

Alaska Criminal Justice Commission
Victims' Rights and Services Workgroup
Meeting Summary

Wednesday July 24, 2019, 10:00 a.m.

Alaska Mental Health Trust, Anchorage
And teleconference

Commissioners present: Brenda Stanfill, Shelly Hughes

Participants: Taylor Winston, Kelly Howell, Buddy Whitt, Barbara Johnson, Kim Stone, Michal Bowers, Michael Ramsey, Christina Evans, Rashika Rakibullah, Ingrid Johnson

Staff: Staci Corey, Barbara Dunham

Introductions

Commissioner Brenda Stanfill explained that this was a new workgroup for the Commission. The Commission had previously looked at some specific issues such as restitution but had not looked at victims' issues more holistically. The Commission had started this process by conducting listening sessions and an online survey. Broadly, the goal for this group was to look at how victims can be included in the criminal justice process rather than excluded, and possibly come up with recommendations for the next legislative session.

VINEWatch

Michal Bowers from the Department of Law, Criminal Division explained how the VINEWatch service works. VINEWatch and VINELink are two different versions of the same service. VINEWatch is a notification system administered by the Department of Law for the pretrial process, while VINELink is a notification system administered by the Department of Corrections regarding people who are sentenced and in the correctional system.

Michal explained that previously, pretrial victim notification was just a manual process of phoning victims to notify them of hearings and plea bargains. VINEWatch is automated and linked to the CourtView system. It is a closed portal, meaning that a victim who wants to be notified must be registered by a paralegal in the local District Attorney's office. The system is synced with CourtView four times per day.

Registration is not automatic, and paralegals will ask victims if they want to be registered. Victims can choose whether they want to be notified by phone, email, or text, and notifications are available in six languages. All notifications remind the victim of who their contact/paralegal is. Emails and texts contain a link to CourtView.

Michal said that if a victim elects to receive voice messages on their phone, the volume of calls can be burdensome, since any change to the system triggers a phone call, even if it's just a minor change such as correcting a clerical error. On the other hand, voice messages require the user on the other end to enter a PIN which means that the Dept. of Law will know if the victim got the information.

Taylor Winston from the Office of Victims' Rights asked whether the Dept. of Law keeps track of the percentage of known victims who register. Michal said they didn't, but she did know that it was a fairly high volume.

Senator Shelly Hughes asked whether all victims were offered this service, and whether notification was in law or was a policy decision. Michal said that the Criminal Division's policy is that all victims are offered the service, including parents of minor victims. It is also offered to witnesses if they are subpoenaed.

Sen. Hughes said her son was a victim of crime and she didn't recall him having this service, and wondered whether all victims were being reached. Michal said that paralegals are all required to offer the service to any victim in their cases, but that paralegals are also human, and could forget. There are also weekend arraignments, and paralegals work a standard week, so they might not get the case right away. Also the initial phone call from a paralegal can be overwhelming, and the victim might miss the paralegal offering the notification service.

Sen. Hughes thought that if the victim lived with the offender, there could be a danger to victims getting these phone calls, and wondered whether there was a way for victims to log in to hear the message. Michal said there wasn't, but the system was directly linked to CourtView, so going to CourtView would give them the same information.

Brenda said that as a victim advocate she was surprised to learn about VINEWatch, and she polled the advocates she worked with—they hadn't known about it either. If advocates don't know about the service, they don't know to push the service to people. Something to think about is how to connect this system with victim service agencies, since victims touch base with those agencies all the time. She also wondered if there was a way to put more information in the system. Michal said that notifications were triggered by a change made in CourtView, so they couldn't add notifications for different things. They could change the messages slightly but wanted to be mindful of text size limits.

Sen. Hughes asked whether Michal felt there were enough paralegals. Michal said that depended on who you ask. It depends on the office or location. Many locations have an overwhelming number of cases. Paralegals have three attorneys assigned to them.

Buddy Whitt, staff to Sen. Hughes, said that there were or victim contact provisions in HB 49, such as notifying a victim if a defendant released on bail was kicked out of treatment for non-compliance. He wondered how implementation of those provisions was going. Michal said that Susie Frenzel at the Dept. of Law had a meeting with people from the national VINE organization on how to implement those pieces. Michael Ramsey from the Dept. of Corrections (DOC) said that DOC had also been in discussions with VINE on how to implement those pieces. Sen. Hughes suggested getting an update on that process for the next workgroup meeting.

