



# **BROWARD VICTIM'S RIGHTS COALITION**

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE INFORMED, PRESENT & HEARD**

## **Minutes from the General Meeting held on March 20, 2024 at 11:00 AM**

### **Plantation Police Department**

**451 N.W. 70<sup>th</sup> Terrace**

**Plantation, FL 33317**

- I. Call to Order: Debbie Geller
  - Meeting called to order at 11:05 a.m.
- II. Introductions: All Members Present
- III. Read and Approve Minutes from November Meeting: All Present
  - Ariel Ladner motioned to approve the minutes. Michelle Obando seconded. Motion passed.
- IV. Treasurer's Report: Debbie Geller
  - RLK Fund Account
    - Starting Balance: \$1,063.63
    - Earned \$0.01 interest
    - Ending Balance: \$1,063.64
  - Leadership Broward Account
    - Starting Balance: \$2,555.94
    - \$149.99 paid to GoDaddy.com for the website launch.
    - Ending Balance: \$2,405.95
  - General Account
    - Starting Balance \$36,366.53
    - \$500 transferred to RLK fund account.
    - \$581.76 paid for BVRC liability insurance.
    - \$500 paid to Galuppi's to reserve room for NCVRW.
    - \$339.27 paid to anypromo.com purchase BVRC promotional items.
    - \$0.49 deducted for debit account verification for the NCVRW room reservation.
    - \$590.60 deposited in membership dues. initial NCVRW ticket sales, and account verification reimbursement.
    - Ending Balance: \$35,035.61
  - Jill Fogel motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report. Deva Cats-Baril seconded. Motion passed.
- V. Speaker: Phil Bulone, PhD  
LOSS Team Director  
Broward LOSS Team Services

- The LOSS Team is a program offered through Mental Health America of Southeast Florida.
- Additional programs offered through Mental Health America include a drop-in center for those with mental health diagnoses in Lauderhill, as well as child and parent services.
- LOSS is a postvention program with a purpose of preventing further suicides after a suicide.
- When LOSS was implemented suicide survivors were reaching out for help, on average about 4.5 years after the loss. Since the program's implementation, that has been reduced to about 43 days. The goal is for survivors to receive immediate help.
- The Broward County LOSS Team is the only one of its kind in Florida. The team operates under a United Way Grant. There are currently 4 trained volunteers and the list is growing. All volunteers are survivors of suicide loss themselves.
- The LOSS team instills hope – decreases perceived burden, increases a sense of belonging, reduces shamed silence, and helps connect survivors with local resources in an organized way.
- When a referral is made, volunteers will respond in a team of two. Attempts are made to assign volunteers who match the scene in terms of the method and relationship to the decedent. A resource packet is provided and an immediate needs assessment is completed.
- Families are connected with different support groups and mental health providers. MHA does have in house support groups, but will connect with other trauma groups on a case by case basis. For example, GRASP is a group for survivors of persons who have died from overdoses.
- Wraparound care coordination is offered. Limited funds are available to assist with lodging, biohazard cleaning and other financial needs.
- In search of other grant opportunities.
- Therapeutic support events are held during the year. Events include International Suicide Survivors Day at Long Key Nature Center, which included equine therapy, a remembrance ceremony at Butterfly World, trauma informed yoga, and an anger processing event at a smash room.
- The LOSS Team is available to speak with social work and first responder communities about suicide loss behaviors, how they manifest and a specific emotions road map, as well as advice of what to say to a survivor.
- LOSS relies on advocates for referrals. Some referrals are received from the medical examiner and local funeral homes.
- Referrals can be made by contacting Phil Bulone at 954-384-0344 or e-mailing [LOSS@mhasefl.org](mailto:LOSS@mhasefl.org).

## VI. New Business

- a. RLK: Need a Member Nomination – Elena Munoz
  - An RLK member is needed. There are currently 6 members and the bylaws state that 7 are needed.
  - The RLK provides funds for victims who have specific needs as a result of a crime. Some examples of prior requests include payouts for food, gas, broken windshields, broken doors, etc. Funds must be paid either directly to a vendor or with gift cards for the victim. Any BVRC member in good standing can apply for RLK funds up to \$500 per application.
  - Requests for RLK funding are sent to Elena Munoz. Elena will ensure the applications are complete and then she will forward them to the committee members

to review and vote. While RLK is not considered to be an emergency fund, committee members usually respond the same day, or as soon as possible.

- The floor was opened for RLK committee member nominations.
  - Self-nominations were received from Judy Nesbitt, Deva Cats-Baril, and Juliana Chereji Dunn.
  - Ariel Ladner motioned to table the committee member vote to allow time for an organized voting method to be implemented and for each of the nominees to identify themselves. The motion was not seconded; motion was lost.
  - Jill Fogel made a motion to move forward with the election today, with the stipulation that time is allowed for each nominee to introduce themselves, prior to voting taking place. Nicole Charbonier seconded. Motion passed.
  - Judy Nesbitt and Juliana Chereji Dunn both informed the membership that they have not yet paid their membership dues for this year.
  - The membership agreed to temporarily appoint a BVRC member in good standing as the position cannot remain vacant until the next scheduled meeting.
  - Deva Cats-Baril was appointed as the interim member of the RLK committee, until which time, a formal vote can take place.

## VII. Old Business

### a. NCVRW

1. Garden Committee – Tara Arena
  1. Rock painting was held at NJCC to place at the Garden.
  2. Broward Monument cannot guarantee that they will have the names engraved before the vigil, but they will try.
2. Awards Committee – Ashley Conon
  1. The deadline to submit nomination forms is this Friday, 3/22.
3. Training Committee – Debbie Geller
  1. TTAC confirmed their trainers for NCVRW.
  2. Tickets for the Annual Awards Luncheon and Training will be \$42/each.
  3. Please ensure your license number is on your training registration if you are requesting CLE's and/or CEU's.

### b. RLK Victim Assistance Fund

1. During the previous month, one application was approved for a hotel stay for a dv victim in the amount of \$202.26. RLK application was submitted by Legal Aid.

### c. Social Media Committee

1. Please e-mail Paulina Quintero with any requests for social media posts at [pquintero@browardsao.com](mailto:pquintero@browardsao.com).

### d. Speaker's Bureau/ Community Outreach – Ashley Conon

1. Please e-mail Ashley if you mention BVRC at any speaking engagements [aconon@margatefl.com](mailto:aconon@margatefl.com). BVRC mentions are tracked for grant purposes.

### e. Membership – Tara Arena

1. Members have access to vote and request RLK funds.
2. Please contact Tara with any questions regarding membership [Tarena@coconutcreek.net](mailto:Tarena@coconutcreek.net).

## VIII. Announcements

- a. Jill Fogel – Announced an upcoming project planned to partner with the Broward County Library to create a grief room and create memory boxes. Contact Jill if you are interested in participating.
  - b. Deva Cats-Baril – Next month is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The Nancy J. Cotterman Center will be forwarding out an announcement of events. Additionally, the next Sexual Assault Response Team meeting will be 5/16/24.
- IX. Adjournment
- a. Debbie Geller motioned to adjourn. Jill Fogel seconded. Meeting adjourned at 12:10pm.

**No meeting in April!**

**[www.browardvictimsrights.org](http://www.browardvictimsrights.org)**

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