

**Center for Crime Victim Services  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Jan. 8, 2018**

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

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

### **REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of Dec. 4, 2017, and approved them as presented.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Cara Cookson updated the Board on legislative issues of concern to the Center. She remarked that the Judiciary Committee was very busy with issues that don’t directly concern crime victims, but the Center is watching and waiting for opportunities to address problems around parole and monitoring of offenders who are released into the community and present dangers to their victims.

Cara is involved in legislation sponsored by Tom Stevens that would add the category of “crime victim” to the list of employment protections, so that crime victims can attend court dates, etc., without losing their jobs for taking time off work. Cara noted that this is a common problem in Domestic Violence (DV) cases, but also affects many other crime victims. Additionally, the Center hopes to enter into a Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the Vermont Dept. of Labor to change a process that was set up years ago, by which Center funds have been appropriated to the Dept. of Labor with the intent to help DV victims. There has never been any notice given or accounting provided to the Center of these transactions, which totaled about \$30K last fiscal year. The Center’s goal for the MOU is that the transfer of these funds be processed as a grant, which would allow the Center to monitor the transfer and the Dept. of Labor to skip the appropriation process.

The Center is also concerned about the costs of future funding for the Victim Advocates in the various State’s Attorneys offices and possible ways to cap costs. Although the Center funds salaries and benefits of the State’s Attorneys’ Victim Advocates (SAVA), we do not hire and fire those advocates.

### **COMPENSATION CLAIMS REPORT**

Christine Morrison presented the Compensation report for December 2017. A total of 33 new regular claims, not including sexual assault (SA), were received this December, the greatest number coming from Chittenden County. A total of 11 SA claims were received. Comparing the current fiscal year (FY18) with the prior fiscal year (FY17), December showed a decrease in the number of new claims for both SA and regular compensation claims. However, regular compensation claims showed an overall increase of 8.03% for FY18; while SA claims in FY18 showed an overall decrease of 17.33%.

Reviewing Year-To-Date compensation payments by type of crime, Christine explained that the crime of Arson was now included on the reports, per federal guidelines, but there was no prior year data for Arson claims. Jerry O’Neill noted that payments related to Child Sexual Abuse had skyrocketed in FY18 compared to the prior fiscal year. Reviewing Year-To-Date payments by expense type, several categories including Counseling, Funeral, Lost Wages, Medical Facility, and Travel Expenses were up in FY18 compared to FY17. Christine noted that expenses for the Dental category fluctuate a lot, because Dental services are very expensive when they occur, but many victims don’t have that expense.

So far in FY18 there were no expenses for Pet Injury/Death, but Christine noted that staff were glad this category was available to offer victims. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

## **REVIEW OF SPECIFIC COMPENSATION CLAIMS**

**Claim 63477** – This case was brought to the Board to determine whether the Compensation Program should consider payment to a medical provider who specializes in psychiatry, but whose license status is “conditioned.” The victim was seeking compensation for payment of counseling and gas/mileage. After discussion, 1 board member abstained from voting and the other 3 board members voted all-in-favor to deny payment to the provider.

For reference in future cases, Margaret Joyal advised that staff can check with the Dept. of Vermont Health Access to find out if a therapist is a Medicaid provider and can bill Medicaid.

## **RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT**

Elaine Boyce reported on the Restitution Unit (RU) through December 2017. A total of 101 new Restitution Judgement Orders were received by the RU in December, from around the state. Elaine advised that this had been another good month. Even though collections by the Case Managers didn't quite reach the month's goal (short by \$1,806.60), the prior months had been good enough that overall collections for the current fiscal year were a bit above target for this point in the fiscal year. Some money was still coming in from tax offsets, which totaled \$1,044.00 in December. Elaine noted that toward the end of February, the RU would go through the state's process to route undeliverable payments to the state's Unclaimed Property division. This is done for restitution orders that have been paid in full by the offender, but where the RU either does not have good victim contact information or the victim never responded. The Restitution Unit Report was accepted as presented.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Carol Brochu was absent, participating in a site visit to monitor a sub-grantee, so there was no Financial Report for December 2017.

## **CENTER UPDATE**

Chris Fenno advised that the new “Grants Coordinator” position was about to be advertised. Funding for that position was included in the Center's FY19 budget proposal to the state. The Center had submitted its grant for AmeriCorps positions, which if awarded to the Center will be used to fund victim advocacy in restorative justice programs around the state. Chris advised that she was forming a new Management Team to tackle issues regarding the overall functioning of the Center. Members of the Management Team will be Chris Fenno, Carol Brochu for Finance, Cara Cookson for policy, Mary Kay Hewlett for Information Technology, and Rachel Atkins for Human Resources.

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** 2:35 PM

**Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:**

**Monday,**

**Feb. 12, 2018**

**1:30 – 3:30 PM**

**60 South Main St. conference room, Waterbury, VT**