

**MICHIGAN DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE
PREVENTION AND TREATMENT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
February 1 , 2019**

***** Approved *****

Members Present:

F/Lt. Yvonne Brantley
Hon. Thomas Cameron
Jeffrie Cape
James Fink
Hon. Elizabeth Pollard Hines

Members Absent:

Sue Snyder
Dr. Cris Sullivan, Chair

Staff Present:

Jess Averill
Tonya Avery
Michael Bobbitt, Board Secretary
Debi Cain, Executive Director
Jordan Kennedy
Gail Krieger
James McCurtis Jr.
Karen Porter
Angela Povilaitis
Amanda Thomashow

Guests:

Stephanie Beyersdorf - Michigan Supreme Court - State Court Administrative Office
Senator Stephanie Chang - Michigan State Senate
Kathy Hagenian - Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
Paula Kaiser Van Dam - Bureau of Community Services
Kathleen Walker - Northern Michigan Children's Assessment Center

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

D. Cain convened the February 1, 2019 Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board meeting at the Michigan Historical Library - Lake Superior room in Lansing, Michigan at 3:00 p.m.

BOARD CONSENT

Review of February 1, 2019 agenda and approval of November 9, 2018 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Moved by L. Hines to approve the February 1, 2019 agenda and to approve the November 9, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Y. Brantley. Motion Carried.

CHAIR'S REPORT

J. Fink said Chair C. Sullivan had nothing to report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – GENERAL OVERVIEW OF WORK TO DATE

A Champions of Justice Award ceremony preceded the February 1, 2019 Board meeting. The Champions of Justice Award honors a select number of legislators who worked diligently to promote

legislation that helps protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Awards were presented to Senator Stephanie Chang, former Representative Laura Cox, Representative Diana Farrington, Representative Kristy Pagan, former Senator Tonya Schuitmaker and Representative Rebekah Warren.

New staff members Jess Averill, Jordan Kennedy and Maggie Devlin were introduced to the Board. Jess Averill formerly worked for Senator Jones and in that capacity worked with L. Rogers on addressing confidentiality and several other key pieces of legislation. Jordan Kennedy will be helping A. Thomashow and other staff members with the Michigan State Police grants for campus sexual assault. Maggie Devlin has worked with two child sexual assault programs in Georgia and wrote curriculum and manuals for the Children's Advocacy Centers of Michigan.

Y. Brantley was recently promoted to First Lieutenant with the Michigan State Police. She now has her own post at Tri-City encompassing Saginaw, Bay and Midland Counties and is currently the only female First Lieutenant in the Michigan State Police.

D. Cain is looking forward to working with the new administration under Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Robert Gordon is the new Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director. Director Gordon has worked in the administration of former President Barack Obama and is therefore very familiar with federal policies and processes, which is important because the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board receives much of its funding from federal grants.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

A. Povilaitis reported on a package of bills, HB 4003, 4004 and 4005, which would modify existing Michigan law to prevent persons from entering into a marriage contract who are under 18 years of age. HB 4003 amends MCL 551.103 to require that a person be 18 years of age in order to enter into a marriage contract, with or without the consent of a parent or legal guardian. HB 4004 amends MCL 551.201 to prohibit a probate judge from marrying any persons under marriageable age. HB 4005 amends MCL 551.51 by changing the age under which marriage is prohibited from 16 to 18 years of age. This legislation would take effect on January 1, 2020.

Board members raised several concerns regarding HB 4003-4005. One concern is that there is no exemption for people who wish to marry between 16 - 18 years of age (such as those who have entered military service and wish for their spouse to have military benefits). Another concern is the term marriage would be "void" (and not voidable) if a spouse was underage when they entered into a marriage contract. There are no protections under the proposed legislation for underage spouses who are coerced to lie about their age to enter into a marriage contract. Another concern is that prevention of marriage under the age of 18 contradicts current law permitting consensual sexual conduct between 16 and 18 years of age. The Board expressed strong concern related to the sealing of secret marriage records by the Probate Court for those under the age of consent to marriage. Sealed underage marriage licenses hinder the ability to track whether persons are having multiple marriages or to fully account for the number of underage marriages in our state.

MOTION: Moved by T. Cameron to delay action on HB 4003, 4004, and 4005 and ask that staff express concerns to the sponsor of the lead agency. Motion seconded by Y. Brantley. Motion carried.

Board members had an opportunity to review other bills of interest to the Board's constituency that had been introduced since the Board's November 9, 2018 meeting.

MOTION: Moved by T. Cameron to acknowledge that the Board reviewed the legislative bill logs. Motion seconded by Y. Brantley. Motion carried.

BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Moved by Y. Brantley to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by T. Cameron. Motion carried. The meeting ended at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Bobbitt
Board Secretary