

Carroll County Veterans Advisory Council Meeting

Meeting Date: June 21, 2022

Start Time: 2:00 pm

Location: American Legion Post 31 (2 Sycamore Street, Westminster, MD)

Chairperson: Marc Fisher

Vice-Chair: Mick Schmidt

Topic	Discussion
Mission Statement	To evaluate, develop and promote new and existing programs and services for Veterans and their families within Carroll County.
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.
Attendance (Appointed VAC Members are in bold)	Larry Burbank , Lindsay Davis, Bob Eney, Marc Fisher , Francine Hahn, Bobbie Lawrence, Mike Messina, Bill Murphy , Bill Nash , Stacey Nash, Rich Pollard, Commissioner Ed Rothstein, Celene Steckel, Elaine May Stem , John Veney , Commissioner Weaver, Steve Whisler
Welcome and Introductions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Chair's Comments</u> – Marc Fisher opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. 2. <u>Attendee Introductions and Announcements</u> – Led by Marc Fisher 3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Marc Fisher. 4. <u>Commissioner's Report</u> – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Commissioner Weaver</u>: Stated that Secretary Finn was addressed in reference to the Veterans Home. No real updates. Letters were sent in the mail this week to thank donors for their donations for the Veterans Celebration. b. <u>Commissioner Rothstein</u>: Stated that the recent Veteran's Claim clinic/Resource Fair that was held was a great success. 5. <u>Public Comment</u> – No comment.
Old Business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A quorum (6 + voting members) was established with seven voting members present. 2. <u>Approval of May 2022 Meeting Minutes</u> – A motion was made by Bill Murphy and second by John Veney. The approval came after an amendment was made. The website that previously given for the Friends of Disabled Veteran in Carroll County was incorrect. The correct website is: https://friendsofdisabledveteranscarrollcounty.org. 3. <u>Monthly Program Reports</u>: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Report for May 2022: (Mike Messina) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. 26 Claims submitted ii. 14 New representations (8 referrals from the Veterans Celebration and continuing)

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- iii. 52 Office visits
- iv. 9 Home visits
- v. 28 Phone appointments
- vi. 1399 Telephone and Email contacts
- vii. Monthly return on investment, based on known awards is approximately \$1,539,781 for compensation and pension.
- viii. Yearly return on investment, based on known awards is approximately \$47,991,848 since inception of the program in October 2013. Growth Rate from 12/2021 to 6/2022 is 14%.
- ix. Rick Pollard reported that two older Vietnam Veterans received assistance. The first has kidney disease, which is not on the approved illness list for those exposed to Agent Orange. He needed to be evaluated by his doctor and evidence was needed to prove that his kidney disease was due to his exposure. Rick attended the appointment with the permission of the Veteran. The doctor wrote a letter explaining the relationship between his exposure to Agent Orange and his kidney disease. The Veteran received 100% of the benefits he was owed. The second Veteran has lung cancer due to his exposure to Agent Orange. The claim was originally turned down. He was assisted in refiling the claim and received a full settlement.
- b. Veteran's Shuttle Report – May 2022:
 - i. 20 Veterans were served with 11 home pick-ups
 - 1. Baltimore – 12 Veterans served with 22 trips
 - 2. Fort Detrick – 2 Veterans served with 3 trips
 - 3. Glen Burnie – 1 Veteran served with 1 trip
 - 4. Martinsburg – 5 Veterans served with 7 trips
 - 5. Total cost - \$3,743.25
- c. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update (John Veney) – Resource Fair was a success. John met with 15 Veterans and seven appointments were made. Unemployment is down for Veterans with a current rate of 2.9% (4.4% last year) according to Department of Labor & Statistics. He has a case load of 11 Veterans this quarter. He is in partnership with Carroll Technology to assist Veterans in receiving free laptop computers.

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	<p>The only stipulation is that you must be a Veteran. There are a total of 40 computers to donate and he is trying to refer at least two Veterans a week. Please reach out to John if you know of any interested Veterans.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. <u>Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant</u> (Francine Hahn) – Three clients are being served. A new family was recently assisted. They live in a senior subsidized unit, so the amount of funding needed to be limited so that they would not lose their voucher. The daughter-in-law was also assigned as a caregiver along with the spouse to receive needed in home services and maintain their subsidy. 5. <u>Update on Veteran Services Program Grant</u> (Bobbie Lawrence) – Courtney Edwards has moved to a new department. Her position is posted, and, in the meantime, Bobbie is handling her cases. They are currently assisting Veterans with back rent, gas and food cards, and are obtaining resources for a Veteran to avoid tax sale on his property. 6. <u>Report on VA Claims & Benefits Clinic</u> (Bobbie Lawrence) – Bobbie reported that approximately 93 Veterans were served through the Claims Clinic and 37 Veterans received information at the Resource Fair.
New Business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Voting for FY2023 Chair and Vice-Chair</u> – Nominations received were Bill Nash for Chair and Jim Duncan and Steve Whisler for Vice-Chair. The results for FY2023: Bill Nash was elected Chair and Steve Whisler was elected to Vice-Chair.
Announcements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bill Murphy: Currently working with the Buddy Project. They are a group of students with Autism who repair computers and give to those with disabilities. Friends of Disabled Veterans in Carroll County has been transporting Veterans to Washington, DC for appointments with specialists such as Cardiology. They have also received a donation of \$50,000 from the Kahlert Foundation. The donation will be used for a new van. They are also currently collecting donations of vehicles and power chairs. They currently have many walkers and wheelchairs. Their new website is doing great and has received a good amount of traffic already.
Next Meeting Date	<p>Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at 2pm at the American Legion Post #31, 2 Sycamore Street, Westminster.</p>