

## Carroll County Veterans Advisory Council Meeting

Meeting Date: January 21, 2020

Start Time: 2:00 pm

Location: American Legion Post #31, 2 Sycamore Street, Westminster

Chairperson: Marc Fisher

Vice-Chair: Elaine May Stem

Topic	Discussion
<b>Mission Statement</b>	To evaluate, develop and promote new and existing programs and services for Veterans and their families within Carroll County.
<b>Vision Statement</b>	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.
<b>Attendance</b>	Kim Benson, Larry Burbank, Jack Curran, James Duncan, Bob Eney, Sharon Feldman, Marc Fisher, Rosemarie Glowack, Josiah Guthland, Francine Hahn, Jim Hillman, Ron Miller, Bill Nash, Stacey Nash, Frank Rauschenbery, Gary Scarbeau, Mick Schmidt, Elaine Scott, Kati Townsley, John Veney, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner, Commissioner Richard Weaver, Steve Whisler, Tom Williams, Tom Woerner
<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Chair's Comments</u> (Marc Fisher) – Marc opened the meeting. Last evening was a great ceremony honoring the life of Mark Main who was an integral part of the Veterans community.</li> <li>2. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Marc Fisher.</li> <li>3. <u>Commissioner's Report</u> (Commissioner Weaver) – Commissioner Weaver informed the Council that the VA can only build one home in Maryland and it is currently between the Warfield area in Sykesville and Montgomery County. Secretary Owings has supported the Warfield location.</li> <li>4. <u>Public Comment</u> – Wesley Freedom and Calvary United Methodist were attending to observe and see where they can assist Veterans in the community.</li> </ol>
<b>Old Business</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A quorum (6 + voting members) was established with eight voting and one ex-officio member present.</li> <li>2. <u>Approval of Minutes</u> (Marc Fisher) – Draft minutes from the December meeting were reviewed. Bill Nash made a motion and Larry Burbank made the second motion. All were in favor and December's minutes were accepted.</li> <li>3. <u>Monthly Program Reports</u> (Veteran Services Staff) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served was distributed. The numbers are as follows:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports</u> (Gina Valentine) – December 2019:                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. 29 new representations</li> <li>ii. 72 claims submitted</li> <li>iii. 11 home visits</li> <li>iv. 72 in-office contacts</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>

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- v. 1579 telephone contacts
- vi. Return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$700,130 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$22,042,309 since inception of the program (October 2013).
- vii. There are several Veterans at the Cold Weather Shelter. Two are currently being assisted by BOAD with coordination from other agencies.
- viii. The North Carroll Senior & Community Center conducted several 50/50 raffles over the course of 2019 and were able to raise \$1,000 for the Veteran Services Program of Carroll County. These funds will go directly to assist local Veterans with no money used for administrative costs.
- b. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Stacey Nash) – December 2019:
  - i. 29 veterans were served and 19 home pick-ups
    - 1. Baltimore – 15 veterans – 36 trips
    - 2. Martinsburg – 9 veterans – 18 trips
    - 3. Ft. Detrick – 5 veterans – 6 trips
    - 4. Loch Raven – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - 5. Bethesda – 1 veteran – 1 trip
  - ii. Total Cost = \$8,117
  - iii. Two no-shows were reported for December.
- c. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update (John Veney) – John reported that the national Veteran unemployment rate is 3.1% as of 12/31/2019, which is the lowest in 20 years. Governor Hogan has three military initiatives for 2020: eliminate state tax for military retirement income, expand tuition assistance from 50% to 100% and place VA representatives in three Maryland MVA's.
- 4. Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Francine Hahn) – Currently four out of the five spots are filled. Referrals are made by Maryland Department of Aging.
- 5. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Gina Valentine) – Shannan Zepp has accepted a job with another county and applications are currently being accepted for this position until 1/30/2020. Contact Gina with any questions. They are currently at the end of their grant year and are awaiting word in February about renewal. Since it is towards the end of the grant, they have had to be very careful in their distribution of funds.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <u>Executive Committee</u> (Gina Valentine) – The Executive Committee met in January to create an agenda for today’s meeting and discuss the Seniors on the Go Expo, VA Claims Clinic and Resource Fair as well as the Resource Guide.</li> <li>7. <u>Resource Guide Update</u> – Work on the guide is ongoing and should be completed by the end of Summer 2020.</li> <li>8. <u>Monthly Column in the Carroll County Times</u> – Ideas should be forwarded to Gina or Leslie. January’s topic regarding benefits for spouses of deceased veterans generated a lot of interest and increased contacts to the Veteran Services Program. Column length is between 580 and 650 words. Staff will assist in review and modifying to fit the length. After discussion, Jim Hillman agreed to write a column on obtaining Veteran ID cards.</li> </ol>
<p><b>New Business</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Director of Citizen Services Transition</u> – Christine Kay has accepted a position in another county. Celene Steckel is the Acting Director and Gina Valentine the Acting Bureau Chief of Aging &amp; Disabilities until the Commissioners decide on permanent candidates.</li> <li>2. <u>VA Claims Clinic &amp; Resource Fair</u> – This event will take place on Thursday, March 19, 2020 from 10am to 2pm in the Great Hall of Carroll Community College. Flyers will be distributed by email later this week as well as color printed flyers available at Aging for those who would like a copy. There will be veteran shuttles running in the parking lot and Gina is looking into have transportation for veterans from their home to the college.</li> <li>3. <u>Computers for disabled veterans</u> – Kati Townsley of Carroll Tech Council spoke on a Kahlert grant they have received for providing computers to disabled veterans in Carroll County. She spoke to the group about specific criteria and creating a communication link for referrals. Current criteria include: documented disability, has no computer and has a demonstrated need.</li> <li>4. <u>Seniors on the Go Expo</u> – Will take place on Wednesday, April 15, 2020 from 9am to 2pm in the Shipley Arena of the Carroll County Ag Center. There will be several veteran organizations there as well as the VAC hosting a booth. Please consider volunteering to man the table. Commissioner Weaver suggested having a handout that gives information on how to apply for a Veteran ID Card, which can be placed in the 2,000 tote bags that are given to each attendee.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Announcements</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a Veteran disability checklist that the Veteran Services Program of Carroll County distributes that notes the benefits received at each rating from 0% to 100%. Mick Schmidt noted that having 0% disability is a disability rating.</li> </ol>

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	2. To receive a veteran discount at Lowes you can provide the service center the required paperwork so you would only need to provide your phone number at future visits to receive the discount.
<b>Next Meeting Date</b>	<b>The next meeting date is Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. at American Legion Post #31, 2 Sycamore Street, Westminster.</b>