

Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission

Victim Issues Subcommittee

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

10 a.m. – 12 noon

VIA: Teams

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present:

Natasha M. Pierre, Chair, State Victim Advocate, presided over the meeting.

Liza Andrews, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV); Linda Cimino, Office of Victim Services (OVS); Melissa Conway, Office of Policy & Management (OPM); Maura Crossin, Program Director CT Alliance & Victims Right Center of CT (The Alliance); Bethany Hamilton, Executive Director, CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance); Michelle Lettieri, MADD; Lucy Nolan, CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance); Jessica Pizzano, Survivors of Homicide (SOH); Leland Moore for Richard Sparaco, Board of Pardons and Parole (BOPP); Marc Pelka, Chair, Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission; Jenifer Rossi, MADD; Nina Vazquez, CT Alliance & Victims Right Center of CT (The Alliance).

1. Welcome

Natasha welcomed members and guests and stated the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Natasha asked all agencies to provide a brief update regarding agency dealings and legislative updates.

2. Agency/Legislative Updates

Jessica Pizzano, Survivors of Homicide (SOH) shared that there were no legislative updates to report. She shared her concerns regarding the closure of Northern Correctional. Soh is excited to announce its fall Golf Tournament to be held in September 2021 in honor of the late Art Jensen.

Liza Andrews, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) shared more information regarding Senate Bill 6, SB48, and HB5520.

Michelle Lettieri, MADD stated she would send an email with the agency legislative updates.

Linda Cimino, Office of Victim Services (OVS) shared that the Court Operations bill was released and there were no changes needed. Linda also shared the need to bring attention to VOCA funding. If any agency is willing to help if possible because grant funding will be reduced significantly. Linda will send an email to Vanessa to share with the group.

Bethany Hamilton, Executive Director, CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance) shared several updates regarding Senate Bill 48 lock change bill. Vote on sexual misconduct assessments, judiciary language, clean slate, and advocacy for crime victim testimony.

Leland Moore for Richard Sparaco, Board of Pardons and Parole (BOPP) shared the board is reviewing technicalities regarding clean slate, pardon process, compassionate parole – working with court based defenders and states attorneys to work out, court operations bill, and victim notification.

Marc Pelka, Chair, Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission shared testimony submitted not in favor of clean slate. Carlton Giles did an excellent job testifying at the public hearing, it is important we find a proactive way to get needs out.

Natasha M. Pierre, Chair, State Victim Advocate spoke more about the amendment to House Joint Resolution 49 regarding appeal and enforcement and working on getting it to the floor. Natasha shared that if items do not violate a crime victim right, she cannot take a stance – agency efforts do have to be specific to violation of crime victims’ rights.

3. Victimization Survey

Linda Cimino shared that the survey is moving along and once it comes to the point where questions need to be determined, she will send an email inviting the group to take part in that process.

4. National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Planning

Natasha shared that the OVA has usually held a conference in observation of this week. Due to COVID-19 – and technical challenges, the OVA is awaiting approval to purchase virtual meeting packages. Past events many service agencies have participated by developing and hosting a workshop. Lucy shared that April is also Sexual Assault Awareness month and the agency will be hosting training that can be offered for the joint NCVRW event. Natasha shared to the group if there is any training in place or if an agency wants to participate please contact Vanessa to schedule. Melissa Conway asked how we can make the NCVRW event victim focused while asking legislators to take part in the observation and issues surrounding crime victims. Marc Pelka shared he will reach out to gain support and encourage participation. Linda Cimino shared two trainings they will be hosting. Liza from CCADV offered to host a webinar. Natasha shared that agencies could participate and choose what would be most relevant to what is currently taking place or would be beneficial to host. Email Vanessa so she can create a calendar of the weeks events and continue with the planning.

The next meeting will be postponed due to NCVRW. Next meeting will take place May 19, 2021.

Meeting adjourned 11 a.m.