

**Center for Crime Victim Services
Board Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2024**

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

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

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of May 13, 2024, and unanimously approved them as presented.

COMPENSATION PROGRAM REPORT

Carol Morgan presented the Compensation report for May 2024. A total of 31 regular claims were received compared to 28 the previous May. A total of 20 sexual assault (SA) claims were received, which was the same amount received the previous May. Year-to-date, 420 regular claims were received so far in the current fiscal year (FY'24) compared to 399 for the same period in the previous fiscal year. Year-to-date, 202 SA claims were received in FY'24, compared to 182 for the same period in the previous fiscal year.

The largest compensation expenses for May 2024 were related to Homicide, Aggravated Assault, and Domestic Assault. Related costs for Lost Wages and Funerals were the highest expense categories in May. Year-to-date, compensation expenses for regular claims were about \$51K lower in the current fiscal year (FY24) than at the same point in the previous fiscal year (FY23). Year-to-date SA expenses were \$2,404 higher 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 May 2024. A total of 121 Restitution Judgement Orders (RJOs) were received from around the state, with the most coming from Chittenden County (42), followed by Rutland County (17), Washington County (14), and Lamoille County (12). In May, the RU's Case Managers collected close to \$46K and a little over \$31K came in via tax offsets. The RU total collections for fiscal year 2024 (FY24) had already exceeded the goal for the entire fiscal year (which ends June 30th). Michelle remarked that recently the number of business victims has been exceeding the number of individual victims, as there's been a notable increase in retail theft, including some offenders who steal from multiple stores and/or repeatedly steal from the same store. Michelle explained that thanks to a new MOU with Court Diversion, even if an offender goes through the diversion process, the RU is still able to collect from the offender on behalf of the victim. The Restitution Report was accepted as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through May 2024. She noted that the balances in the Compensation Special Fund and the Restitution Fund looked like they would end the current fiscal year (FY24) on June 30 a bit shy of Carol's projections for FY24. The DV/SV Fund was still a concern, with a negative balance, and revenues coming in at less than projected. CCVS's surcharge and marriage license fees had been increased by the legislature, in hopes that will generate greater revenues. With June marking the end of FY24, Carol felt that CCVS's year-end revenues for FY24 probably would not reach the amount of the 2024 Appropriation. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

CENTER UPDATE

Jennifer Poehlmann updated the Board on a variety of legislation and other topics. She wanted to acknowledge the death of Senator Dick Sears who did much for CCVS and the field of victim services in Vermont. Jenn noted that Senator Sears always made space at the table for people who've been harmed and was the driver of Vermont's victims' rights legislation. He was also behind the creation of the Vermont Restitution Unit and drove the effort to eliminate the statute of limitations for victims of child sexual and physical abuse. He championed the voices of the victims/survivors of the St. Joseph's Orphanage in Burlington, ensuring multiple appropriations to support them in finding healing and to provide a monument in recognition of their strength and resilience. He would be sorely missed in the legislature.

Jennifer will be bringing together stakeholders to make recommendations for changes and improvements to the Department of Corrections' automated Victim Notification System (VANS). In a few weeks, Jenn will be meeting with delegates from Africa to inform them on how Vermont handles issues related to human trafficking. Jenn and CCVS Grants Manager, Gene Nelson, have already hosted several meetings with delegates from Madagascar, Comoros, Eastern Africa, South Korea, and Turkmenistan. Staff of the Victims Compensation Program and the Restitution Unit will be holding a joint training soon for Victim Advocates who work in each county's State's Attorney's office. The Crime Victim Advisory Group was coming up to its one-year anniversary and the group showed a lot of enthusiasm and engagement. Jenn noted that CCVS was developing a new Grants Manager position which would be advertised in the fall.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Motion was made, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.
Adjourned at 2:28 PM.

Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:

Monday, August 12, 2024

1:30 PM

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