

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
CRIME VICTIMS REPARATION COMMISSION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR



FRANK ZUBIA
DIRECTOR

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
CRIME VICTIMS REPARATION COMMISSION-(NMCVRC)

February 27, 2025, Commission Meeting Minutes

6200 Uptown Blvd. NE Suite #210
Albuquerque, NM 87110

Meeting Called to Order

On February 27, 2025, Commission Chair Karst called the February meeting of the New Mexico Crime Victims Reparation Commission to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commission Chair Karst announced the names of the Commission members of the public body and the acknowledged those who are participating in person and remotely. Information for attending remotely is posted on the CVRC website.

The following Commission Members were present:

David Karst, Commission Chair (Virtual)
Sheriff Kim Stewart, Commission Member (Virtual)
Dr. Randall Brown, M.D., Commission Member (Virtual)
Cody Rogers, Commission Member (Virtual)

The following NMCVRC staff members were present:

Frank Zubia, Director
Cindy Mok, Chief Financial Officer
Donna Richmond, Grants Bureau Chief
Jacqueline Sanchez, Compensation Bureau Chief
Rebecca Duran, State Investigator Supervisor
Debra Yepa, State Investigator
Leslie Valenzuela, State Investigator
Rose Martinez, State Investigator
Kristina Escamilla, Administrative Secretary
Catherine Hiskey, Victim Resource Specialist

The following Department of Justice attendee was present:

Eduardo Ugarte II, Department of Justice

The following public guest attendee was present virtually:

Tozi Rosenblatt, Department of Health
Carol Grant, Daughter of a CVRC victim.
Sonlasta Jim, Daughter of CVRC victim
NMDRC

Review Agenda

The agenda was reviewed by Commission Chair Karst and the Commission members. Commission Chair Karst asked for a motion to approve. Commission Member Brown made the motion to approve and Commission Vice Chair Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The roll call vote of the Commission was as follows: Commission Chair Karst, yes, Commission Member Stewart, yes, Commission Member Brown, yes, Commission Member Rogers, yes.

Review and Approval of February 27, 2024, Commission Meeting Minutes

Commission Chair Karst and Commission Members reviewed the Commission meeting minutes for February 27, 2024. Commission Chair Karst asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Commission Member Brown made the motion to approve and Commission Vice Chair Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The roll call vote of the Commission was as follows: Commission Chair Karst, yes, Commission Vice Chair Stewart, yes, Commission Member Brown, yes, Commission Member Rogers, yes.

Public Comment

Ms. Grant presented to the Commission her concerns and shared her story involving her father, a victim of domestic abuse. She requested assistance with funeral expenses and travel reimbursement. She was denied and came to the Commission to appeal the decision. Mr. Zubia informed Ms. Grant that CVRC would call her with the Commission's decision today.

Commission Chair Karst expressed his deepest condolence from the Commission.

Ms. Sonlasta Jim, a member of the Navajo Nation and a Modac tribe member, also requested to make a public comment. Ms. Jim expressed her concern about the lack of support and cultural insensitivity her family received following her father's murder in New Mexico in 2009. Despite her efforts to work with the Crime Victims Reparation Commission (CVRC) for funeral expense assistance, their appeals were denied, reflecting a misunderstanding of Navajo kinship systems and ceremonial practices. Fifteen years later, she expressed hope for systemic improvements while continuing to await justice for her father.

Commission Chair Karst expressed his deepest condolences to Ms. Jim and her family and assured her we are sensitive to her culture.

Mr. Zubia assured Ms. Jim that we would look into her case and follow up with her. In addition, Mr. Zubia informed Ms. Jim that since this case was in 2009, we would have to request those records from archives, and we don't have the same people in the agency. We have made many improvements to help victims by implementing new laws and procedures.

Agency Financial Report

Ms. Mok updated the Commission on the FY25 budget position report regarding victim payments from July 1, 2024, to February 19, 2025.

The victim payment allocation is \$3,451,950, and the victim's total approved payouts, as of February 19, 2025, were \$1,733,800. In addition, Ms. Mok informed the Commission that the projected amount to carry over is \$590,601.

Ms. Mok informed the Commission that there was a slight decrease in victim payouts in December.

