### Minutes of the

### Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

**Thursday, September 15, 2014**

### State Bar of Georgia

**Atlanta, GA**

**Members Present Staff Present**

Braxton Cotton\* Betty Barnard

Chairman Andy Fuller Nathan Branscome

Drew Ferguson Deborah Brownlee

Melanie Harris Jacqueline Bunn

Liz Hausmann Crystal Crews

Joe Hood Steven Hatfield

Dan Kirk for Director Vernon Keenan+ Juanisha Lawson

Janis Mangum Clive Mighty

Marla Moore Keith Parkhouse

Avery Niles\* Jonathan Peart

Brian Rickman Matthew Pitts

Travis Sakrison Robert Thornton

Jay Sanders Natalie Williams

Arnold Smith Samantha Wolf

Chuck Spahos Shontel Wright

George Turner Kristy Carter

Jeff Wigington Quincie McKibben

Ashley Wilcott ^ John McGahee

Jodi Spiegel ^

Chuck Sullenger ^

David Marimon\*^

*\*Via conference call*

*+ Alternate*

*^ Guests*

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Judge Andy Fuller called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Deborah Brownlee called the roll.

Joe Hood moved to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2014, Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Melanie Harris, and the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

**Committee Reports**

*Compensation Board Report by Melanie Harris*

Ms. Harris gave a report on the Victims Compensation Board’s appeals process as well as the process by which victims of crime come before the Board to seek assistance. She said that “while the Board cannot take away the crime, it can assist with any means available within the authority of the Board. The Board holds face to face meetings with the victims to hear the circumstances of their request.” Ms. Harris also discussed the Administrative Rules. She said that these rules must be followed and kept up to date.

**Victim’s Assistance Grant Committee Report**

*By Robert Thornton on behalf of Chief George Turner*

The Committee met on August 20, 2014, and voted on the new sub-grants that were awarded under the Victims of Crime Act, (“VOCA”) the Stop Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”), and the Sexual Assault Services Program (“SASP”). These sub-grants are going into their second year of a four-year cycle. Some grants received a nine month grant period the first year. The Committee approved increasing these award amounts to a 12 month award period. Also, two law enforcement grant awards were made (one to Athens-Clarke County and one to Henry County.) Both agencies initially received substantial cuts in order to provide funds to more applicants. The Council was able to identify funds in the first year after the appeals process. A one-time award to lessen the impact caused by the reduction in their awards was made. However, these funds will not be available next year to continue the increased funding. The Committee approved to continue those grants at $70,000.00. The Committee also approved the continuation of $70,000.00 for Athens-Clarke County’s Probation Program that was awarded last year after the appeals process.

Staff provided updates on an award for Domestic Violence Shelter and Sexual Assault Center Programs. Those programs were transferred from The Governor’s Office of Children and Families (“GOCF”) to CJCC this year. Staff also provided a presentation on the Domestic Violence Sex Trafficking Task Force that was transferred from GOCF to CJCC. The final item of business was the transfer of a VOCA grant from GOCF to CJCC. Previously that grant was made directly to GOCF. There were remaining VOCA funds in the amount of $109,960.00 and the Committee approved the transfer of that balance to Georgia Cares. Judge Andy Fuller called for a vote after the Committee’s report. The report was unanimously approved.

**Criminal Justice Grants Committee Report**

*Criminal Justice Grants Committee by Charley English*

The Criminal Justice Grants Committee met on August 27, 2014. The Committee took up the appeal of Spalding County for the denial of a grant for a wrongful conviction demonstration project. The Committee determined that in the initial application, as well as on the appeal, insufficient information was provided. Thus, the Committee denied the appeal request from Spalding County Sheriff’s Office. A report was received from staff on the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant Program. The Committee was informed that there were 30 different awards that span 60 counties for a total of $6.8 million.

The staff reported on two grant opportunities. The first was the Sex Offender Registry Notification Act grant (“SORNA”). This is provided not only to state agencies but to local sheriffs’ departments as well. The second has the Byrne Innovative Communities Grant Fund (open to local governments).

