

**COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
AND SEXUAL ASSAULT  
(CDVSA)**

**Host Location:**

State of Alaska Department of Public Safety  
Council on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault  
150 3rd St., Suite 201  
Juneau, AK 99801

**CDVSA Quarterly Council Board Virtual Meeting  
FY 2022 Quarter 1  
September 15, 2021**

**Wednesday, September 15, 2021**

**Board Members Present:**

Teresa Lowe – Chair  
Lydia Heyward – Vice Chair  
Laura Brooks  
John Skidmore  
Kami Moore  
Angela Garay  
Ryon Turley

**Board Members Absent:**

Commissioner Jim Cockrell  
Jillian Gellings

**Staff:**

Diane Casto, Executive Director  
Marjorie Hamburger  
Meggie Stogner  
MaryBeth Gagnon  
Angela Wells  
Ann Rausch  
Karrah Ardnt, MSW Practicum Student  
Jen Anderson, MSW Practicum Student

**Minutes prepared by:** Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

**CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL**

Teresa Lowe called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

## **AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Teresa Lowe called for a review of the meeting agenda. John Skidmore **MOVED** to approve the agenda, **SECONDED** by Laura Brooks. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED. (7/0)**

## **CONFLICT INQUIRY**

Angela Garay shared that she was moving from the Office of Public Advocacy (OPA) to the Office of Victim's Rights (OVR). No conflicts of interest were declared.

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS OF BOARD MEMBERS AND CDVSA STAFF ATTENDING**

Teresa Lowe opened the floor for brief introductions of the board and staff members.

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS OF THE NEW UAA MASTERS OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM STUDENTS**

Diane Casto introduced the Council's new UAA Master of Social Work practicum students, Jen Anderson and Karragh Arndt. Jen's primary project is assisting with the Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup. Karragh is working directly with Ann Rausch, and her primary assignment is assisting Ann with the four-year STOP Program plan, among other tasks.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

John Skidmore **MOVED** to approve the June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting minutes as presented, **SECONDED** by Lydia Heyward. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED. (7/0)**

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT, July - September 2021**

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the executive director report included in the board packet and highlighted the following information:

### **Staffing and Personnel:**

- CDVSA has two vacancies. Due to recruitment difficulties and a need for a higher skill level in these two positions, the Council upgraded both positions. The Research Analyst III was upgraded in the past eight months, and the Administrative Officer II was upgraded during this quarter.
  - Administrative Officer II
    - Conducted one recruitment for the Administrative Officer I
    - Decision to upgrade the position from an Administrative Officer I to an Administrative Officer II, a job class more aligned with the needs of the Council
    - Recruitment was opened September 2<sup>nd</sup> and closes September 17, 2021.
  - Research Analyst III
    - Recruited four times for the Research Analyst (RA) III
    - Intend to establish a new recruitment later in September
    - In the interim, the Council is establishing a new short-term, non-perm RA III to assist with critical data collection needs such as

federal reporting requirements. Morgan Erisman, the previous RA, has agreed to fill in temporarily as a short-term, non-perm.

- Shannen O'Brien, the current Grants Administrator III, will end her time with CDVSA on October 1, 2021. Under a Letter of Agreement with the General Government Bargaining Unit (GGU), the Council was able to have her telework from Washington for three months. This would enable her to assist CDVSA with FY 21 grant closeout and FY 22 grant start-up, in addition to continuing her set-up work for the new grants management system, GrantVantage. The Council has a recruitment packet ready to submit to begin recruiting a new Grants Administrator III, but they are waiting on the possibility of moving a current Grants Administrator III in another department to CDVSA.
- The long-term, non-perm position filled in May to assist with backlogged data entry and other office tasks is vacant due to staff resignation. The Council intends to move forward with hiring a new long-term, non-perm office assistant.
- Angela Wells is back to work full time. The Council is excited to have Angie back and even more excited that her health has rebounded and she is doing very well.
- CDVSA has accepted two UAA practicum students to work with the Council from mid-August through April 2022. Karragh Arndt will work with Ann Rausch to develop the VAWA STOP four-year state plan, and Jen Anderson will work with the Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup.

Diane Casto reported that the CDVSA staff continues to work a portion of their time via telework. They are back to requiring quarantine and testing for anyone traveling and/or exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID. The Council has postponed several work-related trips. The November SART training will again be held virtually. CDVSA will continue following CDC and DHSS pandemic protocols and safety measures until Alaska COVID cases decrease.

#### CDVSA Funding Challenges:

- The CDVSA state fiscal year 2022 funding crisis was averted. The VOCA decrease happened at the same time as federal pandemic aid funds were available.
- The House agreed to provide CDVSA with \$6.0M in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. The Senate agreed to provide \$8.0M. And through the work of the Conference Committee, CDVSA received \$8.0M, funds that can be spent through FY 2024.
- Because the VOCA funding gap will not be resolved in the next 1-2 years, the Council decided to utilize \$5.1M for FY 22 grants and reserve the remaining to help fill the gap in FY 23.

Diane Casto reported that due to timing, staff had to determine FY 22 funding allocation before knowing how much ARPA money would be received. The Council decided to reduce all FY 22 Victim Service/Enhanced Services awards by 5 percent to cushion FY 22 and future years. It was the administration's decision and the work of OMB that each of the sub-grantees was "made whole" by receiving the additional 5 percent of their FY 21 award from the Alaska Community Foundation using federal CARES Act funds. This

funding crisis resolution was an excellent example of the administration, the legislature, and the community providers working together to find solutions.

Diane Casto noted that while the passage of the VOCA Fix Act is significant, it does not immediately solve the dilemma of reduced VOCA funding in the future. The Council anticipates a two to three-year lag for the impacts of the legislation to rebuild the Crime Victims Fund, and they have been told to expect a more moderate but consistent allocation each year. For Alaska, it is estimated to be \$4.0 million per federal fiscal year. The good news is that it will stabilize the funding and allow for better planning for annual sub-grantee allocations.

Diane Casto reported that FY 2023 funding is the primary focus, and work on FY 23 budgets is moving quickly. CDVSA has met with Administrative Services Director Elizabeth Dunayski. She will draft the initial budget requests for DPS, and then Commissioner Cockrell will review and make revisions. Commissioner Cockrell and Special Assistant Kelly Howell will be meeting with OMB and the Governor's office on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to discuss budget numbers for DPS. The Governor will release his state FY 23 budget in December. CDVSA is working on required budget documents for submission to Elizabeth Dunayski by September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

#### COVID-19 and CDVSA's Response:

- CDVSA was awarded \$77,459 through the FVPSA CARES Act in May of 2020.
- CDVSA entered a partnership with DHSS with the intent to assess COVID testing and response needs among domestic violence service providers across the state, most but not all of which were CDVSA-funded programs.
- Of the \$77,459 CDVSA was awarded, the Council expended approximately \$76,652, all of which went directly toward purchases for service providers. A significant amount of work went into the research, coordination, purchasing, and tracking to make this a successful project. The outcome of assisting DV service providers with obtaining essential items to help manage and mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus was well worth the effort.
- On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, CDVSA was notified that DHSS had approved a CARES Act allocation of \$105,000 to CDVSA for distributing to sub-grantees to purchase pandemic-related technology purchases.
  - Twenty-six of the 35 sub-grantees requested a portion of these funds, meaning each of the 26 agencies received an equal share of the funds or \$4,038. Funds were available to purchase technology items to assist in providing quality services during the continuing pandemic.

Diane Casto shared that there are two other pots of FVPSA funding from the ARPA that the Council will utilize for COVID-19 related domestic violence shelter programs. She noted that there will be more information available at the next quarterly meeting.

#### **CDVSA Priority Projects Update**

##### CDVSA Sunset Audit

- The Council's Sunset Audit has is finished, and a draft report was presented to Chair Lowe and Commissioner Cockrell.

### Alaska Victimization Survey (AVS)

- The Alaska Victimization Survey results are very close to being finalized. The phone interviews concluded in late November with over 2,100 completed surveys, surpassing the goal of 2,000 completed surveys.
- Dr. Ingrid Johnson is working with the Alaska Mental Health Trust, which had requested specific questions related to DV and their beneficiary populations. There was also detailed COVID-19 data that may be useful to understand better the pandemic's impact on Alaska's victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- Dr. Johnson, UAA Justice Center, and Diane Casto will meet to discuss the findings and the plan for the AVS to be released in conjunction with October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM).
- The new 2020 AVS data will be added to the current Intimate Partner Violence-Interactive Data Dashboard (IPV-IDD).

