

**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 Street, Suite 201  
Juneau, AK 99801

**Quarterly Council Board Meeting - Virtual  
FY 2023 Quarter 3  
March 31, 2023**

**Board Members Present:**

Angela Garay, Chair  
Lydia Heyward  
Ryon Turley  
Mariah Seater  
Laurel Shoop  
Steve Williams  
Commissioner Jennifer Winkelman  
Deputy Attorney General John Skidmore  
Deputy Commissioner Bryan Barlow

**Guest Presenters:**

Brenda Stanfill, ANDVSA  
Chris Edmonds, Vela  
Pravin Bhandari, Vela  
Katie Hughes, Vela

**Guests:**

Rowena Palomar  
Suzi Pearson  
Brynn Butler  
Kara Carlson  
Cheri Smith  
Marsha Oss

**Staff:**

Diane Casto, Executive Director  
Ann Rausch  
Catherine Mohn  
Chris Hardin  
Ella Nierra  
Kay Riley  
Marybeth Gagnon  
Morgan Stonecipher

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

### **CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL**

Angela Garay called the meeting to order at 8:57 a.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

### **AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Jennifer Winkelman **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented, **SECONDED** by John Skidmore. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

### **CONFLICT INQUIRY**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND CDVSA STAFF**

Angela Garay welcomed attendees to the meeting and opened the floor for introductions. Diane Casto introduced Department of Corrections (DOC) Commissioner Jennifer Winkelman. Board members took a moment to introduce themselves and shared whom they represent. Diane introduced the CDVSA staff.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Angela Garay directed the members' attention to the draft December 2022 meeting minutes. Steve Williams **MOVED** to approve the FY 23 Quarter 2 meeting minutes, **SECONDED** by Lydia Heyward. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

### **OVERVIEW OF AGENDA**

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the agenda and noted that during the last legislative session, CDVSA gained two new board positions: a designee of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and a designee representing an Alaska tribe or tribal organization, preferably rural. Diane reported that CDVSA is experiencing challenges filling the tribal seat due to the eligibility guidelines for CDVSA board members that say the individual cannot work for an organization that provides services to the population CDVSA funds. She encouraged board members to forward names of potential applicants that fit the board member criteria.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT, January – March 2023**

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

#### **Staffing and Personnel:**

- Currently, CDVSA has nine full-time staff members.
- The Council solicited for the new position it received in the FY 23 budget for a program coordinator II to lead and direct the perpetrator rehabilitation programming. The position was offered to and accepted by Lisa Morley. Lisa will begin work on April 10, 2023.
- The Council is currently recruiting for an administrative officer II. As of March 28<sup>th</sup>, the Council has received three applications.

Diane Casto shared that Ann Rausch is retiring on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The position is being updated, and the Council plans to begin recruitment at the end of April. Ann joined the Council in September of 2008 and has been a great asset to CDVSA. Diane

expressed the Council's appreciation to Ann for her years of dedication, passion, and focus on prevention.

#### CDVSA Funding Challenges:

Diane Casto reported that there are many unknowns and possible new budget scenarios for what the Council's SFY 2024 budget will look like. The budget presented by Governor Dunleavy included three increments for CDVSA:

- \$3,000,000 one-time-increment for DVSA Victim Services Grants Support (continuing replacement of federal VOCA funds)
- \$1,200,000 to increase and enhance community-based prevention and abusive partner intervention program activities
- \$420,000 to align authority with the statutory distribution of the balance in the Restorative Justice Account.

Diane Casto reported that with regard to the federal VOCA funding, it is now clear that it will not be as robust as it has been in the past, and the need for additional state general fund dollars is more critical than ever. The Council received notification of its FFY 23 VOCA award. She shared that the FFY 22 award was \$3,573,803, and the FFY 23 award will be \$3,381,187, a difference of \$192,616. The Council has been told that the VOCA Crime Victims Fund (CVF) is at its lowest level, and the expectation is that FFY 24 and FFY 25 will be less stable than FFY 23. A stable funding level of around \$3M or less appears to be a new reality. She noted that the board will need to keep monitoring available state and federal funding for ongoing services recognizing that the Council's funding levels may continue to dip without additional stable funding.

#### **CDVSA Priority Projects Updates**

##### Updating CDVSA Victim Services Regulations

- On January 25, 2023, after a multi-year process, CDVSA public noticed regulation changes to Title 13 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with domestic violence and sexual assault program standards and grant programs.
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program Standards and the CDVSA Grant Programs were updated and revised to reflect changes to federal and state regulations, requirements, and processes. The proposed new language was publicly noticed for 35 days, closing at 5:00 p.m. on February 28, 2023. Sixteen unduplicated agencies submitted comments focused on 19 separate areas of the draft regulations and were received by the indicated deadline.
- The next steps include the following:
  - Review and consider all comments.
  - Staff recommendations for each regulation subject to comment.
  - Call a special board meeting to review and consider staff recommendations.
  - If changes are agreed upon, CDVSA may need to issue a supplemental public notice and may reopen public comment (only if changes are significant).
  - Once finalized by CDVSA, the Department of Law (DOL) will complete a final legal review and approval.
  - Once approved by DOL, regulations will be submitted to the lieutenant governor.