**Agency Report**

*By Executive Director Jacqueline Bunn*

Director Bunn thanked the staff for their hard work and introduced Clive Mighty, the new IT Director. Members were given updated notebooks and the CJCC 2013 Annual Report. Director Bunn reported on three conferences she recently attended: 1) The National Criminal Justice Association meeting (“NCJA”) was held at the Beaver Run Resort and Conference Center in Breckenridge, Colorado. Joe Hood was elected as an alternate Board member and Director Bunn will serve on the Policy Committee. Robert Thornton presented at the conference. The Governor’s policy advisor, Travis Johnson, also attended. 2) The National VOCA Training Conference was held in Boston, Massachusetts where valuable information was presented. 3) The National Association of Pre-trial Services conference was held in Denver, Colorado. At the end of that conference, Director Bunn participated in a focus group that related specifically to pre-trial services. Additional information will be shared in the coming months after research is conducted by CJCC staff.

Director Bunn and staff (along with First Lady Sandra Deal) attended an event hosted by the Fayette County Juvenile Court related to its Juvenile Justice Incentive grant program. Attendees were able to hear firsthand from a participant in that program, counselors and instructors.

**Grants Division Report (“Grants”)**

*By Robert Thornton*

Staff transferred from GOCF were introduced. The new Juvenile Justice unit is headed by Samantha Wolf as Program Director. Matt Pitts and Keith Parkhouse also transferred. CJCC staff member Reggie Boyd moved to the unit.

Some of the staff that transferred from GOCF are working on the sexual assault programs. Quince McKibben is assigned to sexual assault and Natalie Williams and Kristy Carter are assigned to domestic violence. John McGahee will work on criminal justice grants.

Robert Thornton reported on a list of new competitive grants. Director Bunn emphasized CJCC’s goal of bringing new money into the State of Georgia. Thus, the Grants staff worked hard over the past year researching opportunities and working with partners to determine needs state-wide. The first of these grants being implemented is the Veterans Treatment Court grant. Aaron Sayama and Aisha Ford worked diligently to secure this grant. They obtained a list of courts interested in expanding or implementing veterans’ courts. Eight responded, and in a very short time-frame, they put together a grant application for that program. Staff is working with federal partners and the individual courts on a budget to determine who will ultimately receive funds under that program. This is a three-year program that compliments the Governor’s initiative supporting Veteran Treatment Courts. The second grant is Project Safe Neighborhoods, coordinated with the U.S. Attorney in the Northern District of Georgia. The third grant was covered by Stefanie Lopez-Howard. The fourth grant, primarily worked on by Shontel Wright and Betty Bernard, establishes a victims’ legal assistance network and enhances what is already in effect in Georgia. Several of the providers of legal assistance for crime victims partnered with CJCC in that effort. This is an 18-month grant and a needs assessment to determine what is needed will be conducted throughout the state.

Robert Thornton provided an update on the case management vendors. Two vendors will work with Accountability Courts throughout the state to implement the case management system. All of the courts have selected a provider. Implementation will occur in the next couple of months. There are 31 courts throughout the state that are receiving funds through the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant Program which provide funding to 60 counties. These grants provide alternatives to detention. In addition to those funds, $1.6 million was added to the Department of Juvenile Justice’s (“DJJ”) budget which provides services to youth who are outside of those 60 counties, (mostly in rural counties). DJJ will release an RFP soon to select vendors throughout the state to provide the services. Some counties do not have enough youth to justify a program, but they will be able to obtain services through one of these DJJ funded vendors.

Two competitive grants were on CJCC’s website for local counties and state agencies. The first was a SORNA grant that allows local sheriffs’ offices to apply for palm print scanners. No match was required, and the deadline to apply was October 3, 2014. The application was simplified to a one-page form. The second was the Innovative Communities Program. This will be awarded to four recipients for one-time funding. It addresses criminal justice issues in local communities, and the funds are for innovative programs. The deadline for applying for this grant was October 20, 2014.

