



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Violent Crime Coordinating Council

c/o Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs

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Washington County Chief Deputy Brian Mueller, Chair

St. Paul Police Department Commander Ken Sass, Vice-Chair

Violent Crime Coordinating Council Minutes – Wednesday, April 10th, 2019

Minnesota Department of Corrections - 1450 Energy Park Drive – Pung Conference Room, 2nd Floor- St. Paul, MN

Members present: Jim Hughes, Pat King, Jeff Hansen, John Littlewolf, Andy Dunne, Brian Mueller, Rich Clark, Jeff Tate, David Voigt, John Gross, Darwin Melin, Scott Hable, John Melvin, Bruce Folkens, Richard Dusterhoft and Ken Sass

DPS staff: Kate Weeks, Kristin Lail and Allison Scott.

Guests: Mark Uner, John Dotterer, Andy Drenth and Kate Ericson.

Meeting Materials:

- 4/10/19 VCCC Agenda
- 2/13/19 Meeting Minutes
- 4/10/19 Statewide Commanders Report
- 2020 VCET Certification Requirements
- 2020 VCET Eligibility Criteria
- VCCC 2018 Committee Structure
- 2019 VCCC Annual Report to the Legislature
- Minnesota Department of Health Handouts

Welcome, introductions and announcements

Chair Brian Mueller called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. VCCC members and guests introduced themselves.

M/S/P Dunne/Tate to approve minutes from 2/13/19 meeting.

M/S/P Folkens/Dunne to approve the 4/10/19 meeting Agenda.

Statewide Commander Update

Kristin Lail provided an update on behalf of Brian Marquart. The annual VCET commanders training was held at Camp Ripley in February and included presentations from DPS Commissioner, US Attorney, BCA Superintendent, Attorney General's Office, Department of Corrections and HIDTA. Marquart has also presented for new Chief Deputies and Basic Narcotics course. Planning is underway for the MSANI Conference in May. Peer review site visits have begun with Marquart and a Commander from another VCET. All 21 should be complete prior to grant review this fall. Technical assistance was provided to the Buffalo Ridge VCET which has restructured their advisory board and changed commander.

Minnesota Department of Health

Kate Erickson provided an overview of MDH Syringe Services Program, drug overdose prevention and novel substances. Between 2000 and 2017, there was a 300% increase in injected drug use in Minnesota and there were 422 opioid-involved deaths in 2018. She provided a sample handout prepared for an agency in Bloomington that included local resources for substance abuse assessment and treatment, mental health emergencies, naloxone distribution, poison control and syringe services. A similar handout can be developed for any local jurisdiction and distributed by law enforcement. Erickson also reviewed the opioid dashboard, OD Map program and CDC resources for public safety and public health partnerships.

Legislative Update

Kate Weeks summarized relevant bills in play at the legislature including opioid stewardship, forfeiture, sex trafficking statewide coordination and cannabis task force. The forfeiture bill changes the disbursement of forfeited funds to victims, OJP grants to law enforcement, public defense and the general funds. The Law Enforcement Coalition is involved in discussions about seizure thresholds, provisions for innocent owners and reimbursement for law enforcement expenses. The opioid bill is moving forward in both the house and senate with funding for local law enforcement and the BCA for drug investigations. A recap of the legislative session will be presented at the June VCCC meeting.

South Central Minnesota Drug Investigation Unit

Andy Drenth gave a presentation about the South Central VCET, based in Owatonna, which includes Faribault, Freeborn, Steele and Waseca Counties as well as the Cities of Albert Lea, Blooming Prairie, Blue Earth, Janesville, New Richland, Owatonna, Waseca, Wells and Winnebago. There are four full-time investigators and one support staff. They closely work with neighboring task forces and use VCET commanders list to make contacts on cases; many are worked up to sources in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Meth continues to be the primary drug of choice with some recent poly-drug overdoses and increase in indoor marijuana grows. Drenth stated that with an annual grant budget of \$65,000, significant local resources are needed to support VCET operations. Kristin Lail noted that Drenth's first week of work was writing a VCET grant application after the previous commander missed the deadline and was reassigned. South Central has operated with half funding since that time and will be seeking to reinstate previous funding levels in 2020.

VCET Grant Update

Kristin Lail reviewed the 2018 VCCC Annual report including VCET operational reviews, Gang Pointer File audit and VCCC activities. New this year is the addition of 2018 VCET summary data. She also reviewed plans for a competitive VCET funding process later this year for calendar year 2020 grants. Funding will remain the same unless additional state funds are allocated for opioid investigations. Lail reviewed VCET certification requirements, listed in the VCCC statute, which are certified by Advisory Board Chairs and reviewed on site visits. She also noted that there were no recommended changes to the 2020 VCET Eligibility Criteria that will be included in the RFP. VCCC members were asked to review Eligibility Criteria and contact OJP grants staff with any recommended changes or additions. A timeline for the 2019 RFP process will be provided at the June VCCC meeting and vote to approve the VCET Eligibility Criteria.

M/S/P Hughes/Hable to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 pm and breakout into subcommittee meetings for the final half hour.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, June 12, 2019. 10am-1pm Minnesota Department of Corrections