



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Violent Crime Coordinating Council

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

445 Minnesota Street, Suite 2300

St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1515

Voice: 651-230-3358 – vccc.minn@state.mn.us

Ramsey County Undersheriff Mike Martin, Chair

Renville County Sheriff Scott Hable, Vice-Chair

MINUTES of Violent Crime Coordinating Council Meeting – Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Hybrid meeting was held at the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and WebEx.

VCCC members and representatives: John Gross, David Voight, Drew Evans, Jeff Tate, Scott Hable, Mike Martin, Matt Grochow, Andy Dunne, Paul Ford, Scott Hable, Rick Palaia, Allen Slaughter, David Hester, Jeff Stiff, James Novak and Linda Sloan.

OJP staff, speakers and partners: Raphael Mattei, Kent Bailey, Aaron Krenz, Kate Weeks, Ken Sass, Kristin Lail, Allison Hostrawser and Kim Babine.

Chair Mike Martin called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. and welcomed members, partners and staff on WebEx and in person at BCA.

Motion by Jeff Tate, second by Jim Novak to approve minutes from the 4/12/23 meeting. The motion passed.

Motion by Drew Evans second by Jim Novak to approve the 6/14/23 agenda. The motion passed.

Statewide Coordinator Update

Statewide Gang and Drug Coordinator Ken Sass reported on VCET peer review site visits, noting they review CI files, buy funds, case files and seizures. He has conducted some follow-up training for a few VCETs on CI file management. They are offering two courses on electronic search warrants this summer and planning continues for the UC class at Camp Ripley. He also announced that a St. Paul officer was awarded the North Central HIDTA investigator of the year award, which is the first time a Minnesota team member has been recognized.

VCET Grant Update

Grant Administrator Kristin Lail stated that VCET grants are in their second year of funding. OJP waited to release the RFP until after the legislative session and noted that there were not additional funds for VCET grants. With the additional \$1 million from the 2022-23 session, there will be about \$10.5 million available for the 2024-25 VCET grants. At the April meeting, the VCCC voted on a slight change to VCET Eligibility Criteria requiring multi-county VCETs to have full-time officers assigned from at least two separate counties. Ken has been in touch with VCETs that would be affected by this change and also with cities and counties interested in joining or starting a new VCET.

St. Paul Police Department Operation ASPIRE

Jeff Stiff, Commander of the Gang and Gun Unit provided an overview of the ASPIRE program, which works with the Office of Neighborhood Safety to prevent and respond to shootings in St. Paul. They work with prosecutors, probation and community-based violence interrupters to investigate shootings and provide resources for families and victims. Performance data shows a decrease in shootings and gun-related crimes and an increased street presence for community calls on trespass, liquor and low-level drug cases where guns are often involved. They work with the juvenile unit, HIDTA, VCET and other federal and state partners and have been using technology like NIBN to test seized guns and bullet casings from crime scenes.

Legislative Update

Kate Weeks highlighted several OJP grant programs that received funding from the legislature this spring including community crime prevention, youth intervention, pathway to policing, intensive peace officer training, MCAA training, firearms storage, crisis response and sexual assault kit testing. There were additional resources for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Office and Youth Justice Office and funding to establish two new offices for Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls and Restorative Justice Services.

Drew Evans noted that BCA is responding to law enforcement concerns about the cannabis legalization bill including lab testing, DRE training for drugged driving and drug dog retirement and regulatory enforcement through the new Cannabis Management Board. The BCA also received fund for violent crime investigations, human trafficking and crime lab.

Partner Updates

The VCCC members and partners provided updates from the U.S. Attorney's Office, DEA, Minnesota National Guard Counter Drug Program, BCA and Attorney General's Office and the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25, followed by lunch for those attending in person.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, August 9, 2023 at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.