

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF MEN

<http://www.nh.gov/csm>

Minutes for the Nineteenth Commission Meeting

July 27, 2005 1-4 PM

NH State Library, Concord, Second Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Joe Mastromarino, Scott Garman, Michael Geanoulis, Gus Lerandau.

Members Absent: Stephen Gorin, Marshall Hickok, Larry Colby [resignation pending].

Others Present: Rep. David Bickford, Paul Clements, Lee Newman, Eric Ostman.

These minutes were taken by Scott Garman.

Secretary's Report:

Scott Garman motioned to accept June's meeting minutes without changes. Mike Geanoulis seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report:

No treasurer's report is available this month, but Joe will get in touch with Treasurer Larry Colby over the next month to obtain all paperwork. Larry's resignation from the Commission is pending and is expected to be accepted at the next meeting.

Communications:

In response to Marshall Hickok's recent request for an information session with the Attorney General's office, we received a letter from the AG's office stating that a representative will be available to attend our August meeting. Joe will reply to this letter to inform them of our meeting location and that we look forward to this meeting. Commissioners are encouraged to come to the next meeting with questions/comments for the Attorney General's office.

Web Site:

Scott Garman reported that no changes have been made to the CSM web site other than posting the approved minutes from June and updating the meeting calendar page.

Commission Report:

Our first biennial report is due on November 1, 2005. Scott Garman presented some material he has posted to a "wiki" web site that allows group collaboration to occur. With this site, which is

not part of the official CSM web site, people can edit the page to add information that may be relevant to our final report, and we can then select items that we feel would be most appropriate. The URL of this wiki page is:

http://wiki.mensactivism.org:3333/wiki/index.php/NH_CSM_First_Biennial_Report

In particular, there are links to resources that need analysis, and are marked as such. Scott has added an outline to the page on education issues he'd like to cover in the report, including:

- Dropout rates (particularly high school and college)
- Enrollment rates in colleges/universities
- Education 'engagement' indicators
- Special education coding
- Autism, ADD/ADHD and other conditions which are predominantly experienced by males and affect their educational status
- Test scores, SATs, GPAs, and other objective assessment indicators
- Socio-economic status of young men and its impact on their education
- Fields of study in college
- Support resources for men in education, particularly college
- Male teachers and positive male role models

Scott has added to this links to a handful of recent newspaper articles and education studies, with summaries. Commissioners and members of the public are encouraged to add more to this wiki page.

NH Suicide Study:

Joe Mastromarino is still in need of assistance from someone who is familiar with Microsoft Access to help with the suicide study. Eric Ostman offered to take a look at the Access data.

Sperm Banks:

Mike Geanoulis expressed concerns that sperm banks do not promote responsible fatherhood. He felt that using sperm banks to create children for father-absent households is not the optimal situation for the wellness of children. At the present time we chose not to make any official statements or actions regarding this topic.

Legislation:

Rep. David Bickford reported that HB 450, extending the Child Support Study Commission, has taken effect. There will be a meeting on August 5 at 3 PM in LOB Room 206 for putting together a bidding system for the economist.

Rep. Bickford is interested in fashioning a bill to gather parenting time statistics from the family

courts, to allow for a clearer picture of how parenting time is assigned in NH. He welcomes any input regarding this from the public and recommendations from the Commission.

Paternity Fraud:

Mike Geanoulis attended the 2005 Men's Equality Congress last month in Washington, DC and attended a compelling presentation by Carnell Smith, who runs the web site www.paternityfraud.com. Smith led an effort to change state law in Georgia to end non-biological fathers (victims of paternity fraud) from having to pay child support on children who are not their own. His noteworthy statistic is that 30% of men who request DNA tests are not the child's biological father. Scott Garman expressed an interest in this issue and will be researching the impact of paternity fraud in NH. The Commission is interested in any cases of paternity fraud in the state and encourages victims to come forward with their stories.

NH Children's Alliance Network (NH CAN):

Mike Geanoulis mentioned a report that found that prison inmates disproportionately come from fatherless homes. NH CAN refused to post the item on their web site Reading Room, stating that the article was too old. The article was dated in 2004 from the Lancet, a well-respected British medical journal. Stephen Gorin agreed to get in touch with someone from NH CAN to inquire about this at the June meeting, but Mike did not know the result of that meeting yet. NH CAN also posted a report praising the Violence Against Women Act but has not responded to Mike's request to post articles which show that VAWA has a negative impact on fathers and marriages through encouraging unnecessary family breakup by advocating restraining orders based on one-sided testimony.

Communications/Recommendations With Other State Commissions:

Mike Geanoulis mentioned his tabled motion from a few meetings ago to recommend that the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee include statistics about male victims. We agreed to inquire with the Attorney General's office next month about protocols for making requests or recommendations to other state commissions.

A less controversial approach was discussed that involved inviting representatives from the DV Fatality Committee to a CSM meeting instead. It is at the discretion of the Chair to make invitations to our meetings.

Informational Flyer:

Lee Newman presented an informational flyer about the CSM that he designed. We will send suggestions for changes to Lee so that we can approve a final form of the flyer at the next meeting.

Domestic Violence:

Lee Newman reported that SAFE-NH has been listed on the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Also, the Hotline's Spring 2005 newsletter mentioned heterosexual male victims of DV for the first time.

SAFE-NH estimates that they handled 12% of the total DV crisis calls in NH during 2004. They have accomplished this with no state or federal funding.

The next meeting of the Commission will be August 31 in Concord, NH. The meeting location will be announced on the CSM web site.

Gus Lerandau motioned to adjourn the meeting. Scott Garman seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.