FY2025 Crime Victim Fund – Budget Status

Payments received for the period of July 1, 2025, through February 19, 2025, by category:

Restitution: \$41,641

Corrections: \$280,233

Civil Settlement: \$14,096

Penalty Assessment: \$11,773

Total Received: \$347,743

New Business

2025 Advocacy and Action Conference

Mr. Zubia reported on the success of the 2025 Advocacy In Action Conference, held from January 14th to January 17th at the Tamaya Resort. Initially capped at 300 attendees, the event accommodated 460 participants, including Sheriff Stewart's team of victim advocates. The conference featured national speakers who shared best practices on genealogy, DNA, and approaches to working with marginalized groups. Victim-survivors also shared their experience with the criminal justice system, offering recommendations for resource improvements and communication.

Additionally, the conference emphasized self-care for participants. Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham delivered opening remarks, and New Mexico Attorney General Raul Torres provided updates on the Department of Justice's victim's rights initiatives and legislative efforts. Mr. Zubia described the event as a success for advancing victim advocacy in the state.

Legislative Updates

Mr. Zubia provided an update on the current Legislative Session, describing it as insightful and productive. He reported that the agency has completed nearly 27 fiscal impact reports to assess the potential financial effects of proposed legislation. Among the bills discussed, HB 231 proposes adding crimes such as simple assault, simple battery, criminal sexual contact of an adult, and aggravated robbery to the eligibility criteria under the Reparations Act. While these additions were unexpected, Mr. Zubia supported the bill, noting minimal anticipated financial impact due to existing coverage for similar crimes and collateral resources for victims.

Mr. Zubia also highlighted HB 406, which considers compensation for incarcerated individuals who are physically assaulted, sexually assaulted, or murdered in jail or prison, though only after their release. Currently, the Department of Corrections manages such expenses.

Additionally, HB 104 seeks to enhance the classification of crimes against peace officers, including simple and aggravated assault, under the Compensation Act. While these crimes are already covered, the legislature aims to enumerate them formally. Mr. Zubia assured the Commission of the agency's collaboration with law enforcement and expressed no objections to these legislative enhancements.

Mr. Zubia will keep the Commission informed of the status of these bills.

Business

Grant Status Report (VOCA, VAWA, SASP and State Funds)

Grants Bureau Chief Donna Richmond informed the Commission that the Grants Department released the STOP VAWA (Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors Violence Against Women Act) formula grant program has been released. Competitive and continuing applications are due **by March 3rd, 2025**. MS. Richmond also informed the Commission that the NMCVRC Advocacy In Action Conference was well attended, with the team receiving positive participant feedback.

Furthermore, Richmond attended the International Conference on Family and Child Maltreatment in San Diego, California, where the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children discussed the issue of children who are present during drug raids, referred to as "the forgotten ones." The Western Regional Children's Advocacy Centers presented on child trauma, using Disney Princesses as a light-hearted way to illustrate core concepts of the serious topic.

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Ms. Richmond provided the Commission with information about the VOCA, State Grant, and VAWA administrator activities and training.

Executive Session

At 10:25a.m. Commission Chair Karst asked for a motion to enter Executive Session.

The roll call vote of the Commission was as follows: Commission Chair Karst, yes, Commission Member Stewart, yes, Commission Member Rogers, yes, Commission Member Brown, dropped out of the session

At 10:40 a.m. Commission Chair Karst made a motion to come out of Executive Session.

Action on Item Discussed in Executive Session (Voting Item)

Claim # 240698

The roll call vote of the Commission was as follows: Commission Chair Karst, yes, Commission Member Stewart, yes, Commission Member Rogers, yes. (Commission Member Brown, dropped out of the session)

Mr. Zubia asked the Commission Members asked for a motion claim # 240698, to deny or approve. Commission members voted unanimously to deny the expense being presented for this claim.

The roll call vote of the Commission was as follows: Commission Chair Karst, deny, Commission Member Stewart, deny, Commission Member Cody Rogers, deny.

Commission Chair Karst stated that pursuant to Section 10-15-1(J) NMSA 1978 the matters discussed in the closed meeting (Executive Session) were limited only to those specified in the motion for closure.

The next Commission meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, March 27, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., at New Mexico Crime Victims Reparation Commission, 6200 Uptown Blvd. NE, Suite 210, in Albuquerque, NM, in the conference room.

Adjourn

At 10:49 a.m., Commission Chair Karst adjourned the February 27, 2025 Commission meeting.

APPROVED:  Signed by: CA9BC1AF82864A8... DATE: 9/9/2026
Commission Chair Karst