

**Center for Crime Victim Services
Board Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2018**

Board Members Present: Bob Paolini, Margaret Joyal, Susan Ide, Richard Katzman. **Absent:** Jerry O'Neill.
Staff Members Present: Chris Fenno, Carol Morgan, Christine Morrison, Jodie Bacon, Elaine Boyce, Rachel Atkins, Melinda Meyer. **Absent:** Mary Kay Hewlett, Abby Gladstone-Strobel, Carol Brochu, Cara Cookson.

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 PM.

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of May 14, 2018, and approved them as presented.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

There was no legislative update this month, but Chris Fenno advised that the Center was still waiting to hear whether or not the Governor would veto the proposed budget for the new fiscal year (FY19).

COMPENSATION CLAIMS REPORT

Christine Morrison presented the Compensation report for May 2018. Of the 72 non-sexual assault claims received this May, 30 claims came from Chittenden County. Over all the counties, a total of 27 claims were related to homicide, with 37.5% of new claims being related to homicide cases. There were 63.64% more homicide-related claims in May 2018 than in May 2017. Staff explained that the \$12,709 total paid for homicide claims covered different types of expenses such as counseling, etc. The total expense for Funeral costs was \$8,715.50, which covered two funerals with 10 related claims.

Staff noted that Kate Brayton has now been in her position for a year, as Director of Victim Services at the Vermont State Police. Her work is probably responsible for the increased compensation payouts for homicide claims. Expenses related to Child Sexual Abuse were much higher this fiscal year than last year, but Carol Morgan explained that that expense includes payments made on claims from previous years.

Claims for adult Sexual Assault (SA) in May 2018 were 28% less than in May 2017. However, over the course of the year, SA claims showed a 2.6% increase in FY2018. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

REVIEW OF SPECIFIC COMPENSATION CLAIMS

There were no specific claims for review this month.

COMPENSATION DISCUSSION of MILEAGE & MEALS REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR VICTIMS

Carol Morgan presented proposed changes to the reimbursement rate for meals and mileage for crime victims. Regarding the meals rate, the Board voted all-in-favor to approve that crime victims be paid \$46 per day (up from \$42 per day).

Regarding the mileage reimbursement rate, Carol explained that the current calculation used by staff is based on the price of gas and is very cumbersome, as well as difficult to explain to victims.

The proposed change would pay a flat-rate of .545 for victims traveling both in-state and out-of-state. Carol Morgan did not expect the change to increase mileage payments much, but if it does become a burden on the fund, staff will bring the issue back to the Board. Chris Fenno added that the new mileage rate would help maximize the 60% federal reimbursement the Center gets for payments made with state compensation funds.

The Board voted all-in-favor to approve the proposed mileage rate and also that the new reimbursement rate policy will begin on July 1, 2018. Staff will bring the revised policy to the July meeting for Board review.

RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT

Elaine Boyce presented on the Restitution Unit (RU) for May 2018. She was happy to report that collections had taken an upswing, with the Case Managers exceeding their goal for May by \$300.87. The RU was now on-track to meet the year-end goal for FY18 by the end of June. Elaine advised that the RU had signed a new Memo of Understanding with Court Diversion and she will be adding figures for those diversion cases to her future reports. The Restitution Unit Report was accepted as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

In Carol Brochu's absence there was no detailed Financial Report for May 2018. Chris Fenno advised that the Center will be adjusting the way staff benefits are charged off, to correct for some prior processing errors regarding staff salaries being charged to federal grants. Chris noted that the Center's FY18 budget had been prepared without factoring in staff raises for the year, but such increases have been included in the FY19 budget. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

CENTER UPDATE

Chris Fenno advised that, working with Carol Brochu and Gene Nelson, she had sent off the last piece of correspondence to the OIG (Office of the Inspector General). The Center's seven-page letter included attachments detailing policies and procedures that the OIG requires be in place. These new policies and procedures should ensure that C CVS receives no negative findings in future OIG audits.

Chris advised that C CVS will be working with staff of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (the Network) to create a Cost Allocation Plan for the Network. Previously, the Network did not have a good understanding of cost allocations and was not doing them properly.

Chris and Cara Cookson will be meeting with Network staff regarding how the new gun bill will be enacted and who will implement the seizure of a gun.

Regarding grant opportunities, Chris advised that the national Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) has started offering new competitive discretionary grants, almost daily, with very short turnaround times of 35-40 days to apply. C CVS is focused on applying for three grants that would support the "3 Ts" of training, technology, and trafficking.

Chris advised that she had been approached by a Vermont legislator about the lethality assessment screening tool; specifically why the recent homicide in Essex Junction was not prevented by that police department's previous trainings on use of the lethality assessment. Chris remarked that data on homicides from states that have adopted use of the lethality assessment prove that the screening works. Use of the lethality assessment **does** reduce the occurrence of Domestic Violence homicide. Margaret Joyal noted that Vermont is consistently in the top 10 states for DV homicide. She added that although rates for other crimes don't change, rates of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse are shown to be reduced when there is economic improvement in a household.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 2:40 PM

Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:

Monday,

July 9, 2018

1:30 – 3:30 PM

60 South Main St. conference room

Waterbury, VT