

**Center for Crime Victim Services
Board Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2018**

Board Members Present: Susan Ide, Jerry O’Neill, Richard Katzman.

Absent: Bob Paolini, Margaret Joyal.

Staff Members Present: Chris Fenno, Carol Morgan, Christine Morrison, Abby Gladstone-Strobel, Carol Brochu, Rachel Atkins, Melinda Meyer, Shannon Murphy, Gina Yalicki.

Absent: Mary Kay Hewlett, Elaine Boyce, Jodie Bacon, Cara Cookson.

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 PM.

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of April 9, 2018, and approved them as presented.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

There was no legislative update this month, since Cara Cookson was absent. However, Chris Fenno advised that the Center was 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 April 2018. She commented that there seem to be a lot of claims for lost wages lately, along with a lot of Homicide-related claims. There were four new Homicide cases that occurred in May, one of which generated nine separate claims for surviving family members. This will probably cause a bump in next month’s compensation expenses for certain categories such as funeral expenses, lost wages, and counseling. Homicide claims were the biggest expense category for the current fiscal year (FY18), followed by Domestic Assault claims.

Comparing the current fiscal year with the prior year, Jerry O’Neill noted that there was a sizeable increase in expenses related to Child Sexual Abuse. He asked if staff had any idea why. Christine Morrison suggested that the presence of the Child Advocacy Centers was probably responsible for the increase. Jerry also asked about the increase in this fiscal year’s medical expenses. Staff advised that this seems to be due to a combination of fewer victims having health insurance and greater outreach to under-served populations. Susan Ide added that the newest Victim Advocates were now more experienced, which could also be a factor in the increased claims. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

REVIEW OF SPECIFIC COMPENSATION CLAIMS

Claim 65584 – This claim was brought to the Board to determine the victim’s eligibility. The suspect was being charged with 23 VSA 1128(A), Charge Name: Leaving the Scene of Crash—Property Damage. The applicant was seeking compensation for medical expenses. The Board noted that there were three potential sources of insurance in this case. After discussion, the Board voted all-in-favor to table the case until more information is received on the medical bills and insurance coverage.

RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT

Elaine Boyce and Michelle Pelletier were absent. Shannon Murphy and Gina Yalicki reported on the Restitution Unit (RU) for April 2018. A total of 94 restitution judgement orders (RJOs) were received in April, and 429 payments were issued to victims. 116 files were paid-in-full, and 2 files were closed because of offenders being deceased. About \$39,000 of collected restitution was sent to the state's Unclaimed Property office in April, due to either lack of a valid address or lack of response from the victims. Shannon and Gina explained that before a crime victim can be paid by the RU, the victim needs to notarize and return a signed affidavit. The RU staff make two attempts to reach each victim, but aren't always successful in getting a response. A new Collections Case Manager had been hired and was due to start on June 4th. The Restitution Unit Report was accepted as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through April 2018. She commented that revenues into all three of the Center's special funds (Compensation, Restitution, and the DV/SV Fund) had been performing better than anticipated. Carol did have concerns about the Compensation Fund. She explained that although that fund's balance looked relatively good in April's report, this was misleading because about \$115K was paid out in sub-grants that were issued after the current report was run. The Center will not issue any sub-grant payments in May or June, so after our May revenues come in, we'll have a better idea of how our budget stands.

Carol is monitoring the Compensation Fund closely as the fiscal year ends, to make sure CCVS gets as much federal reimbursement as possible. The federal reimbursement of 60% depends on how much of the Center's state special funds are used that fiscal year. The Center has a 3-year spending authority on our federal funds and Carol factors that in, and can fund compensation expenses with federal dollars if needed. Each fiscal year's budget for the Center is based on a 3-year average of revenues and the prior-year's expenses.

Carol noted that the federal VOCA Assistance grant is the one that had a large increase, however those funds cannot be used to pay compensation claims. The Center does get to use 5% of that grant for administration purposes, which will take some pressure off our state dollars. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

CENTER UPDATE

Chris Fenno passed around the new guide to Vermont's Parallel Justice process, and advised that the guide will be posted on the Center's website once finalized.

Chris updated the Board on federal audits by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the Office of Victim Services (OVC). These offices audit every state's use of federal VOCA funds to ensure good stewardship of the funds. The OIG had found issues with some of the Center's subrecipients' reporting of "match" items. To address that finding, Carol Brochu has added three questions to the checklist that subrecipients sign regarding those match items. Chris Fenno added that the Center will now add site visits and risk assessments for subgrants that we make to other state agencies, as well.

The Board discussed requirements of the state's Open Meeting Law. The Center has always posted public notice of Board meeting dates via the state's Dept. of Libraries. Going forward, the meeting dates will also be posted on the Center's website, along with the meeting minutes.

Jerry O'Neill advised that in future, it must be asked if any members of the public are present, and if so, the meeting minutes shall record the names of any public in attendance. It was noted that visitors can be asked to sign-in for the record, but that such signing-in is not required.

Jerry O'Neill noted that future board meeting minutes should also record who motions to move into an Executive Session, who seconds the motion, and the purpose of the Executive Session.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 2:25 PM

Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:

Monday,

June 11, 2018

1:30 – 3:30 PM

60 South Main St. conference room

Waterbury, VT