Sen. Hughes added that HB 49 also added a provision requiring judges to state a defendant's estimated earliest release date on the record at sentencing. They got pushback from the court system on this while working on it in committee. She wondered if there was any way to use the VINE system to notify victims of that date.

Michal said that the VINEWatch system is triggered by items being entered in CourtView, and CourtView doesn't have sentencing information. Also, calculating a release date would be hard from a Department of Law perspective; it's really something that the time accounting folks at DOC need to look at.

Taylor said she didn't think release date information could be pushed through a portal like VINEWatch. Time accounting is incredibly complicated. She worked on this issue during the SB 91 process. The legislature tried looking into having courts notify victims of the earliest possible release date, but that task ended up falling to DOC in the final bill. She didn't have a sense of how often DOC actually provides that information; OVR doesn't get a copy.

Sen. Hughes said this was the discussion they had in Senate Judiciary this past session. Nevertheless it is in statute now that the judge has to estimate the earliest possible release date. Judges were hesitant. She thought the workgroup should look further into this. The information is just not getting to victims, and she thought the information needed to be out there. Victims ought to know a general estimate of the release date even with all the variables.

Taylor thought that prosecutors also shy away from advertising release information, because the plea bargain process might not go as smoothly. The system needs to be honest in order for victims to feel they are treated fairly and with dignity. If things are properly explained, victims will at least feel like they were treated fairly. With increasing caseloads, prosecutors' time to have those conversations is even more limited. She thought prosecutors have been shying away from dealing with victims. She agreed wholeheartedly that this needs to be fixed.

Sen. Hughes wondered if a future workgroup meeting could be devoted to this. Brenda said yes, it would be right on point for this workgroup to tackle.

Barbara Dunham, project attorney for the Commission, said that it might be worth thinking in general about how best to communicate with victims above just increasing contact. Many respondents to the victim survey said that they were often confused by the courtroom jargon they found on CourtView or at hearings.

Taylor said that OVR was looking at updating its website with a glossary, or perhaps developing videos for people to watch that would explain the process, and would take all the "lawyer language" out. Victims don't always know if they should or shouldn't go to certain hearings even if they are notified of them. Going to court hearings can seem like listening in a foreign language, which adds to their apprehension.

Michal said that a lot of people working in the criminal justice system assume that people have some base knowledge about the system, can read well, and can understand English. They may not know whether to ask not just "did you read the pamphlet?", but also "did you understand it?". She also noted that the Dept. of Law has had an incredible amount of turnover in recent years, having lost 100 years of paralegal experience in the Anchorage office. Many attorneys are new as well.

VINELink

Michael Ramsay explained that VINEWatch and VINELink are related services that have separate functions. Unlike VINEWatch, VINELink is public; anyone can register for the service by calling VINE's helpline, calling DOC, or going to vinelink.com. He has found recently that the public is not really aware that the two are separate systems. Some victims think registration with VINEWatch means they will be automatically registered with VINELink, which is not the case.

Michael gave the history of VINE; it was born out of a tragedy in Kentucky in 1993. A victim of sexual assault/stalking asked to be notified if her attacker bailed out of jail. Someone posted bail for him,

but she wasn't notified. Her attacker went to her workplace and shot her in the parking lot; it happened to be the victim's 21st birthday. The victim's parents worked with local officials to create VINE, and it was later developed into a national program. Alaska implemented VINE in 1999.

VINELink is an unmanned service, active 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. People who want to register don't have to be a victim and don't have to be an Alaska resident. The service is offered in English, Spanish, Russian, and Yupik, and users can receive notifications via text, TTY, email, and phone calls. There is also a VINELink mobile app, which is growing in popularity.

DOC tries to make their VINE system as user-friendly as possible. He also gets calls from people who ask him to do the registration for them, which he will do. People can also register as a guest, meaning they don't need an account. They will need to register if they want phone calls because they require a pin.

VINELink sends the following notifications: advance notice of a prisoner's release, day of release, if a prisoner is back in custody, when a prisoner is released on supervision, escape, death, and supervision violations. Each notification message always has Michael's contact information. VINELink's information is based on DOC's ACOMS system, which syncs with VINELink every 15 minutes.

There is also a list of service providers within VINELink. Michael tries to promote this when he talks to victims. Michael thought VINELink was a great tool for victims overall—DOC is using a more enhanced version now, and they will have updates within the next few months which will enhance usability.

