

**South Carolina Victim Assistance Network
Board Meeting Minutes**

February 12, 2009

Present

Brett Macgargle
Ritchie Tidwell
Saylor Fox
Renee Mattox
Dean Kilpatrick
Dottie Cronise
Vicki Bourus
Veronica Swain Kunz
Margaret Frierson via phone

Absent

Riley Bost
Larry Bergmann
Hope Blackley

Guests

Clarissa Whaley
Ebony Alcorn

President Brett Macgargle called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes of the 12/18/08 Board meeting were approved.

Financial Update provided by Ritchie Tidwell. Approximately \$27,732 will need to be raised to support SCVAN through the end of the year. Raising funds from VRW will be critical to meet this gap.

A discussion of legitimate uses of 141 Funds followed. SCVAN sees The Legislative Audit Council's Recommendation #9 to be the most urgently needed in the state. "The State Office of Victim Assistance, in consultation with the South Carolina Victim Service Coordinating Council, should develop and distribute guidelines for the appropriate expenditure of victim services funds." This would make certain the monies are used to serve crime victims. Victim service agencies would benefit from the work of the SCVSCC through a Bill being developed allowing SOVA to oversee funds and provide sanctions if funds are misused.

NEWBUSINESS

A meeting was called by Mayor Joe Riley to form a SC Criminal Justice Legislative Coalition. Eight new crime initiatives are being proposed. A handout outlining these initiatives was provided.

General Membership Meeting: During VRW, Solicitor Trey Gowdy will be leading a session addressing "our broken criminal justice system" and recommend improvements. This session will also include an SCVAN General Membership meeting. Current and former Board members, other criminal justice professionals, all VRW attendees and SCVAN members will be invited to attend.

New Partnership: SCVAN is partnering with Sistercare to expand our Emergency Fund to allow us to provide domestic violence victims with transitional housing. The grant began 10/1/08 and provides \$15,000 for rent and utilities each year for two years.

SCVAN GOALS/STRATEGIC PLAN

GOAL I: Public Awareness

SCVAN has applied for a grant from OVC that would provide for a Public Awareness program regarding victims rights. The program will run for 18 months to 2 years and begin October 1, 2009.

A new VOCA grant had been written that will form a centralized “Immigrant Victim Network” to serve as the umbrella organization through which information and assistance to immigrant crime victims may pass. Greenville Attorney Patricia Ravenhorst is assisting with developing this project and will be hired if funded. She would do trainings to criminal justice professionals, organizations serving immigrants, attorneys and immigrants. A webpage and resource directory will be developed by the part-time bilingual victim advocate who will be hired for this Project.

GOAL III: Fundraising

We received a \$10,000 donation from BlueCross/BlueShield.

We have applied for the following new grants:

- Victims’ Rights Public Awareness Initiative (OVC)
- Immigrant Victim Network (VOCA)
- Bank of America

These are applying for the following continuation grants:

- Victim Information Program
- Crime Victim Information Services System
- Crime Victim Legal Network

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION:

Veronica will be making a presentation for Juvenile Arbitration Coordinators at their annual meeting.

Veronica provided an update on the Kendra Gaddie case. The judge involved might be removed from office or may resign.

Renee suggested that SCVAN might establish a tip line for those wanting to report human trafficking. That recommendation will be included in the VOCA grant to serve immigrant crime victims.

Vicki Bourus will be attending a training about the Court Watch program. This program trains and places volunteers in courtrooms to rate the judges' performances.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30.

**Next Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, April 29, 12:00 Noon
at Victims' Rights Week in Greenville (Embassy Suites)**