

**Center for Crime Victim Services
Board Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2025**

Board Members Present: Bob Paolini, Susan Carr, Richard Katzman, Alycia Post, Susan Ide.

Staff Members Present: Jennifer Poehlmann, Jodie Bacon, Maria Gibbs, Anna Harrington, Diane Gagnon, Michelle Pelletier, Carol Brochu, Megan Kinlock, Vanessa Black, Melinda Meyer.

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

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of January 13, 2025, and unanimously approved them as presented.

COMPENSATION PROGRAM REPORT

Anna Harrington presented Compensation reports for January 2025. A total of 26 regular claims were received compared to 42 the previous January, and a total of 11 sexual assault (SA) claims were received compared to 15 the previous January. Year-to-date, regular claims had decreased by 9.64% compared to the same period in the previous fiscal year, while SA claims had decreased by 4.41%.

The largest compensation expenses for January 2025 were related to Domestic Assault, Child Pornography (mostly counseling expenses), and Simple Assault, in that order. Compared to the previous fiscal year, expenses related to Homicide were \$29.5K less than at the same point in the prior year, but were still the highest year-to-date expense category. Overall, year-to-date expenses for regular claims were \$46,432 less in the current fiscal year than at the same point in the previous fiscal year, and year-to-date SA expenses were \$5,445 less. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT

Michelle Pelletier presented the Restitution Unit (RU) reports for January 2025. She noted that the RU had again exceeded its collections goal for the month, and expected to meet their annual goal within the next few months. In January, a total of 86 Restitution Judgement Orders (RJOs) were received from around the state, with the largest number (27) coming from Chittenden County, followed by Rutland County with 12 RJOs, and Lamoille County with 11 RJOs. January collections by the RU's Case Managers totaled \$85,523.84, and another \$396 came in via tax offsets. Michelle introduced the new Case Manager Vanessa Black to the Board. The Restitution Report was accepted as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through January 2025. She advised that revenues into CCVS's Funds were showing some increase, but revenues were still not keeping up with expenses. Carol noted that since 2019, revenues into the Victims Compensation Fund had decreased by almost 50%. The Compensation Program was currently paying out a bit less than it had traditionally, and until a new manager of the program is hired vacancy savings will help conserve CCVS's state funds. This fiscal year (FY25) CCVS had switched to paying Compensation Claims with federal funds earlier than usual, to ensure that

federal funding would be fully used by the September deadline. In a few weeks, Carol Brochu and Jennifer Poehlmann would meet with the state's Appropriations Committee to give their budget presentation for the next fiscal year (FY26). The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

CENTER UPDATE

Jennifer Poehlmann updated the Board on several topics and legislative issues. She expressed her gratitude to CCVS's Finance Manager Carol Brochu and Grants Manager Gene Nelson for their handling of stressful and confusing information related to changes at the federal government level. Regarding CCVS's requests for budget assistance from the state's administration, Jennifer advised that the late Senator Sears had been replaced by Senator Norris as CCVS's budget rep. CCVS would be meeting with him and the House Judiciary Committee to go over nuances of our budget.

Members of CCVS's Victim/Survivor Advisory Group had recently presented witness-sensitivity trainings to staff of the Department of Corrections (DOC), and to the House Judiciary Committee. Those trainings were so well received that House legislators thought they should become part of the annual orientation process for other legislative committees who deal with witness testimony. Jennifer Poehlmann had also presented at length to the House Judiciary Committee on the topic of "Victims' Rights 101."

Jenn noted that making changes to the DOC's Victim Notification system remained a legislative focus for CCVS, and the issue of expungement and sealing of criminal records was being revisited by legislators. Jennifer Poehlmann and staff of the Victims Compensation Program had attended a meeting of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission, and the House had voted to give CCVS a seat on the committee, which hopefully would be agreed to by the VT Senate.

The Board were introduced to CCVS's new Grants Manager, Megan Kinlock, who comes to CCVS with years of previous experience in grants management at the VT Agency of Education and VT Department of Labor.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Motion was made, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.
Adjourned at 2:19 PM.

Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:

Monday, March 10, 2025

1:30PM

**Virtual by Zoom and in the
conference room at**

60 South Main Street, Waterbury.