Diane Casto shared that the lifetime aggregate for any violence went up from 50.3 percent in 2015 to 57.7 percent in 2020, which was lower than in 2010. She noted that there would be opportunities to do various kinds of research and analysis with the data.

### Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup

- The Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup is fully operational, having met five times (monthly since April).
- The membership includes 25 individuals from diverse disciplines interested in successful services to impact individuals who perpetrate violence.
- To assist in smooth and neutral facilitation, CDVSA procured a contract with Denali Daniels + Associates to facilitate, coordinate, and guide the workgroup. The meetings are held virtually over MS Teams. The meetings are recorded and notes are taken with a follow-up survey after each meeting.
- In addition to Denali Daniels, Katie Lauwers, and Jen Anderson, Drs. Heidi Brocious and Kathi Trawver will be assisting with evaluating the workgroup's process and assisting with multiple approaches for obtaining stakeholder feedback.

### CDVSA Regulations Update Project

- Meggie Stogner is working closely with Brad Sharp, with the Legislation and Regulations Section at the Department of Law. Brad continues to provide guidance and support throughout the process. Meggie has gone through Chapters 90 and 95 to determine which regulations belong in which chapter. The intent is to reorganize the regulations to have a chapter focused on the administrative and financial requirements of being a sub-grantee of CDVSA and another chapter specific to DV/SA programs receiving funding.
- The next step is for Meggie to group regulations by topic and send them in groups to Kelly Howell for review. This process will allow Kelly to review a topic group, provide feedback, and have Meggie work on edits while Kelly checks the next topic group.
- Meggie Stogner has initiated the necessary paperwork through the Department of Law to start the process. She will continue working with Brad Sharp and others to ready the regulations for public comment and the official review through

the Department of Law. They are confident that this new push to revise CDVSA regulations will result in a final product that is clear and up-to-date.

#### Other Projects

Diane Casto reported that other continuing projects include the CDVSA Language Access Plan and the CDVSA Five-Year Strategic Plan:

- As part of the Language Access Plan (LAP), the Council will begin identifying areas where they need to translate information and contact information to make it accessible to everyone, including those with no or limited English reading skills. They are continuing to work with the Alaska Institute for Justice to implement the recommendations in the LAP.
- The CDVSA Five-Year Strategic Plan progress continues, but not as quickly as hoped.

#### Communications, Outreach, and Media

- Walsh/Sheppard, the communications contractor, created a survey to send to the 35 sub-grantees to solicit information about the type of messaging they would like to see, for example, topics, populations they would like to see targeted, and what kind of visuals make the most impact. The survey results were analyzed, and the feedback and suggestions are being incorporated into creating new social media messaging for FY 22. First up will be media messaging to inform and educate Alaskans about domestic violence during Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) in October. The goal is to build a comprehensive and ongoing social media presence regarding key issues about DV/SA.
- The Council's goal is to have a continuous media and social media presence. The limited Prevention funds do not provide that opportunity. The Council is becoming increasingly savvy with finding low-cost messaging practices and saves its media funding for specific targeted messages during the key DV/SA months of February for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.
- The Council works closely with Walsh/Sheppard to audit the website.

#### Upcoming events:

- October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- October is the 40th anniversary of CDVSA
- SART Virtual Training for community Sexual Assault Response Teams, November 16 - 19, 2021
- FY 2022 Quarter 2 Board meeting, December 9 - 10, 2021, rural outreach meeting in Ketchikan (pending COVID conditions).

Throughout her report, Diane Casto expressed her heartfelt appreciation to the CDVSA staff and the Council's appreciation to DHSS and the other partners who helped move the Council's work forward.

#### **CDVSA BUDGET REVIEW**

#### **FISCAL REPORT SFY 2021 Q.4 BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES**

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the draft financial documents updated September 10, 2021 in the board packet for review. Rick Silaj, staff at Public Safety, Division of Administrative Services, joined the meeting to help present the financial reports. Diane shared that Rick was responsible for automating the financial reports. Rick noted that the report required manual entry from multiple sources and was prone to error when it was initially set up. In working with CDVSA, he found that DPS Finance could help CDVSA streamline reporting, and he began creating the report within the state reporting system. The report will be able to be accessed at any time with current, accurate data. Since FY 22 has just begun, some items have not been fully input, and those discrepancies would show up on the financials.

Diane Casto and Rick Silaj highlighted the following information:

- Page 1 – Program Budget FY 2022
  - Total budget authority, \$32,002,170  
(Includes the ARPA allocation, approximately \$5M, and the federal appropriation set up for CDVSA is not tied directly to what's being awarded.)
    - State funding authority total, \$12,968,700
    - Federal funding authority, \$19,033,470
  - Total operating budget, not including grants, \$3,883,300
  - Total program budget, \$20,966,421
  - Total budgeted obligations, \$24,849,721
- Page 2 – Grants Awarded FY 2022
  - Total grant award authority, \$28,118,870
  - Total awarded to programs, \$20,966,421
- Page 3 – Detailed Sub-Award Plan for FY 2022
  - Total spending plan – not available
    - (Under ARPA Victim Service, IAC indicates \$705,781, actually \$580,781)
    - (ANDVSA, two of the awards inaccurately posted; VAWA indicates 216,522, actually \$209,648; VOCA Legal Services indicates \$712,500, actually \$540,016)
    - (Small discrepancies on Mental Health Grant for Anchorage Community Mental Health, Copper River Basin, and TWC)
    - (Note: A new report will be generated and posted as soon as corrections are made.)
- Page 4 – Contracts and Services FY 2022
  - Total authority for contracts and services, \$2,565,400
  - Total of contracts and services obligations, \$1,371,868
- Page 5 – FY 2021 Remaining Balances
  - Total remaining balance across all appropriations, \$13,794,347.

### **ANDVSA REPORT TO CDVSA**

Lauree Morton, Brenda Stanfill, and ANDVSA staff joined the meeting. Lauree directed the members' attention to the document titled *ANDVSA September 2021 CDVSA Update* included in the board packet. She thanked the Council for the opportunity to

provide updates on the projects they share with CDVSA. Lauree highlighted the following information:

### Legal Program

#### Women's Legal Rights Handbook

- Thank you to Apay'uq Moore for sharing her artwork on the cover of the handbook.
- ANDVSA received approximately \$25,000 from the CDVSA in STOP funds to print and mail the Women's Legal Rights Handbook, currently in its eighth edition.
- It was initially developed to empower women about the justice system and combat gender bias in the courts by the former Alaska Women's Commission. ANDVSA has continued that tradition but has made the language gender-neutral in this last edition to reflect current gender norms.
- The handbook gives a brief overview of several areas of law including bankruptcy, criminal law, victim's rights, domestic violence and sexual assault, and estate planning. A new chapter was added in this last edition on working with law enforcement and was written by Katie Tepas at the Department of Public Safety. The content is written by experts in the field who volunteer their time, and it is edited by ANDVSA legal staff.
  - In June 2021, the Network mailed 100 copies statewide to 23 domestic violence and sexual assault community-based programs.
  - The Network has approximately 840 copies remaining in the Anchorage, Juneau, and Sitka offices for disbursement over the next several years. There is no cost for the handbook.

#### ANDVSA Legal Program Update

- The latest joint endeavor with CDVSA, the Victims of Crime Act Enhanced Services Grant, allows ANDVSA to partner and share funding with the Alaska Native Justice Center, Alaska Legal Services Corporation, and the Alaska Institute for Justice. The grant funds a network of three attorneys and a full-time and part-time paralegal providing statewide civil legal services.
- The Network uses close to half of their portion of the grant to contract with attorneys to provide low-bono casework services. They currently have 47 open contracts with attorneys statewide providing services to survivors. In FY 21, 58 clients received assistance from the contract attorneys who donated over \$233,000 in their work.

#### ANDVSA STOP Funding:

- Since the inception of the VAWA Act and Services, Training, Officers and Prosecutors (STOP) funds, the Network has been a Council partner along with the Departments of Public Safety and Law. When asked about critical needs to be met with the services portion of STOP, victims and service providers statewide resoundingly said access to legal services and legal assistance. The need remains, and STOP remains a critical funding scheme to help victims and survivors wind their way through the justice system maze.
- While some attorneys contract to provide services, others volunteer their time. Attorneys volunteer 2,319 hours to victims/survivors equaling over \$579,000 in



donated services. That added to the donated work of contract attorneys equals \$813,459 in donated services in FY 21.

