



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

Sartell Police Chief Jim Hughes, Vice-Chair

MINUTES of Violent Crime Coordinating Council Meeting – Wednesday, August 12th

Meeting was held on Microsoft Teams with two members of the public who joined

Attendees: hairman Mueller, Vice Chair Jim Hughes, Drew Evans, Kate Weeks, Allison Scott, Brian Marquart, John Littlewolf, Andy Dunne, Mike Martin, Don Benner, Richard Dusterhoft, Jeff Tate, Scott Hable, Darwin Melin, David Voigt, Kent Bailey and Jon Dotterer.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Mueller at 10:00. Chair Mueller welcomed public guests to the meeting. Motion by Dunne second by Tate to approve minutes from June 10th meeting. Marquart shared his screen to show the agenda as some had not seen it. Motion by Hable second by Hughes to approve the agenda.

Statewide Coordinator Update

Brian Marquart reported that all BCA training conferences including CANAM had to be cancelled. Kristin and Brian have provided some resources including MCTC to commanders for people to get training. Methamphetamine continues to be the number one drug of choice and the price of drugs continues to rise mostly due to the border closings. Brian and Kristin travelled to Redwood and provided training to the new commander of BLRR. Discussion about tribal police department issue occurring in BLRR where their legal counsel has provided opinion the Lower Sioux Police Dept can only operate in Redwood County due to statute. Brian has forwarded information to DPS tribal liaison Nigel Perrote for his information. Brian has received some calls from commanders about issues as they begin to get back to doing VCET operations however many in the metro area are primarily focused on violent crime cases that have arisen. Brian took part in a call with ONDCP Midwest section for opioid update from Minnesota.

Kate Weeks indicated that the replacement for statewide coordinator was continuing thru human resources and they had received 18 applicants and that 6 had been forwarded for second level review. A review of applications will take place and interviews will be scheduled with applicants. Evans, Weeks and Mueller have been working to identify an interview panel. Governance committee is charged with assisting to identify a coordinator and emails with the committee to identify interview panel were sent yesterday. Panel will include Evans, Mueller, Kristin Nelson, Littlewolf, Justin Terrell, Tate and Hable.

Partner updates

Andy Dunne: US Attorney office has been busy with Floyd investigation and the civil unrest that followed. Newly established twin cities violent crimes task force that combines federal agencies, BCA, Ramsey Co, Hennepin Co, St. Paul & Minneapolis PDs to respond quickly to gun violence, robberies, and other crimes taking place in the twin cities. Ericka McDonald committed to the task force and utilizing resources to combat violent crime. In the past month a staggering number of

cases have come into the US Attorney office. Federal courts are slowly re-opening and federal grand juries and in person hearings have started to take place. First federal trial scheduled for August 24th and is a Meth case. Meth cases are still the number one drug case coming in and estimates are make up 2/3 of dope cases in office. Flooded with compassionate release motions filed by pre-trial detainees and inmates in BOP custody. Reduce sentence to time served. Look at health conditions, what institutions are doing to respond to COVID, etc.

Darwin Melin representing tribal police: Seeing a lot of meth and has been in contact with POST board, DPS, Brian Archdale BIA for answers on how to move forward working with the BLRR VCET.

David Voight representing AG office had technical difficulties and responded in Chat that the Floyd case keeping them busy.

Mike Martin and Don Benner representing Ramsey County and St Paul respectively indicated they are coordinating with other agencies on the USAO Violent Crime Task Force. We continue to focus on reducing violent crime in St. Paul and the surrounding suburbs. The SPPD officers assigned to VCET have also been working on case related to arsons, looting, and theft in recent weeks. Meth and Heroin continue to be our biggest problems.

Richard Dusterhoft representing County Attorneys Association. Social distancing has been challenge for court settings and hearings. There is a huge back log of cases and people that were released from custody during COVID. They are doing Zoom hearing notices – 80% failure to appear rate for Zoom hearing. They are then forwarding a notice to appear for in person hearing if failure to appear for Zoom hearing. High in person failure to appear rates as well. Making deals in a lot of cases due to backlog. Trying to look carefully at cases that are being charged. They had set records in Ramsey County for cases charges in 2019 and so far it appears that 2020 will match or exceed those numbers.

Drew Evans representing BCA/DPS. The BCA working through quantification for THC. Getting close but oils which still pose a challenge. Expect to start rolling it out when needed in Sept. for green leaf. It is more complicated than they thought but will have guidance, etc. Court hearing subpoenas are stacking up for lab personnel as we start hearings again. Communicate as much as possible with county attorneys to use virtual hearings. Violent Crimes Task Force has good violent targets on both sides of the river and are producing good cases. BCA Training – some online, a lot being cancelled thru fall. Conferences scheduled for spring will wait to see what happens with the numbers of COVID cases in the state. A large police reform package was passed in the legislature with use of force reporting now required for all. Good news is that 89% reported last year so on good path with getting the rest on board. Additional legislation will require additional training of police. POST board has 2 new members and believe we will see additional disciplinary things coming from the POST board. BCA received funding for a specialized investigative unit to investigated use of force cases throughout the state and SAIC Scott Mueller & ASAIC Mike Phill have been named to run the unit and will be selecting and hiring additional people for the unit.

Jeff Tate representing metro chiefs. Not a lot from Metro Chiefs. Shakopee has seen spike in overdose calls in last couple of days. Numerous Narcan deployments over the past three days. Marquart asked if they are on OD Map and Tate indicated he would confirm but believed they are.

Brian Mueller representing metro sheriffs. Confirmed they are also seeing overdoses and also confirmed they are reporting to OD Map. Marquart indicated that the BCA has a heroin/opioid grant that can reimburse overtime for those cases if they are submitted.

Jim Hughes representing outstate chiefs. Their VCET in St Cloud is reporting and increase in ODs as well and they are reporting to OD MAP.

Jon Dotterer representing MN National Guard. NG currently has 6 analysts out across the state that will be getting deployed. Will be reaching out to affected agencies to find out what the needs are.

Kent Bailey representing HIDTA. Supplemental budget approved and will be receiving discretionary funds request from Rochester PD for OD beds and Hennepin Co. for Narcan assistance. Next meeting is hosted by MN the first week of Sept. and will be addressing a more fair & equitable power sharing between MN & WI. \$8200/pound for meth. Significant seizures. Increase in cocaine now. All groups back and operational for most part.

Scott Hable representing outstate sheriffs. COVID shut down most proactive activity and jail admissions. Seeing more calls for service in rural areas now and self-initiated activities increased. More drug seizures. Jail #s creeping up a little bit. DTF doing good work. Thanked Brian Marquart for assisting with the BLRR commander transition.

Mueller invited any public comments or input. Marquart advised that DOC remain shut down for October. That has been the month where VCCC meeting has included board chairs. Discussion that the executive committee will be meeting to discuss next month meeting.

Kristin was unable to attend this meeting but Kate Weeks confirmed there was no grant update at this time.

Jeff Tate made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Jim Hughes. The VCCC meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, October 14, 2020. Meeting location and type of meeting will be discussed and decided by the Executive Committee in September.