

INFORMAL WORK SESSION MINUTES

June 10, 2004 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Room 108, Courthouse

PRESENT: Commissioners Kathy George, Mary P. Stern, and Leslie Lewis.

Staff: Kate Smith, Maria Ortiz, Dawn Cottrel, and Allison Musillami.

Guests: None.

A brief history of the Domestic Violence Task Force was provided from its beginnings with Henderson House, to the support of the District Attorney's office, to the broad array of groups involved today. Accomplishments of the Domestic Violence Task Force include: training on the effects of domestic violence on children, participation in the Hardy Myers discussion, governor's council forum on domestic violence, and letters of recommendations from task force committees.

Maria gave an overview of the basics of domestic violence. Domestic violence is a pattern of violence and coercive behaviors. Domestic violence is NOT marital conflict, mutual abuse, lovers' quarrel, or a private family matter. Domestic violence is about power and control. Children who witness this violence learn the pattern of violence. Domestic violence is emotional, psychological, physical, sexual or financial violence. **It is a pattern, not a choice. It is about power and control, not anger.** Local statistics show that reported incidents of domestic violence are increasing. On average, crime victim services assist with 30 to 35 restraining orders every month. Henderson house received over 1000 crisis line calls in 2003.

Kate discussed a Coordinated Community Response to domestic violence. Prevention and intervention of domestic violence requires a community-wide response, where all parts of the community provide safety and support for victims and provide a message to the batterer that domestic violence is not acceptable in Yamhill County.

Dawn discussed the balance between victim-blaming and system risk management. Every person, specifically county employees who come in contact with a victim of domestic violence, needs to have the language and words that do not re-victimize any person. System improvements need to take place to work towards a system that does not re-victimize.

The Yamhill County Board of Commissioners can support the Domestic Violence Task Force in the following ways: First, they can be "Allies" with the Task Force. Second, they can help hold batterers "Accountable". Third, they can "Advocate" for victim safety. Note: there is a free training June 28th and June 29th on domestic violence at the Community Corrections building.

Anne Britt
Secretary

Minutes prepared from notes taken by Allison Musillami.