- Once approved by the lieutenant governor, regulations will be adopted by a vote of the CDVSA board, and final regulations will be filed with the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.
- A summary of the final adopted regulations will be posted at Online Public Notices.

#### Two Current RFPs Available for FY 24 – 26 Grant Funding

Diane Casto reported that CDVSA released two competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) for a three-year funding cycle, SFY 24 through SFY 26 as follows:

1. Enhanced Services for Victims of Crime Grant Program. The grant is available to provide funding to community, municipal, or tribal organizations to provide services to enhance existing services in three specific areas:
  - Legal assistance services for victims of crime.
  - Mental health counseling for children/youth (through 18 years of age) who are direct victims of abuse or have witnessed a violent crime.
  - Child Advocacy Center (CAC) services to serve child/youth victims of sexual or physical abuse.
    - The RFP was released on February 21, 2023, with applications due to CDVSA by April 3, 2023.
2. The Community-Based Victim Services Grant Program is to provide immediate safety and support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their dependent children in life-threatening situations and to strengthen local community responses to these and other crimes.
  - Community-based victim services are funded using multiple state and federal funding streams. Most expenditures are allowable, including personnel, travel, facility rental, services, commodities, equipment, and other needs to provide comprehensive direct victim services.
    - The Community-Based Victim Services RFP was released on March 6, 2023, with applications due to CDVSA by April 18, 2023.

Diane Casto reported that the Council will hold one Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) meeting for the enhanced services applications on April 20 – 21, 2023, and two PEC meetings for victim services applications on May 9 – 10, 2023 and May 11 – 12, 2023. Diane expressed appreciation to the nine individuals from different departments and disciplines and Council board members who agreed to serve on these three PECs as follows:

- Lydia Heyward and Blaze Bell (CDVSA board)
- Brandy Coltellaro, Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
- Michael Ramsay, Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Tony Piper and Amanda Woody, Division of Behavioral Health (DBH)
- Jennifer Summer, Alaska Native Tribal Health Corporation (ANTHC)
- Kami Moore, Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)
- Jennifer Weissaupt, Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB)

#### Legislative Session

Diane Casto outlined a limited list of bills introduced in the legislative process:

- HB 11 – An act establishing the crime of assault in the presence of a child (Rep. Josephson)

- SB 12 – An act relating to creating an Address Confidentiality Program (Sen. Kiehl)
- SB 28 – An act relating to workplace violence protective orders (Sen. Claman)
- HB 67/SB 65 – An act relating to domestic violence/sex offenses (Governor)
- HB 68/SB 66 – An act relating to sex and human trafficking (Governor)
- HB 116 – An act relating to appropriations from the restorative justice account (Reps. Coulombe/Himschoot)
- HB 119 – An act relating to marijuana taxes (currently funding CDVSA Prevention) (House Rules Committee)

Diane Casto reported that HB 68/SB 66, HB 116, and HB 119 have a direct impact on the Council as follows:

- HB 68 (Sections 30-35) includes adding sex trafficking to CDVSA statutes and the Council's work on domestic violence and sexual assault.
- HB 116 and HB 119 both include redefining funding allocations from two specific accounts, the Restorative Justice Account and the Marijuana Tax Fund. Currently, CDVSA receives funding from both accounts. Each bill will redefine what allocation CDVSA will receive in the future.

#### Improving Services for Those Who Cause Harm

Diane Casto reported that the work of the Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup has ended, and with the hiring of Lisa Morley, the internal CDVSA work will begin to implement the identified changes, work with DOC to update related regulations, and establish a new process for agencies to apply to become a state-approved perpetrator rehabilitation program. The initial steps of the process will follow the considerations presented by the Perpetrator Rehabilitation (PR) Workgroup concept paper and the summary from the Stakeholder Interview Project: Examining the State's Response to Domestic Violence.

Diane Casto reported that one of the projects the Council is working on with the UAA School of Social Work relates to the issue that behavioral health providers do not have a full understanding of the myriad of dynamics that constitute the control, power, and coercive behavior prevalent in cases of domestic violence. The Council plans to assist with the need for an improved understanding of domestic violence among behavioral health providers. The UAA team is preparing to develop a DV training curriculum specifically for individuals working and trained in behavioral health. Diane stated that the first step is holding a series of meetings with providers across the state to hear directly from domestic violence providers, behavioral health providers, and tribal partners about what is needed and where the gaps exist. Several meetings have already been held and will continue for the next month. Once these stakeholder meetings have concluded, the UAA team will begin developing a draft curriculum that will be tested and piloted before finalizing. Once this curriculum is complete, it will become a requirement for all providers who apply to become a state-approved abusive partners program.

Diane Casto reported that the Council is sponsoring an upcoming Victims' Rights & Restorative Justice Symposium scheduled for April 27 – 29, 2023 in Anchorage. More information can be found on the Council's website.