- STOP also provides the opportunity for technical assistance and training.
  - 34 attorneys attended the two-day civil legal education virtual training this year.
  - Over 100 applicants attended the annual three-day legal advocacy and wellness virtual sharing.
- The legal program has hosted 17 office hour opportunities and facilitated webinars on tribal courts, victim's rights, working with interpreters, mandatory reporting, and wellness for advocates.
- The Network provides a legal information and referral hotline twice a month to meet the need for short legal questions. Eight attorneys answered 39 calls donating 57 hours of their time last year.

Lauree Morton reported that in addition to partnering with CDVSA to provide legal services, as the Alaska State Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalition, the Network is authorized through the federal statutes to participate in the development of the STOP plan and write a letter of support for the plan. She looks forward to the Network's participation in developing the next iteration of the plan.

### Prevention Program

The joint work includes the development and implementation of projects under five of the six Alaskan Pathways for Prevention:

1. Alaska is engaged in addressing the root causes of violence through the promotion of equity.
2. Alaskan youth are leaders in the promotion of healthy relationships.
3. Alaskan youth have the skills needed to live a safe and healthy life.
4. Alaskan communities are engaged in promoting healthy relationships.
5. Men are leaders in the promotion of healthy relationships and healthy masculinity across Alaska.
6. The state of Alaska has a sustained infrastructure to coordinate domestic violence, teen dating violence, and sexual assault prevention efforts.

In coordination with CDVSA Prevention Coordinator Ann Rausch, ANDVSA Prevention staff focus on the following:

### Pathway 6: Statewide Coordination

- The Network focuses on nurturing infrastructure to coordinate prevention efforts throughout the executive branch of government, statewide coalitions, and local community prevention partnerships.
- Prevention Director Rae Romberg continues to coordinate the 20-member statewide leadership team, Pathways for Prevention. The Council is planning a virtual fall meeting and is working on creating a new Pathways website.

### Pathways 2 and 3: Youth Engagement

- The Network focuses on encouraging youth leaders in promoting healthy relationships and helping youth develop skills needed to live a safe and healthy life.

- ANDVSA school engagement specialist in Juneau is Doug Koester.
- The LeadOn Youth Conference will be held virtually this year in November. Planning has begun, including the recruitment of youth leaders to help plan and implement what may be a series of virtual gatherings to kick off youth-led community projects to build leadership skills, healthy relationships, and connections with Alaskan youth.
- The youth leaders will also contribute to planning a refresh of the social marketing campaign for youth, Stand Up Speak Up. This healthy relationship and youth leadership campaign may be rebranded to be more accessible to all.

#### Pathways 4: TA and support to Alaskan communities and CDVSA grantees

- The Network provides technical assistance and support to local communities and CDVSA grantees.
- ANDVSA prevention specialist in Anchorage Esther Smith.
- With new CDVSA Prevention Grants beginning in October, ANDVSA is ramping up to offer support, coaching, technical assistance, and facilitating peer-to-peer connection and learning with the 12 grantees and other member program communities.
- Monthly virtual learning opportunities will be held in overall prevention strategies and approaches and male engagement. ANDVSA will also offer quarterly opportunities for programs with newer prevention staff (1 to 3 years) and seasoned staff (5-plus years).
- A multi-day virtual Prevention Gathering will be held in the late winter or spring to provide space for deeper learning and connection for prevention and outreach staff at member programs.
- CDVSA Council members and staff are always welcome at prevention events. Contact Prevention Director Rae Romberg in Juneau to get on the listserv or for more information.

#### Pathway 5: Male Engagement

- The Network supports male leaders in the promotion of healthy relationships and healthy masculinity.
- Men's engagement specialist is Johon Atkinson in Metlakatla.
- The development of a social marketing campaign is well underway and set to pilot in October in Southeast Alaska. This campaign, "Strengthen," will focus on engaging and empowering men to not only get involved in local prevention efforts like mentoring and coaching, but also seeks to normalize talking about and stretching beyond the rigid gender norms that are a risk factor for violence.
- This project is a collaboration between CDVSA and Division of Public Health Women's Children's and Family Health. It is supported by federal funds from the CDC's DELTA Impact and the CDC's Rape Prevention Education projects and the Network. The plan is to expand statewide.
- In coordination with the social marketing campaign, ANDVSA is building a network of men working in their communities interested in becoming leaders in building healthier communities. This network will be offered the chance to participate in healing opportunities and a learning cohort to equip them better to contribute to positive change and connect with men across the state through a virtual Men's Gathering.

- The objectives of the original Gathering were to build a network of Alaskan men who work to build healthier communities. The Gathering provides opportunities for men statewide to connect and contribute to positive changes within each other and their communities at large.

Lauree Morton shared the Network's gratitude to Teresa Lowe, who participated in the July 15th, 2021 dialogue with representatives from the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center and the Network to discuss services and supports for Alaska Natives seeking DV/SA assistance and ways in which they can cohesively work together.

Lauree Morton reported that the Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) is a project supported by the Center for Human Development. Lauree shared that she and Christina Love, the Network's advocacy initiative program specialist, participated in the project as part of the expert hub community. Several of the Network's member programs and Council-funded programs brought examples to the group for brainstorming on how to address complex needs. She noted that it was an excellent opportunity for people statewide to think through practical ways to provide integrated services in their communities.

Lauree Morton reported that the Indigenous Sexual Assault and Abuse Clearinghouse (ISAAC) provides technical assistance and training to tribal governments and tribal courts on effective responses to sexual assault through web-based technology, regional training, and onsite assistance. It supplements and supports the work of the Southwest Center for Law and Policy and the National Indian Country Clearinghouse on Sexual Assault. Lauree shared that she, Tami Jerue, with the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center; and Christina Love are members of the advisory group for the project. Lauree noted that she called attention to ISAAC because they host a Third Thursday webinar series in partnership with ANDVSA, ANWRC, and OVW. These webinars are hosted by expert speakers in the field of sexual assault care and response. The next webinar is titled *The Intersection of Trauma, Substance Use Disorder, and Mental Health*. She noted that Christina Love presented the first five sessions and covered topics including the intersection of trauma, substance use disorder, mental health, and understanding the nexus of sexual violence and the science of addiction.

Lauree Morton stated that the Network stands ready to work with the Council to ensure adequate funding is available for community services. She stated that the Network is looking forward to the Council's legislative audit report and working with the Council to create STOP, VOCA, and Family Violence Prevention and Services Act plans. Lauree noted that the Network knows those plans, and the work together will continue to move Alaska forward to increase safety and increase accountability for those who choose to offend.

### **INTRODUCTION OF AND CONVERSATION WITH ANDVSA DIRECTOR**

Lauree Morton shared that the Network was fortunate that Brenda Stanfill was ready to come in as executive director of ANDVSA. She brings a wealth of knowledge and information from her years of service at the Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living, her work with the legislature, her service on the Criminal Justice Commission,

and her participation in Sentencing Commission work. The Network is excited that Brenda has a rich background in grants and interacting at the federal level.

Brenda Stanfill joined the meeting and shared that she looks forward to starting on October 1<sup>st</sup>. She and Lauree Morton have been working behind the scenes to onboard her on the Network's activities. Brenda shared her journey that brought her to the Network. She stated that she knows the power of crisis programs. Everyone has a role, and she values her role in being a voice for those who may not know what happens at the statewide and federal levels that impact them. She shared that she is very excited about the opportunity to get to step in and work with such a great team at the Network.

Brenda Stanfill spoke about the difference between the Council and the Network and said that although they are very different roles, it is critical that they work together. She said that it is her goal to work hand-in-hand with the Council. She said the vision of ANDVSA is that it promotes and sustains a collective movement to end violence and oppression through social change. The Network comprises all of the programs that would like to be a part of the network that serves domestic violence and sexual assault victims. While the vision is large, the mission is to be a collective voice for victims and survivors and support agencies and communities that are working to prevent and eliminate domestic violence and sexual assault.

Brenda Stanfill shared that the Network is one step removed from direct services. The Network fills the gap for information on what's happening on the state and federal levels. The Network has an operating board made up of people who want to be members of the organization that serves domestic violence and sexual assault victims. They also have a governance board, a smaller group that ensures the Network is doing business correctly and following the guidelines.

Brenda Stanfill shared that the Network's five-year strategic planning work will begin in November. Some areas of focus that will be integrated into the work include:

- Addressing dual agencies that are serving both domestic violence and sexual assault victims where often the sexual assault part of it gets overshadowed by the domestic violence because there are more victims on the domestic violence side.
- Ensuring that all of the programs are just as knowledgeable as the more prominent programs.
- The intersection of interpersonal violence and oppression.
- The BIP program, demanding perpetrator accountability and the criminal justice system.
- Mentorship.
- Prevention, blending pathways to prevention.
- Maximizing available federal funding.

