

STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF POLK

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**RESOLUTION
OF THE POLK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
FOR POLK COUNTY SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM
RESTRUCTURING**

WHEREAS, sexual violence is a serious issue impacting the public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, according to a statewide prevalence study, 6.3 million or 33.2% of adult Texans have experienced some form of sexual assault in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, in Texas, in 2020, there were over 30,000 sexual assaults reported to law enforcement, and over 50,000 survivors sought services at a rape crisis center; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault victims must live with the emotional and medical consequences of their assault, which are often chronic and severe; lifetime prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in women who are sexually assaulted is estimated to be 50%; and

WHEREAS, in their 2020 audit report to the Legislature on investigations and prosecutions of sexual assault statewide, the State Auditor's Office identified that only 32% of all reported sexual assaults in a 5-year period resulted in an arrest; and

WHEREAS, in their 2020 audit report to the Legislature on investigations and prosecutions of sexual assault statewide, the State Auditor's Office noted a lack of reliable data on sexual assault case dispositions and a lack of multidisciplinary responses to adults; and

WHEREAS, the 87th Texas Legislature has recognized the serious nature of this crime and has passed legislation requiring counties to form Adult Sexual Assault Response Teams; and

WHEREAS, Polk County recognizes that work must be done at a societal and local level to reduce the incidence of sexual assault, hold offenders accountable and to help heal victims; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners Court of Polk County that Polk County established an Adult Sexual Assault Response Team, effective January 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, some members of the team are no longer eligible to serve in the capacity that they did when the Adult Sexual Assault Team was established;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners Court of Polk County that Polk County will appoint a new Adult Sexual Assault Response Team, effective March 26, 2024.

The following individuals will serve on the Polk County Sexual Assault Response Team:

- District Attorney Shelly Sitton – Chief Administrator of the adult sexual assault response program;
- First Assistant District Attorney Tami Pierce – Prosecutor with jurisdiction over adult sexual assault cases in the County;
- Lieutenant Craig Finegan – Polk County Sheriff’s designee
- Detective Kaleb Barker – City of Livingston Police Chief’s designee
- Krysti Griffin - Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
- DJ Martinez – Service Director at Burke Center

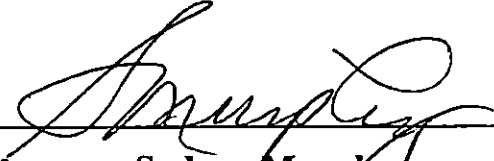
BE IT FURTHER FESOLVED that in order to create systems that reduce re-traumatization and prioritization of victim safety, members of the SART appointed by Polk County are directed to work with other team members to:

- Elect a presiding officer and any other organizational and decision-making structures deemed for the success of the team;
- Add additional members to the team as necessary to fulfill the functions of the team;
- Attend scheduled meetings of the team;
- Review and consider changes within thirty days of this Resolution to the written interagency protocol that establishes local and regional processes for investigating and prosecuting sexual assaults, identifying and obtaining medical and forensic care, mental health care and advocacy resources for victims that was required by Texas Local Government Code 351.256, no later than December 1, 2022;
- In adjusting the protocol, the response team shall consider Chapter 56A, Code of Criminal Procedure; may provide different procedures for use within a particular municipality or area of the county served by the response team; and shall prioritize the health and safety of survivors, including those who choose not to make a police report;
- Notify the Court of any statutory vacancies on the team that would require a new appointment within 7 days of those occurring;
- Collect and maintain data on the number of sexual assaults reported to local law enforcement agencies and the investigation, prosecution and disposition of such offenses as required by Texas Local Government Code 351.257(A) that will culminate in a written summary to the Commissioners Court by November 15th of each year;
- Develop processes for information sharing and conflict resolution between team members;
- Distribute the written protocol to all responding law enforcement service providers throughout Polk County;
- Participate in a minimum of 4 hours of annual cross training with other team members;
- Evaluate the interagency protocol through the utilization of case reviews, with the signed, written consent of the victim as required by Texas Local Government Code 351.258(f); and
- Participate in writing the annual report to the Commissioners Court as required by Texas Local Government Code 351.257.

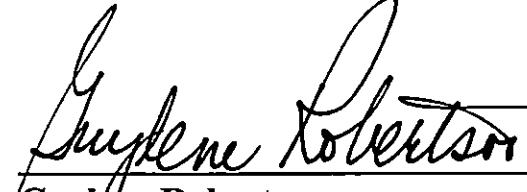
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Polk County will fill any stature vacancies as requested by the Polk County SART within 30 days of those vacancies occurring;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the written annual report produced by the team shall be posted in a prominent place on the County's website and by law will be available to the public. The report shall not be redacted prior to its publication except for redactions needed to comply with the law to maintain privacy of individuals otherwise identified in the report.

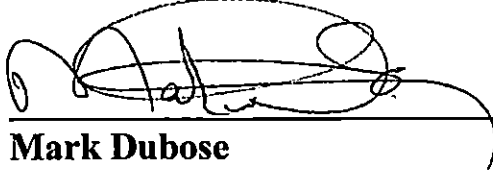
PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 26TH DAY OF MARCH 2024.




Sydney Murphy
County Judge



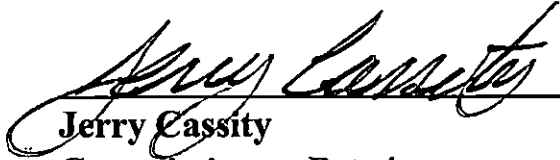
Guylene Robertson
Commissioner, Pct. 1



Mark Dubose
Commissioner, Pct. 2



Milton Purvis
Commissioner, Pct. 3



Jerry Cassity
Commissioner, Pct. 4

Attest:



(seal) Schelana Hock, County Clerk