### Communications, Outreach, and Media

- The FY2022 Annual Report was completed in early February and posted electronically on the Council's website. The Council authorized a small run of print copies of the FY22 Annual Report and sent them to select partners, including copies to Governor Dunleavy, Lieutenant Governor Dahlstrom, Senate President Stevens, and House Speaker Tilton.
- Contractor Walsh/Sheppard continues to do an excellent job creating a well-designed annual report, refreshing existing media messages, and creating new messages for use throughout the year. February was Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month in Alaska and nationally. Throughout the month, the Council ran a series of media messages regarding all forms of domestic and sexual violence in teen relationships. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and social media ads will run throughout the month.

Diane Casto added that having a regular presence on social media, radio, and television is the Council's goal. Unfortunately, paying for a consistent media presence is costly. Therefore, the Council focuses its primary messaging during the three focused months of February (Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month), April (Sexual Assault Awareness Month), and October (Domestic Violence Awareness Month).

Bryan Barlow commented that with regards to HB 68, CDVSA is much more well-structured than the Governor's Council on Human and Sex Trafficking (GCHST) in terms of accepting funding associated with the bill's goal. Diane Casto added that the proposed legislation does not incorporate the GCHST into CDVSA, but there were comments about that in the House Judiciary Committee meeting. She noted that CDVSA is an advisory board and would not do the research and things that the other council would do to put forward recommendations, and the GCHST has to deal with the human trafficking aspect as well.

### **CDVSA BUDGET REVIEW/FISCAL REPORT SFY 2023 Q3 BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES**

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the financial report and budget and highlighted the following information current March 15, 2023:

- Page 1 – Program Budget FY 2023
  - Total budget authority, \$33,861,817.00
    - State funding authority total, \$19,985,517
    - Federal funding authority, \$13,876,300
  - Total operating budget, \$4,652,500
  - Total program budget, \$21,356,258
  - Total budgeted obligations, \$26,008,758
- Page 2 – Grants Awarded FY 2023
  - Total grant award authority, \$28,662,007
  - Total awarded to programs, \$21,356,258
- Page 3 – Detailed Sub-Award Plan for FY 2023
  - Total amount allocated for sub-awards, \$21,356,258
  - Total amount awarded to subgrantees, \$21,356,258
- Page 4 – Contracts and Services FY 2023
  - Total authority for contracts and services, \$2,887,000
  - Total of contracts and services obligations, \$1,120,828

- Page 5 – FY 2023 Remaining Balances
  - Total remaining balance across all appropriations, \$9,844,393

### **DISCUSSION ON THE VELA DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Chris Edmonds, Katie Hughes, and Pravin Bhandari joined the meeting to answer questions about the Vela data management system. Diane Casto reported that CDVSA was looking for a new software solution to replace the current subgrantee data collection and reporting system. She noted that the current system has become increasingly inefficient and unmanageable over time. The challenges include inaccuracy and inconsistent data entry and reporting, manual compilation and counting of data, heightened administrative and financial burden, and reduced local capacity to provide services to survivors. Diane directed the members' attention to the Vela documents included in the board packet outlining the data system and projected costs.

Diane Casto noted that she spoke with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) procurement officers, and there is a chance that the Council may be able to get a single-source contract as opposed to having to go out for bids.

ANDVSA's Executive Director Brenda Stanfill commented that the member programs agree that Vela is a good company to work with, and they have a great history of support. She added that for the programs, a significant change could feel overwhelming. Brenda noted that the Vela database could be used as a primary database for the programs. She commented that the Network plans to do its best to ensure that they are supporting agencies, and she shared that the Network intends to dedicate a portion of an appropriation to pay the fees for the member programs for at least the next three years, allowing programs to assess if Vela works for them.

Diane Casto mentioned that programs do not have to embrace the system entirely. CDVSA would work with Vela to develop a data form where programs not ready to change data systems can integrate and input data into the system for reporting purposes.

Board members asked questions about Vela's capability to interface with other data management systems and the validity of the proposed timeline. Katie Hughes responded that the interface is managed through one point of contact. For organizations not using Vela, a form will be created to submit data; and for programs using Vela, an internal report can be generated for monthly submission. Chris Edmonds said that regarding the timeline, which does not include the procurement process, the software is created to easily adapt to organizations' needs. They can dedicate time and attention to the organizations upfront. When the time comes to roll it out to individual programs, they copy the base site, make adjustments, and provide training for all staff. Diane Casto pointed out that Vela provides the direct help desk, and CDVSA does not have to manage and troubleshoot the database. Chris added that Vela's implementation and support specialists are all former advocates themselves and understand the work being done.