Brenda Stanfill stated that she is looking forward to federal activities and making sure the Alaska Mental Health Trust is a primary partner in the work of the Network. She noted that there is plenty of overlap between the Trust's population and the Network.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Diane Casto shared that individuals who want to provide written public comments can use the comments feature on the public notice website. Comments submitted on the website will be forwarded to the Council.

A public testimony period was offered, and a full transcript was prepared.

## **UPDATE ON CDVSA'S SUNSET AUDIT REPORT AND NEXT STEPS**

Teresa Lowe reported that she and Diane Casto have been in discussions with the auditors. They do not have the final audit report yet. Teresa e-mailed to find out when the Council could expect the final report, but she hasn't heard back from them. Diane Casto reported that they did get a confidential draft management letter that went to the commissioner of Public Safety and Teresa. They both provided an initial response to the draft letter.

## **CDVSA FUNDING GAPS FOR FY 23**

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the *CDVSA FY 23 Funding Needs* document contained in the board packet. She highlighted the following information:

### **History:**

- On August 3, 2021, Chief of Staff Randy Ruaro requested a meeting with Diane Casto to discuss the funding projections and potential funding shortfall for DV/SA funding to communities in State Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023). Also included in this meeting were Neil Steininger and Paloma Harbour, OMB; Kim Kovol, Office of the Governor; and Kip Knudson, Governor's D.C. office.

### **Current Fiscal Year Funding:**

- The total amount of funding for all CDVSA grant award allocations for FY 22 is \$20,359,948.
  - The award amount per funding source is:

State General Funds	\$ 8,842,500
Designated GF	\$ 1,426,330
Federal Funds	\$ 4,787,465
I/A Receipts	\$ 173,583
Federal ARPA	<u>\$ 5,130,070</u>
	\$20,359,948

Available funding in SFY 2021 was \$21,809,739. Funding for FY 2022 represents a 5 percent reduction in grant awards to Victim Service and Enhanced Services Grant programs due to reduced federal VOCA Grant dollars plus a few funding adjustments. The 5 percent cut was restored to CDVSA sub-grantees through the efforts of OMB providing CARES Act Funding to the Alaska Community Foundation to make each CDVSA grantee "whole" for FY 2022 and represents approximately \$1M.

The reduction in federal VOCA funding created a shift in how federal and state funding was allocated for FY 2022.

<u>FY 21-23 Grant Funding</u> (all grant types funding source)	<u>SFY 2021</u>	<u>SFY 2022</u>	<u>Projected FY 2023</u>
General Fund	\$8,902,662	\$8,842,500	\$8,900,000
Designated GF	\$1,411,628	\$1,426,330	\$1,468,808
I/A Receipts	\$ 173,583	\$ 173,583	\$ 173,583
Federal VOCA	\$9,944,303	\$3,434,839	\$3,400,000
Federal FVPSA	\$ 732,590	\$ 705,050	\$ 925,000
Federal SASP	\$ 378,049	\$ 406,054	\$ 400,000
Federal VAWA	\$ 266,924	\$ 241,522	\$ 250,000
ARPA	0	\$5,130,070	\$2,869,930
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,809,739</b>	<b>\$20,359,948</b>	<b>\$18,387,321</b>

Diane Casto reported that if the intent is to maintain funding at SFY 21 levels, CDVSA will have a funding gap of approximately \$3,422,418. Filling this gap with other funding will allow CDVSA to maintain the current funding levels for Victim/Enhanced Services, Prevention, and Perpetrator Rehabilitation Services but with no increases to expand and enhance current DV/SA programming.

Diane Casto reported that what the VOCA Fix legislation does provide for CDVSA and the community-based grant programs is stability and sustainability in what funding levels could be expected in the future. With the change in how funds will be deposited into the Crime Victims Fund (CVF), which funds VOCA Grants, it is expected that the funds will be more stable and sustainable over time; however, it does not expect the fund to grow exponentially over time. They anticipate future allocations to be consistent and comparable to the FFY 17 or FFY 20 award amounts, around \$4.0 million. Until the CVF begins receiving new deposits from additional sources, the long-term expectation is unknown.

Diane Casto reported that another reality is that while Victim Service and Enhanced Services Grants have grown over the last four years, funding for the other two programs that constitute the comprehensive services approach to ending domestic and sexual violence has remained stagnant over five years. Funding for prevention initiatives and services to address the causes of violence perpetrated by abusive partners (Battering Intervention Programs) is necessary to reduce and eliminate domestic and sexual violence in Alaska.

#### Additional Factors Affecting FY 23 Funding:

- The following mitigating/aggravating factors may impact CDVSA's budget needs for FY 23:
  - Senator Murkowski's proposed \$5.0 million in bridge funding to assist CDVSA to fill the gap in VOCA funding until the VOCA Fix legislation stabilizes funding
  - Congressional action to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and discussion related to a significant increase in available funding

- Increased FVPSA funding received through ARPA and allocated to all state agencies and coalitions currently receiving FVPSA formula grant funds
- Increased VOCA and VAWA Tribal set-aside funding and its impact on statewide DV/SA funding needs
- CDVSA's current Victim Service and Enhanced Services funding period ends with FY 22; a new competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued in spring of 2022. The award period will cover SFY 2023-SFY 2026. Additional proposals may be submitted requesting new funding, and current sub-grantees may request additional funds to meet the ongoing needs. The potential need for funding for a new grant award period is unknown at this time.

Diane Casto shared that Alaska does not have a comprehensive outline and assessment of the items indicated above. Realistically, this type of full-spectrum assessment will require considerable time and commitment and cannot be done before developing the FY 2023 budget scenarios. These critical issues can be addressed and investigated in the next year, providing a more grounded and broad assessment of future DV/SA needs for Alaska, both services and funding.

The board had a brief discussion about prevention, how prevention efforts are currently being made, and the potential to think outside the box to further the reach and involve more communities and community members.

Diane Casto noted that the Council would not do a complete needs assessment before FY 23. She reported that the four-year STOP Plan includes collecting information about needs and data, but the Council needs to work on a more complete needs and funding assessment. She believes the needs assessment is something that ANDVSA and the Council can work together on and bring in other partners that can assist.

Diane Casto shifted the discussion to plans for filling the FY 23 gap. She reported that as the Council moves forward, it is vital to identify current and future DV/SA funding needs from a broad statewide perspective. Issues that need to be considered and addressed are:

- CDVSA is the designated recipient of a significant amount of funding, including four federal DV/SA formula grants from DOJ and DHHS, available to each state based on population. CDVSA receives a stable source of state general fund dollars that have remained unchanged for the past five years.
- Filling the FY 23 funding gap with temporary federal emergency funds only, such as ARPA, will leave CDVSA with a continuing funding gap moving beyond FY 2023.
- It is essential to carefully assess Alaska's broad DV/SA needs to determine the right amount of funding to provide a full continuum of services including prevention, victim services, and accountability/healing for abusive partners. This assessment should identify gaps in DV/SA programming and areas of service needs that are not being adequately met, such as transitional housing for victims,

human/sex trafficking, services for children impacted by domestic violence, and missing and murdered indigenous women and girls as examples.

- An assessment must look at funding and regional access to services, how and what funding can be leveraged and coordinated to meet Alaska's needs better, and what role other state agencies should fill in terms of funding, programming, and services to help meet these needs.

Diane Casto reported that the Council requested additional funding for CDVSA from general fund dollars or additional ARPA funding of \$3.4M to keep at status quo. They also asked for approximately \$1M additional marijuana tax money for the prevention programming to fully fund the existing 13 prevention programs and increase the media and communication messaging. She noted that there is no guarantee for the approval of the request. Diane said the Council was told that the OMB had approved two new program coordinator positions at CDVSA for FY 23, one of them specifically to work with the BIP programs.

Diane Casto reminded the board members that in the spring of 2022, the Council will announce a competitive RFP for victim service programs and enhanced services. They expect to get applications beyond the Council-funded programs, which means additional funding could be needed. Diane encouraged the board to review the report and start thinking about the mitigating and contributing factors to help the Council move forward.

### **CDVSA VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN'S ACT (VAWA) STOP FORMULA GRANT**

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the documents titled *STOP Purpose Areas, Four-Year STOP Plan Final*, the *Alaska 2017-2020 STOP Implementation Plan*, and *The VAWA STOP State Plan Overview Due April 2022*. Ann Rausch and Karrah Ardnt joined the meeting, and Ann offered the Council members an overview of the VAWA STOP State Plan, highlighting the following information:

- The STOP Formula Grants Program is the primary source of Violence Against Women Act funding addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking for states and territories. (Address services for survivors who are 11 years of age or older and provides some support services for children whose parents have been victimized).
- STOP Grants are intended to improve and enhance victim services and perpetrator accountability by providing supports to law enforcement, prosecution, courts, and victim service organizations. (Victim-centered responses within institutions that are trauma-informed).
- The purpose of the STOP Formula Grants Program is to assist states; state and local courts, including juvenile courts; Indian tribal governments and tribal courts; and units of local government to:
  - Develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women
  - Develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving violent crimes against women.

