



HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2024 | 10 a.m.-noon

Lara Wilken, Samantha Solomon, Michelle Hannon; Rebekkah O'Brian; Cindy Adams, Maya Simmick, Haleigh Young, Alecia Wells, Terry Brown, Chelsea Gaffey, Jason Schaver, Kristi Mouncey, Erin Meyer, Kwami Adoboe-Herrera; Tara Alston, Hope Daniels; Gwen England; Hannah Esterbrook; Christy Bartmann; Mary Kate Waggoner; Linda Majeska Powers; Chelsey Gaffney; Becca Picken; Harold D'Souza; Anna Travis; Nancy Hashman; Dancy D'Souza; Kathleen Hackett; Terry Hood Brown; Holly Regan; Emily Dunlap; Natasha Cooper; Erin Meyer; Rep. Tracey Richardson; Annette Mango; Rosario Sanchez; Dave Talbert; Cassandra Hartman; Niama Elmi; Michele Sorrell; Matthew Hilbert.

Introductions: Linda Majeska Powers

Introductions of persons in attendance

Advisory Ambassador Updates-Mary Kate Waggoner:

Regarding updates within the Human Trafficking Initiative and the Commission as a whole. We want our ambassadors to be directly involved in all the work that we are producing and giving peer review and feedback, suggestions, etc. We had a meeting recently where we went over updates and a lot of our ambassadors are doing amazing things within their own organizations. Today I wanted to let Harold and Dancy speak a little bit about an event that they are hosting coming up with Eyes Open International. I am going to pass the baton to them to talk about that.

Harold D'Souza: Thank you, Mary Kate, and thank you friends. I think you all know about this upcoming conference. It is on May 2, Thursday, it is from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Linda Powers who is here, she is one of the keynote speakers. I just request everyone; I do not know if Dr. Lara is here. I think Michelle Hannon, many people will have promoted this in their newsletter to promote this event. This is the first time that a survivor like me is putting on a conference. It has been my dream for the last thirty years. But I think it is taking shape and the best part is it is being organized at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and they are sponsoring it. Friends, I need your support, I need your encouragement and I need your guidance because I am doing it for the first time. If anything is missing, I know that Kristy Mouncey is going to be there. I will not take much of your time but please do sign up, registration is free. This is being advertised by Mary Kate and Linda and the Governor's Office email. Please promote it again thank you very much and again thank you for supporting especially the ambassador survivors of the Attorney General's office. Thank you very much Mary Kate and Linda Powers.

Mary Kate: We are very excited for the event so please register and if you have not already done so share with your networks if you are so inclined. Are there any other ambassadors either online or in person that wanted to share any updates about the ambassador advisory counsel or even things that they are doing in their own personal endeavors. Natasha, did you want to share something, I saw you unmute for a second.

Natasha Cooper: No, I am good, thank you.

Mary Kate Waggoner: Alright, no worries. Thanks everyone, we appreciate all that you do.

Linda Powers: Moving on, I would like to call for our subcommittee updates. I would like to go out of the usual agenda order and call on the Public Awareness chair. Chair Lara Wilken would like to speak regarding a project the subcommittee has been working on. The Public Awareness subcommittee would like to present a project to the Human Trafficking Commission as a whole. Lara, we will turn it over to you.

Subcommittee updates:

Public Awareness-Chair Lara Wilken:

Thank you. One of the things that we are working on in the Public Awareness Subcommittee that we are proud of is the creation of a map of the trainings that are taking place throughout the state of Ohio. It inspires us to think about how many other people that we don't know are doing all these great things. So, the survey is really giving us an opportunity to see all the good that is being done in the state of Ohio. If we could get the PowerPoint going here. We are going to give you a few images of the results that we have seen so far. You will see that it is titled Public Awareness Subcommittee Impact Survey 2023 so the data that we are collecting from folks is focused on education that has been provided in the state of Ohio during the year of 2023. We are trying to share it with everyone. The first thing that we to show you and before I reveal it, I have to say as Mary Kate was so kind to compile all the data and as I was starting to go through it and as I was looking, I was "oh my gosh we are at 22 counties, we are at 44 counties." We have a total of 88 counties in the state of Ohio. Just on the people who have participated in the survey alone we are very excited to show, and this isn't even half of our entire commission, we are excited to show that in orange you will see in the year of 2023 there were 66 counties in the state of Ohio that received human trafficking education. Everyone in the room is clapping and I want all of you to know that this applause is for all the commission. For the folks that are out there doing this great work and so we can see by gathering this data it is also helping us to identify counties that are still in need of education as well. It is a celebration of education that has been provided, it is also identifying where else we need that education. If you have not filled out the survey yet we would really like you to because for all we know we could have more of these areas covered, we just don't have that data yet. Another thing that the survey was looking at was not only where the education is being provided but the type of education. I am really excited to share with you that of the 55 people of the commission that completed the survey. Of the 55 people that filled this out, I am happy to report that all those areas have education on both sex and labor trafficking. Almost all the education that has been provided has been reported as being survivor informed as well as evidence based. I think that is amazing as well. Now what you are

looking at here is a pie chart that was created to show the types of groups that that were trained. We are also looking at not only where is the education taking place but who is receiving the education. We can see there that by gathering this data we know that community members are the highest rated. Out of the 55 people who provided feedback in the survey on the type of education that they are giving 41 people stated they educated community members. The next highest one that you will see here are health care providers. Then we can see, and the numbers are small, the next one I see is law enforcement and so on. What this survey is also helping recognize are the professions for which we are providing education. The next thing that we have here is information about the survey. The survey was sent out by Linda to the entire commission. We sent a separate survey out to our subcommittee chairs with the hope that they would send it out to their members if they were not part of the large listserv. If you are wondering who should fill out this survey, this survey is for all members of the commission. This includes ambassadors, as well as subcommittee chairs, and individual members. For service providers we do ask that you fill out only one survey per organization to avoid any duplication in the data collection. What is the goal of this. The goal is to learn all types of human trafficking awareness that is being performed in the state of Ohio by the HTI Commission members. Again, we know you are all doing amazing work, and this is an opportunity for us to get a picture of what that work looks like. How long will the survey take? It will only take maybe five minutes. Super easy, user friendly. Super easy to complete. You just check the boxes and that is what the link looks like. After the meeting today we will send this out again to the commission members and we are asking that if you have not participated to please take the time to do so. And in conclusion we want to leave you with this message, the public awareness survey is not only a tool for determining where education is taking place but also a celebration representative of each one of you and all the hard work you are doing to raise awareness throughout our great state, we genuinely appreciate it and thank you. When we look back one more time at that map, we know that 55 people out of 200 have reported all those areas in orange. Imagine what our state map might look like if everyone took the time to complete the survey. We ask that you do this as soon as possible so we can get a good idea and we can then start tracking data for the year 2024 as well.

Linda Majeska Powers: Lara is there a time parameter that you want to close the survey so that we have an end date.

Lara Wilder: That is a great question. Today is March 11, 2024, if we can give folks another few weeks. A two-week deadline is fair considering that it only takes about five minutes to complete the survey. I will say that I wish there was one thing, lets go back to this other slide, that we would have included and I did not catch it until I was putting together this presentation, is that we do have for the types of groups trained, the last check box was other and we had 11 people that reported other but we did not have a box but what are the other groups. I wish we had that data. If you are filling out that survey and you do check the box "other" if you could send me an email letting me know what those other groups are that would great. And of the 11 who reported that I have your email addresses so I will reach out to you because I think that is really important information for us to have because when our committee came together and compiled all these

groups, we thought we hit everyone. Since people are checking “other” there might be other groups that we are not fully aware of so that would be important for us to know.

Linda Majeska Powers: We can also use this for 2024 when we are gathering the information that we put out for 2024 to see how we are doing.