John Skidmore **MOVED** that the Council approve going forward with the purchase of a new data management system and the funding necessary for that, **SECONDED** by

Steve Williams. Following is a summary of board member comments made during the discussion:

- Angela Garay voiced the importance of a solid data management system and supported moving forward with a modern system that includes technical support.
- Lydia Heyward appreciated and agreed with the motion allowing the Council to look at any affordable system, including the proposed one.
- Jennifer Winkelman agreed with the value and importance of a data management system and supported moving forward.
- John Skidmore said that having a system to help manage the data is important for managing the Council's federal grants. Though the motion isn't specific to Vela, in his review of Vela, it is an exceptional product, and the Council would be lucky to get a product like that in Alaska as it fits all the Council's needs.
- Mariah Seater approved the motion.
- Laurel Shoop supported the efforts of increasing transparency and improving data programming and management.
- Steve Williams stated that an emphasis on trying to get consistent data and programs that can provide it efficiently reduces the administrative burden on the organizations. While the old database may have been cutting edge at one time, it's not cutting edge today. He supported the Council moving forward through the state procurement process to get an updated data management system.
- Brian Barlow added that an effective data management system is an important aspect of the work of the Council.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion **PASSED**. (7/0)

Diane Casto commented that the next step for the Council is to work through the procurement process.

### **OVERVIEW OF SB 66 AND HB 68 COMPANION BILLS**

John Skidmore was asked to present on HB 68 and SB 66, which are companion bills that deal with sex trafficking and human trafficking. John reported that the bills are attempting to take sex trafficking and move it from AS 11.66 into AS 11.41, essentially saying that sex trafficking is not a crime of public indecency but is instead a crime against a person. That matters because crimes that are 11.41, crimes against a person, carry other provisions throughout the law regarding things like bail, sentencing, probation/parole, and victims' rights are impacted. He added that sex trafficking most appropriately should be in AS 11.41.

John Skidmore reported that the next thing the bills do is take the elements of the sex trafficking statutes and rework them. He said that the current sex trafficking statutes do not do a good job of describing and therefore criminalizing the conduct and the ways in which traffickers induce or cause the individuals to engage in commercial sex acts for them. The bills try to rework the language to capture that conduct better.

John Skidmore reported that the third thing is that it's trying to draw a very clear distinction between sex trafficking and human trafficking. Currently in the statute there is some overlap between those two crimes. By and large, that overlap does not have meaningful consequences because the crimes are categorized or classified at the same level. John explained that whether an individual is convicted of one or the other has no



legal significance or meaning. However, in the bills, sex trafficking is categorized as a sex offense that carries the penalties under AS 12.55.125 (i), which is the subsection that deals with sex offenses. They carry greater minimum penalties and, for some, greater maximum penalties than others. Because human trafficking is not characterized as a sex offense and has different sentencing provisions, a clear distinction needs to be drawn between the two, otherwise the increased penalties associated with sex trafficking are meaningless under a legal argument called the rule of lenity, meaning they have to look at the lowest level of sanction to be imposed.

John Skidmore spoke to the bills' attempts to be more aggressive regarding the prosecution's ability to go after the demand side, not just the supply side of this economic endeavor. The demand side is those people attempting to purchase sex. It creates a new statute for a patron of a victim of sex trafficking. It also increases the classification for prostitution only on the demand side, not the supply side. The sex workers do not have penalties changed for them at all. Still, for the individuals purchasing sex, instead of being a Class D misdemeanor, it would now be a Class A misdemeanor. There are mandatory minimums for a second offense within five years. For a third conviction within five years, it becomes a Class B felony.

John Skidmore reported that another major change is creating the opportunity for victims of sex trafficking. Victims who have prior convictions for either prostitution or low-level drug offenses are to be vacated if they demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that they were a victim of sex trafficking at the time the conviction was entered.

John Skidmore directed the members' attention to the document titled *HB 68 Human and Sex Trafficking*, which was prepared by the Department of Law, and highlighted the following information:

#### Description of sex trafficking

Sex Trafficking in the First Degree (unclassified sex felony):

- 1) A person induces or causes another person to engage in commercial sexual acts through the use of force or threat of force against any person; or
- 2) the person induced or caused to engage in commercial sexual acts is under 20 years of age or in that person's legal custody;
- 3) a person manages, supervises, controls, or owns, either alone or in association with others, a prostitution enterprise or a place of prostitution.

Sex Trafficking in the Second Degree (Class A sex felony):

- With the intent to promote sex trafficking, a person induces or causes another person to engage in commercial sexual acts.

Sex Trafficking in the Third Degree (Class B or C sex felony):

- The person provides services, resources, or other assistance in the furtherance of sex trafficking.

Patron of a Victim of Sex Trafficking (Class B or C sex felony):

A person solicits a commercial sexual act:

- 1) with reckless disregard that the person engaging in the sexual act is a victim of sex trafficking;
- 2) or from a person who is under 18 years of age.

Prostitution (B misdemeanor)

- 1) engages in or agrees or offers to engage in sexual conduct in return for a fee; or
- 2) offers a fee in return for sexual conduct.

Human Trafficking in the First Degree (Unclassified felony)

- 1) Induces or causes another person to engage in adult entertainment or labor by force or threat of force against any person; or
- 2) the victim is under 20 years of age.

Human Trafficking in the Second Degree (Class A felony)

- With the intent to promote human trafficking, the person induces or causes another person to engage in adult entertainment or labor by \*see definition of “induce or cause.”

Human Trafficking in the Third Degree (Class B or C felony)

- Provides services, resources, or other assistance with the intent to promote human trafficking.