Taylor asked whether VINELink will notify users if the prisoner goes to a halfway house/CRC, or is released on electronic monitoring. Michael said it will send those notifications, but they are not very detailed. Their concern is texts—victims may pay per message if they have a pay-as-you-go phone, so they try to keep notifications to the length of one message.

Taylor asked whether there was a way to include information on a person's probation/parole officer (PO) or institutional PO. Michael said that information was not on the VINE system, people would have to call him for that information. He said he was happy to help get victims information, and be a one-stop shop in that regard; he didn't want victims to get bounced around.

Sen. Hughes asked whether the system notified users of parole hearings. Michael said they did. Sen. Hughes noted that users would be notified of an escape but wondered whether that would trigger any other kind of protection for the victim? Michael wasn't sure; he hadn't been at DOC when there was an escape yet.

Brenda said that she had personal experience with being notified of an escape with VINE, although she was actually notified that the prisoner was caught again before she got the notification that he had escaped. She thought this was something the group should look at. She was not sure a VINE notification is enough since victims may not always check their email or might not look at texts at work. Taylor agreed and said that sometimes Nixle is a better source of information.

Barbara Johnson of 49th Rising said that she was still trying to keep both systems differentiated in her head. She knew there were brochures, but wondered if there was a way to rename the services to make it simple and clearer to victims which was which. Michal agreed that confusion was an issue. Taylor wondered if there might be trademark issues with renaming things. Michael said that VINE might be a brand name, but he knew the federal system used a different name. It might be an option to look into.

Sen. Hughes observed that typically victims will sign up for VINEWatch first, and wondered if they will be told about both services at the same time. Michael said he will explain the two systems if people talk to him in person. Sen. Hughes wondered whether the two services were explained on OVR's website. Taylor said yes but it could be explained better.

Brenda suggested that for the next meeting, the group should look into what the outreach methods are for all victim services, pulling together all the brochures typically handed out or made available to victims.

Buddy asked about the challenges of notifying victims in rural Alaska. Michael said that contact information often changes, so he tries to remind people to keep it updated if he speaks to them in person. They can try to track people down but are not always successful. Buddy suggested contacting local VPSOs to get contact information for victims. Michael said he could look into that.

Brenda said that she noticed the VINE app lists a release date; she wondered if that was the actual date of release. Michael said it was the earliest possible date of release.

Office of Victims' Rights (OVR)

Taylor explained that OVR has four part-time attorneys and three full-time attorneys, plus an investigator. Full-time attorneys have caseloads of about 60 cases. OVR handles 250 to 280 active cases per year.

OVR represents victims in criminal cases, but can also act like an ombudsman to investigate state agencies—for example, right now they are looking into timely dispositions for cases. Three major recurring themes they encounter are issues of notification, timely dispositions, and restitution. OVR also provides a voice for victims in various groups such as this one.

OVR attorneys will represent anyone who is a crime victim, regardless of need, with some constraints. They only represent victims in state criminal cases (not federal or civil). OVR can't represent someone who is also a defendant, or if representation will somehow interfere in an ongoing investigation. They can only represent a victim if, at minimum, a police report has been filed, although it doesn't matter if charges have been filed. They can follow the case through until the offender is "off paper" (i.e. off probation/parole).

OVR attorneys can also only represent victims cases that involve felonies or person-based or DV misdemeanors. Other types of misdemeanors are out of their jurisdiction; this includes misdemeanor harassment, which, in Taylor's view, was a gap that needed to be addressed. All of OVR's attorneys are former prosecutors, experience which can help them when they argue for charging or increased charges.

OVR serves the whole state; often their attorneys will appear telephonically. Buddy asked how many of the people they serve are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. Taylor said those cases make up the bulk of their work— about 50-70% of their cases, depending on the year.

A person is considered a victim they are if a person against whom a crime has been perpetrated. If the victim is a minor, incompetent, incapacitated, or deceased, then the following people, excluding a perpetrator, are considered victims:

- the spouse or domestic partner of the person

- a parent, adult child, guardian, or custodian of the person
- a sibling or grandparent of a deceased victim

The phrase “adult child” precludes minors, so a minor who has lost a parent to violent crime would not be eligible for services. However, Taylor believed that there are minors who are sophisticated enough to understand what crime is and that they have rights. In situations where the victim is deceased, the family member can receive services, but not if that family member is also the perpetrator of the crime or if OVR’s representation would interfere in the investigation.