**Statistical Analysis Report** **(“SAC”)**

*By Stefanie Lopez-Howard*

The SAC secured a grant for transition and reentry (along with several partners). That grant is approximately $500,000.00. DOC risk/and/needs assessment data will be shared with the State Board of Pardons and Paroles and the Department of Behavioral Health. This will integrate an operational database which local mental health providers can use for citizens returning to their communities upon exiting prison. Full funding for the State Justice Statistics Grant has been approved. This supports state funding at the statistical analysis level for criminal justice statistics. Part of the grant will support another information sharing initiative which is a data sharing portal for state agencies. The SAC hopes to share aggregate level data, CJCC’s Victim Services data and Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Force data. The SAC has several state-level partner agencies that hope to create an outward facing website that everyone can access, look at the aggregate level data, and run real time analytics. This is just a start with hopes of becoming a much larger data sharing initiative. The other component to this grant is a one-time study funded at $150,000.00 - making the total grant award $210,000.00. The SAC is still spending its Bureau of Justice Statistics Grant for the state drug enforcement strategy. The SAC recently sent a survey out to stakeholders for their comments. The SAC will retool the survey (based on feedback) and send it out to the larger community within the next six weeks.

The Accountability Court Funding Survey full report is now available on the CJCC Website. The Human Trafficking Report (along with the report by the GBI) that was picked up and covered briefly by the AJC is also available on the CJCC website. Focus groups with different stakeholders and law enforcement, to determine the additional needs, are planned. Council members are encouraged to access CJCC’s website and sign up to receive the monthly newsletter.

**Victims Services Division Report (“VSD”)**

*By Juanisha Lawson on behalf of Nicole Jenkins*

The appeals board overturned 82 claims for fiscal year 2014. In fiscal year 2013, 140 claims were reviewed. The decrease was due to Administrative Rules changes as well as some in-house changes. The payout for fiscal year 2014 to date was $2.7 million. This time last year, VSD paid out a little over $2.5 million. We are slightly ahead. The legislative changes related to extension of the filing deadline from one year to three years has helped, since there are many different factors that prevent victims from filing a claim within one year. Since this change (on July 1, 2014), 320 applications were received. Only nine of the 320 were denied. Those denials were based on the fact that the date of crime was prior to July 1, 2014.

Three VSD staff members attended the VOCA training conference in Boston, Massachusetts. The Victims Compensation unit spoke at the Victim Witness Conference in Savannah, Georgia, at the invitation of Council Member Chuck Spahos. Based on feedback received at that conference, there are 15 training opportunities slated for this fall throughout the state.

**Report of the Victim Compensation Emergency Fund**

*By Nathan Branscome*

The Financial Services Division undertook a project of building a model of the revenues and expenditures and functions of the compensation fund to ensure a sustainable operating fund and we manage that fund. The fund is used for provision of benefits for victims of violent crimes in Georgia, including medical expenses up to $15,000.00, counseling expenses up to $3,000.00, funeral expenses up to $3,000.00, economic support up to $10,000.00, and crime scene cleanup up to $1,500.00. There are also two new variables which include forensic interviews which are compensated up to $1,000.00 per claim. We typically receive over 7,000 claims per year which are processed by our Victims Services Division. It is important to note that a claim can come with multiple components, such as medical bills, recurring medical bills and support payments. Those 7,000 claims received during the year translate to 16,000 claims paid to victims of crime in Georgia every year. A breakdown on where the money comes from is as follows: The first portion of the Crime Victims Revenue funds come from the $9.00 probation fee which is assessed on every active probationer in the State of Georgia, whether supervised by the Department of Corrections, a public probation agency, or by a private probation agency. These come in at $15 to $16 million per year at an average of $1.2 million per month. The second are the parolees assessed by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. When a prisoner is paroled, the State Board of Pardons and Paroles has elected to assess a fee of restitution on the parolees in the State of Georgia, and that money comes in at $300,000 to $400,000 per year. Funds from DUI cases in the state come in from the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority at $600,000 to $700.000.00 per year. Finally, we have unclaimed restitution. When restitution is ordered by a court in the State of Georgia, there is a two-year period after it has been collected by any local agency for the victim to claim that restitution. If it has not been claimed within that two-year period, it is then remitted into the Crime Victims Emergency Fund. It is held separately for a period of three years to allow those funds to be claimed by the victim. CJCC uses the Department of Revenue’s search function to help identify these funds. Amounts that remain unclaimed up to a five-year period are transferred into the broader fund and can be used for benefit payments. A valid claim for restitution made after the five-year period may still be paid. The Prison Industry Certified Enhancement Program allows inmates in Georgia to work for private companies in certain prison programs. A portion of the prisoner’s wages are assessed to support restitution in the Crime Victims Emergency Fund. This comes in at approximately $10,000.00 per year. The Crime Victims Emergency Fund typically sees $15 to $18 million in revenue per year.

