

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT  
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Wednesday, September 12, 2001, 5:30 p.m.**

**Commissioners Present:**

JoAnn Allen  
Steve Belcher  
Alison Bernant for Larry Biggam  
Melissa Berrengé  
Kate Canlis  
Amy Christey  
Anita Henri, Vice Chair  
Laurie McWhorter

Francine Nickell  
Francesca Raphael  
Heidi Simonson  
Linda Starn  
Sam Stevens  
Mark Tracy  
Maria Isabel Vargas

**Commissioners Absent:**

Jane Brune  
Lisa Gifford  
Evelyn Hall  
Lynn Harrison (Excused)  
Alan Hiromura (Excused)  
Loretta Kuechle (Excused)  
Christine McGuire, Chair (Excused)

Heather Morse  
Dee O'Brien (Excused)  
Celia Organista (Excused)  
John Rhoads  
Barbara Schaller  
Mary Simoni (Excused)

**Others Present:**

Rahn Garcia  
Karen Gillette  
David Rabow  
Julie Schneider

Brita Wilder Ross  
Elizabeth Voorhees  
Allison Woodman  
Nicole Young

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Vice Chair Anita Henri. Introductions followed.

**2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda**

There were no deletions or additions to the agenda.

**3. Approval of Minutes of August 8, 2001**

On the motion of Linda Starn and second by Judge Stevens the minutes of August 8, 2001

were approved as submitted.

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

Allison Woodman recounted her experiences when her daughter was the victim of domestic violence in Contra Costa County. Ms. Woodman identified herself as a social worker who was familiar with both the social service system and the legal system. Despite her background she had difficulty assisting her daughter and navigating the system. She felt that the procedures were confusing and difficult for victims. The explanation concerning how to obtain a restraining order was difficult and confusing. She felt that they had received bad advice concerning going to a local hospital to document injuries. She was distressed that the Contra Costa County District Attorney had filed misdemeanor rather than felony charges.

Ms. Woodman felt that there should be a standard statewide protocol for domestic violence cases which was used in every county. She also recommended that victims be able to obtain a restraining order in any county and not be limited to the county where the crime occurred. She expressed her willingness to help put these ideas into practice and asked that the Commission take up her suggestions.

Chair Henri explained that this was her opportunity to address the commission but that neither action or discussion on these items could take place at this meeting as they were not on the agenda. Chair Henri said that Ms. Woodman's remarks would be included in the minutes and referred to the Executive Committee.

#### **5. Information Reports**

##### **a) Executive Committee**

Anita Henri reported that beginning in November, 2001, D.V. Awareness Month will be a standing agenda item.

Commissioners were asked to submit one name of an individual they would like to be recognized for their work on D.V. issues. Names should be sent or faxed (420-5821) to Julie Schneider at the Santa Cruz Police Department no later than Wednesday, October 3, 2001.

##### **b) Commissioners' Biographical Orientation**

Commissioner Allen made her presentation to the Commission.

#### **6. Subcommittee Updates:**

JoAnn Allen also requested Commissioners contact her with activities scheduled in order

to develop a comprehensive calendar of events and to avoid conflicts.

**b) Medical**

No report was submitted.

**c) Law Enforcement**

No report was submitted.

**7. D.V. Web Site**

Karen Gillette made a presentation to the Commission on how to use the Domestic Violence Commission web page. If Commissioners request changes or additions to the web site their request must be in writing and be submitted to the Executive Committee for their approval. If the Executive Committee approves the request it will be submitted to ISD

**8. Report on Court Calendar Changes (Stevens)**

Judge Stevens informed the Commission that the Santa Cruz Superior Court would change the calendaring of family law matters including domestic violence in January of 2002. The Court has created a Family Law Courts group which consists of three departments to be located geographically together on the back, or river view side, of the Court building. One court will handle dependency matters, one will handle family law and domestic violence cases where the parties have children in common, and the third will handle all domestic violence criminal cases other than those in family court. The Court feels this will allow specialization and improve their handling of these cases.

