

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF VICTIM SERVICES MEETING

MINUTES

Wednesday, May 1, 2013

Anne Arundel Police Department Headquarters

ATTENDEES

Board Members: Ellen Alexander, Barbara Bond, Walter T. Coryell, Jessica Dickerson, Linda Fleischer, Rea Goldfinger, Rhea Harris, Laura Martin, Margery Patten, Bonnita Spikes, Debra Tall, Deborah Unitus, Heather Amador on behalf of Frank R. Weathersbee.

Staff: Anne Litecky and Lauren O'Malley.

Guests: Stephanie Lansey, Steven Kroll, Laurie Rajala, Jessica Powers-Heaven, Pauline Mandel, Michael Cohen

Welcome/Call to Order: Ellen Alexander, Chair, began the meeting at approximately 10:15 a.m.

MINUTES:

- Motion: Move to approve Minutes of February 6, 2013.
- Vote: Seconded and unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee met with members of the GOCCP Fiscal Department and reviewed the Administrative Cost portion of the MVOC Fund by line item.
- The Fund is in good financial standing and has extra money due to the vacancy savings realized from not filling the position left by Shirley Haas when she retired.

❖ Grant Review Committee

- NOFA has been posted and grants are in processing.
- There are no funds for the LSCV Award of \$75,000 to the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc.
- The Board needs to decide whether to honor the grant using extra funds available in the MVOC Fund.
- Motion: Move to fund the LSCV Grant award to Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc. via MVOC Funds. Vote: Seconded and unanimously approved.
- Department of Public Safety (DPS) Unclaimed Restitution/LSCV: Rhea Harris
 - In the last 18-24 Months DPS has discovered issues with restitution collection.

- A system breakdown has occurred over the last 10-12 years and funds were not appropriately turned over to unclaimed.
 - DPS is hiring someone to find those victims awarded restitution and the money is on hold for the time being.
 - LSCV may get more or less than the \$75,000 in FY2015, and it may vary from year to year.
 - DPS should have an amount that will be transferred to unclaimed by the end of the week, but the issue exceeds \$6 million.
 - Motion: Move to use MVOC Funds to cover future LSCV shortfalls, as necessary.
 - Vote: Seconded and unanimously approved.
 - Department of Juvenile Services (DJS): Unclaimed Restitution/LSCV
 - The issue with DJS is similar to DPS' issue.
 - DJS has particular trouble finding victims because they are unable to use MVA for identification and addresses.
 - Many times money comes in without any name or case number attached, so there is no way to know where it should go.
- ❖ **Legislative Committee**
 - The Legislative Committee was very active and involved in the legislative process this session.
 - A handout was distributed detailing Bills that were relevant to Crime Victims and the State Board, and the stance that the Board took on them.
- ❖ **Governor's Luncheon/Commemorative Day**
 - This year's luncheon was more costly due to lowered ticket prices and the combined Awards and Commemorative Day Luncheon.
 - The budget for the Luncheon was \$9,000 and we collected \$4,845.06 in ticket sales to offset.
- ❖ **Memorial Services**
 - The Memorial Services were beautiful thanks to hard work from each of the four hosts.
 - Coordinators suggested that those regions with bigger populations may need more funds to accommodate the attendees in the future.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- ❖ **Victim/Witness Protection Fund: Review of Guidelines and Balance** (Hon. Laura Martin, Steven Kroll)
 - There is \$300,000 in the fund, which State's Attorney's request and the MSAA coordinates.
 - Currently this fund is used to prevent any potential harm from reaching victims and witnesses during criminal proceedings. It also allows for transportation to and from court.
 - The fund currently only provides assistance to victims and witnesses themselves, but cannot assist homicide survivors who want to attend the trial, but can't afford to.
 - Proposition for the board is to change the current guidelines to allow out of state families to attend trial.
 - An Ad Hoc committee should be established to review the logistics of the guidelines. The guidelines should include a clause stating subject to funding availability, and could be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
 - Motion: Move to set up an Ad Hoc Committee to establish new guidelines for the Victim/Witness Protection and Relocation Fund to include out of state travel assistance for homicide survivors.
 - Vote: Seconded and unanimously approved. The Committee will be chaired by Laura Martin.
- ❖ **MVOC FY2014 Third Quarter Fiscal Report.**
 -
- ❖ **Sunshine Fund:** Linda Fleischer

- Proposed guidelines on how the funds are managed and how the Board might become aware of and respond to Fund distribution needs were presented.

❖ **State Board Member 2012 Attendance Review**

- Each board member received their 2012 attendance record.
- The Chair again encouraged Board members to participate more in meetings and in their assigned sub-committees. While everyone is busy, the majority of the Board's work should not fall on just a few Board members.

❖ **Statewide Homicide Survey**

- The Board agrees that it would be useful and expedient to conduct a new survey of programs and services available for homicide survivors: what is currently available, what is needed, current models, and best practices. The Board will establish an ad hoc committee this summer to handle the survey.

❖ **VINE**

- For 2013-12 compared to 2012-11, there was a 6% increase in overall site searches, a 1% increase in email events, and a 4.4% increase in phone events. Additionally, there was a 15% increase in new registrations.
- Since 8/2012 there have been 56 total agency outages, the majority of which were resolved within 24-72 hours with no current agency outages to date.
- The total contract amount for all VINE Services (VINE, VINE Courts, VINE Sex Offender, VINE Parole and Probation, and VINE Protective order is \$802,530.
- The DPSCS has extended all VINE services until 10-31-15 (renewal letter received from DPSCS 4/2013).

○

❖ **MD State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (MSCCSP): Sentencing Guidelines Worksheet Revision**

- On April 15, 2013, the MSCCSP released a new version of the Maryland State Sentencing Guidelines Manual Victim Information Section with the following changes:
 - *CICB Cost Imposed* question was removed with the *Victim Court Costs Imposed* question noted on the previous page.
 - *Victim Unavailable* question was changed to *Victim Non-participation*.
 - *NRF* question was changed to *Victim Notification Form*, as *NRF* abbreviation is unfamiliar to most.
 - *No Contact with Victim* question was changed to *No Contact Requested*.
 - Added *No Contact Ordered* question to the guidelines worksheet to distinguish whether or not a request for no contact was made.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Guests and Board members were thanked for their participation. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:35 a.m.

**The next Board Meeting will be held in:
Prince George's County
on
Wednesday, July 10, 2013**