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Louisiana Sexual Assault Oversight Commission Minutes  
November 20, 2024

1:00pm

Louisiana Department of Justice  
Office of Attorney General Liz Murrill  
1201 N. Third St. – Claiborne Building  
Thomas Jefferson Room 136C  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

**Board Members/Designees:** PRESENT - John Sinquefield, Dr. Randall Brown, Rafael de Castro, Dr. Juliette Saussy, Michelle Jackson, Heidi Martin, Erica Sparacino, Amanda Tonkovich, Bob Wertz, and Morgan Lamandre. Other members or their designees were absent.

**Other Attendees:** Jeddie Smith, Olivia Boudreaux, Kim Wall, Cassidy Smith, Tonya Suire, Keith Talano, Yancy Guerin, Jason Eastin, Danielle Lax, Maci Lapeyrouse, Julie Foret, Bobby O’Byron, Heather Furnees, Bridget Depew, Carie Whittington, Rebecca Harlik, Kim Young, Jencie Olivier, Ginesse Barrett, Emery Doga, Drew Hawkins, Andy Mahoney, Eric Brooks, Martha Wyle, Natasha Poe, Dr. Neha Mehta, Natalie LaBorde, Olivia Johnston, Autumn White, Julia Hine, Stehanie Henson, Brandy Sheely, Kreslyn Kelley-Ellis, Tina Stafanski, Lacey Cavanaugh, Euil E. Luther, Christina Lord, Alliece Cole, Michelle Johnson

- **Call to Order and Roll Call**

- Kim Wall called the meeting to order, made roll call and confirmed a quorum of members.

- **Chairman’s Report**

- Chairman John Sinquefield expressed the Commission’s thanks to the Division of Administration for the use of the Thomas Jefferson Rooms for Commission Meetings. He noted that the size of the Commission has expanded to 18 members and that we normally have a large public attendance.

- **Approval of the Minutes**

- Minutes of the July 18, 2024 meeting were unanimously adopted.

- **Book Report**

- Chairman John Sinquefield gave a report of the New York Times Best Seller, **The Rape of Nanking** by Iris Chang. The Chairman discussed that the book describes the horrors of the invasion of Nanking, China by the Japanese Army in 1937, and the alleged rape of up to 80,000 Chinese women and the murder of 300,000 civilians by Japanese soldiers. He cautioned that the book contained disturbing passages, images and pictures.

- **Topics of Discussion**

- Kit Tracking Update

- Erica Sparacino reported that kit tracking system is up and running and that victims are currently able to track their kits. Further discussions of the project were deferred to the next meeting with the hopes that Captain Chad Guidry would be in attendance, and able to provide more details.
- Definition of Serious Bodily Injury (Strangulation) per HB 208 / Act 131
  - Assistant Attorney General Cassidy Smith gave a power point presentation complete with statutes, case law and pictures of victims. She discussed the varying interpretations of the statutes and cases, including the different degrees of serious bodily injury and strangulation. There were questions from Commission Members and members of the public, which were answered. Dr. Randy Brown, who had raised the issue and requested information at the last meeting indicated that his questions had been answered. Commission members expressed their thanks to AAG Cassidy for her detailed and informative presentation.
- Kit Issues – Adult/Child
  - Dr. Neha Mehta made a detailed power point presentation demonstrating the problems with the instructions in the current standard kit with regard to forensic pediatric examinations. She highlighted the problem areas in the current instructions and made suggestions for corrections. There was an at length discussion of the matter by the Commission Members and members of the public. It was pointed out that some areas are not using the current adult instructions and that some corrections and modifications may need to be made. There was further discussion about whether the pediatric kit should be in a smaller box to conserve storage space. Further it was pointed out that there may have been some confusion as to the narratives that were adopted for the standardized kits. Erica Sparacino expressed concern that the State Police under the new project already had in orders for a number of kits and that any modifications should be discussed with Captain Chad Guidry. Chairman Siquefield determined that there should be a special meeting in January with just the kit issues on the agenda and that the Commission should make every effort to correct any problems with the kits. He indicated that he would try to meet with both Dr. Mehta and Captain Guidry before the next meeting.
- Desert of Sexual Assault Centers
  - There was a discussion of the continuing problem of having statewide access to Sexual Assault Centers by survivors, particular in some rural areas. Dr. Juliette Saussy and Morgan Lamandre reported some of the problems in certain areas. Legislation and funding may be necessary to cure the problems and it was decided that such matters would be brought up with Senator Beth Mizell before or at the next Commission Meeting.
- Future Projects for the Commission
  - Commission Member Rafael de Castro requested that the issue of the directives in HCR 103 by Representative Moore be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Chairman Siquefield stated that the next meeting would focus on the corrections to the problems of the instructions in the Sexual Assault Kits, with emphasis on the issues with the pediatric kits as discussed by Dr. Mehta, but that he would include Mr. de Castro's request on the next meeting agenda.
- **Public Comment**
  - Public comment was received throughout the meeting on all the issues discussed by the Commission and members of the public in attendance were allowed to ask questions and make

comments. Before consideration of any votes Chairman Siquefield invited any further public comment and none was offered.

- **Votes**
  - No votes other than for approval of minutes and adjournment were taken.
  
- **Assign Tasks & Schedule Next Meeting**
  - Chairman Siquefield requested that Commission Members give input to Captain Chad Guidry and Dr. Neha Mehta about corrections to both the adult and pediatric kits. Mr. Siquefield requested and received permission of the Commission to set the next meeting on either January 22, 2025 or January 29, 2025, depending on the availability of the Thomas Jefferson Rooms.
  
- **Adjourned**