

VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

March 27, 2025

Attendance: Shanquenetta Anderson, Wendy Ayala, Larry Center, Chelsea Hughes, Franklin Marks, Dyan Owens, Anand Verma, Alan Schulman.

Members Absent: Ellen Alexander, Dolores Briceno, Debra D'Agostino, Christina Ingram, Celeste Iroha.

Ex-Office Members Absent: Ellen Alexander

Support Staff: Liz Briganty and Carla

I. Additions to Agenda – Wendy Ayala

- No additions to Agenda.

II. Roll Call & Virtual Meeting Procedures – Wendy Ayala

- The chair will call the roll to establish a quorum.

III. Approval of Minutes from Past Meetings – Wendy Ayala

- The February 27, 2025, Minutes were approved.
- Motion – Shan; Second- Alan and Larry.

IV. Executive Subcommittee Update

- Discussion: County's Victims Services Advisory Board & MCPS
- Shan and Wendy attended the meeting where the discussion was on how to collaborate in the board attending events and receiving the information.
- Shan will attend to the MCVR event on April 19th.
 - a. **Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC): March 26, 2025**
 - Next meeting is the May 27th at 07:30 to 09:00 AM
 - Judge Bennett shared insights on the significant decrease in crime rates in Montgomery County from 2019 to the present.
 - Workforce mentoring efforts were discussed, emphasizing improved communication strategies with Montgomery County.
 - Increased organized crimes, such as burglaries and robberies, were observed in Montgomery County.
 - Several presentations were given by different departments in Montgomery County.
 - The sheriff's office discussed court-ordered evictions, highlighting efforts to connect individuals facing eviction with assistance programs available within Montgomery County before their removal from their homes.
 - b. **Update on Outreach to County Council and County Executive**
 - Wendy gives in updated her meeting with Councilmember Dawn Luedtke.
 - Shan scheduled a meeting with Councilmember Jawando.
 - Councilmember Albornoz provided Wendy with information on contacts for bridge housing initiatives.

V. Legislative Subcommittee Update

- a. Update on Legislative Advocacy Work- No updates.

VI. Ex-Oficio, Non-Voting Members:

- a. **Montgomery County Police: Ellen Alexander**

b. Office of Public Defender: Dyan Owens

- Dyan shared the barriers and challenges faced by criminal public defenders, explaining how individuals who have committed crimes are still part of the community and emphasizing efforts to support and help them reintegrate effectively. She identified in her work many of the offenders were once survivors themselves.

c. State's Attorney's Office: Dolores Briceno

d. Department of Health and Human Services: Vacant

VII. Membership and Recruitment – Wendy Ayala

a. Update on Vacancies

- Liz provided an update on the recruitment efforts for the VSAB board and will send out information on how to begin recruiting as she is working with the BCC for the application.
- There is a need to recruit members representing the clergy, mental health, medical, and community sectors for the VSAB board.

b. Share Reminder About Attendance

- Wendy emphasized the importance of the attendance policy for VSAB board members.
- VSAB board members hold ten meetings annually, seven of which are virtual and three conducted in person.

VIII. Public Affairs/Events Subcommittee updates – Celeste/Chelsea

- Liz provided updates about the Facebook page, informing board members that she will be the owner and manager of the page once it been approved so there is a pause on posting.
- Liz explained that the board could join Trauma Services at events also to promote their work as someone from Trauma Services needs to be with the board when they are representing in outreaches.
- Wendy emphasis informing the board through Liz of any events that may be an opportunity and in the future this could be posted on the social media page.
- Following events were announced:
 - a. Respect Fest March 30-6 April 2025: Wheaton Community Recreation Center
 - b. Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center (MCVR) Walk April 19, 2025: Watkins Regional Park 8-10 a.m.
 - c. Black Mental Health Awareness Fair April 26, 2005: Montgomery Blair High School 1-5 p.m.

IX. Discussion of future presentations

- The VSAB board discussed the limit on presentations for the year as they review and update the board rules.

X. Announcements/Comments/New Business

- NO Announcements.

Next Meeting:

April 24, 2025 (Virtual)