Ann Rausch reported there are annual reporting requirements and annual applications for the formula funds. All the sub-grantees submit a yearly report on their efforts to



CDVSA, and the state applies for the new grant. STOP administrators are asked every four years to work with stakeholders to develop a statewide plan to improve services and reduce forms of violence. CDVSA is beginning the process of revising the 2017 plan. The due date for the new plan is in March of 2022. The 2017 STOP Plan was developed in committee and includes stakeholders from state agencies and tribal governments, and specific to Alaska, the 229 individual federally recognized tribes were given an opportunity to share information, address concerns, and identify helpful practices as it pertains to response to domestic violence and sexual assault. Alaska's current plan was approved in the fall of 2017. Funding through STOP is distributed to organizations situated to provide statewide services including the State of Alaska, Department of Law, Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Court System, ANDVSA, Ketchikan Indian Community, and the Kenaitze Indian Tribe.

Ann Rausch reported that CDVSA reserves the allocated discretionary and administrative funds. Funded agencies train first responders statewide and implement projects to improve access to victim services and the criminal and civil justice system. The Council reserves 15 percent of the STOP funds for discretionary programming, including the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) work, training, and technical assistance. She shared that Alaska has historically funded statewide efforts in the four purpose areas of victim services, law enforcement, courts, and prosecutions. Historically funded agencies at a statewide level recognize that funding would give the best opportunity to change systems by funding those entities that work and create policy and practice statewide. In the past, the Council has had administrative support for that practice. Under this plan, the Council is hoping to seek that same type of administrative support.

#### Purpose areas:

- STOP Grants provide personnel, training, technical assistance, data collection, and other resources for the more widespread apprehension, prosecution, and adjudication of persons committing violent crimes against women. There are 20 purpose areas allowable under STOP.
- Training is clearly emphasized in each purpose area of Alaska's current plan.

#### Funding allocation:

State and territorial grantees are required to make awards in accordance with the following formula:

- At least 25 percent must be allocated for law enforcement
  - Provide services around training and support, policy development, discipline-specific and multidisciplinary training for law enforcement personnel and first-responders statewide including village public safety officers, village police officers, and tribal police officers to increase victim safety, enhance the overall quality of evidence collection and crime scene documentation through the use of technology, maintain coordinated training and outreach efforts, and implementation of law enforcement segments of the STOP Plan.
  - Supports AST's STOP Program coordinator position. The position's role is to coordinate training for law enforcement personnel to enhance AST

capacity to respond better and investigate crimes against individuals who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

- At least 25 percent must be allocated for prosecutors
  - Domestic violence and sexual assault training statewide for prosecutors and victim/witness coordinators.
  - The Department of Law Criminal Division also maintains the statewide victim witness program.
  - Planning and coordination of statewide conference to increase the knowledge and skills of approximately 100 prosecutors and 300 paralegals.
  - Support the attendance of prosecutors and paralegals at the biannual SART training held regionally.
  - A victim witness program coordinator is funded through the allocation to oversee the victim witness program.
- At least 30 percent must be allocated for victim services. Of this amount, 10 percent must be distributed to culturally specific community-based organizations; and at least 5 percent must be allocated to state and local courts (including juvenile courts)
  - Currently, 20 percent goes to ANDVSA to support their legal service program and legal training for community-based advocates statewide.
  - Training for components for legal advocates and attorneys includes workshops designed to build awareness and approved legal representation for all underserved populations, including traditionally underserved racial, cultural, or ethnic minorities, including Alaska Native tribal members, immigrants, individuals with disabilities, elders, teens, language minorities, LGBTQI, and domestic violence and sexual assault victims in geographically isolated rural and bush communities.
  - 10 percent goes to culturally specific programs to enhance regional efforts to improve system response. (Kenaitze Indian Tribe and Ketchikan Indian Community).
  - Currently, those funds serve to enhance and expand culturally-informed victim services, and both grantees are working to improve victim services through culturally-relevant, localized trainings and collaboration with law enforcement, shelter services, and other community-based providers.
  - 5 percent goes to support interpreter services in civil and criminal domestic violence and sexual assault proceedings such as ex parte orders, long-term orders of protection, and other forms of court proceedings. Due to COVID-19, the courts have been exploring online hearings and online opportunities for interpreters.
  - In addition, courts provide training to the judiciary on issues or topics related to domestic violence and sexual assault.

Ann Rausch reported that the federal government extended the state plan by one year due to COVID-19. She noted that the Council will use the 2017 approved statewide plan as a foundational template for the stakeholders to review and give feedback. She

shared the planning process and timeline with members and highlighted the following information:

- September:
  - Outreach to statutorily required stakeholders and drafting initial outreach materials for stakeholders. It is a requirement that all outreach efforts be thoroughly documented with signatures and dates of participation.
    - AK Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
    - Rape Prevention Education (RPE)
    - Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (FVPSA)
    - Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)
    - Current recipients/grantees
    - Alaska's 229 federally recognized tribes
    - Populations identified as underserved in Alaska
    - Survivors of interpersonal violence (IPV), domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- October:
  - Outreach and documentation to statutorily required stakeholders to continue.
  - Demographic information is updated.
  - Methods to identify underserved populations are identified and may include existing research/surveys:
    - CUBS, AVS, Public Safety, Uniform Crime Report (UCR), Department of Law, AST and court reports, CDVSA dashboard, research, and resources from additional stakeholders.
- November
  - Outreach and documentation to statutorily required stakeholders to continue.
  - Plan priorities and approaches are identified in each of the allocation categories.
  - Goals and objectives are updated in the existing plan.
- December
  - Begin drafting the updated plan.
- January:
  - Writing continues.
- February:
  - Draft is updated and posted online for public comment and distributed for stakeholder review.
- March:
  - The plan is finalized and submitted.

Ann Rausch shared that the STOP planning process is an opportunity for key stakeholders from a variety of disciplines to consider together how to serve victims best and hold offenders accountable. It is an opportunity for STOP administrators to learn from the collective expertise and experience of those in the jurisdiction whose work responds to the violence, coercion, and control perpetrated by offenders, including law enforcement, prosecutors, and courts. It will also include the CDVSA board of directors; advocates; attorneys who work with victims to help them achieve safety, autonomy, and

restoration; and representatives of all communities affected by the violence including survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Diane Casto stated that the plan is not for spending the funding per se, because the funding's allocation purposes are preset by VAWA STOP. What can change is other needs identified beyond what grantees are currently doing that could change the funding, but not the amount. It can also be a plan for things beyond the STOP Grant. It can help shape specific services within those percentage points and show the needs beyond the funding capacity but still needed in service delivery areas. It's not just looking at how to use the funds, but how to look at this area of service statewide and what the needs are.

Diane Casto stated that one of the key pieces of building the plan is input from stakeholders. The Council will be reaching out in the traditional ways. Staff wants to ensure that the board has a role to play in that the connections the board members have with systems and entities provide valuable opportunities to gather input. Diane noted that one of the biggest challenges of the last STOP planning was meeting the requirement of outreach to 229 tribes in the state. Staff recognized last time that sending a copy of the proposed plan to each tribe without context and relationships was not as meaningful as it could have been.

Ann Rausch offered to post information related to the purpose areas if members find that helpful. She encouraged members to reach out to the Council staff with any questions or comments about the STOP Plan planning process.

### **QUESTIONS AND CLOSING REMARKS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Teresa Lowe opened the floor for Council member questions or comments. A summary of the dialogue is as follows:

Laura Brooks commented that with regards to the needs assessment, DOC would like to be included in that planning. DOC has limited DV programming, and clearly DOC needs to be expanding where they provide programming. DV programming is currently being provided at Goose Creek, Point McKenzie, and Fairbanks Correctional Facility. DOC is working on adding DV programming into Palmer Correctional Center in the next few months.

Laura Brooks commented that with regards to the public comment on VINELink and the use of aliases and name changes, DOC has only recently been aware that this happens, and they are actively searching for a solution. Oddly enough, there's no state law requiring an offender, either an inmate in custody or someone out on probation or parole, to notify the state of any name change. While they are inmates, they can petition the courts and get their name changed, but the only time DOC finds out about it is if they want to be referred to by their new legal name. In addition, of all the things sex offenders must report to the state sex offender registry, a name change is not one of them. It's a concerning issue.

