

MINUTES
Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime
July 20, 2010

The Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, in the fourth floor conference room on Tuesday, July 20, 2010, from 2:05 p.m. to 3:31 p.m.

Members in Attendance:

Co-chair Steve Eppler-Epstein, Joseph Bibisi, Larry Bostrom, Chester Brodnicki, Janice Heggie Margolis, Nancy Kushins, Kevin Lawlor, Erika Tindill, and Jan VanTassel

Members Excused or Absent:

Deputy Chief Court Administrator the Honorable Patrick L. Carroll, III, Fernando Betancourt, Cheryl Burack, John Duffey, Jo-Ann Miller, and Neil O'Leary

OVS Staff Present:

Linda J. Cimino, James Morgan, and Brenda Jordan

Agenda:

1. Welcome

Steve Eppler-Epstein called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and welcomed members.

2. Approval of the Minutes from the May 18, 2010 Meeting

Steve asked for a motion to accept the minutes of May 18, 2010. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.

3. OVS Updates

Jim Morgan distributed the Criminal Injuries Compensation Program Budget statement for month ending 06/30/10, the Estimated Statement of Financial Position State Fiscal Years 2009 – 2011, and a summary of Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF) collections by court for fiscal year 2009 – 2010.

Jim stated that as of June 30, 2010, the obligations exceeded budget by \$598,000, which is less than previous end of year deficits due to the receipt of federal recovery grant funds. Jim added that as a result of an increase in Victims of Crime Act funding, 3.4 million will be available in fiscal year 2010 – 2011.

Members discussed the information from the documents, including the possibility of additional transfers from the CICF and the decrease in court donations. Steve recommended that the reconstituted Council receive an explanation on the CICF and the consequences if the fund falls short.

Jim reported that in October a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be issued for domestic violence shelter services for one year and an RFP to provide counseling services for family members of homicide victims for two years. The human trafficking train the trainer program ends in January and will also go out to bid.

Linda provided the following OVS updates:

- Kathryn Nesta, administrative clerk I, transferred to OVS from Jury Administration and Administrative Clerk I Ann Marie Bonnanzio was promoted to claims examiner.
- In state fiscal year (SFY) 2009 – 2010, 956 claim files (1,169 claimants) were received.
- As of July 19, 2010, 112 claim files are ready for determination with 48 percent in the non-compensable category. The length of time from ready for determination to determination averages 30 to 49 days.
- Sixty-two reviews were requested in SFY 2009 – 2010 and 52 reviews were completed.
- Processing times exceeded the standards within the Review process. The standard processing time for victim compensation commissioners to render a hearing decision is 120 days; decisions during this fiscal year were issued on average 37 days from the date the hearing was held. The standard processing time from receipt of review request to hearing date is 90 days with an average processing time of 75 to 80 days.
- The Melanie Ilene Rieger Memorial Conference was held in June at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU). The Conference, which will be held next year on June 22 and 23, 2011 at CCSU, will focus on sexual assault.
- The “tear off card” that police officers distribute to victims is under revision to include the contact information for the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) program.
- A subcontractor training on SAVIN will be held in August.

Valina reported that she is continuing to meet with victim services advocates (VSA) assigned to the Juvenile courts to discuss “Raise the Age” issues. Valina added that OVS also continues to participate in the Judicial Branch Intern Program and currently has two interns assigned to VSAs in the Hartford and New Haven courts and anticipates that more interns would be provided during the next semester. At the request of a member, Valina provided an overview of the internship process.

4. Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Pilot Program Update

Linda Cimino reported that the SAFE pilot program has been renamed the Gail Burns-Smith Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Program at the recommendation of the SAFE Advisory Committee.

Two program staff were hired on July 1, 2010: Program Coordinator Rebecca Russo, a certified sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) and registered nurse at Windham Hospital and Clinical Coordinator Nancy Mayeda-Brescia, an advance practice registered nurse and SANE.

A Request for Information (RFI) to solicit nurses and physicians for the program is under development as well as a Memorandum of Agreement between the Judicial Branch, Connecticut Department of Public Health, and the six pilot hospitals (Hartford Hospital, the Hospital of Central Connecticut, Manchester Memorial Hospital, Middlesex Hospital, St. Francis Care, and Windham Hospital).

Linda stated that the RFI will be e-mailed to Council members when available.

Quinnipiac University was awarded a bid to provide training to 110 nurses and physicians to serve in the program.

The program is funded by two recovery act grants: a Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) that provides personnel funds and a Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant to provide equipment needs. The program will run October 1, 2010 and conclude September 30, 2012.

The equipment includes alternative light sources, locked refrigerators, GynoCarts, and SDFI-Telemedicine, which is a high powered pixel camera to document injuries.

The goal of the program is to provide more comprehensive and coordinated services for sexual assault victims presenting at emergency room departments.

Linda added that in other state programs there has been a dramatic increase in pleas as a result of the higher quality forensic evidence.

5. Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) Update

Linda distributed the revised OVS Notification Programs brochure which was updated with SAVIN information. Linda reported that SAVIN will begin a test period on July 23, 2010, with an anticipated quiet launch on August 5, 2010. The Council will receive an electronic version of the brochure when SAVIN goes live.

Linda explained the notification process, including that the program is open to everyone and notification will be provided in English and Spanish and available in other languages through AT&T Relay.

Linda stated that a unified statement on the program is underdevelopment and reported on several trainings and outreach activities that have been planned. Members provided additional training audience suggestions.

The next phase will include notification on the termination of protective orders.

6. 2011 Legislation

Linda reported that OVS is working with Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc. on legislative language to expand compensation eligibility to child sexual assault victims who disclose the sexual assault to a mandated reporter. Linda offered to provide the language to the Council when developed.

Linda reported that she is researching other state compensation programs' laws regarding crimes committed via the Internet to possibly amend the definition of personal injury to assist victims who have been enticed to commit sexual acts.

7. Council Recognition

Linda thanked members for their service during this Council's term and presented members with a Certificate of Appreciation. Larry Bostrom and John Duffey were presented with an additional certificate for their longevity on the Council.

Brenda Jordan read an e-mail from Cheryl Burack to Council members as Cheryl was unable to attend the meeting.

8. New Business

No new business was introduced.

9. Adjournment

Steve adjourned the meeting at 3:31 p.m.

Brenda Jordan, Recorder