



STATE OF WASHINGTON
SEX OFFENDER POLICY BOARD
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MINUTES
Sex Offender in the Community Committee
Tuesday, March 3, 2009
11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Teleconference

Members Present

Mary Ellen Stone
Kecia Rongen
Brad Meryhew
Andrew Neiditz
Brooke Burbank
Anmarie Aylward
Lindsay Palmer

Staff Present

Shoshana Kehoe
Andi May

Others Present

Amy Pearson, Office of Crime Victim Advocacy

I. Call to Order

Chair Mary Ellen Stone called the meeting to order at 11:15am

II. Introductions

Everyone present introduced themselves

III. Approval of Minutes

MOTION # 1 APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 3, 2009 MINUTES

Moved: Brad Meryhew

Seconded: Brooke Burbank

Passed: Unanimously

IV. Ad Hoc Review Process Committee

Mary Ellen updated the Committee on the SOPB “Review Process Policy” for those not present at the February 19th SOPB meeting.

The WATSA Seminar last weekend discussed the Everett Task Force recommendations; this reminded the Committee when people come to us and ask for things, we need to make sure that individuals understand completely why we are or are not doing something.

This spurred a lively discussion about the Board’s new policy. This Committee raised concerns that by including a group or individual’s proposal or suggestions in a “best practices” file or posting it on the SOPB website, the group or individual make get the impression that the Board endorsed the proposal or suggestion. This lead to a series of questions about the new policy including: Does the SOPB or the Committees endorse anything? If so, what is the process for endorsing? What criteria is used to determine if something should be endorsed?

Committee Decision: The committee will ask the Board for further some clarity on the review process that the Board adopted at its meeting on February 19, 2009.

V. Committee's Role in Relationship to the Other SOPB Committees

The Committee discussed whether it had a role and addressed issues different from the other SOPB Committees.

While the Benchmarks Committee will touch on housing issues during its look at supervision and reentry of male sex offenders, it will not be able to provide a thorough review of the many barriers that exist for all type of sex offenders in accessing housing.

The Benchmarks Committee is primarily focusing on registerable male sex offenders. The Sex Offender in the Community Committee would like to expand that population in its review to include juvenile and non-registerable sex offenders. When Governor Gregoire developed the SOPB she called for sex offender housing to be a priority. Therefore, it is critical that this issue be addressed in its own right.

There was a consensus by the Committee that it has a purpose unique to the other SOPB committees.

The Committee then brainstormed a list of barriers for sex offenders in obtaining housing along with what the Committee may want to address in the future.

Barriers:

- The Committee identified community attitudes and leadership concerns as barriers to housing.
- There is a lack of shelter for offenders; they often cannot stay in a shelter for any period of time due to their sex offender status.
- There are all kinds of stages where there are barriers. The community will be a pivotal player in providing preventative education to the residents and ridding of those barriers.

Areas of Focus:

- What is the role of communities and city government? Their priority right now appears to be alleviating the fears of schools and residents.
- Should sex offenders be in one housing complex or allowed to spread out amongst the locality's neighborhoods?
- There was quite a bit of discussion about wanting to focus on prevention education. The Committee would like to get more information about how communities react to sex offenders being a part of their community. The Committee is concerned about how

to educate and engage with communities without creating a possible backlash from the education.

- The Committee would also like to shift communities from looking to law enforcement to resolve their fears and concerns, to having them address the issues as a community.
- The Committee identified the two primary areas it would like to address: barriers and engaging the community.

VI. Designing a Work Plan

The Committee reviewed and discussed the work plan drafted by Shoshana. The Committee made a number of constructive suggestions. Shoshana will incorporate the changes and send out a revised work plan to the Committee before the next meeting.

VI. WSIPP/WSU Literature Review

This Committee will contract with WSU to do the literature review. The Committee brainstormed some ideas as to what areas of literature it would like WSU to review.

- What's going on in the country that seems to be working?
- What is on the ground and what didn't get off and why?
- What literature is out there focusing on the homeless sex offender population (adults, juveniles and the non-registerable)?
- What are examples of community protection zones/residency restrictions across the country?

The Chair and SOPB staff will draft contract language and then email it to the Committee for approval.

VII. Meeting Schedule

The Committee will continue to conduct its meetings via teleconference. It will then revisit whether it would like to meet in person to accommodate presenters.

The Committee would also like the SOPB to discuss the role of the SOPB website at its next Full Board meeting.

VIII. Public Comments

There were no members from the public present at the meeting.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 12 p.m.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE SEX OFFENDER IN THE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE.

Mary Ellen Stone, Chair

Date

Shoshana K. Kehoe

Date