

Idaho Council on Domestic Violence and Victim Assistance

Minutes, February 19, 2021

12:45 pm

WebEx Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 975 5063 8507

Passcode: 090619

<https://idahogov.webex.com/meet/ICDVVA>

Council Members present: Sarah Swanson, Len Humphries, Alan Boehme, Wes Somerton, Doug Graves, Rachel Kaschmitter, Jodi Nafzger

ICDVVA Employees: Heather Cunningham, Angie Lindsey, Amy Duque, Dana Wiemiller, Gabrielle Lowenthal

Doug Graves, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:02 am

New Council Member and ICDVVA Staff Introductions. Jodi Nafzger, New Region IV Council Member; Rachel Kashmitter, New Region V Council Member; and Gabby Lowenthal, Research Analyst for ICDVVA introduced themselves.

1. **Review and approval of Minutes from December 11, 2020 and January 7, 2021 meetings. Action Item:** Councilmember Somerton moved to approve the December 11, 2020 after typos in the title line are made. Councilmember Swanson seconded. Motion was approved. Councilmember Boehme moved to approve the January 7, 2021 minutes. Councilmember Somerton seconded. Motion was approved.

2. **Strategic Plan & Grant Program Requirements**

Director Cunningham reviewed the Strategic Plan requirements of I.C. § 67-1903, the definition of agency in I.C. § 67-1902 and the performance measurement requirement of I.C. § 67-1903. The Director reported to the Council that whether a strategic plan is required is a gray area; in the past the Council did not do one. However, in discussions with DFM and the DHW AG, if the Council falls within the definition of an agency then a strategic plan is required, and when there is a gray area, compliance with the strictest interpretation is the most conservative. Regardless of whether or not the Council chooses to do a strategic plan in the future, it will need to do one this year to take into account the data from the Boise State report and close the remaining federal open audit item, considering a victim needs assessment in funding allocations.

Director Cunningham reviewed the duties and responsibilities of the Council pursuant to I.C. § 39-5208. The Director then provided the Council with a recap of OIG audit recommendation number one and prior Director Fitzgerald's agreement with the finding and subsequent contract and scope of work with Boise State University to identify data and recommendations for the use of the Council.

meet and revise a strategic plan for audit completion.

Proposed Strategic Plan Revisions:

- a. Remove unrealistic or outdated portions
- b. Revise Performance Measures
- c. Prioritize Goals
- d. Identify Policy Issues
- e. Identify Collaboration Partners

Grant Program Requirements:

Federal grants want data and more funding information.

Items to include / enhance:

- a. Grant allocation funding formula
- b. Who is underserved?
- c. What are high need locations?
- d. Identification of barriers?
- e. Training.
- f. Council Role.

3. Available Data & Recommendations Regarding Victim Needs in Idaho &

5. Utilizing the Available Data to Promote Equitable Access to Services

Presentation by Director Cunningham on the need to incorporate data in the four [Boise State Biennial Reports](#) into funding decisions. Ms. Lowenthal's addition to the Council staff will give more opportunities to effectively use data from programs and fill data gaps. The recommendations of each report were highlighted and then the Council discussed the recommendations and potential action items regarding the same, summarized as follows.

- a. *State v Clarke* Report: Len Humphries reviewed recommendations of the report. The BSU Clarke study was discussed.

Councilman Humphries indicated that making victim based training mandatory can cause law enforcement opposition for a variety of reasons. He further discussed that a constitutional amendment was a big lift and likely unrealistic. He indicated that in one Judge counties there are significant barriers to obtaining warrants as Clarke requires. Finally, he indicated law enforcement connecting victims with services while on scene might be something the Council could works towards, in collaboration with the Sheriff's Association, the Association of Police Chiefs and/or the Association of Counties and Cities.

Director Cunningham discussed with the Council the report findings and potential actions the Council could take, including: 1) possible a collaboration with law enforcement for victim response and training, possibly in the form of POST approved webinars, and incentivizing training 2) working with existing agencies who have hotlines to connect victims to services in geographically underserved areas of the

state, 3) exploring a statewide hotline or regional network to connect victims at the scene with providers.

Councilman Somerton suggested working with Legal Aid, which has a statewide hotline, to explore whether existing networks could be tapped into and expanded to victim services.

