

# LOUISVILLE METRO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION COORDINATING COUNCIL

## Meeting Summary Tuesday, December 11, 2018

**Members Presents:** Chief Steve Conrad and Ellie Kerstetter, Co-Chairs, Pam Darnall, Linda Bledsoe, Marcia Roth, Kathy Paulin, David Nicholson/Samantha Graves, Tina Ward-Pugh/Chris Owens, Elizabeth Wessels-Martin/Marguerite Thomas, Chris Foster, Ingrid Geiser/Anne Schiavone Dyke, Chief Judge Tara Hagerty, Mike Littlefield/Charles Gootee, Major David Allen/Sgt. Leigh Burke, Ruben Pavlov, and Kelly Williamson.

**Staff & Guests:** Mayor Greg Fischer, Professor Emily Sack, Jessie Halladay, Stephanie Stidham, Darrell Aniton, Rianna Ayala, Robin Nelson, Martin Baker, Don Griffin, Tanner Bielefeld Pruitt, Kim Allen, Jamie Allen and Faith Augustine.

### I. Welcome/Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ellie Kerstetter, Co-Chair, who welcomed members and guests and expressed appreciation for their attendance. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves. Ellie called on Chief Conrad to introduce the presentation of the community assessment report.

### II. DVPCC Background and Community Assessment Overview

Chief Conrad recalled that the DVPCC last commissioned a study of the local system response to domestic violence twenty years ago. That study led to a series of recommendations and positive changes including the creation of the Domestic Violence Intake Center and the implementation of the Lethality Assessment Program. In 2005, a local System Snapshot review was conducted as a joint project of the DVPCC and The Mary Byron Project to identify progress since the 1998 report as well areas requiring continued attention.

In the summer of 2016, Chief Conrad noted that interest was expressed by DVPCC members in conducting another comprehensive community assessment and a small work group was formed to explore the possibility and identify an expert to conduct the study. Chief Conrad advised that LMPD agreed to fund the study and a contract was established with Professor Sack during the summer of 2017. Chief Conrad reported that Professor Sack came highly recommended after conducting similar work in other large cities like Anchorage and Portland, Maine and called attention to a copy of her bio included in the agenda packet.

Chief Conrad reported that Professor Sack was in attendance to present the final report and findings from the assessment process. Based on his review of several preliminary drafts, Chief Conrad complimented Professor Sack on conducting such a thorough review and expressed his excitement about the work ahead while noting that the DVPCC is going to have an extensive "to do" list.

### **III. The Louisville Metro System Response to Domestic Violence: Assessment, Evaluation, and Recommendations**

Professor Sack began by thanking Mayor Fischer, Chief Conrad, the staff of the Metro Criminal Justice Commission, and the Mary Byron Project for their support and assistance during the review process. She briefly discussed the prior studies conducted in 1998 and 2005 and outlined the goals for the current assessment, which included highlighting improvements in the system response since the prior studies; documenting continuing system gaps; identifying emerging needs; offering recommendations and suggestions, informed by national best practices; and providing guidance for action by system partners.

Professor Sack emphasized that the report is intended to be a living document and that while not everyone will agree with every finding, it is her hope that the report will provide the impetus for renewed discussion, brainstorming and collaboration. She reviewed the timeline for the assessment process and thanked members and community partners who reviewed preliminary drafts of the report to ensure its accuracy. She also provided an overview of agency representatives that were interviewed; highlighted her observations of system processes; and outlined data collected on overall system operation. Professor Sack thanked agency representatives for their ongoing commitment to reducing and preventing domestic violence and their willingness to work to ensure that the assessment was as complete as possible.

With regard to the report findings, Professor Sack began by highlighting a number of areas of progress since the 1998 and 2005 reports including the DVIC, expansion of protection order eligibility, electronic protective order processing, development of the LAP, the Arise to Safety Program, and beginning implementation of the ODARA Assessment. As an additional area of progress, Professor Sack cited the institutionalization of the DVPCC and the work being done by the Fatality Review Committee. She briefly explained the structure of the report and noted that all the recommendations were consolidated into a list at the end of the report. She advised that she would only be discussing highlights of the assessment and encouraged members to read the entire report.