Lara Wilder: I think this is really going to be neat Linda, in a comparison of 2023 versus 2024 to see how those numbers changed because that is really one of those things we hope to do with this data is to track the trending of areas that we are improving in. In areas where we need improvement in. We are really excited about that, and I do not want to take up too much of your time but to just give you a little bit of insight into the projects we have for 2024. We have three major goals. One of our first goals is creating a resource library for various professions on the AGO website. This resource library will consist of partners, providers, credible resources and services. That is one of our goals, kind of a big goal. I do not know if we will get it done. We are looking at potentially taking, I don't know if you have seen this, the Michigan State Police have an awareness video of what human trafficking might look like in the community. So, we would like to make one for the commission of what it would look like in the community in the state of Ohio. Not necessarily exactly what that video is but something similar. The last thing is we really want to look at the publication already out there on the AG website for applications to be aware of. There is something out there, but we know that technology is changing all the time, and our subcommittee really wants to review that document and make sure we have all of applications that parents should be aware of and even include a gaming piece of that also. That is pretty much it for Public Awareness. Again, if you haven't completed the survey, if you can do that within the next two weeks, we will greatly appreciate it and if you already have filled it out there is no need to do another one and we thank you tremendously.

Linda Majeska Powers: I would like to express my appreciation to the Public Awareness Subcommittee as this data is invaluable. We will be sharing this information with Shared Hope International so that they can see what we are doing within the state of Ohio. I would also like to include this in the Attorney General's Annual Report.

Health Care-Michele Sorrell on behalf of Chair Heather Wilder:

Mary Kate Waggoner: Heather Wilder is unavailable, so unless someone is available from this subcommittee who would like to summarize your projects, I would be happy to do so.

Michelle Sorrell: This is Michelle Sorrell; I was on the subcommittee and video filming as well.

Mary Kate Waggoner: Okay, perfect please go ahead.

Michelle Sorrel: I just wanted to see if Kathleen was on. She jumped off. We went over the last video that we created for the EMS presentation. It was done in Cleveland Heights with Tom DeBeers who is a firefighter at Cleveland Heights fire department and the EMS Coordinator at the Cleveland Clinic. It was done with two of my forensic nurses. It is the EMS perspective of what happens when you go out on a call. What are some red flags. Some talking points. We reviewed the video and now the teamwork we are doing is to kind of come up with the talking points. Come up with the guide when you do your pauses. What are the talking points that we are

trying to hit upon with people asking those questions and how to properly answer them. What we are trying to do is make sure we are all on the same page, when people ask questions, what is the best way to answer it. I think that Annette was on, Annette is in the video as well. She was instrumental in helping us to make sure the scene was set properly. I think she is trying to get in. The whole thing was the video which I think is the 4th one that we have done and then being able to do a talking guide and once that is done, we will be able to release it on the AG website. Linda, have you seen it yet?

Linda Majeska Powers: I did see it. It was excellent and I really appreciate all the hard work that everyone has done, and we are looking forward to debriefing guide that you come up with so that we can get that onto the Attorney General's website because it is a very useful piece of information. I think that EMS was really excited with how it went. They really enjoyed the process. They are also excited about utilizing the video and debriefing guide for their training purposes. We look forward to more videos that this committee is contemplating for future development. Q, who worked with you on this video is also looking forward to future projects. Is there anything else that anyone else would like to add before we turn it over to law enforcement?

Law Enforcement-Co-Chair Matthew Hilbert:

Matthew Hilbert: Hey Linda, it is Matthew Hilbert, JP is not on today's meeting. I told him that I could give a brief update from the last meeting that you had. I appreciate the public awareness presentation. I will probably reach out at some point soon for some take aways from our last meeting in January was to come up with a law enforcement tailored presentation. Several in our group have their own that they provide to different agencies in the public and other police officers that they work with. Trying to come up with one for agencies that don't have one is something the group thought about undertaking. I am looking forward to receiving recommendations from the Public Awareness committee on what we should include and what we should not include. Otherwise, our meetings are pretty much the same each time. We discussed a couple of different cases that we have ongoing. It is usually a good representation of the various task forces across the state. Seven of those are affiliated with OCIC, part of the Attorney General's Office. Then there are a couple of others across the state that have joined and are not part of the task force or not a task force at all. They hop on and share on case updates as they happen. We have another meeting scheduled towards the end of April. You will probably be at the next meeting. If anyone has any questions on that. That is about it for now.

