

Attorney General Office

Interview of Rose Torgerson, former WCCVA Director of Training

Date: March 26, 2019

Time: 11:10am-12:00pm

Interviewers: Sarah Walker, Fraud Manager and Stephanie Sullivan, Assistant Fraud Manager

Place: via skype

Introductory information and questions:

- Thank you for meeting with us today. My name is Sarah Walker and this is Stephanie Sullivan. We will both be asking some questions and taking notes.
- The State Auditor's Office is a reporting agency, not an enforcement agency. We perform several different types of audits at a variety of government agencies across the State of Washington. The State Auditor's Office is reviewing a state grant that provided funding to the WCCVA and we have a few questions about the process and specific transactions.
- I want to make sure you are aware of the following:
 - You are not required to discuss any information related to the audit with us; however, we consider your input valuable and it will assist us in making recommendations.
 - If you would like to end the meeting at any time, you may do so. Also, if you want to take a short break from the interview, just let us know.
- Do you understand what we have explained to you? Yes.
- Are you willing to proceed? I am.

General Questions:

1. Are you currently employed or involved with the WCCVA?
Currently no. I stopped I think in May 2015. I moved out of the country in 2015.
2. How long did you work for the WCCVA?
I worked there from August 2011 to around May/June 2015. I also helped them out under contract work in June or July 2016 or 2017.
3. What was your position title?
Director of Training. I was originally hired as training facilitator then promoted to Director of training. I was the Director for a little over 3 years.
 - a. Were you an employee or contractor? I was an actual employee and paid once a month.
4. Please briefly explain what your primary responsibilities were.
With any, nonprofit you have to be a jack and jill of all trades. So I helped with allot of things but my job was to organize trainings, update our academy, register participants, offer and manage webinars each month, and helped with legislative work. I was involved with the criminal justice round tables and represented WCCVA at them. The WCCVA was a small office. I worked mostly on trainings and legislative stuff.

5. Who did you work with at the WCCVA?

When I was hired, the Executive Director was Carla S. and the administrative assistant who also worked there's name was Shana. Cody Benson came on as the Director of public policy and was later promoted to Executive Director. A gal by the name of Jackie handled the bookkeeping. I think back now how nice she was to not give me a hard time for my crumbled up receipts that I turned into her for reconciling with the credit card charges. There was also an AmeriCorps employee working there but not for a long time.

6. Who did you work with at the AGO?

Rebecca Podszus, was our first grant manager and she was fantastic. Then later right as I was leaving Mike Webb came to be the grant manager. There was also an individual who's last name was Yamaguchi who was involved with the grant.

7. How you were compensated?

Payday was the 5th of every month. When I first joined, I was paid hourly, but once we received a national victim's assistance grant, I went to full time and was paid a \$47-48k salary a year. I was exempt and not hourly.

- a. Did you have a signed contract? No I didn't sign any contract. I remember an employment agreement when I first worked there, but the contract work I didn't sign a contract for that.

8. Were you involved with reconciling the WCCVA bank account or preparing the voucher reimbursements submitted to the AGO for reimbursement?

No. I didn't have anything to do with payroll. I assisted with mid-year and annual progress reports regarding what we had done. Mostly a status of what we had accomplished for the grant. I think Jackie handled this area and then they contracted maybe someone else when she left.

We did have some contracted trainers and I would compare their original proposals to the final invoices to make sure what they charged was reasonable. We had to have everything approved way in advance.

9. Were invoices allowed to be submitted by the WCCVA to the AGO for reimbursement before the expense was actually incurred?

Not reimbursed in advance, but maybe the approval. We always had to get certain things approved before we could open registration. We did have to get approval in advance to be able to commit to things and certain expenses. It was a pretty clunky process and we had to get estimates in advance in order to get it approved. IT was kinds of a pain to get it all lined up and very detailed out. I think it was this way because when I was hired there were concerns surrounding the Executive Director (Carla) and the financial records.

- a. Was the information gathered used to get AGO pre approval of the activity or to get reimbursement to then use for that activity?

As far as I know it was to just preapprove of the activity. So I didn't schedule the activities without the AGO approval.

- b. Once you have the AGO approval, are you approved to spend this money?
Yes, you are.
- c. Do you know if any of the financial information (quotes) were ever used to get reimbursed from the AGO before the WCCVA incurred the expense?
When we worked with the AGO, we didn't have any additional money or fundraising funds to expense. We lived on the grant because Carla had these fund raising schemes and after she left, we had to have the Boards approval for everything. The AGO was aware of this and had discussed with us, if we have to incur the expense in advance knowing that it was approved that was ok. I didn't see how it all really worked on the finance part, but I knew we didn't have the money in the bank.
- d. Were there instances where the activity was approved by the AGO and so the WCCVA would need to first get funds upfront to have those activities?
I'm not sure. I do know the board said do not spend any funds without their approval. This was part of why things would get clunky but approval was important.

10. What services were provided by Tower Limited and Phillip Burgess?

I knew Brad Tower was going to come in and help with the legislative stuff. I think I had already left by the time of him coming on. I knew of Brad because of the legislative stuff. The other name, I don't know who that is. The WCCVA was getting ready to update the website, so maybe that's who that is.

Specific Questions:

11. Did you bill an invoice to the WCCVA on June 30, 2017 for \$8,500?

- a. 6/30/17 invoice description: 2017 Curriculum Review and Update \$2,500/ Victim Assistance Academy Training Coordination \$3000/ Victim Rights in WA state training coordination \$3000
No. \$8,500 is definitely not the number. That's not correct. I did invoice them, but I think it was \$5,000 or \$5,500.
- b. Do you happen to have that invoice? I'm pretty sure I would have emailed it. So I can look into it and send it.
- c. When were these services actually performed?
Over the course of 2017. I helped with reviewing the curriculum when I could and provided feedback on trainings. I provided some support with various communications they would send out and sometimes handled sending them. When I started a new job, I just didn't have enough time.
- d. When were you paid for this invoice?
I can't recall. I was living overseas and everything seems to take a long time to get to me. I don't remember it being anything unusual.

- e. Were you paid the full \$8,500?
 - i. Check \$5,500 cashed 3/21/18 (9months later) ck memo 2017 services
Oh was it really. I am really bad about that and will sit on checks so this really doesn't stand out to me.

12. Were you aware of any personal relationships between WCCVA individuals and AGO individuals?

There was a one-time personal encounter between Rose and Mike Webb in 2013 during a time when the WCCVA was trying to get support from the AGO to move away from the Department of Commerce.

a. When did this situation occur?

It was at the time during legislative session 2013 or during the special sessions and we were trying to get the support from the AG's office to help WCCVA and move away from Department of Commerce.

b. Did you work there when Mike was the grant manager from the AGO?

I mainly worked with Rebecca at the AGO. Then when she left it defaulted to Mike. There was a brief period of time where Mike was the contact.

c. Any other relationships- no

d. Anything else?

I chose not to report this, so it is a little concerning this is being brought up, especially now since I am the primary provider for my family with my husband's recent retirement from the military.

Thank you for meeting with us today. If you think of something else you want to share with us, please don't hesitate to contact us.