

NH Commission on the Status of Men

Meeting Number 4, 17 Dec 03

LOB 208

Members in Attendance: Gerard Boyle, Tony Raymond, Steve Gorin, Mike Geanoulis

Members Absent: Larry Colby, Joe Mastromarino, Ron Blankenstein

Discussion ensued about expanding the avenues of communication.

1. Executive Councilor Ray Burton stepped forward to say he will put Scott Garman, who we authorized to be liaison/maintenance of our web site, in contact with Bob Anderson, the governor's IT specialist in charge of standardizing New Hampshire's government websites. I was asked to put Scott in touch with Councilor Burton, who may authorize the web proceedings for him.
2. We should be asking to have our meetings posted in the House Record and the House Journal.
3. Chair Boyle is spending 2-4 hours a week on the phone regarding our mission on the status of men--Relief needed. A list of the State's Men's organizations is being compiled by Scott Garman for referral purposes.

Family Law Task Force FLTF (M Geanoulis reporting)

A lengthy discussion arose from a 6 page paper submitted to the FLTF by the Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence which portrayed males unfairly. IE what to do about the one-sided portrayal and treatment of the DV problem.

Lee Neuman of www.VIP-NH.org was asked to draft a letter requesting Gary Palmer and the NH Dept of Justice to review its policies for the purpose of obtaining sex-neutral education and funding as an improved way to treat the problem of domestic violence. The judiciary should be approached for education from the other side, as well.

Lee was asked to bring his 20 minute educational tape on DV to the next meeting, Jan 28.

Geanoulis recommended the new book on DV to the FLTF, "Insult to Injury," by Linda Mills as it sheds new light on the problem and suggests solutions based on communication and counselling. The criminal justice approach with the issuance of orders based on one-sided testimony may be causing more problems than it solves.

The "male consumer" chair held by Richard Martel has been empty for about 10/12ths of the past year thereby reducing an already low male presence on the FLTF.

Geanoulis wondered about the conflicting interests and motivation of the 10-12 lawyers on the FLTF charged with reducing acrimony in divorce while simultaneously depending on acrimony for their financial health.

Rep. Dave Bickford presented HB 298, which he created and that goes into effect on Jan 1. He also presented evidence of his proposal already in place in several other states. The bill basically states "it is public policy of this state that frequent and continued contact between minor children and both parents after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage is ordinarily beneficial to the children."

Dave also presented comments on HB 298 from Linda Griebisch, Director of NH Coalition against D & S Violence. Of course she did not support it (well, she did "in theory, not in practice").

The commission addressed suicide issues.

Some NH studies show that in grades 9 - 12, 1 out of 4 students thought about suicide, with the majority being female. However, 4 out of 5 that actually committed suicide were male.

The commission has taken on the task to obtain NH specific data on sexual & domestic violence, as the NH Coalition report contains data from all over the U.S. and some of it is from 1990.

Public Comment

During the public comment time a man named Ralph Brewster Presented his theory on how greed and America's focus on money has caused us to eat improperly, not exercise enough, and cause us to be unable to deal with anger and rage.

Next meeting will be held Wed, 28 Jan 04, 6-9 PM at Hyde Hall, Plymouth State, Plymouth, NH and will focus on Men's Health with 2 guest speakers to be announced. [Men are dying ten years sooner than women in New Hampshire]

February's meeting will focus on the suicide problem with 2 guest speakers and be held at Keene State, bldg/room/time TBA. [Men are committing suicide at 6 times the rate for women.]

The case summary of one James MacFarlane (US Maj, ret), was submitted to the commission. MacFarlane alleges severe maltreatment by domestic court here in NH. He claims harm created by 17 separate incidents of perjury that officers of the court refused to redress in violation of the oaths those officers swore to uphold.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Geanoulis