



**Monroe County Domestic Violence Coalition  
Meeting Minutes  
November 17, 2017**

**Mission:** The Monroe County Domestic Violence Coalition is committed to improving our community's response to domestic violence issues through communication and coordination of services.

**Attending:** Victoria Barnhill, Alison Bishay, Kendra Lanier, Naomi Long, Debra Morrow, Ro Osborne, Julie Robertson, Stephanie Waller, April Wilson, Gina Erickson, Brittany Lawrence, Pamela Sojker, Ketelyn Lipa, Tebby Kaisara, Gustavo Jimenez, Brandy Summers, Deb Slikkers

**City Staff:** Michael Shermis (CFRD), Anthony Christian (CFRD)

**I. Introductions**

A. Brief introductions were provided.

**II. Tebogo (Tebby) Kaisara**

1. Human trafficking victim from Botswana. Came to speak about her experience.
2. Human trafficking is modern day slavery. Widespread through USA and other countries. Second largest criminal industry after drug trafficking. Fastest growing. Victims can be forced into prostitution, pornography, exotic dancing, exploitation of labor, restaurant work, tourism, industry, and factory work. Usually lured in through fraud, extortion, or domestic sabotage.
3. Tebby's Story: Experienced violence in her home, and went to live with her cousin, who was paying for her private schooling. Trafficker's sister mentioned to the cousin that her sister need help in St. Louis. Tebby's lack of knowledge on traveling procedures was capitalized on in order to further isolate her. Her funds were faked, her identity was faked, she had faked letters. Her ticket contradicted what she was told. She never met who was supposed to be her original contact. Got moved to multiple cities attempting to meet someone. Eventually picked up by a limo driver who seemed suspicious. Then dropped off at a house in Bloomington in 2004. Limo driver told her how to use 911.

The trafficker took her documents and told her to fear the police and white people. She was forced into nanny-hood. She was forced to call her trafficker her sister in order to cast off suspicion. She started braiding hair to avoid prostitution and stripping. Money was stolen from her by her trafficker. She got sick and her trafficker would always refuse to help her, even when she clearly needed medical attention.

During the process of moving into a new apartment, the physical violence began. A reclining chair was used as a weapon. Tebby was injured and received no medical assistance. Eventually, she developed a cyst on the side of her head and was forced to go to the hospital. She got the cyst removed, but became ill again. She relied upon a friend for moral support.

Tebby was 140 lbs when she came to the US. She had dropped to 80 lbs.

The mental abuse increased. Tebby was threatened with cancer, and that she likely was dying. Eventually the violence came to a head when she was beaten and locked in a room. Tebby copied a number from her trafficker's phone. Tebby was ejected from the apartment.

Three years later, she called that girl and went to Cleveland to save her from trafficking. When they came back to Bloomington, the girl called the original trafficker and returned to her. Tebby never heard from her again.

Tebby called the FBI and her life started piecing itself back together. She gave all the info she could to the FBI. She started a day care, which operated for a year before they needed to expand. The grand re-opening is on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Tebby is working on opening a group home for abused children.

**Question: How many human trafficking victims are here in town?**

A lot. Victimhood prevents vocalization. They are dependent upon their trafficker. Look for changes in behaviors and appearance of victims.

**Questions: What happened to the trafficker?**

They were deported. However, Tebby's relationships with her family have been destroyed.

### **III. Conference Planning Update, Sam Harrell and Stephanie Walker**

1. All those chosen to present have accepted.
2. Tebby will be presenting.
3. Working on getting continuing education credits for those attending.
4. Working on media materials.
5. January 5<sup>th</sup>, planning meeting at 1 p.m. in Hooker Room.
6. Michael is doing food planning.

7. Looking for volunteers for event. Coalition members asked. Will be sending out an electronic form.
8. Conference is March 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at St. Mark's Church.
9. "A Survivor's Journey". A panel of experts explain what a survivor may go through during the follow-up process.
10. Everything is on schedule.

#### **IV. Staff Update**

##### **A. Michael Shermis**

1. Let Michael know about suggestions for guest speakers at future meetings.

#### **V. Information Sharing**

1. Volunteer pre-service event on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at Middle Way House.
2. If people need help with utilities, winter coats, etc., Connect 211 is a resource.

#### **Next Meeting:**

12 p.m., December 15, 2017, McCloskey Room, City Hall

Guest Speaker: Jennifer Spencer, Spencer Psychology

Topic: Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)