John Skidmore shared that the meeting takeaways for him included:

1. The comments made during the executive director's report regarding recruitment and retention are being felt across state government, not just in Alaska but throughout the country.
2. While recognizing the potential shortfalls in the VOCA funding, he is hopeful that things can be done to fill the gaps. While trying to get more funding directed towards prevention, the Council needs to make sure it's not done at the expense of the critical victim services in the state.
3. Applying for STOP funding is a big undertaking. Although it is somewhat formula driven, it's still worthwhile to gather the input from stakeholders and figure out how to allocate the funding best. He is looking forward to working with Brenda Stanfill at the Network.

Kami Moore commented that this was her first meeting as a board member and thanked CDVSA for the welcome. She looks forward to getting her bearings and contributing more at future meetings. Kami noted that she has a passion for prevention and hopes to help the Council think more strategically about connecting with schools and youth and building resources and supports.

Angela Garay asked if the STOP Grant includes training for corrections officers that work with DV victims in custody. Diane Casto noted that she thinks corrections officers can be included in the training under law enforcement.

Teresa Lowe remarked that it was a wonderful, information-packed meeting. She appreciated the board members for their input and the staff for their tireless work.

Ryon Turley shared his appreciation for the hard work and effort people put into the work.

The entire board expressed their appreciation to Diane Casto and the staff at CDVSA.

### **NEXT BOARD MEETING DATES**

Diane Casto reported that the next board meeting is the regular rural outreach meeting, and Ketchikan has been selected as the region chosen. They are opening a new shelter facility in October, and they would gladly host the board. The Council meeting is currently scheduled for December 9 - 10, 2021. Diane noticed the host in Ketchikan that the Council will play it by ear, but at this point, the Council will plan to go to Ketchikan in December. If travel is not advisable, the Council will move the rural outreach meeting to Quarter 3 and conduct the December meeting virtually. Council members agreed that that is a reasonable approach.

FY 2022, Quarter 2 – December 9 - 10, Ketchikan (rural outreach meeting)

FY 2022, Quarter 3 – March 2--tentative

FY 2022, Quarter 4 – June 16--tentative (approval of FY 24 funding recommendations)

### **ADJOURNMENT**

John Skidmore **MOVED** to adjourn, **SECONDED** by Angela Garay. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
& SEXUAL ASSAULT

HOST LOCATION:

State of Alaska Department of Public Safety  
Council on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault  
150 3rd St., Suite 201  
Juneau, AK 99801

PUBLIC COMMENT

Wednesday, September 15, 2021  
11:45 a.m.

ROUGH DRAFT TRANSCRIPT  
Pages 1 - 23, inclusive

Committee Members Present:

Teresa Lowe, Chair  
Lydia Heyward, Vice Chair  
Laura Brooks  
John Skidmore  
Kami Moore  
Angela Garay  
Ryon Turley

Transcribed by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 TERESA LOWE: Is there anyone on the  
3 line now that would like to make a comment? Deb  
4 O'Gara, okay. Hi, Deb.

5 DIANE CASTO: Hi, Deb.

6 DEBRA O'GARA: Hello. Thank you so much  
7 for -- can you hear me all right, Diane?

8 DIANE CASTO: Yes.

9 DEBRA O'GARA: Oh, good. Okay. You  
10 never know on these things.

11 DIANE CASTO: I know.

12 DEBRA O'GARA: My name is Debra O'Gara,  
13 I'm the senior policy specialist for the Alaska Native  
14 Women's Resource Center. And I think it's just  
15 perfect that public comment comes right after the  
16 Network's report, as well as the sort of update from  
17 Brenda, even though I'd like to know how you managed  
18 to get Brenda to start working before she's even  
19 officially transitioned into her new job. That was  
20 really good, Lauree.

21 So I just wanted to -- the only thing  
22 that I wanted to do was I had a couple of items to  
23 just briefly touch on.

24 First, we at the Alaska Native Women's  
25 Resource Center really take to heart our partnerships.

1 We are so thankful and take very seriously our  
2 partnerships with both the Council and with the  
3 Network and are really excited about Brenda coming on  
4 board. Certainly, we'll miss Carmen, but she was also  
5 very clear that she had other things that needed to be  
6 done. And I think that the Network has done a great  
7 job of finding somebody who can take the helm. And I  
8 look forward to Brenda, when you -- after October when  
9 you are finally onboard and working full time instead  
10 of just this quasi full-time thing that you're doing  
11 now.

12 I had an opportunity to meet Brenda as  
13 well as Teresa at the dialogue that Lauree mentioned  
14 that we just had this last summer in Anchorage. I  
15 think that was -- that dialogue with our organizations  
16 was so important, because I was able to see firsthand  
17 not just a dialogue where we were sharing our  
18 experiences and sharing information about what we were  
19 doing, but problems came up, and I actually saw  
20 firsthand how our minds coming together and all of our  
21 experience coming together to really be able to  
22 problem solve.

23 And so it made me think as I was leaving  
24 that meeting that we really need to have more frequent  
25 meetings like that, whether it's on Zoom or in person.



1 And luckily, we were -- it was one of our few meetings  
2 this last -- in the last six to nine months that we  
3 were able to have in person, so I was really happy --  
4 happy that we were able to do that. It was such a  
5 beautiful day in Anchorage that week.

6 The other thing that I wanted to mention  
7 was the renewal and revision of the statutes,  
8 regulations, and funding I think that the Council is  
9 going through, and I think that's really important.

10 I had a brief correspondence with Diane  
11 just asking some questions. I know that the renewal  
12 is coming up, I know that statutes are getting ready  
13 to expire and need to be revised or renewed, and we're  
14 very interested in just having an opportunity to look  
15 at those and be able to collaborate with you so that  
16 we can see what kind of changes are needed and how we  
17 can participate in helping get those changes in  
18 through the legislature or wherever they need to go at  
19 that point, because I think a strong Council is  
20 imperative.

21 And Diane, from your reports so far on  
22 both the executive director report as well as the  
23 budget report, there is so many organizations  
24 throughout that state that rely on the subgrants and  
25 the -- not just the money, but also the advocacy and

1 support that the Council provides, so I just want to  
2 thank you for that.

3 And thank you, Diane, for giving me the  
4 information about how to log on. I have to admit that  
5 I'm not the most savvy technical person there is, but  
6 I'm a really good researcher, and I was not able to  
7 find the information about the public meeting.

8 So hopefully I'm now on the mailing list  
9 and I can -- I will get that, which I did for today's  
10 meeting, as I am very interested in both sitting in  
11 and listening, as well as participating as I can in  
12 the board meetings as they come up.

13 So thank you all for all of your hard  
14 work, and let us know how we might be able to help  
15 you. Thanks.

16 TERESA LOWE: Thank you so much, Deb.  
17 It's so good to see you again. I was like, Deb  
18 O'Gara, I'm like, how do I know that name? And I was  
19 like, oh, yes, Deb. Thank you so much for coming on  
20 and sharing your thoughts. I appreciate it.

21 DEBRA O'GARA: Absolutely. Nice to see  
22 you, Teresa.

23 TERESA LOWE: Is there anyone else that  
24 would like to provide public comment at this point?

25 ANGIE WELLS: I did send you an e-mail,

1 Teresa.

2 TERESA LOWE: Let me get -- let me check  
3 my e-mail.

4 DIANE CASTO: Rae Romberg would like to  
5 provide public comment.

6 TERESA LOWE: Okay. Let's go ahead and  
7 go with --

8 MILAN PAQUETTE: Milan Paquette would  
9 like to make public comment.

10 DIANE CASTO: Okay. We'll start with  
11 Rae and then Milan.

12 TERESA LOWE: Yes.

13 MILAN PAQUETTE: Thank you.

14 RAE ROMBERG: Great. Thank you. Hi  
15 everyone, this is Rae again, the prevention director  
16 at ANDVSA. And for those of you that have been on the  
17 Council for a while, you know I tend to jump in here  
18 to provide a little bit of public comment.

19 I really appreciate your role on the  
20 Council, everything you do is so appreciated. And  
21 also to the Council staff with whom we have the  
22 opportunity to work very closely.

23 I was so grateful to hear Brenda  
24 acknowledging her growth in the understanding of  
25 prevention. I know at IAC she has overseen an

1       impressive growth of their prevention department and  
2       work, and so we're very excited to have her on board  
3       here at ANDVSA, particularly with her perspective both  
4       as an advocate for prevention and for strong  
5       intervention services, as well.

