



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Violent Crime Coordinating Council

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Washington County Chief Deputy Brian Mueller, Chair
Sartell Police Chief Jim Hughes, Vice-Chair

MINUTES from Violent Crime Coordinating Council Meeting – Wednesday, June 10th

Meeting was held on line with Teams.

Brian Mueller opened the meeting at 10 am via teams and motion received by Tate and seconded by Hughes to approve the minutes from 2/12/20 meeting. Motion by Evans second by King to approve the agenda as presented.

Minnesota County Attorney Association has appointed Kristin Nelson from Mower County to replace Jeff Edlbad on the VCCC. Additionally Don Benner will be representing St Paul PD.

Update by OJP Director Kate Weeks. OJP is currently teleworking and the hiring process has started for the Statewide Coordinator position. Kristin and Brian have gathered information about the previous hiring process from 2013. The position description has been updated and the position is considered a Priority 1. Current hiring freeze in state government so the position is in the approval process with the commissioner's office. Discussion about the hiring process and involvement by the VCCC in the process. Evans advised that the statute was written that the VCCC should make recommendations to the commissioner for hiring. Weeks and Evans indicated that they would be working with the commissioner's office to determine the process but confirmed the commissioner's office wanted the VCCC involvement and input.

Under the current structure the Governor is required to call special session every 30 days to extend the emergency powers and additional legislation is being brought up as well. There will be a special session at the legislature starting June 12 to discuss the emergency powers as well as a number of bills regarding use of force. Supt. Drew Evans indicated there are a number of bills that have been introduced and are working their way through the caucus. Many of the bills have to do with police use of force, investigation of use of force cases, data collection, and POST Board reform.

Brian Marquart provided an update on current VCET operations during COVID indicating that approximately ¼ of the VCETS have shut down/limited during this time. ½ maintain full operation with full personnel, ¼ sent people back to home agencies. Kristin advised that all VCETs were offered granted extensions on grant reporting but all reports have been submitted. Brown Lyon Redwood Renville (BLRR) has a new acting commander. Marquart indicated that he will be attending a board meeting in Redwood Falls to discuss their process moving forward. The 2020 commander conference was a success and there was lots dialogue and information sharing between the commanders. A presentation from MN Dept of AG on the Hemp program and recent legislation was discussed. There has been good communication and cooperation between the VCETs and the Dept of AG. There were also updates from the US Attorney office, legal updates from the MN AG office as well as presentations on operation planning, HIDTA capabilities and from

the league of MN Cities Trust to discuss insurance and why rates went up. Marquart indicated that the spring MSANI Conference has been postponed to 10/28-10/30 held at Grandview. Marquart discussed that overdoses are continuing to be investigated by VCETs and that larger seizures of heroin and fentanyl laced products have taken place.

The commander conference also had a drug court speaker and there was robust discussion about the stats that she presented vs what is actually happening in drug courts in their counties.

Evans reported that the Stearns Co application to join the North Central HIDTA was not approved due to some weaknesses with the application. There will be an HIDTA executive board meeting to approve budget request for 2021 along with annual threat assessment that will be submitted to DC. HIDTA is in processing of hiring a public health analyst, DIO position and have received 84 applicants.

Partner updates:

US Attorney office reports that they have been very busy over the last several weeks with the George Floyd incident and had no additional updates.

Bruce Folkens indicated that MPD has had a long couple of weeks but that they have seen lots of people showing support for MPD.

Dusterhoft: indicated that Ramsey Co will be holding the 1st jury trial since COVID started so things may be starting to get back to more normal in courts.

Axel: Believes St Paul will see less drug cases but will be investigating violent crimes that occurred over the past two weeks.

Tate: Forfeiture reform did not go thru this year as there was no agreement between the house and the senate. Chief's assn opposed to bill and senate didn't think bill went far enough.

VCET grant update & 2020 Operational Reviews from Kristin Lail. OJP conducted the RFP last year and the new grants were executed in January. OJP had state money that lapsed at the end of this month (VCET funds) in the amount of \$100,000. OJP made determination that VCETs that has added partners/staff would be available for an additional \$10,000 with a focused on Greater MN areas. The tentative plan for 2021 would be to extent the grants for the same amount for an additional year however the 10,000 recent addition may not be available and may revert back to their original grant amount. Due to COVID OJP has extended the contract with Alliant Consulting and will be starting audits July 1st. Rob Carlson will contact commanders to schedule visits. The audits will focus on fourth quarter cases of 2019 and will look at forfeitures, informant payments and making sure that adequate documentation exists following the guideline manual in those areas.

11:00 Adjourn

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, August 12, 2020. Time and location TBD