Mr. Branscome provided a PowerPoint presentation with an overview chart of the benefit payment process from 2008 to the current 2014 fiscal year. A total of $18 million was paid out with a projected payout of $20 million for fiscal year 2015. This projection is being gauged by the current work flow of VSD and the trend over the last several years of the efficiency of claims being paid.

The long term prospects of the fund: from 2009 to 2013, the fund grew from approximately $35 million to approximately $50 million. Based upon the addition of forensic interviews, a slow decline is anticipated unless there is a change in revenue to the fund over the next few years. Right now, there is $300,000.00 to $500,000.00 per year in aggregate over the expenditures. A sustainable rate of $35 million provides 18 months of operations for the funds, as well as a cushion for emergencies. At current, we are looking at 8 to 10 years without substantial changes before the fund reaches that level.

**Presentation by the Office of the Child Advocate (“OCA”)**

*By Ashley Wilcott and Jodi Spiegel*

Ms. Wilcott was appointed in February by Governor Nathan Deal. The mission of the OCA is the oversight of any child welfare agency with which the Department of Family and Children Services (“DFCS”) has been involved. This primarily engages DFCS but can also include any other child welfare agency. OCA receives referrals that are investigated by one of four investigators. Investigators look for violations of law or policy, and those violations are then addressed. Last year, approximately 350 referrals were received. This year to date, 400 were received. Calls received that are not handled by the OCA are referred to the appropriate agency. OCA provides Guardian ad litem training for those who act as such, and the Juvenile Courts also work collaboratively with DFCS to decrease caseloads.

Ms. Jodi Spiegel discussed the procedure for investigating and prosecuting cases of child abuse. The goal is to ensure cooperation with all agencies involved in the investigation of child abuse cases. CJCC’s assistance comes into play for the forensic interviews and forensic medical exams. Ms. Spiegel said she is training with Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (hereinafter “CSEC”). Her goal is to educate the Council on the completion of the statewide child abuse protocol and to draw attention to the work they are doing with CSEC.

**GBI Southeastern Regional Drug Task Force**

*By Chuck Sullenger*

Mr. Sullenger has worked with the GBI Drug Task Force since 1992. This task force operates with funding from CJCC. The East Central Georgia Drug Task Force was later formed as a street level multi-jurisdictional task force. Over the past seven to eight years there has been a trend in which drug dealers attempt to figure out a way to get around street level drug task force enforcement actions. The Southeast Task Force office consists of one commander, two assistant commanders, one budget and grant coordinator, and six special agents from GBI. There are also seven local deputies who have been sworn in by Director Vernon Keenan as GBI Task Force Agents. This gives them investigative authority state-wide. There has been a paradigm shift and the term “Task Force” has actually been replaced with the term “Regional Drug Enforcement Office.” This term denotes the broader spectrum of how drug dealers and the major suppliers are captured.

Judge Fuller stated that task force funding has decreased in recent years. Mr. Thornton stated that interest has picked up in other parts of the state, this is why Mr. Sullenger was asked to come and brief the Council on the task force effort.

**Unfinished Business**

None

**New Business**

Director Bunn introduced David Marimon from National Criminal Justice Association who was attending the meeting via telephone. Director Bunn also announced that the 2015 NCJA Conference will convene in Atlanta.

Braxton Cotton asked for prayers for the two Monroe County Sheriffs’ officers who were shot. One succumbed to his injuries. Mr. Cotton also expressed a desire to reach out to the surviving family members of those officers.

Judge Fuller acknowledged the presence of Chief Turner. Judge Fuller recognized the members of the public who were present and opened up the floor for any questions or comments. There were none.

Robert Thornton presented a list of grants previously operated by GOCF. A list of contracts were provided. These were continuation awards from the prior year. The first was the Georgia Cares allocation. The recommendation was $718,930.00. Last year they received $550,000.00, and the Executive Committee previously approved a continuation of that amount. Grants has a staff member who dedicates all of her time to CSEC. A recommendation was made to the Council to continue these programs and to continue these funding amounts. Commissioner Avery Niles made a motion to continue the grant funding. Joe Hood seconded the motion. The Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Jay Sanders made a motion to adjourn. Braxton Cotton seconded the motion. The Council voted unanimously to approve the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

Approved Date