**9. Presentation on Brown Act by Chief Assistant County Counsel Rahn Garcia.**

Chief Assistant County Counsel Rahn Garcia addressed the Commission concerning the Brown Act. Mr. Garcia explained that the purpose of the Brown Act was to allow the public to know not only how governmental bodies vote but also to hear their deliberations. Therefore, Commission meetings and sub-committee meetings must have agendas and be noticed. Matters not on the agenda cannot be discussed or acted upon. A member of the community can speak to the Commission concerning items on the agenda and during the Oral Communications from the Community portion of the meeting. However, when a community member speaks to the Commission during the Oral Communications segment, no response can be made as the matter is not noticed.

The Agenda may serve as the notice and must be posted 72 hours in advance of the meeting. The Agenda/Notice must be mailed to all members of the Commission and any member of the public who has requested in writing to receive notice.

These same restrictions apply to the meetings of subcommittees which are comprised of a quorum of commissioners, are created by a legislative body, or have continuing subject matter jurisdiction such as the Education Committee and the Law Enforcement Committee.

It is possible to act on non-noticed items if the matter at issue came to light after the 72 hour period expired and it is necessary for the Commission to act. In these instances a vote requires a two-thirds majority or must be unanimous if less than 2/3 of the members are present.

A quorum is one half of the number of members actually appointed, not the number of positions available for appointment, plus one. Thus, if there are 22 named and seated commissioners a quorum is twelve.

Proxies are not permitted. Those commissioners authorized in the by-laws to designate a representative may sit or send a representative who may vote. All other commissioners must be present to vote.

Mr. Garcia answered questions from Commissioners and volunteered that he would be happy to provide information in the future on this subject.

#### **10. Update Regarding Commission Vacancies**

##### **a) Latino Community Representative**

Kate Canlis reported that Ernesto Lopez-Molina has submitted his application to the Board of Supervisors.

##### **b) Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgendered Representative**

Kate Canlis announced the Sergeant Amy Christey was appointed to the Commission by the Board of Supervisors on September 11, 2001.

#### **11. Domestic Violence Awareness Month Update**

- a) Calendar of Activities
- b) Awards Dinner -- Guest Speaker Ariel Hand, R.N., Coordinator Violence Intervention Program, Valley Medical Center
- c) Purple Ribbon Campaign

Anita Henri announced that a calendar of activities for Domestic Violence Awareness Month will be distributed to Commissioners.

Guest Speaker at the Domestic Violence Awards dinner will be Ariel Hand, Coordinator of the Violence Intervention Program at Valley Medical Center.

Sheriff Tracy and Chief Belcher will provide the purple ribbons that will be distributed.

**12. Nicole Young, on behalf of Celia Organista will address the Commission on Coordination of Wmen Crisis/Defensa with the Medical Sub-committee**

Nicole Young from Womens Crisis/Defensa spoke about a grant which enabled her agency to train medical personnel about reporting domestic violence. To track the effectiveness of the grant, records are kept of the numbers of reports from a medical provider before and after the presentation. She suggested that the medical subcommittee could participate with them in this project and that perhaps a second, follow-up video for medical providers could be produced.

Linda Starn said that the medical subcommittee had not met in some time. She said that she had heard from Loretta Kuechle that she no longer had the time to chair the subcommittee. Discussion about the future of the medical subcommittee and possible coordination with the Women's Crisis/Defensa medical training grant was referred to the Executive Committee.

**13. Announcements/Oral Communication from Commissioners**

Kate Canlis announced that Commissioners will be receiving an invitation to the District Attorney's Office open house. The event is scheduled for October 3, 2001. Copies of the District Attorney's Office Domestic Violence Policy and Protocol, and Commissioners will also have an opportunity to meet with the District Attorney's Office Domestic Violence Team.

Laurie McWhorter announced that the Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women (CPVAW) is commemorating its 20th anniversary on Friday, October 5, 2001 at 8:00 p.m. at the Civic Auditorium. Commissioners were invited to attend. Admission is free.

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m. The next meeting will be October 10, 2001 at the Sheriff's Posse House.

Approved by Commission on: October 10, 2001

Submitted by:

Jeanne M. Rodriguez, Secretary  
Domestic Violence Commission

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