(Note: The only change made to this statute in HB 68 is that a patron of a sex worker under (2) would be a Class A misdemeanor. Recidivist patrons of sex workers under (2) are elevated to a Class C felony.)

John Skidmore shared the definitions of sex trafficking, sex trafficking and patron of a victim of sex trafficking, sex trafficking and prostitution, human trafficking, and inducing or causing.

John Skidmore noted that pages 24 and 25, Sections 30, 31, and 32 talk about including CVDSA in the coordination of planning and services for victims of domestic violence, sex trafficking, or sexual assault. He clarified that the bill does not put human trafficking under the auspices of the Council, only sex trafficking. He added that if the bill did not come with additional resources, existing resources would need to be parsed out more to include other organizations dealing with sex trafficking.

John Skidmore reported that HB 68 is in House Judiciary, and it has had several hearings, and SB 66 has had one hearing in Senate Judiciary.

Angela Garay asked how many people would become classified as victims under 11.41 versus 11.61. John Skidmore said that it is difficult to define the number of individuals, because most of the testimony in committee meetings was based on referrals in the last ten years. Diane Casto agreed to send board members the GCHST report and noted that the number of victims they contacted was not included in the data.

Steve Williams asked if the bill passes, what would that mean in terms of services and resources and how providers feel about the inclusion of sex trafficking into the focus of the Council. Brenda Stanfill responded that working with individuals who are sex

trafficked creates challenges for safely serving victims in the shelter settings and will likely require a different setup than programs currently have for victim services.

Diane Casto stated that last year a form of this bill came up, and she was very clear last year and again this year that if the bills pass, they cannot take away from the current funding for domestic violence and sexual assault. The Council can only do it with additional resources. She also clarified when talking to the GCHST that the Council cannot diminish the work programs are currently doing to take on an additional victim population without additional resources. Steve Williams added that the Council would have two resource issues, one is the provision of services, and the other is administration, and he hopes for fiscal notes that address both sides.

### **ANDVSA UPDATE**

ANDVSA Executive Director Brenda Stanfill shared a Network update as follows:

- ANDVSA held its spring meeting in Juneau and had the opportunity to speak with lawmakers advocating for the needs of membership programs. Members appreciated Diane Casto's CDVSA presentation and other partner presentations on Partner Day. The membership also held its final strategic planning session.
- The Network looks forward to a larger conversation on the regulation changes. The Network had concerns about the regulations and looks forward to the opportunity for public comment to discuss the impact of some of the regulations if they pass.
- The Network is developing a statewide needs assessment to map the statewide services available for domestic violence and sexual assault. An effort by the Denali Commission for funding was not successful. The Network will begin the work and seek support from other partner funding sources, including the Trust.
- Challenges for programs include:
  - Funding is unstable and inadequate to match the need
  - Staffing shortages, recruitment, and retention challenges
  - Increase in costs of providing services, including utilities and supplies
  - The administrative burden for programs.

Brenda Stanfill reported that the timing of the Network's strategic plan usually coincides with CDVSA's strategic planning. The Network is beginning the process and will look to the Council's plan, once developed, to see where the goals align. She stated that there are five goals in ANDVSA's strategic plan as follows:

1. Increase the member programs' capacity to effectively serve survivors and prevent violence in their communities
2. Need to inspire action to prevent and respond to domestic violence/sexual assault and intersecting issues
3. Do activities that hold the justice system accountable to survivors
4. Ensure victims and survivors across Alaska have equitable access to the services and support they need
5. Develop the necessary infrastructure for the network to accomplish its core function.

Brenda Stanfill shared the Network's upcoming activities as follows:

- Senator Murkowski procured funding for the Network to support programs providing services wherever possible. Support includes setup, access to training, and technical assistance. Senator Murkowski secured a \$3M appropriation split over four years. The Network will begin by creating a deputy director position to work specifically with members and support executive directors. They will also work on membership recruitment and retention and focus on sexual assault.
- The Network plans to create an executive director support program.
- The Network plans to develop and implement a staff exchange program.
- The Network plans to create a specific Domestic Violence Advocacy Specialist position to work with statewide partners to increase the system's effectiveness.
- The Network is looking at shared services. Programs have a lot of duplication in things they do, and the Network will look to see if there would be a place in the Network they can assist programs with admin, training, and mentoring.
- The Network will begin to look at communications and outreach.
- The Network will look to work with the Council on hosting a multidisciplinary statewide conference.

Brenda Stanfill shared that a portion of the Network's appropriation will be put towards funding the Vela database implementation for member programs. The Network felt it was important to see if this could roll out statewide if they got as many programs as possible to use it right away, and they felt the best way to make that happen would be if there were no cost to the program. The Network intends to absorb the costs for at least the next three years and allow the programs to assess if Vela is a case management program that works for the agency tasks.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

### **DISCUSSION AND PLANNING FOR FY 2023 Q4 RURAL OUTREACH MEETING**

Diane Casto reminded the board that the Council conducts an annual rural outreach meeting. She stated that the goal of the rural outreach meeting is for the board to go to a rural community that has a program the Council funds.