The Council discussed and expressed support for having a regional pilot project, perhaps in conjunction with Safe Passage or one of our other funded agencies, to explore regional connections with victims on the scene. Further, the Council voiced support for collaborating with the Coalition and law enforcement organizations to make training available.

Councilman Humphries voiced concerns with the current relationship between the Idaho Coalition and law enforcement.

b. ISAKI Report: Sarah Swanson, Amy Duque

Councilwoman Swanson and Ms. Duque discussed the ISAKI report recommendations. Councilwoman Swanson discussed the beneficial collaboration with prosecutors and victim witness coordinators. Ms. Duque discussed the recommendation to amend I.C. § 39-6316 and the need for it to include all victims of sexual assault and not just domestic violence. There is a need for funding to prioritize the underserved area of Idaho. Councilmember Swanson recommended looking at and revising the current materials and pamphlets on domestic violence, and the Council discussed trauma informed training that would help officers understand that trauma can cause some of the same behaviors that officers are trained to see as credibility problems, and it would be helpful to have more officers trained in trauma informed practices.

The Council discussed how to:

1. Prioritize funding to rural/remote underserved counties – this requires a precise definition of “underserved” as discussed elsewhere in our Strategic Plan, and a plan for how to give extra weight to these services when scoring applications
2. Advocate for the modification of Idaho Statute 39-6316 to incorporate all victims of sexual violence (not only victims of domestic violence)
3. Advocate for the modification of Idaho Statute 39-6316 to require policing agencies to connect victims to services at the time of reporting (or at the very least, a national or regional hotline to call to get more information about available services)
4. Work to enhance the partnerships between policing agencies and victim service providers
5. Work to increase training opportunities in the state for law enforcement to better understand the obstacles to victim credibility (similarities between the physical manifestations of trauma response vs. the physical manifestations police have been trained to identify as lying)

Director Cunningham reviewed that while the Council needs to obtain the Governor's approval to propose legislation, the Council may serve as an informational resource on policy issues and that if the Council felt that it should act on the recommendation to revise I.C § 39-6316, it would be reasonable to draft a proposed "fix" bill and provide it to the Governor's office for consideration for next legislative session. The Council expressed general support for this idea and Councilmember Humphries suggested that Director Cunningham draft proposed legislation and move that effort forward through the proper channels. Councilmember Nafzger expressed support for that proposal.

c. Agency Report: Wes Somerton, Dana Wiemiller

Councilman Somerton and Ms. Wiemiller discussed the recommendations in the report. Councilmember Somerton reported that recommendations 12, 13, 14 and 15 all deal with expanding efforts to reach traditionally underserved communities. Expanding efforts to reach traditionally vulnerable and underserved communities is a key priority. The definition of "underserved" previously used by ICDV should be updated to be more inclusive of vulnerable/underserved communities referenced in the Agency Report. The Council should also regularly revisit which communities are included in our definition of underserved communities. The Council should evaluate how agencies are addressing underserved populations when scoring funding applications. Interagency collaboration is another (related) priority. This is mentioned in other reports and could be referenced in the Strategic Plan as a common theme among the BSU study efforts.

Councilmember Somerton indicated that in addition to the agency report he considered the May 2020 Idaho Statistical Analysis report. He indicated that one theme or category to address is a funding issue: how do we make our funds known to agencies, as well as help them easily understand the proper use of federal funds so they know what they can and cannot use the funds for and using that knowledge, use funds to their best advantage. The Council discussed that the updated grant manual and information on our website was a good step in that direction and suggested staff talk with stakeholders to identify what problems they have regarding funding and work to address them.

The Council discussed the VOCA priority categories and the how to better identify the populations being served in funding applications. Councilmember Nafzger discussed refashioning applications, providing training via roadshows or otherwise reducing barriers to training for programs, and how to best reach marginalized communities. Councilmember Nafzger suggested exploring self-rescue manuals as a way to connect programs with resources or victims with resources.

Director Cunningham informed the Council of the recent Resource Library project to connect programs with policies and resource lists of other agencies, as well as the new Mentorship program to pair newer agencies with more experienced agencies. The Director also suggested that a future BSU intern project might be to look at the

service standards for agencies that are outdated. Councilmember Kaschmitter suggested that many behavioral health and mental health providers already have resource lists, which might be a good starting point as we try to collect resources for agencies and build regional lists.

