

**Center for Crime Victim Services  
Board Meeting Minutes  
April 9, 2018**

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

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

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

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of March 12, 2018, and approved them as presented.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Cara Cookson updated the Board on legislative issues. The Compensation subrogation bill had passed the House and will become law.

Cara had been focused on H.422 and was happy to announce that the bill passed both chambers, along with two related bills on Firearms Safety. The governor would be signing H.422, S.221 and S.55 into law on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Cara remarked that it was very rewarding to work on this legislation, and she was grateful for the opportunity. Susan Ide asked about the logistics of the gun storage bill (S.55) and Cara explained that Buildings and General Services (BGS) has a warehouse full of decades' worth of confiscated guns which will be sold by auction to federally licensed firearm dealers. Going forward, S.55 will specify what, when, and how BGS will handle newly confiscated guns.

Regarding H.711, An Act Relating to Employment Protections for Crime Victims, Cara advised that she was trying to get that legislation signed before the end of the current legislative session. She asked the Board for their assistance to advance the bill. The Board agreed and were later copied on Chris Fenno's letter to Senate committee leaders, supporting the bill.

### **COMPENSATION CLAIMS REPORT**

Christine Morrison presented the Compensation report for March 2018. Compared to the previous fiscal year (FY17), the current fiscal year (FY18) shows a decrease of 4.10% in the average number of claims received per month. However, the average number of sexual assault (SA) claims received has increased 4.84% over the prior year, and the number of SA claims received in March 2018 was almost double the number received in March 2017. Although the number of SA claims coming in had increased in FY18, compensation expenses for SA claims had decreased compared to the same period in FY17.

Christine noted that expenses for March 2018 were low compared with prior months this fiscal year. Earlier months had generated a lot of funeral expenses, but March 2018 did not have high funeral costs. To-date expenses for medical bills and lost wages were higher in FY18 than in FY17. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

## **REVIEW OF SPECIFIC COMPENSATION CLAIMS**

**Claim 65515** – This claim was brought to the Board to determine whether the victim had violated a criminal law of the state which caused or contributed to the victim’s injury. The victim was seeking compensation for relocation expenses, loss of wages, and mental health counseling. After discussion, the Board voted all-in-favor to deny the claim.

**Claim 61898** – This claim was brought to the Board to determine the eligibility for Cannabidiol Oil (CBD oil). The suspect was charged in September 2013, with attempted murder and aggravated domestic assault. The victim was seeking compensation for the purchase of CBD oil in the amount range of \$40 - \$150.00. After discussion, the Board voted all-in-favor to pay for the CBD oil, and agreed that any future such cases should also be brought to the Board for review.

## **RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT**

Michelle Pelletier reported on the Restitution Unit (RU) for March 2018. A total of 79 restitution judgement orders (RJOs) were received in March, with Addison County generating the most at 30, followed by Chittenden County with 17 RJOs. Collections for March came in short of the monthly goal. April should be a big month for collections received via tax-offsets. Michelle noted that a representative of the Vermont Lottery had called the RU recently to advise that an offender had won \$50K. After that offender pays off their restitution balance, they will still keep a large amount of the winnings. Michelle explained that for any lottery winnings of \$500 or more, the winner must go to a Vermont Lottery office to claim the funds. The Restitution Unit Report was accepted as presented.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through March 2018. With the current fiscal year 75% complete, Carol noted that the Compensation Fund, DVSV Fund, and the Restitution Fund were each close to their budgeted balance for this point in the year. Reviewing the “Financial Status Report” Carol explained that the “Difference” column shows the change in each item from the previous fiscal year. Each month Carol Brochu runs queries in the state financial database, to monitor the Center’s revenues.

Carol noted that although the Accrued Fund Balance for the Compensation Fund is a negative figure, it’s smaller (less negative) than it was previously. She is watching this fund and is concerned with spending there. The Center gets a 60% federal reimbursement of the state Compensation funds that we spend. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

## **REVIEW OF AMENDMENT TO STAFF HRA PLAN**

Rachel Atkins presented the Board with a proposed amendment to the Center’s employee Healthcare Reimbursement Account (HRA) Plan. The Board voted all-in-favor to approve the amendment as presented.

## **CENTER UPDATE**

Chris Fenno informed the Board that she, Carol Brochu, and Cara Cookson had recently presented the Center's budget to the state. She noted that since President Trump signed the federal budget, our federal grant funds now show a sizeable increase, rather than the decrease forecast earlier.

Chris advised that she'd formed some new teams at the Center: an Operations Group and a Program and Planning group, to look at work processes: as well as an Ad Hoc group to work on how the Center would respond to an incident of mass violence in Vermont. Chris was also in the process of finding someone to facilitate a staff training on communications.

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** 2:30 PM

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board went into Executive Session at 2:30 with Chris Fenno and came out of Executive Session at 2:35 with no action taken.

### **Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:**

**Monday,**

**May 14, 2018**

**1:30 – 3:30 PM**

**60 South Main St. conference room**

**Waterbury, VT**