

MINUTES
Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime
February 6, 2024
225 Spring Street, Room 4B, Wethersfield, CT

Members in Attendance: Co-Chair Judge Courtney M. Chaplin, Co-Chair Yvette Young, Beth Hamilton, Amy Lupoli, Irene Mikol, Susan Omilian, Jessica Pizzano, Lee Ross, Deborah Witkin Gerrie Wild, Andrew Woods

Members Excused or Absent: Lisa D'Angelo, Bob Garguilo, Ebonie Suggs

OVS Staff in Attendance: Mary Kozicki, James Morgan, Marc Pelka, Jean M. Weisbrod

Guest in Attendance: Krystal Rich, Heather Ryan, Meghan Scanlon, Erin Williamson

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Announcements

Co-Chair, Judge Courtney Chaplin, opened the meeting at 2:07 p.m. Council and OVS Staff members introduced themselves.

2. Approval of the November 14, 2023, Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented. Deborah Witkin, Susan Omilian, and Amy Lupoli abstained because they were not present for the November 14, 2023, meeting.

3. Legislative Updates

Lee Ross reported on and distributed the new summary of the Court Operations Bill.

Jessica Pizzano reported that the Survivor of Homicide volunteers have been participating in advocating for legislative change and attending public hearings.

Beth Hamilton reported on the development of a sexual assault bill to increase the rights of survivors and the response by the criminal justice system, a Criminal Justice Response sexual assault model policy, extending the antidiscrimination protections, and (paid and not paid) FMLA for victims.

Meghan Scanlon reported about reintroducing a bill coordinated with CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) and the Public Health Committee regarding distributing hard copy and electronic versions of the informational discharge packets to obstetric and gynecologic patients, the coerced debt bill from last session, and the Murder with Special Circumstances bill, which is not supported by the members of the Coalition.

Several council members discussed potential legislative proposals for the upcoming session.

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4. Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding Update

James Morgan reported:

- The Director for the Office for Victims of Crime provided a monthly update on the status of the Federal Crime Victims Fund.
- The balance in the Fund as of November 30, 2023, is \$1.08 billion dollars.
- The President's FFY 2024 budget request includes an appropriation of \$1.2 billion from the Fund for OVC programs. Congress has authorized a continuing resolution until March, so there is no additional information on the status of the FFY 2024 VOCA funding.
- There have been discussions among national victim services groups of potential bridge funding to maintain FFY 2023 levels, but OVC has not released any official information on this matter.

5. Discussion on VOCA Funding

Council members discussed issues related to identifying additional sources to fund victim services. Members will continue to discuss the impact of anticipated reduced funding on victim services, ways to collaborate, and options to mitigate these impacts.

6. New Business

Notification Programs roundtable discussion agenda item for April meeting.

Mary Kozicki reported that The Office for Victims Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) and OVS will be moving to the next phase of training on building resiliency.

Krystal Rich reported that Connecticut Childrens Alliance and CCADV are hosting a free, two-day, workshop May 8-9, 2024.

Susan Omilian distributed a flyer for *My Avenging Angels Workshop*TM.

Andrew Woods will be a guest on Lunch Break with the Village, addressing the issues of community violence on Facebook Live, February 22, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. hosted by The Village for Families and Children.

Mary reported on National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 21-27, 2024, featuring one-hour virtual sessions highlighting victim service providers in Connecticut.

7. Adjournment

Yvette Young adjourned the meeting at 3:53 p.m.

Jean M. Weisbrod, Recorder