



Arizona Human
Trafficking Council

Arizona Human Trafficking Council

June 3, 2020, 9:00 AM

Virtual Meeting

1700 West Washington Street, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

A general meeting of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was convened on June 3, 2020 virtually, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (18)	Members Absent (8)
Cindy McCain, Co-Chair	Kate Brophy McGee
Gil Orrantia, Co-Chair	Nathaniel Brown
Sarah Beaumont	Marsh Calhoun
Heather Carter	David Curry
Tom Salow (proxy for Cara Christ)	James Gallagher
Doug Coleman	Lois Lucas
Jennifer Crawford	Rachel Mitchell
Mike Faust	Jim Waring
Maria Cristina Fuentes	
Debbie Johnson	
Joseph Kelroy	
Sarah Kent	
Zora Manjencich	
Tony Mapp (proxy for Heston Silbert)	
Sheila Polk	
Jill Rable	
Dominique Roe-Sepowitz	
Brian Steele	
Staff and Guests Present (14)	
Kim Brooks	Andrea Videbeck
Vianney Careaga	Leona Morales
Kristin Sorensen	Linda Singhurse
Claire Merkel	Ryan Soto
Joanna Jauregui	
Lisa Lucchesi	
Angela Salomon	
Samantha Caplinger	
Lacey Fisher	
Pamela Svoboda	

Call to Order

- **Mr. Gil Orrantia, Co-Chair**, called the Arizona Human Trafficking Council meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. with 18 members and 14 staff and guests present. **Mr. Orrantia** reviewed the procedures of how the remote meeting platform would be facilitated.

Roll Call

- **Mr. Orrantia, Co-Chair**, conducted roll call of the Council and took note of Councilmember proxies.

Approval of Minutes

- **Mr. Orrantia, Co-Chair**, introduced **Mrs. Cindy McCain, Co-Chair**.
- **Mrs. McCain** requested a review of the **February 19, 2020** meeting minutes.
 - **Ms. Maria Cristina Fuentes** motioned to accept the **February 19, 2020** minutes.
 - **Mrs. McCain** seconded the motion.
 - The motion passed with no dissenting votes at 9:08 a.m.

COVID-19 Impact & Updates

- **Mrs. Cindy McCain, Co-Chair**, introduced the next item on the agenda. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the main purpose of the meeting is to provide the Council updates from partners who continue to provide services and support to combat trafficking across the state.

Arizona Department of Child Safety

- **Mrs. McCain** introduced the first presenter **Mr. Mike Faust** of the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) for an update on activities within DCS. **Mr. Faust** began his update by ensuring Councilmembers that amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Arizona Department of Child Safety is doing what it can to stay on mission. Over the course of the pandemic, hotline calls to report child neglect and abuse have dropped by 20-25%. The major source of reporting comes from schools. During an average week, the department would receive 600 phone calls from teachers which speaks to the concern teachers have for their students. There have also been 420 adoptions in Arizona, which, comparatively, is atypical with the rest of the country. Last week the department transitioned to in-person visitations between parents and children. Up to that point, the children had gone 10 weeks without seeing their parents. The department has also sent weekly updates on the children to their biological parents and caregivers.
- **Ms. Maria Cristina Fuentes** asked about youth aging out of the care system and about abuse/neglect prevention.
- **Mr. Faust** responded by informing the Council of the department's advisory board that it is aimed at engaging youth from the care system. The department is looking into ways in which it can expand service to support more youth aging out. In terms of prevention, "when in doubt, report." The biggest support the department is missing with the COVID-19 closures is the role that summer programs have typically played in prevention.

Mr. Gil Orrantia, Co-Chair, noted that **Mr. Jim Gallagher** of the Phoenix Police Department was unable to join the meeting, therefore no presentation will be made by Phoenix Police Department.

