

MINUTES
Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime
May 19, 2009

The Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, in the fourth floor conference room on Tuesday, May 19, 2009, from 2:06 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance:

Co-chair Steve Eppler-Epstein, Fernando Betancourt, Joseph Bibisi, Larry Bostrom, Chester Brodnicki, Nancy Kushins, Neil O'Leary, Erika Tindill, and Jan VanTassel

Members Excused or Absent:

Deputy Chief Court Administrator the Honorable Patrick L. Carroll, III, Cheryl Burack, John Duffey, Janice Heggie Margolis, Kevin Lawlor, and Jo-Ann Miller

OVS Staff Present:

Linda J. Cimino, James Morgan, and Brenda Jordan

Guest Speaker:

Kevin Dunn, Senior Domestic Violence Prosecutor, Division of Criminal Justice

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions
Steve Eppler-Epstein called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. and welcomed members.
2. Approval of the Minutes from the March 17, 2009 Meeting and April 22, 2009 Special Meeting
Steve asked for a motion to accept the minutes of March 17 and April 22, 2009. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.
3. OVS Update
Linda Cimino distributed to members the *Information for Victims of Sexual Assault and Their Families* brochure and reported on the following:
 - One vendor responded to the Request for Proposal for implementation of the Statewide Automated Victim Notification (SAVIN) system. Linda and another member of the SAVIN Planning Committee are working on the final revisions to the Scope of Work document.
 - The fifteen-minute meetings with the director were conducted in March. A summary of the meetings will be distributed to staff in June and Council members at the July meeting.

- Based on the trend of new applications received, it is projected that the Compensation Program will receive 960 applications for this calendar year.
- Two significant projects resulted in a delay in issuing determination decisions. However, thanks to a concerted effort among Compensation Unit management, the decisions are now being processed in near real time.
- The policies and procedures for the Victim Services and Compensation Units are complete and will be forwarded to Judicial Branch Legal Services for final approval.
- Victim Services Advocate Kitt Tierney received the Office of the Victim Advocate's Victim Assistance award during the Melanie Ilene Rieger Memorial Conference.
- The Victim Satisfaction Survey to assess services victims receive from OVS victim services advocates is being piloted at the Bristol Geographical Area court for the next three months.
- OVS will re-establish an internship program in the Spring of 2010.

Linda thanked Steve for his assistance in developing the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund Fact Sheet and reported that many of the talking points were incorporated in a letter sent to the ranking members and chairs of the Judiciary and Appropriation Committees, among others. In addition, the Fact Sheet was made available at the Survivors of Homicide (SOH) Victims' Rights Rally, the Melanie Ilene Reiger Memorial Conference, and at OVS trainings. Larry Bostrom added that Jessica Norton forwarded the Fact Sheet to all SOH members.

Jim Morgan distributed and reviewed a report entitled *Criminal Injuries Compensation Program Budget statement for month ending 4/30/09*. Jim stated that obligations exceed available funds by \$519,000 and approximately \$400,000 is available for spending in May and June.

Jim stated that the paperwork for the additional funding under the federal stimulus bill is still being processed; it is anticipated that an additional \$280,000 in funding will be available this summer.

4. 2009 Legislative Initiatives

Larry Bostrom reported that the habeas corpus reform bill did not pass. Nancy Kushins reported that a bill to establish a sexual assault forensic examining program is under consideration. Linda added that if the bill passes, the responsibility to pay for the sexual assault evidence collection kits would transfer to OVS.

Neil O'Leary reported on missing persons' legislation that would mandate and standardize law enforcement procedures on missing persons' cases.

Erika Tindill reported that a bill to include teen dating violence education in middle and high school curriculums did not pass and that the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence opposes a bill that allows family support magistrates discretion to order a person to participate in parenting education and job skill programs, and in doing so, may suspend child support in whole or part.

Steve reported that the legal services funding bill is moving forward and was sent to the Senate. Steve will keep Council members updated.

5. Domestic Violence Docket Overview

Jim provided a brief background on domestic violence dockets and stated that in the late 1990s, the first domestic violence docket was established in Bridgeport, and subsequently in seven additional Geographical Area courts: New Haven, Waterbury, Hartford, Stamford, Norwalk, New London, and New Britain. Currently, there are nine OVS funded non-profit family violence victim advocates in five courts dedicated to the domestic violence docket.

Linda welcomed and introduced Kevin Dunn, who is the senior domestic violence prosecutor. Prosecutor Dunn provided an in-depth overview of the domestic violence docket, the vertical case management approach, and a comparison of other states' prosecutorial approach to domestic violence.

6. New Business

Chet Brodnicki suggested that the Council be provided with an overview of Family Justice Centers.

7. Adjournment

Steve called for a motion to adjourn the meeting; the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Brenda Jordan, Recorder