

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**Santa Cruz Police Department  
Community Room  
155 Center Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Wednesday, April 9, 2003, 5:30 p.m.**

**Commissioners Present:**

Kim Austin  
Melissa Berrengé  
Amy Christey  
Judy Cox  
Gillian Greensite  
Lynn Harrison  
Anita Henri  
Alan Hiromura  
Tom Kelly  
Bob Lee

Jim McMillan for Larry Biggam  
Dixie Mitchell-Clow  
Francine Nickell  
Dee O'Brien  
Celia Organista  
Francesca Raphael  
Mary Simoni  
Heidi Simonson

**Commissioners Absent:**

JoAnn Allen (Excused)  
Julie Hopfner  
Charles Molnar  
Lisa Gifford  
Loretta Kuechle  
Ernesto Lopez Molina

Linda Starn  
Mark Tracy, Chair

**Others Present:**

Jenny Sarmiento  
Julie Schneider

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m. by Vice Chair Celia Organista.

**2. Introductions**

Commissioners and guests introduced themselves.

### **3. Approval of Minutes of March 12, 2003 Meeting**

On the motion of Judy Cox, and second by Lynn Harrison the minutes of February 12, 2003 were approved with the following corrections:

Change the Walnut Avenue Women's Shelter to Walnut Avenue Women's Center; correct spelling of Saramento to Sarmiento, and add that Celia Organista announced that Women's Crisis Support~Defensa de Mujeres are providing domestic violence parenting classes in Watsonville and Santa Cruz.

Motion passed with Gillian Greensite abstaining.

### **4. Oral Communication from the Community**

On the motion of Anita Henri second by Francesca Raphael the following item was added as item 10(d): Discussion of Domestic Violence Commission Website.

### **5. Oral Communication from the Community**

Jenny Sarmiento announced that FSAPV is scheduling a workshop that will focus on batterers in either the first or second week of June .

### **6. Impact on recent budgetary constraints upon providers, agencies probation, etc. What are some of the strategies agencies/providers are employing to address the crisis. What can agencies/providers assist each other.**

Tom Kelly stated that a part-time mediation position has been eliminated from the courts.

Commissioners felt it was too early to determine the full impact on their department/agency. A short discussion followed. This item will be placed on the agenda for next month for more discussion.

### **7. What projects are the organizations/agencies represented on the commission working on. Please share them briefly with the Commission.**

Bob Lee announced that the District Attorney's Office has implemented a new procedure in the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence cases. When a domestic violence call comes to an agency the agency calls the District Attorney's Office and an attorney and inspector respond to the call with the police agency. The attorney and inspector then interviews and videotape the victim, witness(es) and defendant. This practice will eliminate the need for more interviews and unnecessary follow-up, and will enable the attorney to successfully prosecute the case.

Francine Nickell discussed a tool Human Resources Agency are using to assess risk in

child abuse and neglect referrals including domestic violence. The findings provide useful information about the results of their intervention. They average 25 to 30 domestic violence referrals a month.

#### **8. Report of Court Task Force Meeting of April 8, 2003**

Tom Kelly stated that given the present budget concern, the courts are unable to provide family law services in South County. Celia Organista stated that she would continue to advocate for Family Law services in South County as soon as financial resources are available.

Celia Organista stated that Women's Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres will continue to provide transportation for victims in south County.

Tom Kelly announced that the Family Law Domestic Violence Court will now be scheduled for Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:00 a.m.

#### **9. Locations of Meetings**

The Agenda Review Committee will determine the locations for upcoming meetings. A schedule of meetings will be distributed at the next meeting.

#### **10. Reports from Committees**

##### **a. Evaluation**

Jim McMillan reported for Larry Biggam that the Committee will be meeting in about two weeks.

##### **b. Annual Report**

Alan Hiromura said that the criminal courts could not provide any statistics because they were changing computer platforms. He will be scheduling a meeting with the courts in June or July to provide the statistics they requested.

Alan Hiromura stated that the District Attorney's Office does not have an attorney to sit on the committee. He requested that anyone having domestic violence experience to volunteer to serve on the committee.

##### **c. Direct Services Committee**

Will be meeting on May 28 at noon to discuss gaps in services to families of domestic violence. They are inviting people from all areas of the community to ask for their input to begin to develop a plan for seamless services in the area of domestic violence.

Invitations will follow.

### **10. Announcements from Commissioners**

In observance of Victims' Rights Week, Bob Lee invited everyone to the District Attorney's Office Open House and Artist Reception scheduled for Thursday April 10 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Dee O'Brien invited everyone to the Walnut Avenue Women's Center's Annual Strawberry Festival scheduled for June 7, 2003.

### **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m. to ***May 14, 2003 at 5:30 p.m. at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, 809 Bay Avenue, Capitola, Pacific Ocean Room.***

Approved by Commission on:

Submitted by:

Jeanne M. Rodriguez, Secretary  
Domestic Violence Commission