Mercy Care

- **Mrs. McCain** introduced **Lisa Lucchesi** of Mercy Care for an update. **Ms. Lucchesi** began her update by informing the Council that since October 17, 2019, they have identified 250 youth that have come to them through the collaborative. Additionally, there has been a spike in non-DCS youth that have come to them. They are working with Aurora to provide inpatient assessment to support higher levels of care and more youth disclosures. St. Luke's Hospital has been one their primary healthcare partners which has formed its own Human Trafficking Unit to provide proper care to these victims. In terms of transportation, the response has shifted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They have found it difficult for local law enforcement organizations to help with transportation.

- **Mr. Orrantia** inquired about other ways in which they have been handling transportation if local law enforcement organizations have been difficult to assist.
- **Ms. Lucchesi** responded by lauding the great partnership they have with the Arizona Department of Child Safety. When one of their youth is involved, DCS provides transportation.
- **Mr. Orrantia** encouraged Councilmembers to speak with **Ms. Lucchesi** if they can help with their transportation needs.

Phoenix Dream Center

- **Mr. Orrantia** introduced **Brian Steele** of Phoenix Dream Center for an update. **Mr. Steele** began his update by informing the Council that the Center had shared two surveys with 30 service providers, of which, eight felt comfortable responding to how COVID-19 has affected their services. Of the respondents, services had been provided to 180 juveniles and more than 200 young adults. Asymptomatic persons have been required to isolate using hotels. The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has assisted many of these service providers by providing PPE and hand sanitizer. Respondents have also seen an increase in requests for services as a result of group homes reducing intake numbers due to COVID-19. Financially, the respondents have also taken advantage of the payroll protection from the federal government and as a result, there have been no reports of loss of employment. Event fundraising has also gone down, but individual giving has increased. The service providers also report being at capacity and are looking at ways to expand.
- **Mr. Steele** also thanked **Mr. Faust** and the Arizona Department of Child Safety for their continued help.

StreetLightUSA

- **Mrs. McCain** introduced **Angela Salomon** of StreetLightUSA. **Dr. Salomon** began her update by informing the Council that the Victim Services Workgroup is working on a series of Training videos to be made available to service providers. The Workgroup's intention is to have these resources available by the end of the month. In terms of StreetLightUSA, as of yesterday, there have been no cases of COVID-19. They have implemented health guidelines in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and have adapted to telemedicine and telecounseling. Their staff is 50% working off-site and early this week they began to bring back more staff to the office on an alternating schedule.

Maricopa Association of Governments

- **Mr. Orrantia** introduced **Sarah Kent** of the Maricopa Association of Governments for an update. **Ms. Kent's** update was focused on the impact COVID-19 had on LGBTQ+ victims of exploitation. LGBTQ+ persons are more likely to work in jobs in highly affected industries, often with more exposure and/or higher economic sensitivity to the COVID-19 crisis. LGBTQ+ persons are also at an increase of experiencing homelessness and in-turn, increased risk of COVID-19. According to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, LGBTQ+ youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than non-LGBTQ+ youth. The CDC reports that the effects of COVID-19 on the health of racial and ethnic minority groups is still emerging, however, current data suggest a disproportionate burden of illness and death among racial and ethnic minority groups. According to the Trevor Project, COVID-19 also has serious implications for the mental health of LGBTQ+ persons. Overall, there is an increased need and a decrease in services due to COVID-19. However, there are resources available and **Ms. Kent** provided those resources in her meeting material. *See Meeting Materials 1.*

ASU Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention

- **Mrs. McCain** introduced **Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** of the ASU Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention for an update. **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** shared with the Council the first infographic in a series related to child sex trafficking. The purpose of sharing this information is to inform the Council and the public the ways in which children can be exploited and trafficked. The infographic was compiled based on an eight-year exploratory study in Las Vegas, Nevada based on law enforcement reports from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Vice Enforcement and Sex Trafficking unit. These reports were collected for 833 child sex trafficking cases from 2011 to 2019. It is important to note that the child sex trafficking cases did not include cases where

a child and an adult victim were trafficked by the same trafficker. Within the 833 child sex trafficking cases, 922 child victims were identified. For full details, *See Meeting Materials 2.*