6               We have a similar advocate in Ann Rausch  
7       at the Council. She is our closest contact in the  
8       prevention department at the Network, so we work very  
9       closely together. She is a member of the Pathways  
10      Committee, and I just appreciate that, her advocacy  
11      for prevention. She's been a tireless advocate for  
12      us.

13             And it also made me think of something  
14      that Brenda opened with around the issue of oppression  
15      and how it is so closely related to the work we do. I  
16      also wanted to really acknowledge Ann, Diane, and the  
17      Council for their inclusion of an equity, cultural  
18      responsiveness, and inclusion requirement in the new  
19      prevention grants that were recently awarded.

20             The Network here for the past -- for  
21      about a year, we hosted what was at first a weekly  
22      call and then turned into a monthly call called  
23      Antiracism and the Root Causes of Violence, because  
24      our member programs were so actively addressing those  
25      issues in their communities and wondering how to do

1 so. And so we held just a very casual space where we  
2 were able to talk about these things. We were very  
3 excited to help member programs be responsive to the  
4 Council's requirement for equity to be considered in  
5 prevention work. We absolutely think that it is a  
6 core part of actually ending violence in the state.

7 As Brenda said, violence happens to  
8 anyone and everyone, but we also know that certain  
9 populations are disproportionately affected. And  
10 there's a lot of wisdom in populations dealing with a  
11 lot of violence about the reasons behind some of that  
12 violence, which go beyond power and control and go  
13 beyond needing just perpetrator accountability for the  
14 individual, but about support and healing for the  
15 whole community.

16 So I just so appreciate the Council's  
17 efforts in being responsive to these challenging times  
18 and appreciate the opportunity to work in prevention  
19 with such strong partners.

20 The last thing I'll say is that I think  
21 in referencing Brenda's growth in the area of  
22 prevention, I have been part of a field, the violence  
23 prevention field that it has made prevention more  
24 complicated than it might need to be. I'd like to  
25 just leave with advocating for the message that

1 prevention is actually so simple. It is not easy, but  
2 it is simple.

3 There's an amazing quote from the  
4 Qungasvik toolkit, which is for suicide prevention,  
5 where this quote from an elder that says, "I know what  
6 this prevention is, it is what my parents gave me when  
7 I was growing up. They gave me yuuyaraq, which is  
8 everything I needed to live a good life."

9 And if you aren't familiar with that  
10 toolkit, I encourage you to look for it, and for all  
11 of us to remember it's about supporting people and  
12 working to create stronger, healthier communities  
13 across efforts. And I see that happening with you all  
14 so much, so I appreciate it. Thank you.

15 TERESA LOWE: Thank you so much, Rae. I  
16 appreciate your comments. I'm always so happy that we  
17 have people who share their thoughts and their  
18 comments on the work that we do, because it's -- the  
19 work we do as the Council is for everyone in the  
20 state. So I'm so thankful that you took time out of  
21 your schedule to share your thought with us.

22 And next we have Milan. Are you on the  
23 line?

24 MILAN PAQUETTE: Yes. Can you hear me  
25 okay?

1                   TERESA LOWE: Yes. Yes, we can. So the  
2 floor is yours.

3                   MILAN PAQUETTE: Thank you very much.  
4 My name is Milan Paquette, I am a life-long Alaskan.  
5 I am here in Southcentral Alaska on the Kenai  
6 Peninsula. I, immediately after high school, went to  
7 college, after a Master of Arts, served Child  
8 Protection Services for several years, and have  
9 continued to serve in civil support and advocacy  
10 roles, counselor, and things like that.

11                   Currently, I'm not serving as a  
12 counselor or anything, primarily for anti-fraud issues  
13 to be brought forth, as well as accountability in the  
14 missing, and promote victim rights resources too at my  
15 booth once a week.

16                   I wanted to share with you guys a couple  
17 of what I think to be loopholes in domestic violence  
18 cases. And this is just from personal experience,  
19 this is not from any work that I've done. I just want  
20 to share this personally.

21                   I've had a sibling that has cycled  
22 through the justice system, including childhood, who  
23 is currently on parole three decades after efforts to  
24 mitigate some of the horrors that I've witnessed. And  
25 what I found out is the offender, in his most recent

1     arrest, was arrested under his legal name, and at some  
2     point during his incarceration and conviction, he  
3     changed his name, and so probation and parole has a  
4     new name for him.

5                 So probation and parole have him on  
6     VINELink under this new name, meanwhile Court View  
7     doesn't show anywhere in there this new name with this  
8     new conviction. There was a child custody case open.  
9     That individual had the wherewithal to add the alias.

10                When somebody goes to VINELink to look  
11    up the offender under his current name and his current  
12    conviction, you will not find him on VINELink. If you  
13    don't know what his new name is, you will not find him  
14    on VINELink.

15                This is a huge loophole in the  
16    notification procedures in mitigating ongoing  
17    victimization of domestic violence survivors in  
18    Alaska.

19                It seems to me that the probation and  
20    parole section feel it's not their job to notify the  
21    courts of this illusion that has been created, an  
22    illusion that the offender is convicted, yet you can't  
23    find them on VINELink. So you have to sign up, and  
24    VINELink has a new name, right? But there's no  
25    guarantee when he's released he's going to continue to



1 use his legal name. It's just weird. It's a very  
2 bizarre loophole. I guarantee you there's multiple  
3 offenders in our state doing this.

4 This individual that I'm speaking of has  
5 done this before, and the only reason I knew to ask if  
6 there was a name change is because I've heard it  
7 occurring in the past.

8 This is a conviction now of what I  
9 believe to be the fifth victim, and now we have a new  
10 name which looks like he has no victims, you know.

11 Another sibling, quite horrific, two  
12 decades, domestic violence, substance abuse reporting  
13 as a sibling witnessing, speaking up, falling on deaf  
14 ears with the Office of Children's Services. All the  
15 way around and around and around, domestic violence  
16 restraining orders, all of this.

17 He goes to plead out, and he shows me --  
18 has anybody seen the ASAP release of information  
19 recently? This is another loophole. I believe that  
20 is enabling offenders to get away with it,  
21 debilitating the communication, the necessity of  
22 communication in child safety issues. Because on that  
23 ASAP release, nowhere in there do you see Office of  
24 Children's Services, not even a blank for other for  
25 them to specify Office of Children's Services. ASAP

1 is overwhelmed beyond belief.

2 We need our infrastructure to be  
3 communicating effectively to mitigate domestic  
4 violence and the victimization of children in the  
5 state.

6 To me, there are two macro concepts that  
7 could turn the river in these loopholes. One, add  
8 Office of Children's Services to the ASAP release.  
9 Get with them, look at your memorandum of agreements,  
10 whatever it is, look at the form, because it's  
11 insufficient.

12 So now you have somebody who pled out,  
13 new case, was on the ankle monitor, cycled through  
14 drinking, re-arrest, drinking, re-arrest, drinking,  
15 re-arrest, finally just pled out, because guess what?  
16 He wants to drink, he doesn't want to have to go back  
17 to jail. But now agreeing on this ASAP thing, with no  
18 release of information with vulnerable children in  
19 both of the sibling dynamics. I think it's a hugely  
20 poor macro-concept where we are not meeting the needs  
21 of the public.

22 And one of them, again, originally is  
23 the Court View alias function, and why is probation  
24 and parole acting like it's not an issue for them to  
25 address regarding their caseload when they have

1 somebody on an alias on parole? It looks like he's on  
2 parole for a child custody case that he's not, he's on  
3 parole for breaking somebody's (indiscernible), a  
4 violent offender.

5 So there's a huge disconnect between  
6 VINELink, Department of Corrections, and Court View  
7 regarding the alias function. There's a huge loophole  
8 again, in the ASAP lack of contributing as far as  
9 Office of Children's Services.

10 I really would like to see, you know,  
11 improved actions in these areas. And I know the  
12 courts are hiring court case managers. They've got  
13 blank vacancies all over there.

14 But I've been bringing this alias  
15 function thing up a lot. One of the reasons is  
16 because of my personal frustration with how Court View  
17 added a false alias. Did you know that a process  
18 server can serve somebody with a made up name, and  
19 that individual doesn't even have to be present when  
20 their spouse signs for the service, then Court View  
21 goes ahead and assigns made up names? So I'm looking  
22 at a victimized individual, and then I'm looking at  
23 how the inaccuracy are enabling offenders in our  
24 state.

25 Now, when I am dealing with a simple

1 civil issue, acknowledging in court this is not how my  
2 name is spelled, no results ever achieved, even to  
3 this day. So now it's on my credit report. But what  
4 is the deal with these aliases? Are they checking  
5 somewhere? Because they really aren't, and I'm really  
6 concerned about the integrity of that database.