This year's rural outreach board meeting is scheduled for June 7 – 9, 2023 in Cordova, Alaska. The Council funds the Cordova Family Resource Center. Due to limited airline schedules in and out of Cordova, board members will fly to Cordova on June 7 and depart on June 9. Meetings will occur at the new Prince William Sound Science Center, including an evening community dialogue/town hall meeting on June 8. Lodging has been secured at the Reluctant Fisherman. Diane explained that the Council pays for the travel of the public members, and Kay Riley will be taking the lead on the reservations for the public members next week. Diane noted that a quorum would be needed at the meeting because the board will vote on approving funding allocations for FY 24.

### **CLOSING COMMENTS**

Angela Garay opened the floor for closing comments. A summary of comments follows:

- Diane Casto thanked the individuals who provided public comment, which she said is very helpful to the board in making decisions regarding Council

operations. Diane also reminded board members to send pictures to update the Council's website.

- Lydia Heyward shared that the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Workgroup is waiting for the Governor's response to the recommendations submitted at the end of November.
- Jennifer Winkelman commented that she appreciated the information she received at the meeting and looks forward to seeing how DOC can contribute to making a difference.
- Laurel Shoop shared a document that outlined the DEED's efforts regarding mandatory reporter training on sexual abuse awareness and prevention and dating violence awareness and prevention. She shared that 4,522 educators completed sex abuse/assault awareness and prevention training, and 2,831 educators completed dating violence awareness and prevention training since 7/1/22. Laurel talked about the teacher shortage, especially in special education, and referred to SB 20, which offers out-of-state teacher reciprocity. She noted that SB 20 would effectively streamline the certification process.
- Bryan Barlow commented that he appreciated being at the meeting and applauded the work of the Council.
- Angela Garay expressed the board's appreciation to Diane Casto and the Council staff. She thanked Ann Rausch for her years of service to the Council. Angela shared that an Office of Victim's Rights (OVR) attorney has been appointed as a Superior Court judge in Kenai. She reported that OVR's executive director retired, and the long process of hiring a new executive director is underway. Angela shared that OVR has been conducting training on victims' rights and what OVR can do to help victims.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Jennifer Winkelman **MOVED** to adjourn, **SECONDED** by Lydia Heyward. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 1:45 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 Street, Suite 201  
Juneau, AK 99801

PUBLIC COMMENT

Friday, March 31, 2023  
1:00 p.m.

ROUGH DRAFT TRANSCRIPT  
Pages 1 - 13, inclusive

Council Members Present:

Angela Garay, Chair  
Lydia Heyward  
Jennifer Winkelman  
John Skidmore  
Mariah Seater  
Laurel Shoop  
Steve Williams  
Bryan Barlow

Transcribed by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

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

2 ANGELA GARAY: It looks like we have  
3 some people online already. So if you want to start,  
4 raise your hand if you would like to make a public  
5 comment, and we will begin at 1:00.

6 It looks like we have at least one. So  
7 Diane, if you will type that in the chat, and then  
8 maybe we can take up with Marsha.

9 MARSHA OSS: Right now or do you want to  
10 wait until everybody is back?

11 ANGELA GARAY: Why don't you start.  
12 It's 1:00, everybody from the Council should be back.  
13 So you can start.

14 MARSHA OSS: Well, first of all, thank  
15 you for allowing me to sit in today on this. I want  
16 to speak from a couple of different positions, if I  
17 may, just some comments.

18 My first -- the first position that I  
19 would speak as is as a direct provider to services in  
20 relation to perpetrators of domestic violence and  
21 sexual assault. As a substance abuse counselor and a  
22 case manager for reentry, what I've watched over the  
23 past six years here, seven years in Fairbanks, and  
24 then in the Lower 48 is -- and this maybe is addressed  
25 more to Jen, but I think there has to be a way of

1 supervising these folks that is different than the way  
2 you supervise other probationers or parolees. I think  
3 that supervising them the same way we supervise  
4 somebody that has a DUI, it's a different mentality  
5 that you are working with. They need a lot more --  
6 they need to be supervised like you would a sex  
7 offender where there is some accountability, where  
8 there is some long-term treatment in the community  
9 that's mandated, where there's lie detector tests  
10 that's geared towards are they stalking, are they  
11 showing up at their work, are they calling and  
12 harassing. And that's probably at a legislative  
13 level, but that's just been my observation. If we  
14 want to change their behavior, we are going to have to  
15 be more on top of their behavior. So that's that  
16 perspective.

17 From the perspective of a provider for  
18 people who have been victimized and also as a survivor  
19 of sexual assault and domestic violence, I would say  
20 that doing that under the -- in the shelter's  
21 guidelines, I think it should be a separate program or  
22 project. I think that for myself with my own healing,  
23 I had to work on one issue in one capacity, and then I  
24 had to work on the next issue in another capacity.  
25 And having it mixed together, living in a shelter, and



1     trying to deal with all of that, it just wasn't  
2     effective for me.

