

**Center for Crime Victim Services
Board Meeting Minutes
May 13, 2024**

Board Members Present: Bob Paolini, Susan Carr, Richard Katzman, Alycia Post. **Absent:** Susan Ide.
Staff Members Present: Jennifer Poehlmann, Carol Morgan, Jodie Bacon, Maria Gibbs, Anna Harrington, Michelle Pelletier, Carol Brochu, Melinda Meyer.

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 PM.

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of April 15, 2024, and unanimously approved them as presented.

COMPENSATION PROGRAM REPORT

Maria Gibbs presented the Compensation report for April 2024. A total of 25 regular claims were received compared to 37 the previous April. A total of 14 sexual assault (SA) claims were received, compared to 20 the previous April. Year-to-date, regular claims had increased 4.57% compared to the same period in the previous fiscal year. Year-to-date SA claims had increased 12.35% compared to the same period in the previous fiscal year.

The largest compensation expenses for April 2024 were related to Homicide, and Aggravated Assault, with related costs for Funeral and Counseling expenses. Year-to-date, compensation expenses for regular claims were about \$42K less in the current fiscal year (FY24) than at the same point in the previous fiscal year (FY23). Year-to-date SA expenses were about \$5K less than at the same point in the prior fiscal year. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT

Michelle Pelletier presented the Restitution Unit (RU) reports for April 2024. A total of 117 Restitution Judgement Orders (RJOs) were received from around the state, which Michelle noted was back in the pre-pandemic range. The RU's Case Managers had collected a little over \$42K and another \$32K came in via tax offsets. As noted in March, the RU's total collections for fiscal year 2024 (FY24) now exceeded the goal for the entire fiscal year (which ends June 30th).

Michelle explained that every year, there are some victims who have moved or cannot otherwise be located. Every April, the RU sends those unclaimed restitution payments to the state's Unclaimed Property division. In April 2024, almost \$47.5K was sent to Unclaimed Property. The RU is also able to receive an offender's unclaimed property if restitution is owed by that person. The Restitution Report was accepted as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through April 2024. With only two months left in the state's fiscal year, she noted that CCVS's special fund balances were doing relatively well. Both the Restitution Fund and the DV/SV Fund showed slight increases compared to the same point in the previous fiscal year. A clerical error by the courts had been fixed, so that the increase to CCVS's surcharge should now be properly routed to CCVS, which should hopefully increase revenues. Carol explained that a one-time appropriation was also expected into the DV/SV Fund. She noted that the federal funds balance was only "in the red" because she'd been on vacation so hadn't yet drawn down those funds.

CENTER UPDATE

Jennifer Poehlmann updated the Board on a variety of topics. The year's legislative session had ended and Jenn remarked that it was the busiest session regarding CCVS that she'd ever seen. She was asked to provide feedback on twenty separate issues. CCVS now serves on many legislative working groups, including its long-term seat on the Sentencing Commission; the Sentencing Commission has been charged with exploring several issues that will impact crime victims. Jenn will write a summary of legislative highlights to share with the board and CCVS staff. Jenn/CCVS was able to have included in statute a directive to study the Dept. of Corrections' automated Victim Notification System (VANS), and to work in collaboration with impacted agencies and parties on making recommendations for change/improvement. CCVS will also be working on getting Victim Rights included in the Vermont Constitution.

Board Chair Bob Paolini congratulated Jennifer Poehlmann on her efforts and success at the legislative session. The legislature had authorized a 3% increase to CCVS's General Fund Appropriation, which will help pay for a sorely-needed new Grants Manager position. CCVS will also receive a one-time appropriation to the DV/SV Fund that will help maintain current staffing within Network programs and avoid cuts.

Jenn advised that the April 26th event honoring National Crime Victim Rights Week went very well, and attendance at the ceremony was "standing room only." A Community Listening Forum held at the Community Justice Center in South Burlington was also well-attended, and two crime victims at the forum had been inspired to pursue further roles in advocacy. Jenn advised that she and Gene Nelson, Grants Manager, would be meeting with delegates from several countries including Madagascar, Comoros, Eastern Africa, South Korea, and Turkmenistan to educate them on Vermont's approaches to a variety of crime-related issues.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Motion was made, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.
Adjourned at 3:01 PM.

Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:

Monday, June 10, 2024

1:30 PM

**In the conference room at
60 South Main Street, Waterbury.**