

## VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: August 20, 2019

Time: 2 p.m.

Location: VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Road, Westminster

**Veteran's Advisory Council Mission Statement:** To evaluate, develop and promote new and existing programs and services for Veterans and their families within Carroll County.

**Veteran's Advisory Council Vision Statement:** That Carroll County offers our Veterans quality services and programs to ensure the enrichment and enhancements of life for our men and women and their families.

**Council Present:** Larry Burbank, Jack Curran, Marc Fisher, Bill Murphy, Elaine May Stem, John Veney, Commissioner Richard Weaver (Ex-Officio), Tom Woerner

**County Staff Present:** Francine Hahn, Jim Hillman, Christine Kay, Mike Messina, Stacey Nash, Commissioner Ed Rothstein, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner, Shannan Zepp

**Other Present:** Donna Babylon, Kim Benson, Sheila Bowman, Ed Cramer, Adam DeLauter, Aaron Dockery, Bob Eney, Christopher Hotaling, Greg Kahlert, Alison Malachowski, Keith Midberry, Phillip Munley, Gil Muse, Tammy Ray, Gary Scarbeau, Chris Schiller, Frank Valenti, Charles Wheatley

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Chair's Comments (Marc Fisher) – Marc opened the meeting with a welcome. He encouraged everyone to wear their service cap or veteran organization shirt to the meeting.
- b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Elaine May Stem.
- c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver and Rothstein) – Commissioner Weaver thanked everyone who volunteered at the Veterans booth for the 4-H Fair. He was surprised at how many that stopped by did not know about the Veteran Services Program of Carroll County or the Veterans Shuttle. Commissioner Rothstein shared that he and Commissioner Weaver were able to speak with Secretary Owings at the Maryland Association of Counties conference. Secretary Owings shared that he is interested in expanding Veteran Retirement Homes in Maryland and that possibly Carroll County would be a good location.

### 2. Old Business

- a. A quorum (6 + voting members) was established with 7 voting and 1 ex-officio member present.
- b. Approval of Minutes (Marc Fisher) – Draft minutes from the June meeting were reviewed. Bill Murphy made a motion and Elaine May Stem seconded. All were in favor and June's minutes were accepted.
- c. Monthly Program Reports (Veteran Services Staff) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served.
  - i. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports (Jim Hillman) – July 2019:
    1. 12 new representations
    2. 80 claims submitted
    3. 12 home visits
    4. 80 in-office contacts
    5. 1,318 telephone contacts

- 6. Return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$635,253.00 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$18,602,593.00 since inception of the program (October 2013)
  - ii. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Stacey Nash) – July 2019:
    - 1. 35 veterans were served and 17 home pick-ups
      - a. Baltimore – 19 veterans – 44 trips
      - b. Loch Raven – 5 veteran – 5 trips
      - c. Fort Detrick – 6 veterans – 11 trips
      - d. Washington, DC – 1 veteran – 2 trips
      - e. Martinsburg – 7 veterans – 9 trips
    - 2. Total Cost = \$8,315.00
  - iii. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update (John Veney) – No report.
  - d. Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Francine Hahn) – Two families are enrolled, and they have received one new referral. A statewide issue regarding payroll taxes is being addressed at the state level.
  - e. Updates on Veteran Services Program Grant (Shannan Zepp) – Currently five in a hotel with two transitioning to permanent housing. In the past month four veterans have been diverted from homelessness, Southern Charm Corn Hole made a donation to the program, and a ramp was built. In addition, rent security, scooter batteries, hot water heater, A/C unit, furniture and a vehicle were all provided to local Veterans.
  - f. Update on Carroll County Veterans Independence Project – CCVIP – Ed Cramer distributed updated brochures and marketing materials for the project. They are focused on finding a property that will allow shelter, outreach and employment with zoning. 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Red, White and Blue Gala will be held November 16<sup>th</sup>. If anyone knows housing regulations as it pertains to individuals versus families, see Ed or Frank.
  - g. Update on Friends of Disabled American Veterans in Carroll County (Bill Murphy) – Bill reported that they had 46 pick-ups for veteran appointments and donations for July. They have an AED in both vans now. September 12<sup>th</sup> at 8am the Carroll Tech Council will be conducting a workshop on navigating government resources. They also received a \$500 donation towards phone services for a year.
  - h. Executive Committee – Beginning next month they will be adding “Public Comments” to the agenda. This will not be a time for announcements, but instead an opportunity to address the council regarding the work the VAC is doing. There will also be a sub-committee of Carroll's Complete Count Committee to count Veterans for the 2020 Census. Gina Valentine will be leading this sub-committee and needs volunteers. The Census Workgroup will be meeting at the beginning of the next Executive Committee on September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:30am at the Bureau of Aging & Disabilities. See her if you are interested in volunteering.
3. New Business
- a. Updates from Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (Phil Munley) –
    - i. Veteran Cemetery System – no cost burial plot (not funeral), limited plots so they use the Maryland State Cemetery System, Garrison Forest is the single busiest state cemetery in the US.
    - ii. Charlotte Hall Veteran Home – only Veteran continuing care retirement community in Maryland, currently house 410 with the capacity of 454.

- iii. Maryland Veteran Trust Fund 501(3)(c) – Assists veterans who have interruption of income and can not pay, they have contract with casinos to raise funds, application which goes to committee, \$106,000 to 40 veterans last year.
  - iv. Outreach Program – have weekly newsletter which is emailed weekly, almost 125,000 signed up to receive.
  - v. Service Program – 13 locations, Veteran Benefits Specialists work 1:1 with veterans to apply for benefits, accredited through Maryland, 4,917 claims last year, contact with 140,000 duplicated, \$33.5 million in benefits back in to the state, new position this year at the Glen Burnie MVA.
  - vi. Working with a Veteran Center in Frederick County that is networking with Goodwill.
  - vii. Veteran Claims Clinic in Stevensville on September 12<sup>th</sup>, then Harford County, would like to visit Carroll County as well with a clinic.
  - b. Wreaths Across America – December 14<sup>th</sup> at 12pm. Babylon Vault is coordinating with other Carroll County cemeteries and raising funds. Goal is to have every Veteran grave with a wreath.
4. Announcements:
- a. American Legion 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday event on October 13<sup>th</sup> at 1pm.
  - b. Tom Williams is looking to raise funds for a canopy at Charlotte Hall's entrance.
5. Next Meeting: September 17, 2019 at 2pm – VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Road, Westminster.