3                     And so that's what I would say about the  
4     comment. I think that it is too much to ask for  
5     people that are running shelters to take it on,  
6     especially with the finance -- the extra finances that  
7     come with it. I think it should be separate.

8                     Those are my opinions. Thank you all  
9     very much.

10                    ANGELA GARAY: Thank you, Marsha. I  
11     appreciate you being here today.

12                    Ms. Smith? Cheri, would you like to  
13     make a comment?

14                    CHERI SMITH: My name is Cheri Smith.  
15     Can you hear me okay? Perfect. Diane is shaking her  
16     head, I appreciate that. I am the executive director  
17     of the Lee Shore Center in Kenai. I am one of the  
18     victim service programs.

19                    So, we have a 34-bed emergency shelter  
20     and then also a 23-bed transitional housing facility.  
21     That transitional housing is funded under HUD, but the  
22     majority of our funding comes through the Council on  
23     Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. I really  
24     appreciate the public comment section. I appreciate  
25     being able just to chat for a minute.

1                   First I want to say that I appreciate  
2 all of you. I think the work you have to do is  
3 critical and important, and speaking for other  
4 directors, we do appreciate the Council. Diane --  
5 kudos to Diane. She's a wonderful leader. And I have  
6 to say that any time I need Diane's input, I can shoot  
7 her off a quick e-mail or call, and she's always  
8 there. So thank you, Diane, I appreciate that.

9                   I just wanted -- you know, listening  
10 this morning kind of off and on, because I get pulled  
11 in different directions, just to comment on a couple  
12 of things.

13                   One is, you know, this is the first  
14 year, as Diane said, in a few years that we've been  
15 able to actually have an RFP for the victim service  
16 grant dollars, which is pretty critical because, you  
17 know, continuation basis is kind of hard, especially  
18 the last few years with COVID and everything else. We  
19 haven't been able to ask for what we truly need. So  
20 this year is going to kind of give us an opportunity  
21 to ask for some of those needs. I realize that  
22 funding is going to be tight, kind of precarious, it  
23 will be for a while. We all understand that.

24                   But I wanted the Council just to  
25 understand, too, that unless we can adequately pay for

1 the staff that we have, the advocate staff -- you  
2 know, I was at the point, to be quite honest and  
3 truthful, that I didn't know how much longer we would  
4 be able to hold on. You know, we've been providing  
5 emergency shelter for 38 years, but it got so bad.  
6 You know, we had almost a complete turnover in our  
7 advocate staff for a number of reasons, like moving  
8 out of state, taking different positions that pay  
9 higher, and we had some health issues here with some  
10 of the staff. And you know, at one point, trying to  
11 run a 24 emergency shelter -- 24-hour emergency  
12 shelter with two (indiscernible) advocates, a manager,  
13 and one advocate. So, you know, those two advocates  
14 that were on the days were working 24 hours a day,  
15 seven days a week. They basically lived here. And we  
16 never want to be in that position again. It is just  
17 too hard.

18 We lost an advocate position a few years  
19 ago and never had the funding to actually bring that  
20 position back. So besides being short staffed, if we  
21 don't have the funds to adequately pay for advocate  
22 staff -- and I'm not only speaking for myself, this is  
23 other directors that are in this same position -- you  
24 know, it just becomes almost inoperable to do this  
25 job.

1                   So we appreciate all of the, you know,  
2                   attention to this. I know Diane works really hard to  
3                   try to get those funds. And I understand it's  
4                   probably going to be another, you know, year where we  
5                   will still probably have to tighten our belts, but  
6                   there's only so many years you can do that. So I just  
7                   wanted to kind of bring that to your attention.

8                   Thank you for what you do, and I guess  
9                   that's all I have to say for now. Thank you.

10                  ANGELA GARAY: Thank you, Cheri. We  
11                  appreciate what you shared.

12                  DIANE CASTO: Angela, this is Diane, may  
13                  I make a comment?

14                  ANGELA GARAY: Absolutely.

15                  DIANE CASTO: I just think it's really  
16                  important. First of all, thank you for your kind  
17                  words, Cheri. We certainly do try our best to keep  
18                  everything balanced.

19                  And your comment about being able to ask  
20                  for what you really need to provide the services that  
21                  you're doing I think is really important, also  
22                  recognizing that we probably won't be able to fill all  
23                  those needs this year. But I do believe it's  
24                  important for us to know what it takes to run these  
25                  programs so that when we go to the legislature next

1 year, we are able to say, "Here's how much money  
2 people ask for, here's how much we had, and there's a  
3 discrepancy between what is needed and what we have."

4 I know that we did that a couple of  
5 years ago when we had our prevention RFP, and we  
6 clearly had a much, much larger request and need than  
7 what we were able to fund, and we used that data when  
8 we requested an increment for prevention dollars. And  
9 while we didn't get -- well, we haven't gotten any of  
10 it yet, but while we didn't get what we asked for in  
11 the actual budget, it was a starting point, and we  
12 were able to say, "We can only fund what we can with  
13 the money we have, but the needs are greater than what  
14 the funding is."

