



## Safe Harbor Commission Meeting Minutes

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM, November 17, 2022

Microsoft Teams

**Meeting Attendees:** Commissioner Candice Broce, Jay Neal, April Hale, Theresa Schiefer, Judith Fouts, Grant Thomas, Regina Quick, LaTanya Hunt, Jackie Tate, Renita Jeffries, Jordan Watson, Ron Stay, Kristy Carter, Naeshia McDowell, Kate Templeton, Julie Wade, Elizabeth Green, Sujata Tah, Trishi Malhotra Dahlia Brown, Hunter Ferguson, and Salena Perry.

### Called to Order:

- I. **Welcome and Call to Order –Commissioner Candice Broce**
  - a. The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Broce at 1:01pm.
  - b. Roll Call
    - i. Salena took roll, which resulted in a quorum. The Commission members that were present were Commissioner Broce, Jay Neal, April Hale, Judith Fouts, Theresa Schiefer, and Grant Thomas.
  - c. Approval of Minutes
    - i. The motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting was made by April Hale and seconded by Judith Fouts.
    - ii. The motion was approved unanimously.
  - d. Approval of Agenda
    - i. The motion to approve the agenda was made by April Hale and seconded by Theresa Schiefer.
    - ii. The motion was approved unanimously.
  - e. General Updates and announcements
    - i. Commissioner Broce mentioned that DHS and CJCC are working to create and publish a press release for the most recent grant awards that the Commission has made.
- II. **Standard Order of Business**
  - a. Introduction of Grant Thomas
    - i. Commissioner Broce introduced Grant Thomas, our most recent Safe Harbor Commission member.
    - ii. He holds a bachelor's degree and an MBA from the University of Georgia.
    - iii. He and his team advise the governor on healthcare policy, pending legislation, as well as coordinate healthcare policy.
  - b. Update on the Riley vs GA Club Execs Case
    - i. Attorney Ron Stay provided updates concerning the case.
    - ii. Attorney Stay gave some background concerning the litigation before he brought the Commission up to speed on the case.
    - iii. The Georgia Supreme Court heard arguments at the end of 2021 and issued a decision in early 2022.



- iv. The Supreme Court dismissed the plaintiff, the clubs and club executives due to a legal technicality.
- v. The case was originally filed when Lynn Riley was the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue (she was named as the defendant).
- vi. When former Commissioner Riley transitioned from that position and Robin Crittenden acquired it, the motion for the court to substitute former Commissioner Riley to former Commissioner Crittenden didn't happen.
- vii. The decision was made to send the case back to trial court.
- viii. Attorney Stay mentioned that the Safe Harbor Commission can continue using funding and continue the work during litigation.
- ix. Jordan Watson is available for updates concerning the case.
- c. Updates on current Safe Harbor Commission Funding
  - i. Renita Jeffries and Sujata Tah provided an update of available Safe Harbor Commission funds.
  - ii. The funding available in SFY22 was \$351,005.
  - iii. The funding available in SFY23, is \$110,586.
  - iv. The total amount of available funding from House Bill 911 is \$461,591.
- d. Grantee updates from CJCC-SFY23
  - i. Four grantees were awarded a total of \$351,005 in SFY23.
  - ii. The awardees were Micah's Promise, Tharros Place, University of Georgia CEASE Clinic, and Wellspring Living.
  - iii. The awardees submitted progress reports to CJCC on October 30<sup>th</sup> that covered grant activities from July 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup> of 2022.
  - iv. Micah's Promise was awarded funds to support the cost of furnishing 2 community rooms, 12 bedrooms, and staff offices. They are planning a ribbon cutting on December 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - v. Tharros Place was awarded funds to support hiring an Outreach Coordinator along with printing supplies.
  - vi. The CEASE Clinic was awarded funds to support continued staff salaries and effort to expand services.
  - vii. Wellspring Living was awarded funds to support access to services for noncustodial minor human trafficking victims by 290.86 days of residential care using trauma-informed, evidence-based interventions to achieve increased safety and wellbeing for victims.
- e. CACGA Presentation
  - i. Naeshia McDowell, Director of CSEC Response Team (Children's Advocacy Centers of Georgia) gave data updates from the Regional Child and Youth Care Coordinator & Runaway Prevention Specialist.
  - ii. From January 2022-September 2022, 62 youth referrals were received for the youth in the Metro area. Those referrals were received from Law enforcement,



the Division of Family and Children Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Children's Advocacy Centers, Medical Professionals and the Greater Community.

- iii. From January 2022-September 2022, 589 services were provided for 80 clients which included assistance with safe housing, comprehensive assessments, information and referral, crisis intervention, parent education and multi-agency correspondence.
  - iv. During the time period of January 2022-September 2022, the Regional Child and Youth Care Coordinator & Runaway Prevention Specialist provided CSEC Education and Awareness training to 100 community members and multi-disciplinary professionals.
  - v. Ms. McDowell also provided data on the demographics of youth served as well as statewide referrals. A copy of the presentation will be made available to the Commission members.
- f. Update from Tharros Place
- i. Julie Wade, Executive Director of Tharros Place, gave updates on the organization's progress since receiving funding.
  - ii. In addition to Safe Harbor funds, Tharros Place has received a grant from the Department of Justice Office of Victims of Crime. It's a three-year grant for residential services for operations.
  - iii. Tharros Place is currently under contract for a facility in Pooler, GA that will provide space for 12 beds, giving individuals their own rooms.
  - iv. Ms. Wade plans to close on the property in March and open in the summer of 2023.
  - v. Tharros Place has made great progress with garnering support from surrounding communities through community meetings and school presentations.
- g. Reinstatement of Sub-Committees
- i. The Commission agreed to think of ideas for new subcommittees and discuss them at the next meeting.
  - ii. Commission members agreed to submit those ideas to Salena and indicate if they have any preference on serving as an officer on the committee.

### III. **Next Steps**

- a. Commission members were asked to think of the types of sub-committees that they would like to have moving forward and present at the next meeting.
- b. The next Safe Harbor Commission meeting will be in January.
- c. Salena will be emailing the previous list of sub-committees to the Commission as well as the bylaws.
- d. Salena agreed to reach out to the Grace Commission for a potential joint meeting in the half of the year.
- e. Salena also agreed to email the presentations from CACGA and CJCC to the Commission members.



IV. **Public Comment**

- a. Commissioner Broce opened the meeting for public comments, however, there were no public comments made.

V. **Adjournment**

- a. The motion to adjourn was made by April and seconded by Judith. The motion passed unanimously.

**Meeting Adjourned: 2:01pm**