Victim Services-Co-Chairs Rebekkah O'Brian & Michelle Hannon:

Rebekkah O'Brien: Hello everybody. Michelle and I co-chair the Victim Services Subcommittee. It is kind of interestingly structured, so we have the primary subcommittee and then we have two sub-working groups. I will brief everybody on the sub-working groups before I hand it over to Michelle. First, we have the child response protocol working group. That group is working to develop a resource for communities to utilize. That resource is intended to improve communities' identification and response efforts to child victims of trafficking. We have been working on that project for quite a while and we are wrapping it up. We have a really great team working on this, survivor informed, the ambassadors have been really engaged and just a great

team that are experts. We are looking forward to wrapping that up. Hoping that is done in the next quarter of this year, which is exciting. Our second sub-working group is really working to support ambassador Kwami's vision for resources and programs for males who have experienced trafficking and need shelter. We have been working with him closely to develop that program proposal. Great team dedicated to that. That is in the beginning stages. That project started at the very end of last quarter. It will take us a little while to flush that out a little more fully. Michelle, is there anything that I forgot before I hand it over to you?

Michelle Hannon: No, I think that is a lot of what we have been doing lately. My other update to share is one of the other functions of our subcommittee is that we organize and manage the state self-assessment for providing services for people with lived experiences that have experienced human trafficking. A reminder about that for anyone that might be newer to the conversation here. Ohio has standards of service for individuals who provide direct service to human trafficking survivors. One of our newer and more exciting additions to the whole conversation on standards is that we now, as many of you know, we have a state service directory housed on the Attorney General website. Organizations, specifically at the program level. An organization may offer four different programs to serve survivors and when they complete the assessment maybe only two of those programs meet the state standards and two are working on it. Programs at a program level that have demonstrated that they meet the state standards, demonstrate that they meet the state standards are included in the state directory. That is the background. The survey is active, open all the time and as a committee we engage with those results every six months. We recently pulled and analyzed the data for the most recent participants in the survey. We had fifteen completed responses. We work on a July to December framework for this. In 2023, from July through the end of the year we had a total of 16 responses. 15 of them were completed. Once looked like someone who had jumped on the survey, looked around a little bit, put in some information but did not complete the survey. Of the 15 that were completed, 7 of them met the standards for all the programs that they reported. One of the organizations met some of the standards for some of the programs but not all the programs. 6 did not meet the standards. What happens next is that as a committee we are reaching out to organizations that do not meet the standards to offer support to find out if there are ways that we can further engage or share resources, provide technical assistance. We are compiling right now and will be sharing with Linda and Mary Kate. There is a series of emails that will be coming out that will either say "congratulations and thanks for participating and you met the standards" or "thanks for participating and we would like to talk more because you did not" or "it looks like you started but are you interested in completing that at one point". We gather that information up, put that information in categories and send that to Linda and Mary Kate and that will go out to a larger community soon. That is where we are right now. Any questions about that process or for our committee as to how it relates to that process, providing technical support and engaging with partners and organizations.

Linda Powers: Thank you so much and I just want to express how grateful we are to everyone that is on your committee and subcommittees that are working on these items. The service directory is such a powerful tool and the fact that you are engaging with partners and organizations, supporting them and trying to bring them up to state standards is admirable.

Demand Reduction: Maggie Goins on behalf of Chair Tony Talbott

Linda Majeska Powers: I don't think Tony is going to be here today. I received an email willing to stand in Tony's stead on Tony's demand reduction.