The services OVR provides include:

- (1) Make referrals to other agencies for other assistance
- (2) Advise victims of their constitutional & statutory rights
- (3) Investigate when a crime victim believes rights have been denied
- (4) Communicate with law enforcement agencies and/or prosecutors about the case
- (5) Explain the criminal justice process in detail and be available for those questions
- (6) Attend meetings with victim and DA
- (7) Attend hearings, like bail hearings and sentencing and, if requested, speak on their behalf
- (8) File pleadings on their behalf when a victim right is triggered – i.e. the privacy right not to have records discovered.

They cannot go to every hearing. A big part of their job is to demystify the process for the victim—they can read between the lines on Courtview. They will let the victim know which hearings are important to attend. They can speak on behalf of the victim at hearings but they also try to empower the victim to speak on their own behalf.

OVR receives the same discovery that the defendant in the case receives. If it is not yet a court case, their investigator will get the police reports. They can file pleadings to enforce victim rights such as the right to a timely disposition, though they usually only file motions on that after the case has been open for one year.

Taylor noted that at pretrial hearings, there is usually no dialogue with the judge and DA about the how victim feels about a continuance. However, the law says a judge must make findings on the record if a victim objects to the continuance. Taylor said this was not being done since judges were not taking the time to ascertain the victim’s position.

Sen. Hughes said she believed Dan Sullivan was working on, or had perhaps passed, legislation that would develop more legal representation for victims, and wondered if OVR would be part of that effort. Taylor was not sure, but thought it would be interesting. OVR could expand its operations and more people could be helped. She would also be happy to expand this service within other agencies. Private attorneys or pro bono attorneys can always represent victims. Sen. Hughes asked if she could look into it and find out what the plan is for that legislation. Taylor said she would.

Taylor explained that victims rights are guaranteed in the Alaska Constitution (Article 1, Section 24). They include:

1. The right to be reasonably protected from the defendant through appropriate bail or release conditions;
2. The right to confer with the prosecution;
3. The right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness through the entire process;
4. The right to timely disposition of the case;
5. The right to be informed about and to be allowed to be present at all criminal or juvenile proceedings where the defendant can be present;
6. The right to be heard at sentencing, or at any proceeding, before or after conviction/adjudication, where the defendant's release from custody is considered;
7. The right to restitution from the defendant(s); and,
8. The right to be informed, upon request, of the defendant's escape or release from custody before or after conviction or juvenile adjudication.

Taylor added that there are also more than 40 statutes in Alaska addressing various victim rights. Some rights are automatic, and some must be requested by the victim. She added that Arizona was an exemplary state for victims rights .

Taylor explained that OVR keeps all matters confidential unless disclosures are necessary to enable the victims' advocate to carry out duties and to support recommendations. Also, while OVR is entitled to have all the information (discovery) a defendant would receive, they must not disclose confidential records and cannot give victims police reports. This can frustrate victims, but don't want to taint process, witnesses

Taylor said that a frustrating aspect of victim representation in juvenile cases is that the juvenile justice system doesn't operate the same way as the adult system. There is no centralized source of information on hearings for those cases. JPOs have a lot of control over how the cases proceed.

Law enforcement must notify victims of OVR's existence, typically accomplishing this by handing victims one of OVR's brochures. Officers don't always have an opportunity to give the brochure, so they also have a card. However, Taylor explained, the best way to make people really understand what OVR does is to have a conversation with them about it. She tries to train police so they can have that conversation. It's hard to monitor compliance with this law. Victims may not remember what they were told, or what information they were given.

Taylor noted that all agencies were welcome to use their brochures. APD doesn't request their brochures—they have a DVSA booklet, but not one for all victims. She would rather they just give something to all victims.

Sen. Hughes asked whether all victims were supposed to get OVR's brochure. Taylor said they were supposed to get the information; the exact means of giving them the information was up to the officer so the officer could just tell them about it rather than give them a brochure. Sen. Hughes asked whether the troopers used OVR's brochure. Kelly Howell said the troopers have their own DVSA booklet; they also have OVR's brochure but she was not sure how much it was used. Taylor said that she had presented at the trooper academies in the past; it was hard to convince troopers that all victims need support, not just DV/SA victims.

