



SOUTH CAROLINA

Victim Services Coordinating Council

Barbara Jean (BJ) Nelson - Chair
SC Crime Victim Services
Division Office of the Attorney
General

Nettie Jacobs
SC Department of Probation,
Parole and Pardon Services

Lisa Catalanotto
SC Commission on
Prosecution Coordination

Karin Ho
SC Department of Corrections

Marcia Nobles
SC Department of Juvenile Justice

Veronica Swain Kunz
SC Department of Crime Victim
Ombudsman, Crime Victim
Services Division, Office of the
Attorney General

Jarrold Bruder
SC Sheriffs' Association

Nataki Brown
SC Solicitors' Advocate Forum

Tressa Dixon
SC Law Enforcement
Victim Advocate

Sara Barber
SC Coalition Against Domestic
Violence and Sexual Assault

Trisha Allen
SC Attorney General's Office

Joe Corey, Deputy Director
SC Department of Crime Victim
Assistance Grants, Crime Victim
Services Division, Office of the
Attorney General

Chief Sonny Ledda
SC Police Chiefs' Association

Dean Kilpatrick, Ph.D.
Medical University of SC

Laura Hudson
SC Victim Assistance Network

Debbie Curtis, Deputy Director
SC Department of Crime Victim
Compensation, Crime Victim
Services Division, Office of the
Attorney General

Thomas Knapp
SC Network of Children's
Advocacy Centers

Jada Charley
SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis
Coalition

Kassy Alia Ray, Ph.D
Serve & Connect

Ginger Dukes, Deputy Director
SC Department of Crime Victim
Services Training, Provider
Certification and Statistical
Analysis, Crime Victim Services
Division, Office of the Attorney
General

Ashley Thomas
The Hive Community Circle

Chief John C. Hicks, Jr.
SC Jail Administrators'

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 16, 2023 | 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Barbara Jean (BJ) Nelson; Dexter Boyd (Debbie Curtis); Joe Corey; Missy Knight (Nettie Jacobs); Ginger Dukes; Shannon Geary (Laura Hudson); Sara Barber; Thomas Knapp; Veronica Swain-Kunz; Jada Charley; Jennifer Aplin (Lisa Catalanotto); Ashley Thomas; Kassy Alia Ray; Jarrod Bruder; Karin Ho

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nataki Brown; Dean Kilpatrick; Trisha Allen; Tressa Dixon

OTHERS PRESENT: Fatima Britt - VSCC Admin.; Steve Yarborough – DCVAG; Patrick Cable – CVST; Bonnie Brooks – CVS; Sheila Hoffman – CVS. **Special Guests:** Kyra Jones; Mike Fargen

I. Call to Order

Today's meeting was called to order by Director Nelson.

II. Approval of Minutes

Director Nelson asked members for any discussion of the Minutes from the August 24, 2023, meeting. No changes were recommended. The minutes were accepted as prepared and approved by members of the Council.

III. Business

OVC, Strategic Plans Update: Steve Yarborough gave a very positive status update on the efforts to-date (one year!). Expressed appreciation for all the assistance received by NCJAA. Steve introduced Ms. Kyra Jones, Project Coordinator with the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council as the Consultant selected to oversee the Strategic Plan project. Attending along with Ms. Jones is Mr. Mike Fargen, Data Center Director with the NCJA. Ms. Jones and Mr. Fargen gave excellent Power-Point presentations. Specifically, Ms. Jones' presentation highlighted the Strategic Plan "Proposed Activities and Timeline". It was noted we want to target what exactly we are looking for and to leverage our resources to do more. Mr. Fargen gave a review on "SC Performance Measurement/Metrics". He discussed specifics related to performance measures, data sources etc. A copy/recording of their presentations (along with a complete recording of today's meeting) is attached. Ms. Jones expressed her desire to arrange for a thirty-minute conversation with each Council member to ascertain additional feedback and information for use with the project goals. Steve verbalized his support of Ms. Jones' plea and encouraged member participation.

Steve informed the VSCC members that the Council is now identified on the Attorney General's Office website. In addition, copies of the last two VSCC Meeting Minutes, and the bylaws, can also be found on the website. It is suggested the bylaws need to be updated.

IV. Council Member Updates:



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Director Barbara Jean (BJ) Nelson thanked Steve and the team for the excellent presentation and hard work. She announced new member appointments that will be serving on the Council: Ms. Rhonda Holman will be representing the Director of SCDJJ (replacing Angela Kelly); Chief Sonny Ledda is representing the SC Police Chief's Association (replacing Mark Fallaw).

Deputy Director Veronica Swain-Kunz discussed the status of the final report by the Restitution Task Force. She stated the final report is now done. The Task Force believes all services need to be collected and tracked by one group/agency (advisory group) to successfully assess what is happening around the state. Veronica shared that they now have two of the most recent annual reports on the website.

