

MINUTES
Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime
March 15, 2011

The Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, in the fourth floor conference room on Tuesday, March 15, 2011, from 2:04 p.m. to 3:58 p.m.

Members in Attendance:

Co-chair Steve Eppler-Epstein, Joseph Bibisi, Chester Brodnicki, Antonia Cordero, Kimberly Joyner, Nancy Kushins, Daniel F. Lewis, Robin Montgomery, Susan Omilian, and Jan VanTassel

Members Excused or Absent:

Deputy Chief Court Administrator the Honorable Patrick L. Carroll, III, Janice Heggie Margolis, Kevin Lawlor, Erika Tindill, and Rocco Tricarico

OVS Staff Present:

Linda J. Cimino, James Morgan, Tina Bouchard, Brenda Jordan, and Katie Nesta

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions
Steve Eppler-Epstein called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and welcomed members. Members introduced themselves.
2. Approval of the November 16, 2010 Meeting Minutes
Steve asked for a motion to accept the minutes of November 16, 2010. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.
3. Public Attendance at Meetings
Steve distributed a revised proposed policy regarding public attendance at Advisory Council meetings. Members reviewed the policy. Steve asked for a motion to adopt the revised policy. The motion was moved and seconded; the revised policy was adopted and will be available at all future meetings.
4. OVS Updates
Tina Bouchard reported on an upcoming OVS conference titled "Social Networking: Changing the Rules" that will be held on September 27, 2011, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Cromwell area. The targeted audience is advocates, prosecutors, and law enforcement. A save the date card will be mailed soon.

Tina also reported that the 15th annual Melanie Ilene Rieger Memorial conference titled "The Many Faces of Survivors" will be held at Central

Connecticut State University on June 22-23, 2011. The conference offers scholarships that will cover the \$50 registration fee for victims of crime who demonstrate a financial need and have at least one year of volunteer/advocacy service to other victims. Conference save the date cards and scholarship forms were made available to members.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund

Jim Morgan distributed and reviewed the Criminal Injuries Compensation Program Budget statement for month ending 2/28/11. Jim explained most claims are being paid in a timely manner. The majority of claims that are pending are waiting for claimant responses.

Jim explained that 3.4 million in revenues is needed to maintain the budget. Members discussed that if additional monies are transferred from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (Fund), depleting the current fund balance, payment could be delayed to claimants and contractors.

Gail Burns-Smith Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program

Denise Covington, SAFE program coordinator reported that on December 2, 2010, three out of the six hospitals were participating in the SAFE Program. The remaining three hospitals joined the SAFE Program on February 3, 2011. To date, there have been twenty-two cases among the six hospitals.

The on-call system is operational for 96 hours a week: Thursday 7:00 a.m. through Monday 7:00 a.m.

Denise reported that twelve students completed the training course at Quinnipiac University. Two additional spring semester classes had approximately 18 to 20 students. Another course is tentatively scheduled for the fall semester.

Denise explained the various obstacles the program encountered per a members request.

Denise reported on various trainings, including regional trainings in April and May and a statewide conference on June 16 - 17, 2011, hosted by Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc.

Steve asked Denise if there was an evaluation in place for the program. Denise responded that the Program has quality assurance and data collection based on grant requirements, but the Program is still under development.

Statewide-Automated Victim Information and Notification

Linda Cimino reported the following statistics on the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification system:

- o 17,000 site searches with 16,000 through VINELink
- o 6,080 registered
- o 15,202 telephone notifications and 13,000 e-mail notifications

5. Council Updates

Steve combined the Legislative updates with Council updates.

Nancy Kushins reported on various legislative priorities including updating Connecticut stalking laws, eliminating the statute of limitations for bringing a civil action by a victim of child sexual abuse, strengthening sexual assault laws to protect people with disabilities, and providing paid sick leave to Connecticut workers.

Kim Joyner reported on the GPS pilot program and stated that there are currently 30 to 40 cases with 17 cases in Hartford. Kim explained the different ways a victim can participate in the program. Steve suggested that Kim and Court Support Services Division provide a presentation at the July meeting.

Antonia Cordero reported on a course available at the University of Connecticut involving twelve students in which the goal of the course is to develop leadership in the anti-violence movement. The students will conduct field interviews to develop action plans based on emerging issues. Antonia invited members interested in participating in the field interviews to contact her.

Steve reported there will be another legislative effort to protect tenants in bank foreclosure cases and to prevent imposing co-pays on low-income Medicaid recipients.

Linda reported that OVS is working with CONNSACS on legislation to improve access to victim compensation for sexual assault victims. Linda also reported that the Judicial Branch was granted permission to submit the Judicial Branch budget directly to the legislature.

6. Legislative Updates

Legislative updates were combined with Council updates.

7. Remembering Maggie: Living Beyond Abuse in Our Lives

Susan Omilian, originator and facilitator of "My Avenging Angel Workshops; Living Well is the Best Revenge" provided a presentation on the workshop that helps women of sexual assault and domestic violence

conquer self-doubt, discover hidden talents, heal their wounded spirit, and create a new future.

8. New Business

Steve asked for suggestions on new topics or trainings from members. Susan requested more information regarding the GPS pilot program.

9. Adjournment

Steve adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m.

Katie Nesta, Recorder