Sen. Hughes said that property crime was often perpetrated by stranger, which can feel very violative especially if it's a break-in in someone's home. She was concerned that a law on the books was perhaps not being followed. She wondered how to require accountability for this requirement. Taylor said

she has tried to inquire about compliance at APD, for example, but got shut down. OVR can do a formal investigation of an agency through deposition, discovery, etc, and can publish reports. The hard part is verification—it is hard to determine whether information has been imparted to traumatized people.

Brenda wondered if OVR gets involved in cases at the law enforcement stage. Taylor said they did; at that stage, they get many people who say that law enforcement isn't calling them back. They find out about OVR by looking for help for victims on the internet. Brenda ask when someone would get referred to OVR if they are a victim of a property crime; in Fairbanks, victims are given a report to fill out to hand in to the police. Taylor said she would think it should be when the officer makes contact. But in Anchorage many people are told to fill out an online form, so they're not necessarily even dealing with a patrol officer.

Taylor said that OVR has found issues at every juncture of the criminal justice system. Brenda said it would be helpful to get that breakdown; it could be blueprint for the workgroup.

Taylor explained that the restorative justice account was created through a bill from Rep. Kopp-- it became law in January. They have set up procedures for distributing money, but money hasn't been allocated for the program yet. They are taking applications and telling people the money has not been appropriated yet.

OVR can also get property back that's being held as evidence, though that can be procedurally complicated. Taylor thought there should be an inter-agency effort to find ways to get property back to people if it is not needed for trial (i.e. if a picture will do).

Sen. Hughes asked whether OVR provided general information to people, given that the criminal justice system is complicated. It would be nice to have someone act as a general navigator for the system. Taylor said that would be a good idea. OVR will answer general questions. Sen. Hughes said she didn't want to take up attorney time to do that; it might be more efficient to have a someone dedicated to that function. She thought OVR might be the logical location for that.

Ingrid Johnson, from UAA, wondered whether that was the kind of thing Victims for Justice (VFJ) could do. She thought they served more victims. Brenda said VFJ has a bigger footprint, but not they did not deal with all crimes. Christina Evans from VFJ said that was correct; they support victims of violent crime, not property crime, although something like a robbery would count as a violent crime.

Michal added that the DA's office makes sure the paralegals know that they serve in a public access office, and are there to help provide information to the public. She formerly served that role as a paralegal herself and would explain how the system worked to the people she came into contact with. Taylor observed that the smaller DA offices tend to have better communication, perhaps because they have smaller caseloads. OVR doesn't get as many cases from those offices and she believed it was because the communication from those offices was better.

Kim Stone from the Dept. of Law asked whether OVR keeps data on where its clients are from. Taylor said they keep data by district and court location, but that doesn't necessarily give the exact location of the person. They get very few cases from Southeast, Utqiagvik, or Bethel. There could be many reasons why that is, including that people might not know about OVR. They get more cases from Kenai and Fairbanks.

Christina said she was in Fairbanks, and suggested that OVR conduct a new training for law enforcement there. There have been changes in the last year; many senior officers retired, and there is a

new chief. Taylor said she would try to get there. She tries to speak to law enforcement agencies when she can. Even though the law requires officers to be aware of OVR, she thought it was best to try to present to as many levels of the organization as possible.

Buddy noted that HB 49 contained some additional notification requirements that could also help get information to victims.

Victim Listening Sessions and Survey

Barbara explained that the Commission had decided to host listening sessions late last year. To date the Commission has hosted four sessions, in Juneau, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, and Bethel. Attendance was varying at these events, so staff created an online survey to try to reach more people. Over 125 people responded to the survey. She had circulated a memo to the group about the listening sessions and survey.

Staff also asked the Commission at the last plenary meeting in May whether the Commission wanted to keep going with the listening sessions. The Commission voted to keep going with the listening sessions, directing staff to plan for sessions in the Anchorage or Eagle River area, at AFN in Fairbanks, and in Nome and/or Kotzebue.

Sen. Hughes suggested also hosting sessions in the Mat-Su and on the Kenai peninsula.

Michal asked how the survey had been advertised. Staff research analyst Staci Corey said that she sent it to all the people she'd contacted for listening sessions—law enforcement, local state victim agencies, shelters, courts, city councils, etc. Some victim groups were able to post the survey on Facebook and that got a good response. She said staff didn't do a lot of outreach specifically to places other than where the listening sessions were, but there were still plenty of responses from people from all over the state.