Maggie Goins: What we are currently working on, we used to meet once a month but now we meet every other month. We started working groups because we are working on our revised version of the white paper that we did from the previous committee. That is about it.

Legal & Legislative-Chair Samantha Solomon:

Hey everybody my name is Samantha Salomon. For Legal & Legislative Subcommittee we have narrowed our down our goals to three different objectives. One is dealing with giving this expungement bill passed. For those of you not familiar, in January there was a bill that was introduced by representative Richardson and Representative Williams to expand the current expungement bill for human trafficking survivors. If anyone would like some additional information regarding this bill, I can provide that for you, or you can reach out to Linda because Linda has a lot of information about it as well. That was one of the proud things that we were able to do in January amongst others. We are trying to push hard and get that passed. It looks very promising and at one point we had over 18 cosponsors on the bill. For those that are not familiar with the legislative process that is a darned good amount. There was also a companion bill passed in the senate by Senator Kunze. We are really hoping that we have a lot of buy, enough buy in to really get this passed. To give some people some background, we have been trying to get this introduced and get this passed for years. It has continuously, at the last minute it has been able to go through. We have all the right people on board, and we have all the approval that we need to really push this. We want to provide support, whether that is testimony, whether that is getting more legislators on board in support of the bill, that is one of our goals. The second goal is that we have been analyzing, last year, Erin's Law. For those of you who are not familiar with Erin's Law, that is the law that was passed to educate our teachers and our youth. The issue arises as to how the implementation of these trainings are to occur. I know there are some jurisdictions like Summit County, where CSEA/ Children Services are taking the reins at some of the educating. The problem is that there is no standards. Every jurisdiction is left up to their own device as to how they want to implement it. If you do not implement it, there are really no penalties to it. That is what I mean by putting more teeth into this law. We are educating. One theme and consensus that I keep hearing amongst advocates in multiple sectors in dealing with human trafficking is that we really need to educate the community but really focus on the youth. Because that is a target, that the media is targeting that a lot of individuals are targeting. At least train individuals to spot red flags. Youth are going to even be more vulnerable than they already are. This is why we are already putting a focus on the amendments to Erin's Law. The last goal that we have for this year is, sorry I am looking at this right now so that I can be sure, we talked a lot about wanting to increase accountability to the standards and screening tools of housing facilities. Whether that be shelters, whether that be different recovery centers and rehabilitation programs. The problem is right now that the standards, there are little to no standards especially, we are seeing a lot of grooming occurring in a lot of these shelters. Or there is room for improvement. Whether it is dealing with a shelter or whether it is dealing with a rehabilitative

center of some sorts. We want to make sure that the staff are informed and understand what grooming and what recruitment might look like. Means that the shelters are run by qualified individuals that are on staff so that they can at least understand what these situations could look like. These are our three main objectives that we want to hopefully get achieved this year. So that everyone is understanding, one thing that we really want to encourage everybody. People here believe at Legal & Legislative, and they think that most people should be lawyers and legislators to be on this committee, I strongly oppose that. While lawyers help with the language and legislators understand the process, we need input. We need people from various perspectives to understand where the various gaps are.

Research, Data & Gap Analysis- Co-Chair Kristy Mouncey:

A brief explanation and status update was provided regarding the joint data collection project with the Attorney General and the University of Toledo

HTI Updates: Linda Majeska Powers

Please save the date for the Human Trafficking 2024 Summit which will take place at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Columbus on August 7, 2024. This will be a live event and no virtual component will be offered this year. Registrations will open on May 1, 2024, and there are a limited number of scholarships available for survivors, students and entities that need financial assistance. The focus this year was developed through many discussions with our ambassadors. The focus will be on a continuum of care. What do we do now that a survivor has been recovered or has stepped away from the life. How can we as a community assist them so they do not turn back to that situation. We hope that everyone will register and look forward to the many workshops and the speech of the keynote speaker this year.

The 2nd Quarter HTC meeting will take place on June 10, 2024, at the Mt. Carmel Healthy Living Center. Thank you to all the new members that joined us today.