Before discussing specific areas of the review process, Professor Sack identified the major themes of her findings which included the need for increased consistency; greater communication among agencies and courts; increased collaboration; institutionalization of procedures; meaningful data collection and sharing; wrap-around victim services; identification and service delivery to high-risk victims; increased accountability for offenders and compliance with court conditions, including BIPs; and increased targeting and monitoring of high risk offenders.

Professor Sack outlined key points from each category of the review process along with the related recommendations as delineated in the PowerPoint presentation included in the agenda packet. The areas of review included the following categories:

\*Services and Advocacy for Victims of Domestic Violence

\*Data Collection, Information Coordination and Access, and Utilization of Information across Agencies

- \*Processing of Protective Orders
- \*Accountability of Court-Ordered Participants in Batterer Intervention Programs
- \*Domestic Violence Firearms Regulation and Protocols throughout the Justice System
- \*The Criminal Justice Process
- \*Interagency Coordination and Planning
- \*Domestic Violence Training and Resource Needs for System and Community Partners
- \*Public Awareness of Domestic Violence and Prevention Efforts
- \*The Environment of the Courthouse

She provided detailed background information in support of her recommendations for domestic violence firearms regulation and protocols throughout the justice system and a specialized domestic violence docket.

In discussing the next steps, Professor Sack recommended that the DVPCC, Metro Government and the Metro Criminal Justice Commission develop a plan for considering the recommendations in the report and monitoring their implementation. She expressed her hope that the report will serve as a starting point for future action.

#### **IV. Remarks from Mayor Fischer**

Mayor Fischer began by thanking Professor Sack for such a comprehensive evaluation and the DVPCC Co-Chairs and members for their initiative in undertaking the study. He also thanked all of the community agency representatives who provided valuable data, information, insights and perspectives to enable a thorough review process. He acknowledged that the report has been eagerly awaited and offered the support of the Metro Office for Women as the committee moves forward to the implementation phase. He advised that it is often difficult to get a big system with numerous moving parts to work together but is optimistic that this can be achieved since it has been accomplished in other areas of government.

Mayor Fischer noted that while it is always reassuring to hear about areas of progress, it is even more important to focus on continuous improvement. He reflected on the numerous community challenges related to domestic violence, including homelessness, and emphasized the importance of the “Cradle to Career” initiative and addressing achievement gaps. He noted that Kentucky has a “backward view” on gun safety and urged members to never stop advocating for common sense firearms safety measures. Locally, Mayor Fischer reported that Louisville experienced seven domestic violence homicides in January 2018 with a total of 13 domestic violence fatalities year-to-date as compared to an average of nine domestic homicides annually over recent years.

Mayor Fischer offered the support of his administration in working on legislative recommendations included in the report. He stressed the importance of ensuring that victims receive the help they need, and that information is available in multiple languages. In closing, he noted that while implementation of the recommended actions will not occur overnight, he believes the report will promote renewed collaboration and coordination across the system. It is his hope that the report will unite and reinvigorate the community

in efforts to promote education about the dynamics and lethality factors related to domestic violence and to respond effectively and compassionately to the needs of victims while holding offenders accountable.

#### **V. Discussion/Questions**

Ellie opened the floor for questions and discussion of the report. Marcia indicated that she plans to review and digest the report in greater detail and hopes that members will also read the full report and recommendations from the perspective of their respective agencies. She thanked Professor Sack for providing such a great outline and noted that some of the recommendations may be aspirational while others can be more readily implemented. She suggested that members come to the next meeting prepared to discuss the next steps. Chief Conrad advised that the next DVPCC meeting will be held on January 24, 2019 and he has contemplated asking someone to chair a subcommittee to develop a plan for moving forward on the recommendations. Mayor Fischer offered the assistance of the Metro Office of Performance Improvement to the DVPCC in developing a strategic implementation plan.

Following discussion, Marcia made a formal motion that members be asked to read the full report and come to the January meeting prepared to vote on accepting the report and establishing a process for reviewing and implementing the recommendations. Pam Darnall seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Ellie suggested that individuals interested in serving on the subcommittee send their names to Jamie Allen at the Criminal Justice Commission Office. Jamie will assume the staff report role for the DVPCC since Kim Allen will be retiring at the end of December. Mayor Fischer congratulated Kim on her upcoming retirement and applauded her 34 years of public service to the community.

#### **VI. Adjourn/Next Meeting**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DVPCC will be held on Thursday, January 24, 2019 in the Crown Room at 12 noon.