**Safe Harbor Commission Meeting**

January 17, 2020

2 Martin L. King Jr. Drive SE, Suite 1252 Atlanta, GA 30334

**Commission members present:** Tom Rawlings (DFCS Division Director), Theresa Shiefer, Honorable Angela Rogers, April Pair, Judith Fouts, Hal Jones, and Major Andy Hite

**Commission members absent:** Dianne Scoggins

**Other attendees:** First Lady Kemp, Nicholas Smith (Director of External Affairs and Public Policy, Attorney General’s Office), Alex Sponseller (Senior Assistant Attorney General), Kristy Carter (Victim Assistance Division Director of Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), Amy Hutsell (Program Director with CJCC Victim Assistance), Jay Neal (Executive Director of CJCC), Steven Hatfied (Deputy Director of CJCC), Tyrone Oliver (Commissioner of DJJ), Rachel Davidson, (Director of the Office of the Child Advocate).

**DFCS staff:** Dahlia Bell-Brown, Susan Boatwright, and Salena Perry

* Welcome and housekeeping by Director Tom Rawlings. The meeting started officially at 1:07pm.
* Director Rawlings discussed the purpose of the gathering and mentioned that Lady Kemp would be stopping by to address the Commission members. Everyone agreed to pause the meeting and give the floor to Lady Kemp when she arrived.
* Introductions by board members and attendees.
* Review of the agenda.
* First Lady Kemp arrived at 1:14pm and addressed the Commission. She explained that putting an end to Sex Trafficking is on the top of her and Governor Kemp’s priority list. She thanked the Commission for their efforts in helping to assist in putting an end to Sex Trafficking.
* Overview of Legislation and Update on the Pending Lawsuit/Nicholas Smith and Alex Sponseller.
* Explanation of the purpose and responsibilities of the Safe Harbor Commission/Alex Sponseller
  + - Anytime there is a quorum, the meeting is open to the public, votes in that meeting must be recorded, minutes/notes must be published and there should be at least a day’s notice of when the meeting will take place so that the public can attend unless the Commission is having a closed meeting The explanation of the duties and expectations of this Commission can be found in Georgia Code Section 15-200-209.
    - This Commission has its own fund that is separated from the General Fund.
    - Code Section 15.21.202 in Sub-section C explains how money from the Commission’s fund can be dispersed (providing care, rehabilitation services, residential housing, health services, social services, safe houses and towards awareness and prevention for becoming a sexually exploited child, necessary operating expenses for the Commission).
    - The Commission is authorized to accept other sources of money to fund the program (See Section 208). Adult Entertainment businesses are being charged 1% of total annual income (See Section 209).
    - The current funds that have been collected from Adult Entertainment businesses is roughly $300,000, however, the Commission is not able to spend it until Judge Russell rules on the matter.
* Review of the Safe Harbor/Rachel’s Law Act Litigation Arguments/ Alex Sponseller
* Review of the Safe Harbor/Rachel’s Law Act Litigation Timeline/ Alex Sponseller
* Overview of the initial legislation and amendment(s).
* Background and updates since the passage of the Safe Harbor/Rachel’s Law Act/Kristy Carter and Amy Hutsell. Items discussed were:
  + - The DMST/CSEC (Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking/ Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) human trafficking issue in Georgia
    - Accurate data on human trafficking in Georgia
    - Data Sharing with DJJ, Georgia Cares and DFCS
    - Funding administered by CJCC to combat this issue- $6.3 million in grant funding for law enforcement response, direct victims’ services, Receiving Hope Center, Coordination of projects addressing all the aspects of the human trafficking continuum and training to improve the criminal justice and medial response to human trafficking.
    - Georgia Standards for DMST safe homes and certification process
    - Resources available to serve CSEC/DMST victims
    - The Receiving Hope Center
    - The DMST/CSEC Data Sharing Project
    - The Judge’s Benchbook for presiding over CSEC/DMST cases
    - The Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force
    - The Georgia Coalition to Combat Human Trafficking
* Next Steps/ Director Rawlings
  + - Choosing a Chair for the Commission. Hal Jones agreed to be the Chair of the Commission and Director Rawlings agreed to send a letter to the Governor recommending Hal as the Chair.
    - Look at what’s going on in terms of DMST and start looking at programs that are working and our current protocol. Review of the current protocol (policy). Plan for each meeting and get different groups and organizations to come up and talk about their efforts to help DMST.
    - Tom asked: What do we do about the money collected (roughly $300,000) from adult entertainment businesses that is in the bank now? A suggestion was made to issue a press release about the Safe Harbor Commission and mention the Commission’s anticipation concerning the ruling on the lawsuit.
    - It was agreed that the Commission would meet quarterly. DFCS will schedule the meetings. Two weeks before the meetings, the agenda will be distributed. The Commission also agreed to set up a tour to visit the Receiving Hope Center.
    - The Commission agreed to shape its mission with a focus on the children.
* There was a motion to adjourn by Judge Rogers and a second by April Pair. The meeting was dismissed at 2:50pm.