15 So those are the battles that we're  
16 going to have to continue moving forward with. CDVSA  
17 so appreciates the Network and all of our -- all of  
18 our providers who go to bat for our funding, and they  
19 are helping us along the way. I've always said, you  
20 know, it's a great partnership, because from the state  
21 perspective, there's certain things I and my staff can  
22 do to kind of move more funding forward, but there are  
23 things we can't do just because we work for the  
24 administration. You, on the other hand, can go out  
25 and do some of the advocacy we can't do, and we can do

1 the advocacy that you can't do from the inside.

2 So it works well, and I appreciate  
3 everyone's hard work this year on the budget as we  
4 continue to move forward with it. Thank you.

5 ANGELA GARAY: Is there anyone else who  
6 would like to make a public comment? Not hearing  
7 anyone. Diane, do we need to leave the line open for  
8 a little longer for public comment?

9 DIANE CASTO: I would probably leave it  
10 open for another five or ten minutes, at least five  
11 minutes. We've gone -- usually we open it for at  
12 least ten minutes if nobody comments. And then if we  
13 start the meeting up again in a few minutes, if  
14 someone does come on, we'll take a break until the  
15 30-minute time slot is over, if that makes sense.

16 So currently public comment is from 1 to  
17 1:30. Let's keep it open for another five minutes and  
18 then we can go, if there's no more public comment,  
19 we'll start the agenda again, but if someone comes on  
20 before 1:30, we'll go ahead and take a break and let  
21 them provide comment.

22 ANGELA GARAY: Sounds good. Thanks,  
23 Diane.

24 DIANE CASTO: How about one more minute  
25 and then we'll move forward with our agenda.

1 ANGELA GARAY: Sounds good.

2 DIANE CASTO: Angela, should we go ahead  
3 and move forward?

4 ANGELA GARAY: I think so. I'm not  
5 seeing anyone else raising hands or asking to comment.  
6 So let's talk about Cordova.

7 (Pause)

8 ANGELA GARAY: Is there anyone else who  
9 has just joined us who would like to make a public  
10 comment? If so, speak up or raise your hand and let  
11 us know that you would like to make a public comment.

12 SUZI PEARSON: Hello, this is Suzi  
13 Pearson from AWAKE.

14 ANGELA GARAY: Hi, Suzi.

15 SUZI PEARSON: How are you all today?

16 ANGELA GARAY: Great.

17 SUZI PEARSON: I wanted to first off  
18 thank Diane and the CDVSA staff. Diane has been  
19 really critical in helping us with her guidance in  
20 regards to us supporting CDVSA's budget this year, and  
21 the clarity she's provided in making sure that we are  
22 able to do that in an effective way with correct  
23 information. So I do want to acknowledge that.

24 I also want to acknowledge the fact that  
25 there might be flat funding again, which is very

1     unfortunate.  However, with the RFP that's come out  
2     and trying to ask for more funds, it's going to be  
3     difficult considering -- I'm sure you've heard from  
4     many people that wages for us at AWAKE in Anchorage  
5     have been the most significant challenge in hiring.  
6     Our ability to compete has been challenging in regards  
7     to the fact that not only can corporations, but also  
8     tribal agencies have been able to match or actually  
9     offer a great deal more for similar positions that  
10    we're in.  So we are falling behind in obtaining  
11    qualified applicants because of that.

12                   And so part of that, of course, is  
13    connected to the fact that we are grant funded, which  
14    provides limitations as far as what we are able to  
15    afford.  But I do want to advocate and strongly  
16    encourage CDVSA to seek additional funding and really  
17    help us to better supply the legislature and really be  
18    more aggressive, especially in the coming years, as  
19    far as what we're asking the state government for.

20                   So thank you.

21                   ANGELA GARAY:  Thank you, Suzi.

22                   Marsha, did you want to put your comment  
23    on the record?

24                   MARSHA OSS:  Yeah.  I apologize for  
25    that.  I was thinking -- I was nervous to talk to you



1 all. I was thinking I do know that I actually made it  
2 clear that I was talking about keeping the human  
3 trafficking programs separate if there's a way to  
4 possibly do that. That was what I was talking about  
5 when I was saying that it was hard as a victim of that  
6 as well. It was hard to deal with both of those  
7 situations under one roof, you know, because there was  
8 specialized help in both areas that was necessary for  
9 healing to take place and for old behaviors.

10 And the other thing that was happening  
11 in some of the shelters that I was in was that the  
12 women that had been trafficked that were going back  
13 were actually grooming other women to try to pull them  
14 in with them as well. So I just wanted to say that I  
15 really support those being separate.

16 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you. Is there any  
17 response from the Council to any of the comments that  
18 we've heard? Anyone want to make a comment?

19 LAUREL SHOOP: I'm sorry. Are we on the  
20 agenda item for 1:45?

21 ANGELA GARAY: We went back to the  
22 public comments.

23 LAUREL SHOOP: Thank you.

24 ANGELA GARAY: Yeah. Any responses to  
25 the public comments? Okay. I don't hear any. Thank

1     you so much, Suzi and Marsha, for adding those  
2     additional comments.

3                     (End of public testimony)

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