

**Center for Crime Victim Services  
Board Meeting Minutes  
August 19, 2019**

**Board Members Present:** Bob Paolini, Susan Ide, Jerry O’Neill.

**Absent:** Margaret Joyal, Richard Katzman. **Staff Members Present:** Chris Fenno, Elaine Boyce, Carol Morgan, Christine Morrison, Jodie Bacon, Abby Gladstone-Strobel, Carol Brochu, Mary Kay Hewlett, Melinda Meyer, Gina Yalicki, Kira Krier, Rosalind Renfrew. **Absent:** Michelle Pelletier.

The meeting was called to order at 1:38 PM.

**REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of July 8, 2019 and approved them as presented.

**COMPENSATION CLAIMS REPORT**

Christine Morrison presented the Compensation report for July, the first month of the state’s fiscal year (FY). A total of 49 regular claims and 28 sexual assault (SA) claims were received in July 2019, with both types of claims showing an increase compared to the number in July 2018. The number of regular claims increased 11.36 % compared to the previous July, and SA claims increased 21.74% compared to July 2018. Jerry O’Neill asked if staff could tell whether the increase in certain types of claims was due to better outreach and public awareness of the Compensation Program, or reflected an increase in actual crimes. Staff replied that the cause of the increased claims was difficult to determine.

Reviewing expenses, July 2019 showed a large increase in expenses for victims’ Lost Wages, compared to the previous July, but overall, both regular and SA expenses were slightly less than in July 2018. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

**REVIEW OF SPECIFIC COMPENSATION CLAIMS**

**Claim 66588** – This claim was brought to the Board for consideration of denial, since the applicant had violated a criminal law of the state, which caused or contributed to the applicant’s injury. The applicant was charged with Domestic Assault. The applicant was seeking compensation for reimbursement of locks paid for by a Network program. The Board noted that without probable cause for a violation of the temporary abuse prevention order, and given the fact that the locks were changed prior to the victim applying for the temporary order, they were bound by statute to find the claim ineligible.

**Claim 66398** – This claim was brought to the Board for consideration of payment of the landlord’s insurance deductible which was collected by the Vermont Housing Authority for arson damages to the victim and suspect’s apartment. The insurance deductible was the victim’s responsibility to pay. The suspect was being charged with First Degree Arson, Second Degree Arson. The victim was seeking compensation for the landlord’s insurance deductible in the amount of \$5,000. After discussion, the Board tabled decision pending a copy of the victim’s lease to review.

**Claim 65783** – This claim was brought to the Board because the victim was requesting reimbursement for counseling expenses paid for by the victim’s Health Reimbursement Agreement (HRA), which is employer-driven. Per the Board’s previous directive, such reimbursement is to be reviewed on a case by case basis. The victim was requesting reimbursement for two mental health sessions paid for by the HRA at the Compensation Program’s cap of \$70.00 per session, totaling \$140.00. After discussion, the Board voted all-in-favor to reimburse the victim’s HRA expense.

**Claim 59562** – This claim was brought to the Board for consideration of payment of mental health counseling to an unlicensed provider, which would be an exception to the Compensation Program’s policy and would only apply to this claim, if approved. The suspect was charged with Domestic Assault on a minor child. The parent was seeking compensation for the minor child’s counseling. After discussion, the Board voted 2 to 1 to pay the provider at the Compensation Program’s usual rate.

**Claim 66261** – This claim, which had been tabled by the Board at the 7/08/19 meeting, was revisited for consideration of payment for a “handpan” (a type of small drum) for the surviving family member of a deceased homicide victim. The suspect was being charged with second degree murder. As required by the Compensation Program guidelines, the victim’s therapist had provided a short letter endorsing that the victim would benefit from alternative therapeutic supports. After discussion, the Board voted to table their decision, pending the following: 1) a clinical justification by the therapist for the drum use; 2) the claimant’s actual practice using a rental handpan drum to see if it is truly helpful before purchasing; and 3) information on other therapeutic supports that the therapist could recommend to the victim that are provided in a structured therapeutic setting (such as meditation or sound healing).

## **RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT**

In Michelle Pelletier’s absence, Gina Yalicki reported on the Restitution Unit (RU) for July 2019. Gina advised that although July’s collections had fallen short of the month’s goal, a large payment of \$18K had just been received in August, which would make up for July’s shortfall. Bob Paolini noted that the courts shut down for a while in July, for the Judicial College, which can skew July’s processing. The Restitution Report was accepted as presented.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through July 2019. Since July was the first month of the new fiscal year (FY20), Carol focused on June’s data, which marked the end of fiscal year 2019 (FY19). Carol advised that FY19 year-end revenues into the Restitution Fund were higher than projected, and year-end Compensation Program expenses were only 94% of what she’d budgeted. The negative figure shown for federal grant funds was due to the flow of federal reimbursements to CCVS. Carol noted that although the Compensation Program’s mileage reimbursement rate for crime victims was raised in FY19, compensation travel expenses were less in FY19 than in FY18. Carol advised that in FY20 the state plans to audit the VOCA grant. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

## **CENTER UPDATE**

Chris Fenno updated the Board on various topics. Regarding the federal audit three years ago by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Chris advised that the federal government shut-down had

caused a delay in the OIG's review of documents that CCVS sent to them in December 2018. CCVS had recently received follow-up questions from the OIG.

Several staff had just attended the national VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) conference. CCVS Grants Manager, Omara Rivera-Vazquez gave a presentation at the conference regarding collaboration efforts between CCVS and the Crime Research Group (CRG).

**MEETING ADJOURNED: 2:53 PM**

**Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:**  
**Monday, Sept. 9, 2019**  
**Noon – 2:00 PM**

**Meeting room at**  
**60 South Main St., Waterbury, VT**

**To be followed by picnic with staff**  
**At the**  
**Waterbury Reservoir Park**  
**2:00 – 4:30 PM**