The Council discussed the difficulty in finding available data on underserved populations and potential available sources of data, including data from the domestic violence courts. Director Cunningham discussed identification of resources for data and the Council agreed that identification of data and collaboration with other agencies to obtain needed data should be a key priority.

d. Victim Survey Report: Doug Graves, Angie Lindsey

Councilman Graves and Ms. Lindsey discussed the barriers of getting information from Victim Surveys. There are too many surveys and victims do not want to fill out multiple surveys after receiving services from providers. It is currently difficult to obtain usable data. Placing an ongoing survey on the ICDVVA website may give access to victims. The 2021 Safety and Resiliency conference will provide a session of resources and an opportunity for feedback. Councilmember Somerton expressed that if out of 97 people who took the BSU survey only 19 completed it or provided enough information for the data to be usable, there may be a problem with the survey. The Council discussed ways to encourage stakeholders to participate in the survey effort, including potential incentives to those who complete surveys or agencies which give out the BSU survey and end up with high completion rates. Incentives, revision of the survey, and promotion of the survey were all discussed as options.

The Council considered the BSU recommendations for a statewide victimization survey. Director Cunningham briefly discussed how such a survey might provide a baseline and suggested if the Council was interested, she would contact the BSU team and invite them to make a proposal and provide a cost estimate for consideration so they could answer the Council's questions about the utility and process of a statewide survey. The Council indicated that at this time they would prefer to learn more about available data and focus on existing data vs. explore a statewide additional survey.

e. ACES Report - Alan Boehme

Councilman Boehme was called away but reported via email to the Director that he did not see many recommendations made in the ACES report the Council could act on. The primary recommendation was to raise awareness about ACE's in order to shift preventative efforts from individual responsibility to community-level public health solutions. A secondary recommendation was to garner more data to ensure and verify the relationships between ACE's and other systems (judicial, social, ect.) He noted that the report brings up a strong correlation between social and economic impoverish children and their proclivity to having ACEs.

f. Idaho Criminal Justice Needs Assessment – Heather Cunningham

Ms. Cunningham explained that the older 2014 Needs Assessment report by Boise

State had identified data issues that had not yet been resolved, such as the need to standardize the way programs collect and report data. She suggested that the Council tackle these items as part of a new data collection and data education effort with the Council's Research Analyst.

6. Discussion of Proposed Plan Revision

Councilmembers discussed establishing a more current definition of underserved populations on an annual basis and reviewed the VOCA definition of "underserved" as well as discussed the FVPSA definition and the Council's past/current definition as reflected in former Director Fitzgerald's letters from the federal OIG audit. After discussion Director Cunningham suggested that Council staff will evaluate the available data and make a recommendation on how underserved should be defined, which would be revisited every year before grant funding decisions. The Council voiced support for that approach.

The Council reviewed the existing strategic plan and walked through proposed staff revisions to the Mission Statement, Goals, and proposed performance measures. The council spent time discussing the Idaho Coalition's assessment of the Boise State reports. Director Cunningham discussed the current challenges posed by the relationship between DHW and ICDV and the progress made, and gave examples of some of the problems, including the recent discovery during the LSO audit that DHW had unilaterally removed all of the ICDV data entered into Navision that would allow ICDV to match up payments with ICDV reimbursement records, and the subsequent effort to immediately implement an invoice number system that DHW would not alter.

Director Cunningham also advised the Council that staff was stretched beyond capacity, and that staff levels were not adequate to keep up with federal grant reporting requirements, as trying to do required performance reporting, reimbursement processing of \$1 million per month, and now monitoring of all 46 agencies required more than four FTE. Without having a Research Analyst on board or the Grants Supervisor position approved by the Legislature yet, it was a struggle to keep up and the Grants Managers are being over-taxed. Councilmember Kaschmitter asked if there was any action the Council could take to assist with increased staff; Director Cunningham indicated that she did not know of a solution since an additional staff position required legislative approval, and hiring a temp to work on federal grants was not realistic. The Director indicated she wanted to make sure the Council is aware of the capacity challenges in trying to meet minimum federal requirements to avoid future audit findings.

Councilman Boehme made a motion for adjournment at 3:55 p.m. Councilwoman Nafzger seconded. Motion was approved.

Adjourn/Doug Graves