Dexter Boyd (Deputy Director Debbie Curtis) announced the DCVC Regional Training is scheduled for February 15, 2024 (additional details to be shared at the next meeting). DCVC has increased their medical cap from up to \$3500 to up to \$7500 per claim per hospital. This new medical cap has been tested and sustained. Director Nelson added that DCVC has been testing this new cap for the past several months, but a date for it to be implemented has not been finalized or set. Dexter shared the Auditing section is working on an audit with the city of Gifford, and they are hoping to wrap up soon. Dexter informed members that they are working on a situation involving a comfort animal which was purchased, and received training, with funds of approximately \$10,000 for a victim advocate. Dexter noted the advocate has had the comfort dog for approximately two years, but the advocate is feeling very overwhelmed from her position. The officer/advocate solely takes care of the animal but has expressed a desire to leave her position. Dexter asked members of the Council for any suggestions on how to handle this situation from an auditing perspective. Thomas Knapp shared an experience along with the suggestion of looking at the expected service life of the animal and then deduct the number of years of service already completed. He noted that different animals have different service life. Dexter indicated the comfort dog was a Golden Retriever. Additional consideration to this matter will be given and an update will be provided once the situation is resolved.

Executive Director Thomas Knapp shared they are currently engaged in a five-year Children's Advocacy Center development plan for child abuse victims and their families across the state. At the start, they had seventeen CACs and now are up to seventeen primary and twelve satellites offices. He announced they are breaking ground today on another Children's Advocacy Center located in Berkeley County. Over the past six years they have served over 62,000 kids which is a 51% increase. Thomas reminded the Council that the SC Network of the Children's Advocacy Center is partnering with the Children's Advocacy Centers in NC to hold a Carolinas Symposium on Child Abuse scheduled for April 29 - May 2, 2024. Registration for this event will start right after Thanksgiving. They are expecting 500-600 people in attendance. This will help our victim advocates with our CACs and multi-disciplinary team partners from other states.

Sara Barber shared they are developing a training calendar for next year - two training courses are already confirmed in April. They are also conducting other events: a Netflix documentary called "Victim Suspects" to be conducted at a school; a webinar on "community well-being" to be held in the summer; and they will be hosting a conference focused on a prevention campaign based on sexual assault in young adults in May. Sara expressed concern over the VOCA cuts. She has been preparing for the upcoming legislative session and is following three bills that are on the table: S.143, S.147, and H.4158. They are also working on 2 other draft documents to introduce: 1) Statute of



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Limitations – Minors; and 2) Survivors of DV who kill abusers. She shared SCCADVASA's LAD grant funds were renewed for another three years.

Shannon Geary (Ms. Laura Hudson) informed the Council that they have been engaged with training across South Carolina which included participating in community resource events, presenting SCVAN exhibits, and they conducted a holiday scam webinar. Some of these training courses were in conjunction with Human Affairs and the Attorney General's Office in the month of December. SCVAN will begin implementing these activities throughout the year. Planning for the 2024 Victims' Rights Week is ramping up. They are adding a wellness component for the conference. This year's conference is in-person only. Shannon shared a committee of twenty-five people (including several victims) has been formed to identify where needs are. SCVAN has experienced a large increase in incoming calls over the past six months. The dates for 2024 VRW are April 23-25, 2024. The event will be held at the Double Tree Hotel.

Deputy Director Ginger Dukes CVST conducted an in-person Basic Core training in October with twenty-seven participants. Ginger shared the Human Trafficking Task Force had a Basic Core training as well with thirty-two participants. They are experiencing the end of the year rush with an increase in inquiries requesting balance of training hours etc. They are planning to send out an email notification to everyone in the IQ database that has less than 12 hours and remind them that they have about 45 days to earn the additional needed hours.

Ms. Karin Ho shared her appreciation and gave kudos to SCVAN. She stated that the National Institute for Corrections has expressed interest in a couple of their projects which encouraged them to create a National Training Academy for those of us that do victim driven work. The first training is going to be in Colorado, as a test pilot, in mid-July. This training will target training for facilitators. She indicated their next Post Critical Incident Seminar is being facilitated with two states, Missouri, and South Carolina. These events are for officers that have been traumatized and impacted in many ways. Being able to support them is critical. Karin also announced that their Domestic Violence Doctoring Program that started last summer is still vibrant and active. Participants will graduate this summer. They began their female program this past March at Lee Correctional with the hopes of it continuing to grow. Director Nelson thanked Karin for all she does.

Deputy Director Joe Corey gave an update regarding the current grant cycle. FFY 2023-2024 grants are now active. Staff are making a big effort to conduct in-person monitoring once again. They monitored 86% of grant recipients last year which is the closest they've gotten to 100% over the last five or six years. Joe shared the DCVAG is expecting a 41% cut in its award from the OVC VOCA funds. The Department will be asking the General Assembly for \$15 million, hoping to bolster the SAVS Program to help offset this loss in funds. They are working on a contingency plan and anticipate announcing their funds availability sometime in January. A tentative Workshop date has been set for February (Update to the minutes: The Workshop has now been confirmed for March 13, 2024).

Jennifer Aplin (Lisa Catalanotto) shared an update from the Annual Solicitor's Conference held in October, Myrtle Beach. The Conference was a huge success. Jennifer recognized



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Ginger Dukes and the CVST for their assistance with the victim advocates this year. She also thanked Ginger for their efforts in sending out emails to the VSP community informing them of their hour status. They have two core trainings coming up: Part IIA November 17, 2023 and December 8, 2023; and then Parts I A&B will be in May and June. Their office has been working closely with Debbie Curtis and Dexter Boyd on recognizing the financial programmatic report for victim services.

V. Next Meeting Date(s)

Thursday, February 22, 2024 10:00 – 12:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 23, 2024 10:00 – 12:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 22, 2024 10:00 – 12:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 21, 2024 10:00 – 12:00 p.m.

VI. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by Director Barbara Jean (BJ) Nelson.