7 TERESA LOWE: I agree, Ms. Paquette.

8 MILAN PAQUETTE: Yeah, (indiscernible)  
9 out there.

10 TERESA LOWE: You know, I'm very  
11 thankful that you were able to call in and give us  
12 this feedback, because I really -- you know, I really  
13 had no idea that the alias thing was an issue. It's  
14 certainly, you know, not necessarily something within  
15 CDVSA's capability at this point, but definitely these  
16 are very good important points for all of us to  
17 consider, because we do work with multiple different  
18 areas in the state.

19 So I'm really glad that you were able to  
20 call in and give us this information, because  
21 otherwise, you know we wouldn't have any idea. So I  
22 appreciate your time.

23 MILAN PAQUETTE: It's VINELink. It's  
24 VINELink. That is a resource that we are all  
25 depending on as advocates.

1                   TERESA LOWE:   So, I appreciate that.  
2   Thank you very much.

3                   MILAN PAQUETTE:   So essentially, it's --  
4   who's duty -- who's duty is it?  Is it the probation  
5   officer's duty to add the alias?  Is it the Court  
6   View?  Or do they all just throw their hands up, it's  
7   not their job?

8                   TERESA LOWE:   So we've got about --  
9   we've got a little under ten minutes left for anyone  
10   else that may want to make public comment.  Is there  
11   anyone else on the line that would like to provide  
12   public comment?

13                  BRENDA STANFILL:   Teresa, if you have  
14   just a minute, I'd love to talk about what's happening  
15   with the programs right now, at least through IAC.

16                  TERESA LOWE:   Sure.  You have the floor.

17                  BRENDA STANFILL:   Perfect.

18                  TERESA LOWE:   So we do have until about  
19   12:15, and then we can take the rest in written if you  
20   have additional thoughts.

21                  BRENDA STANFILL:   Perfect.  I can do  
22   fine.

23                         You know, one of the things that we have  
24   going on right now is a very difficult time in our  
25   programs through the eyes the IAC executive director

1 has at this point in time.

2 We've been going through this pandemic  
3 now for more months than we can possibly count. And I  
4 think when we first started out we thought, okay, how  
5 do we do this and how do we navigate this? And we put  
6 things in place, and then things changed, and we  
7 changed what we had in place, and then we put it back.

8 And it's -- we're experiencing a lot of  
9 things, but one of the biggest things we're  
10 experiencing is having challenges finding staffing.  
11 I'm speaking specifically for Fairbanks, but I would  
12 venture to guess that probably most programs are  
13 having this difficulty.

14 One of the things that we just had to do  
15 is increase the hourly rate that we pay by \$3 an hour.  
16 And I know that sounds like, whoa, but here's the  
17 thing is that we were starting people at 17.60 an hour  
18 to work shift work to deal in a residential program  
19 with COVID, and they could go work stocking shelves at  
20 Walmart for 20.

21 So we are competing right now in a very  
22 difficult situation where fast foods have raised their  
23 rates to \$15 an hour. There's just a lot of things  
24 that are happening in our community, and we're no  
25 longer able to attract staff for what we were

1 currently offering.

2 It has helped some, raising that rate,  
3 but it also makes it where we are having to figure out  
4 how are we going to sustain that. What are we going  
5 to do, and what does that look like budget-wise? And  
6 does that mean that we have to cut services somewhere  
7 if we don't have enough staffing? Do we have to  
8 decrease the amount of shelter beds that we are able  
9 to allow people to access a night where we can make  
10 sure that we're safe? Do we not respond to a SART  
11 call because we have nobody who could come on call?  
12 Our on-call is done by the people who are at the  
13 shelter and working, so they've already been maybe  
14 working a shift, and then that night they are on call,  
15 and then they end up going out again.

16 It's been very, very hard for staff.  
17 It's very hard that there is such division in  
18 vaccinated or not vaccinated, wearing a mask or not  
19 wearing a mask, how that impacts our clients that are  
20 residents that are there in the shelter.

21 For some who maybe have been --  
22 experienced strangulation or trauma, a mask can be  
23 very triggering, and so they really feel like they are  
24 dying when they put it on. And it's not like, "Oh, I  
25 just don't want to wear a mask," it really is a

1 physical response they have. How do we make sure we  
2 meet their needs while at the same time protecting the  
3 rest of the staff?

4 It's been incredibly challenging for our  
5 team. They've done an amazing job. I just couldn't  
6 ask for it better. We had a local philanthropist who  
7 helped us build our building, the other day who walked  
8 in with a card and a \$100 bill for every person who's  
9 been showing up. And you know, that must have meant  
10 so much to them that people were recognizing that this  
11 has been hard.

12 When people talk about, you know, not  
13 having to quarantine and having to isolate and not  
14 being able to go to work, not one day did our staff  
15 stop coming to work, not one day did they stay home.  
16 They have kept showing up the whole time, and we just  
17 can't say enough about the people and the dedication  
18 out here on the field.

19 And so one of the things we are  
20 definitely challenged by are some of the deadlines.  
21 We're working in the same thing that I heard Diane  
22 talking about in the how do we get this all done with  
23 short staffing and administration who maybe ends up  
24 doing some direct services because we don't have  
25 enough people to do direct services. And that's where



1 the focus has to be when we're on the ground doing it.

2 So we're definitely looking for ways to  
3 streamline, and asking for people's understanding and  
4 patience as we go through this. And definitely as a  
5 funder, we would ask you for your understanding and  
6 patience that, you know, everyone is just working and  
7 doing as much as they possibly can. But sometimes  
8 it's just -- it's not quite what it would have been  
9 when we were not dealing with a pandemic.

10 So the issues have not decreased. Our  
11 shelter populations have decreased, but our outside  
12 clients have increased, and I think a lot of that is  
13 people are nervous about checking into a community  
14 setting. But violence is still going on, and they are  
15 looking for other options. "Can I get directly from  
16 my home I'm in now to a different home?" "How can  
17 I -- can I get a restraining order to get him out?"

18 And then, of course, the courts have not  
19 necessarily been so accessible, and so it -- when you  
20 are dealing with child custody things that have been  
21 delayed and delayed and delayed. That's already about  
22 a two-year process, and now sometimes we can't get  
23 them into court. We have some people who maybe have  
24 had a criminal charge against them, and while  
25 oftentimes people who are being victimized, they can

1 resort to using resistive or reactive violence that is  
2 not necessarily tied in with the event, so sometimes  
3 they are being charged with the violence that we know  
4 when we look at their history it's about something  
5 different, but they do have to go through the criminal  
6 process. And then during that time, oftentimes the  
7 barrier crimes kick in and they are losing their job  
8 as a bus driver. So just lots and lots of different  
9 things that we are dealing with.

10 And we thank the Council for recognizing  
11 that and being willing to work with all the of the  
12 programs on where we're at. And just, you know, if  
13 you have an opportunity to go into your local  
14 shelter -- I know we're from all over the place -- or  
15 at least send them a little card and tell them how  
16 much you appreciate that their staff is still showing  
17 up, it really does make such a difference.

18 So, thank you. I just wanted to make  
19 sure we put that in there since I'm not sure if I see  
20 any other programs on today.

21 TERESA LOWE: Thank you so much, Brenda.  
22 I really appreciate your input and your point of view,  
23 because it is really -- the board has such a big  
24 overview, that's a really good reminder, you know, to  
25 remember that, you know, there's so many, so many

1 other additional challenges that all of you guys --  
2 all of you guys have in addition to everything else.

3 So, thank you. Thank you so much for  
4 sharing your experience and sharing your staff's  
5 experience with us. And we do appreciate all of the  
6 hard work that everybody puts in day in and day out,  
7 we really do.

8 So I think that that brings us up to --  
9 is there anyone else, Diane, that you can see that  
10 might want to make a public comment for the last  
11 couple of minutes?

12 DIANE CASTO: I do not. Let me just do  
13 a quick look here.

14 TERESA LOWE: Yeah, I kind of looked  
15 too, but I just want to see if there's anything else  
16 that you can see.

17 DIANE CASTO: No, I think that's it.  
18 Let me do remind everyone, if you want to make a  
19 written comment, you can go onto the online public  
20 notice. Angie just did a little experiment, and it  
21 worked.

22 So at the bottom, there's a -- it says  
23 leave a comment, you click on that, and there's a  
24 space to type in your comment. So give it shot, give  
25 it a try.

1                   TERESA LOWE:   Excellent.   So we will  
2   take a break for lunch, and we will reconvene in about  
3   in hour, at 1:15.

4                   (End of public testimony)

5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25