

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF MEN
MINUTES FOR THE FIFTEENTH COMMISSION MEETING
February 23, 2005

1. Opening and Introduction of the Commissioners – Vice-Chair Joseph Mastromarino called the meeting to order at 9:10. Larry Colby and Michael Geanoulis were the other Commissioners present; absent were Scott Garman and Stephen Gorin
2. Treasurer's Report – Commissioner Colby reported a balance of \$1,470 dollars. He also shared an email message from Barry Bodell concerning allocating new funds until the Commission decides where to spend them
3. Commission Communications – Commissioners discussed adding a rider to the Commission website disclaiming responsibility for information in resources linked to the website. Members also talked about providing agendas for subsequent meetings on the site in a timely manner
4. Website Update - Commissioner Garman – Scott was unable to attend, no website update. Commissioner Geanoulis spoke of a Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting (RADAR) message concerning a Valentine's Day advertisement called, "Men of Heart Campaign" that ran in a Springfield, MA newspaper
5. Committee Reports
 - Suicide Report - Commissioner Mastromarino spoke of the large quantity of data compiled by the state of NH and the difficulty of sifting through it on an ad hoc basis by members of the Commission. Discussion developed about assigning a sub-committee to take on this task and the difficulty of establishing committees when the Commission is down two members. Joe talked about recruiting a graduate student from UNH to take on the task of analyzing data related to the number of male suicides in NH and the possible causes
 - Health Issues – No report
6. 6th Annual Fathering Conference, Education Update - Commissioner Colby shared information about the 6th Annual Fathering Conference, "Men Count-Everywhere", to be held in Framingham, MA on March 9 and 10, 2005. He thanked Commissioner Geanoulis for presenting on, Divorced and Separated Dads: the Tools for Being an Involved Dad and acknowledged former Commission Chair, Gerard Boyle for presenting, The Custodial Rights of Fathers - Planning Ahead
7. Commission Nominations – Commissioners noted the months-long absence of a full Commission and the need for quicker action from the Governor and Executive Council to fill slots. The positions of Chair and Secretary have been vacant since December 2004 and October 2004 respectively. Various ideas to hasten the process were discussed:
 - Invite the Governor and/or members of the Council to attend a Commission meeting
 - Send individual letters to the Governor asking for his intervention
 - Draft a letter to Governor Lynch from the Commission informing him of the need to have a full Commission with all officers

Commissioner Colby offered to draft the letter in the third option and share it with fellow Commissioners. The group supported this approach for now

8. Domestic Violence Update - Spring Conference –
9. Family Law Task Force Update - Commissioner Geanoulis – The Task Force completed its report, copy of which can be found at <http://www.nhbar.org/pdfs/FamLawTFRep04CL.pdf> . The legislature is expected to extend the life of the Task Force for the purpose of monitoring progress of its recommendations going forward.
10. Fatherhood Initiative - Commissioner Geanoulis - It seems the Commission on the Status of Men will not be able to affiliate with the Fatherhood Initiative as they are only set up to link with 501c3 organizations. We will therefore not be able to use their PSAs

11. RADAR Task Force - Commissioner Geanoulis - "Requiring Accuracy in Domestic Violence Reporting" – Commissioner Geanoulis offered the points that in too many reports of domestic violence men are almost always assumed to be perpetrators and that in victim reports and studies male victims are seldom mentioned. He added that he would favor a link to the, Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting (RADAR) website. Larry stated he could support this only if the disclaimer discussed earlier were part of the Commission website. More discussion is needed on this issue
12. Commissioner Comments – None noted
13. Legislative Report - Representative Bickford – No report
14. Advisory Committees: Commissioner Geanoulis successfully moved to authorize creation of Advisory Committees to get public help in pursuing our mission. A friendly amendment by Mr. Colby was accepted that only Commission members can chair said committees and that proposed action items should first get permission from the Commission to go forward. It was felt that committees were needed for such things as Domestic Violence, Fatherhood promotionals, and Steering suggestions.
15. Public Comments – Lee Newman, Director of SAFE-NH discussed the new name for his group. Also:
 - He noted a series of Public Service Announcement (PSA) running on WMUR-TV in Manchester concerning coaching boys into men. The PSA implies that only boys need to be trained not to abuse or resort to violence. Mr. Newman noted the spots brought out the comment from his grandson, "Don't they know girls are mean too?"
 - He reported that SAFE-NH had received 1,199 calls or contacts from 1/04 – 12/04

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Colby, Treasurer