

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL  
ELDERLY and DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES for May 12, 2015

The DVCC Elderly and Domestic Violence Committee met on May 12, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. at the Carvel State Office Building, Wilmington. Attending the meeting were: Honorable Lewis D. Schiliro, Secretary, Department of Safety and Homeland Security and Chair, Gina Schoenberg, Department of Justice, Peggy Bell, Delaware Criminal Justice Information System; Tonia Bell-Delgado, Delaware Center for Justice; Kim Buiano, Adult Protective Services; Cindy Mercer, Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities; Mary Post, Department of Justice; Pat Kwetkouskie and Natasha Smith, DVCC staff.

Call to Order: Gina Schoenberg called the meeting to order.

Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the meeting held on March 20, 2015 were reviewed. Two minor revisions were requested. Gina Schoenberg made a motion to accept the minutes with the revisions; Tonia Bell-Delgado seconded the motion. There was consensus to approve the minutes with the revisions.

On-going Business:

- Expanding Committee Membership

Pat K. reported she contacted Irmina Williams from the Wilmington Housing Authority's Community and Supportive Services. Ms. Williams has agreed to participate on the Committee. Pat also noted that Peggy Bell, Kim Buiano, and Mary Post have joined the Committee.

Gina recommended the following additions to the Committee: Sharon Merriman-Nai, Assistant Policy Specialist and Director of the Clearinghouse on Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly (CANE); Gail Weinberg, Ombudsman, Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities; and Moe Monagle, Coordinator, Criminal Justice council. Pat K. will contact them and invite them to participate.

- Reports on Existing Data re: Elderly Victims:

Tonia Bell-Delgado provided an update on DCJ cases. She noted Regina Gray, her predecessor, provided services to 15 older victims (age 50+) who needed safe housing following their victimization. Of those, five obtained housing. The remaining 10 were "precariously" housed. Tonia explained that "precariously" is a term used by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to indicate housing that is not permanent.

Mary Post provided an overview of the older victims who received services through a project at the DOJ. She noted that since September 2014 there were 89 criminal cases that included victims age 62 or older with a familial relationship to the accused. She reported the 89 cases do not include cases from the Court of Common Pleas, Protection From Abuse cases, or Family Court cases where a juvenile is the defendant.

Peggy Bell provided an overview of the type of information that can be retrieved from the DELJIS system. She provided data from 2014 that was related to victims age 65 and older, the types of crimes reported, and the relationship of the victim to the offender.

Secretary Schiliro requested that Peggy provide the same data from 2004 so that the committee could conduct a comparison of the data from 2004 to the most recent data. Peggy will prepare a report from DELJIS of the data from 2004 for the next meeting.

Cindy Mercer noted that staff from the Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities can provide general information about Delaware's older population.

Kim Buiano from Adult Protective Services will provide an overview of the number of complaints of elder abuse received by APS, the categories of elder abuse investigated and categories of perpetrators from 2005 to 2014.

- Potential Funding Opportunities

Secretary Schiliro reported there are not many requests for duplicate certified copies of death certificates. It was agreed that due to the limited number of requests, adding a surcharge would not generate much revenue. There was additional discussion about the existing Senior Trust Fund. Cindy Mercer noted that revenue from this fund must benefit seniors but does not go to seniors directly. The current spending plan is to provide training to staff of senior centers to promote memory care education and activities for older adults.

- Sacred Heart Village

Pat K. reported that she was unsuccessful in making contact with a representative from the Sacred Heart Village. She noted that in addition to several voice messages, she reached out to the Ministry of Caring through their website. Gina noted she has a name and telephone number for a contact at the Sacred Heart Village. She will forward this information to Pat.

- Obtain Information and Input Directly from Constituents in the Community

The Committee discussed its plan to obtain input about the issues facing elderly victims of domestic violence by conducting three public forums (one in each county). The intended audience would be staff from agencies that provide services and assistance to elderly victims of domestic violence along with the public at large. The forums will be held in the fall of 2015.

Gina reported the Pat Dailey Lewis is waiting for approval from Attorney General Matt Denn. Secretary Schiliro noted he proposed the idea at the quarterly meeting of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council and didn't receive any negative feedback.

A workgroup was established and will begin meeting after June 15<sup>th</sup> – World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). The purpose of the workgroup will be to plan the three forums in order to obtain input about the issues facing elderly victims of domestic violence.

- Statewide Panels planned for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Gina reported that the Delaware Department of Justice's Senior Protective Initiative will conduct four panels on elder abuse and senior protection issues. The panels will consist of various professionals with knowledge of adult protective services, health care, financial exploitation and scams, and law enforcement. Gina noted that two panels will be held in New Castle County (Wilmington and Newark). In addition, panels will be conducted the same day in Dover and in Georgetown. Additional information about the panels can be obtained through the Attorney General's website:  
<http://attorneygeneral.delaware.gov/executive/protectingseniors.shtml>
- Next Meeting:  
The next meeting of the DVCC Elderly and Domestic Violence Committee will be held in late summer – the date and location to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Kwetkauskie, DVCC Staff  
June 4, 2015