

**FAMILY VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL**  
**February 27, 2008**  
**ROOM 14, GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**  
**5:00 P.M.**

<b>MEETING MINUTES</b>
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**Council in Attendance:** Judge Karen Abrams, Tim Cameron, Rona Harding, Andre Wells, Laura Joyce, Lanny Lancaster, Nancy Luginbill, Kathleen Lyon , Ella May Russell, Elizabeth Schaeffer, Craig Thomas, Julie White (on behalf of Kevin McDevitt), Gary Lynch and Detective Julie Yingling.

**Absent:** Brian Cedar, John Helldorfer, Kevin McDevitt, Kathleen O'Brien, Sue Sabo, Judge John Slade, and James Tanavage.

Recorder: Karen Gates

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Laura Joyce at 5:14 p.m.

**Review/Approval of Minutes:**

Laura Joyce requested Council approval of the January 23, 2008 Meeting Minutes. Council voted and meeting minutes duly approved.

**Review/Discussion:**

**Status Reports** - Laura Joyce requested that Council Members provide status reports to the group: the group discussed the upcoming Fatality Review Process (see below) and identified client cases to review. Laura suggested making a note to check with Sue Sabo at the next meeting about the status of the data collection system.

**Fatality Review Committee** – The team will review all near-fatalities and serious assaults related to domestic violence occurring in the County (cases which are reviewable). The team spoke briefly about four DV cases. Laura Joyce suggested the team choose two cases to review for the next meeting. The team agreed to review the cases of Tammy Goldsmith and Mary M. Wood at the next meeting.

**Multi-Disciplinary Review Team** – Laura Joyce reports that the team is meeting once per month on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m., and that the last meeting was on February 11, 2008. All members attended, resulting in a coordinated plan for a victim who has been assisted by most of the Lead Agencies.

**Lethality Assessments** – Gary Lynch stated that the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence has developed the Maryland Domestic Violence Lethality Screen and Protocol for First Responders. Gary distributed, for council review, a handout containing information about the Lethality Screen and the Protocol for handling a situation where a DV victim is likely to be in serious danger. Also attached to the handout were articles from the baltimoresun.com dated November 14, 2007 and the washingtonpost.com dated October 2, 2007 stating how a growing number of police departments are using lethality assessments as part of their domestic violence program. Detective Julie Yingling explained the importance of identifying and responding to

potentially lethal situations and spoke about how the lethality screen would be used by police officers arriving first at the scene. All screening forms will go to Detective Yingling for assessment and follow up. If it is determined that the victim is likely to be in serious danger, the victim is encouraged to speak with a DV hotline counselor. The intent is to connect victims with support groups and counselors on the spot – while emotions are still raw. If you get with these victims a couple of days later, they have time to rationalize.

Gary Lynch stated that the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence has contracted with several cab companies within the County to transport DV victims to shelters. There is also a contact in place with the Days Inn.

Lanny stated that his biggest fear was not that the victims wouldn't be willing to go to shelters; it was how the victims could sustain themselves and their children over the longer term. Laura Joyce stated that we must continue to encourage our elected officials to support initiatives for more affordable housing and daycare facilities, and more long term solutions. Lanny commented that we need to help the victims develop good strategies for long-term stability.

Prosecutor, Julie White offered her assistance and participation in team meetings and gave her home phone number to team members to contact her in the case of a DV emergency after hours.

Plans/Next Meeting:

The DVCC will sit as the Fatality Review Team and review the cases of Tammy Goldsmith and Mary M. Wood at the next meeting. This will be a practice review; both individuals are living, although both have been victims of serious domestic assaults. Individual team members will identify information and records pertinent to these cases and will make those records and information available at the next review meeting. Ella May Russell will contact Dave Sargent to see if he will be available to facilitate the meeting.

The next FVCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2008 at 5:00 pm in Room 14 at the Governmental Center.

Adjournment:

A motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn the meeting at 5:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Karen Gates, Recording Secretary