- **Ms. Jill Rable** asked about outreach efforts to passenger train companies.
- **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** responded by informing the Council that outreach had been done to train companies to look out for the signs of trafficking, and added that there can still be improvements made in this industry.
- **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** also updated the Council that the Arizona Attorney General's Office awarded approximately \$275,000 in grant funding to organizations to provide support to human trafficking victims. An additional \$310,000 was also allocated to combat human trafficking by the Phoenix City Council. The ASU Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention has also embarked on a new project to explore the link between missing and murdered indigenous persons and human trafficking.

Phoenix Children's Hospital

- **Mr. Orrantia** introduced **Sarah Beaumont** of Phoenix Children's Hospital for an update. **Dr. Beaumont** informed the Council that many of the outreach sites that they had partnered with have either shut down or reduced their services. This reduces their ability to reach youth on the streets. Additionally, the Hospital had to stop using their mobile clinic due to safety precautions because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, they have shifted to a telehealth platform and remote support. They hope to potentially have their mobile health service center up and running, but complications with decreasing infectious spread may inhibit that reopening.
- **Mr. Steele** complimented the Hospital on their work.

Maricopa County Attorney's Office

- **Mrs. McCain** introduced **Samantha Caplinger** and **Lacey Fisher** of the Maricopa County Attorney's Office. **Ms. Caplinger** and **Ms. Fisher** are front line attorneys in the Sex Crimes Bureau who handle cases including the human trafficking of minors and adults. **Ms. Caplinger** began her update by informing the Council that they have seen less cases being handled proactively, such as involving sting operations, and have seen an increase in cases being handled reactively. There are also less offenders that are being held on bond. To highlight the issue, **Ms. Fisher** described a case from Scottsdale that involved a youth that was being trafficked. The incident was initially reported by a patrol officer, who understood the terminology and signs of trafficking, and was able to intervene. The trafficker was released on her signature with pretrial services and fled to California. They are now working in cooperation with other agencies to get this individual back to Arizona. **Ms. Caplinger** also brought up their inability to prosecute sex crimes at this time due to the lack of trials and the ability of the courts to safely assembling juries amid COVID-19.
- **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** also brought up issues that she had seen with victims compensation and asked Councilmembers to be mindful of them.

Maricopa County Juvenile Court and STRENGTH Court

- **Mr. Orrantia** introduced **Judge Pamela Svoboda** of the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and STRENGTH Court for an update. **Judge Svoboda** informed the council that juvenile court operations continue everyday through video and telephonic conferencing. The STRENGTH Court continues to operate as well.
- **Mrs. McCain** asked about the progress of the data sharing between the courts and research partners.
- **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** discussed briefly the progress she has seen on her side as a research partner, and shared with the Council the areas in which data sharing could be improved upon.
- **Judge Svoboda** responded that they will work to continue to address those needs and areas for data sharing.

Mrs. McCain thanked the presenters for providing these updates to the Council.

Adjournment

- **Mr. Gil Orrantia, Co-Chair**, echoed **Mrs. Cindy McCain's, Co-Chair**, thanks to the presenters and thanked everyone for joining the meeting. **Mrs. McCain** also reminded the Council about the need to also focus on the area of labor trafficking and the dangers associated with it.
- **Mr. Orrantia** added that GOYFF will be in touch with Councilmembers regarding future meeting dates.
- **Mr. Orrantia** entertained a motion to adjourn.
 - **Ms. Jennifer Crawford** moved to adjourn the meeting.
 - **Mrs. McCain** seconded the motion.
 - The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Dated 3 of June 2020
Arizona Human Trafficking Council
Respectfully Submitted By:
Vianney M. Careaga
GOYFF

Final