Sen. Hughes suggested trying to open the survey again, perhaps in conjunction with the other listening sessions, perhaps for a concentrated window of time.

Barbara explained that she and Staci coded the responses to the survey through June 23. There were 127 respondents, and they went through the responses to each question to code them for common themes. They also tried to ascertain the nature of the crime the person experienced although this was not always possible. The types of crime experienced were 25% violent crime, 16% property crime, 16% sex offense, 4% domestic violence, and 7% domestic violence and sex offense. 30% were unknown while the remaining 2% was a combination of crimes.

Staci and Barbara grouped the common themes found in the responses into five major categories: communication, law enforcement and prosecution, defendant consequences, information and services, and prioritizing victim needs and effective crime control. The most common themes included wanting services or better access to services (such as support, financial help, housing, legal services, or behavioral health services), better communication from law enforcement or prosecution, and a more thorough investigation by law enforcement or prosecution. Respondents also mentioned feeling as though victims did not have as many rights as defendants.

The survey also asked victims whether they were able to access any victim services in Alaska. 39% said they hadn't, 27% said they had, 13% said they were able to access some services, and the remainder had some other response or didn't respond. Those who said they weren't able to access services listed barriers such as not knowing services were available, not qualifying or not being able to pay for the service, or services not being available.

Brenda thanked Staci and Barbara for their work and said it was interesting to see the themes coming out of the survey.

Ingrid said she would be interested in joining any conversations about collecting more data, or modifying the data. She is also working on a project centered on interviews with victims and the concern she has now is that since Alaska has such a small population, there are only so many victims to interview and she is getting a sense of participation fatigue among victims. She wanted to be careful about collecting data without very specific purposes so that victims did not feel like they were being mined for information for no reason.

Brenda thanked Ingrid for pointing that out. She noted that the Commission thought listening sessions would be more popular than they were. She thought it was important to find the right mechanism to make sure victim voices are heard.

Ingrid said that people want to see some change happen after they share their stories. She went out to Nome in April, where it seemed they were tired of people coming in and asking questions, but nothing changes as a result. She thought there was an opportunity to coordinate survey-taking to make sure people were not being fatigued, especially in light of the fact that UAA was scheduled to re-do its victimization survey next year as well.

Buddy said he thought even having a statement of purpose or of what we're trying to accomplish may help. Sen. Hughes said it could even be something simple: we are working to improve things for victims. Staci noted that the advertisements for the listening sessions and survey said the purpose was to improve victim services and the state response to crime.

Kim also suggested talking to a key informant. Ingrid said she was doing that as well. She was talking to system stakeholders (e.g. AST, service providers) as well as conducting victim/survivor interviews, which were harder to get. Even between victims and victim advocates there were different perspectives. Some victims never connected with victim advocates.

Brenda said the Commission also spoke with key informants, when the Commission conducted victim roundtables; she suggested the group read that report as well. The responses at the roundtable were a little different from the responses to the survey. Sometimes the system stakeholders don't understand victim frustration or are the cause of frustration. For next meeting, she suggested thinking about what more data we need to collect.

Public Comment

There was an opportunity for public comment but none was offered.

Future Meetings and Tasks

Buddy asked what the goal of the workgroup was. Brenda said the agenda was fairly broad right now: the goal was to find out how to make the criminal justice system fit victims' needs. The group will hone in on the specifics in the next meetings.

Sen. Hughes asked whether this was a new workgroup. Brenda said that it was, and that this was the first meeting. It was just established by Commission at the last plenary session in May. This meeting was intended to be a data gathering session. The Commission did not assign any task other than meeting the needs of victims.

Brenda said she thought this meeting had been educational, and next the group will focus on what we want to accomplish, and set priorities. It always takes longer to accomplish things than you think, especially since everyone participating in the group has a primary job they need to do. It was also difficult to shed that role sometimes at these meetings. She encouraged people to be creative and open to new ideas.

Sen. Hughes said she appreciated the session today and the opportunity to brainstorm. She suggested making a presentation to the Senate Judiciary Committee next session.

Buddy said it sounded like tasks for group members before the next meeting included reading the memo on the listening sessions and survey, as well as the victim roundtable report from the Commission's earlier effort and the restitution report. He said he would throw together a summary of the new victim notification requirements from HB 14 and 49 as well as the new reporting requirements for the agencies.

The group agreed to meet next on September 25 at 10.