



## Orange County Domestic Violence Commission | Draft Meeting Notes

February 24, 2020 | 10:00 a.m.

### Committee Chairs

- Honorable Alice Blackwell, Ninth Judicial Circuit Judge, Co-Chair
- Dick Batchelor, President, Dick Batchelor Management Group, Inc., Co-Chair

### Members in Attendance:

- Lisa Alexander , Founder, Stand Up Survivor Inc.
- Honorable Aramis Ayala, State Attorney, Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
- Jay Corzine, Ph.D., Graduate Director & Professor, University of Central Florida
- Lui Damiani, Executive Director, Victim Service Center of Central Florida, Inc.
- Gerry Glynn , Chief Legal Officer, Embrace Families
- Jana Jasinski, Ph.D., Pegasus Professor of Sociology, Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence, University of Central Florida
- Honorable Alicia Latimore, Circuit Judge, Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
- Marie Martinez, CEO/Executive Director, The Howard Phillips Center for Children & Families - Orlando Health
- Diana Mejia, Founder & President, Nuevo Sendero, Inc.
- John Mina, Orange County Sherriff, Orange County Sheriff's Office represented by Captain Mary Huggins
- Honorable Donald Myers, Chief Judge, Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
- Tekoa Puerie, Director of Center Advancement, Pace Center for Girls
- Louis Quinones, Chief of Corrections, Orange County Corrections Department
- Honorable Tiffany Moore Russell, Orange County Clerk of Courts
- Bob Smedley, Chair, Orange County Domestic Fatality Review Team
- Orlando Rolon, City of Orlando Chief of Police, Orlando Police Department represented by Deputy Chief Jose Velez
- Michelle Sperzel , Chief Executive Officer, Harbor House of Central Florida
- Sharron Washington , Regional Director, Florida Department of Children and Families represented by Ms. Christi Gray
- Heather Wilkie, Executive Director, Zebra Coalition



## **Welcome, Pledge and Introductions**

Judge Blackwell thanked everyone for participating on the Commission and reviewed the agenda. Mr. Batchelor led the Pledge of Allegiance; the Commission members introduced themselves.

## **Public Comment:**

Jeanette Copler spoke about her personal experience with domestic violence.

## **Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the meeting held on December 6, 2019 were approved.

## **Proposed Solution to Address Domestic Violence**

Judge Blackwell introduced Diane Meiller-Cook, Program President of DM&A's Me & My CommUnity and said that the 2019 Me and My CommUnity program winning team, OCPS female junior students, will give a presentation. The students introduced themselves: Michelle Ortiz, Dr. Phillips High School; Helosia de Assis Goncalves, Freedom High School; Neemy Gressine, University High School and Crystal Cristino-Sanchez, Evans High School. The students gave a presentation on their program called, Aware, giving statistics such as Orlando Police receives 3,000 calls each year, Orange County has the highest rate of domestic violence in the state of Florida, and in Orange County, 36% of domestic violence emergency 911 calls are made by children. Aware has several partnerships: Target, Walmart, Ross, Walgreens, Chick-Fil-A, Harbor House, Rideshare programs, OCPD, OCPFA, and OC Domestic Violence Task Force. Lime green stickers are placed in dressing rooms, restrooms with secret codes such as lime green shirt and key lime pie. They plan to get the word out about the program through social media and plan to raise money for their program.

## **Update on Proposed Legislation**

Mr. Batchelor said that an update will be given by Sheriff Mina after the legislative session concludes.

## **Orange County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team Overview**

Bob Smedley gave a power point presentation on the fatality review team, giving background and history information of the team, its purpose which is to learn how to prevent domestic violence by intervening early, and improving the response of an individual and the system to domestic violence. Mr. Smedley reviewed the objectives, danger assessment, local trends and recommendations which are all contained in the handout.



## Committee Updates

**Honorable Alicia Latimore – Court Process Committee** – Judge Latimore said the committee has met four times and heard from guest speakers from the Office of the Clerk of Court, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association, 9th Circuit Domestic Violence Division, A No Abuse Program, Inc., Initial Appearance Judge Carly Wish and the Orange County Pre-trial Diversion Program. The committee identified gaps in service to victims seeking a DV injunction to include issues related to language barriers, delayed service of process on their abuser and lack of information sharing between agencies. The committee also recognized gaps in the sharing of pertinent information between the agencies and within court systems.

The preliminary recommendations of the Court Process Committee:

- 1) Link all related criminal, Baker Act and Marchman Act cases to DV injunction cases in the clerk's records keeping system for cross reference by the court.
- 2) Translate and provide all civil and criminal DV court forms, pleadings, court orders and final judgments in Spanish, Creole, and Portuguese.
- 3) Provide interpreting services to assist completion of paper work.
- 4) Provide sheet defining frequently used terms.
- 5) Implement a process allowing electronic transmission and receipt of injunctions paper work by the Sheriff's Office for service.
- 6) Establish an e-portal with the Clerk's office to receive returns of service.
- 7) Perform CLEAR and VINE checks at any point in the injunction case to find an address to serve respondent if whereabouts are unknown, not just at time of compliance hearing.
- 8) Request assistance from Department of Revenue/Child Support Services with location of respondent.

**Michele Sperzel, System Process Committee** – Ms. Sperzel reported that the committee met on December 6, 2019 and January 16, 2020. Representatives from the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) facilitated training on system mapping. The Court Process Committee agreed to focus on the criminal justice system, identifying and inviting community partners who work directly with survivors. The committee also discussed conducting focus groups with both survivors and abusers as to their experience within the criminal justice system. Representatives from the FCADV will coordinate with community partners to train further on the purpose of system mapping and the desired outcome to identify gaps in the criminal justice system.

**Gerry Glynn, Community Services & Resources Committee** – Mr. Glynn reported that the committee has held two meetings and at this point the committee is exploring resources and gaps in community resources. The committee also reviewed the previous DV Commission recommendations to evaluate the progress made on prior recommendations. The committee will be hearing from many more community members and further exploring the progress made on prior recommendations. The committee's discussion with the Interfaith Council led them to believe that progress could be made with a stronger clergy partnership.



**Heather Wilkie, Public Awareness Committee** – Ms. Wilkie reported that the primary priority identified by the committee is to develop a public service awareness campaign that focuses on providing information to survivors of domestic abuse. The committee discussed ideas about creating a public service awareness campaign. Other considerations of the committee is that they want to make sure that we are culturally competent and understand a wide range of types of abuse such as economic, emotional, etc. – that domestic violence is not always physical. Their messaging is simple: How do we get services to survivors? People need to have information on resources. The committee’s next meeting is March 9th.

### **Roundtable Discussion & Future Planning**

Judge Blackwell said that the next DV Commission meeting will be set early to mid-April. Mr. Batchelor suggested meeting with the chairs to develop a structure for the recommendations to be included in the final report.

Judge Latimore gave a description of the Early Childhood Court called Building A Better You Court. It is a family-focused program that uses child-parent psychotherapy to assist families during their involvement with the child welfare system. The Court’s main priority is the safety and well-being of children. An additional component is addressing trauma that a child between 0-5 years of age experiences during separation. The court meets once a month and the courtroom is child-friendly.

### **Closing remarks**

Judge Blackwell and Mr. Batchelor thanked the Commission members for their participation and asked everyone to please stay involved. That it’s important to take action early; the more prevention, the less cost to society.

The meeting concluded at 11:57 a.m.