

**Center for Crime Victim Services
Board Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2020**

Board Members Present: Bob Paolini, Susan Ide, Margaret Joyal, Richard Katzman, Jerry O’Neill.
Staff Members Present: Chris Fenno, Elaine Boyce, Carol Morgan, Christine Morrison, Jodie Bacon, Abby Gladstone-Strobel, Michelle Pelletier, Carol Brochu, Melinda Meyer, and Shannon Murphy by phone.

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 PM.

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of February 10, 2020 and approved them unanimously, as presented.

COMPENSATION CLAIMS REPORT

Christine Morrison presented the Compensation report through April 2020. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the March and April board meetings had been cancelled, so data was presented for the months of February, March, and April. In February 2020, both regular and sexual assault (SA) claims had increased compared to February 2019. In March 2020, possibly due to Vermont’s pandemic shutdown, regular claims decreased by 34.48% compared to March 2019, while SA claims were up by 69.23% compared to March 2019. April 2020 showed a decrease of 53.19% in regular compensation claims and a decrease of 47.06% in SA claims, compared to April 2019. Despite recent decreases, the total number of claims received year-to-date in fiscal year 2020 had increased for both regular and SA claims, compared to the same period in the prior fiscal year.

Looking at year-to-date compensation expenses through April 2020, both regular and SA claims showed an increase in expenses for the current fiscal year (FY20) compared to the same point in the prior fiscal year (FY19). Compensation Program staff noted that although the number of claims had decreased, several claims in April 2020 involved large payments. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

COMPENSATION DISCUSSION RE: ELIGIBLE EXPENSES RELATED TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

Compensation Program staff requested guidance from the Board on eligibility of certain expenses related to sexual assault, pregnancy resulting. Staff were uncertain about whether costs associated with the birth of a child were eligible for payment from the Compensation Fund. Discussion followed. Motion was made, seconded, and the Board voted to find the birth costs and a victim’s required aftercare related to the birth of the child eligible for payment from the fund.

REVIEW OF SPECIFIC COMPENSATION CLAIM

Claim 66295 - Motion was made, seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to deny the claim.

RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT

Michelle Pelletier reported on the Restitution Unit (RU) for April 2020. She noted that, despite the effect of the pandemic shutdown on both the courts' and the RU's staffing, collections for April 2020 were fairly good at \$39.5K and close to that of April 2019. Collections for April 2020 fell short of the month's goal by about \$15K. Receipts from tax offsets year-to-date are significantly down from the same time period last fiscal year. The Restitution Report was accepted as presented.

REVIEW OF SPECIFIC RESTITUTION CLAIM

Restitution File # 27581 – Motion was made, seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to award the maximum upfront payment to the claimant.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through April 2020. She noted that April 2020 revenues were within the average of other months for the whole year of FY20, and not so far off that C CVS hadn't seen such numbers before. However, all of the Center's revenues from appropriations were currently below their projected budget figures for FY20. It's uncertain what revenues will look like for the last two months of the fiscal year. Due to COVID19, there was a delay in drawing-down the federal reimbursements for payment to C CVS's subgrantees but that would be done in May. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

CENTER UPDATE

Chris Fenno updated the Board on several topics. She had recently provided testimony to the legislature regarding budget adjustment for FY20. The legislature had asked about COVID19-related expenses, which had so far been low for C CVS. It's possible subgrantees may have greater need in the new fiscal year (FY21). The legislature won't look at the FY21 budget until they finish the FY20 budget adjustment.

Just prior to the pandemic lockdown, C CVS had provided the State's Attorney's Victim Advocates with cell phones which have helped those advocates assist victims and communicate with Compensation Program staff. Due to COVID19, fourteen C CVS staff were on furlough and working one or two days a week. Salaried staff were mostly working from home with some coming in one day a week. All staff had taken the state-required COVID awareness training, and there is work C CVS has to do as employer, to prepare for staff returning to the office.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Motion made and seconded to adjourn. Adjourned at 2:45 PM

Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:

**Monday,
June 8, 2020 - 1:30 PM
Via Zoom Meeting**