

VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: July 18, 2017

Time: 2 p.m.

Location: Carroll County Department of Social Services

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, Joe Everett (CTS), Elaine May-Stem, William "Bill" Murphy, Commissioner Richard Weaver

County Staff Present: Mike Chandler, David Reese, Sr., Celene Steckel, Esther Stevens, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner

Other Present: Ed Cramer, Roslyn Jones, Scott Kutkat, Bryan Lyburn, Les Mariner, Keith Midberry, Bill Nash, John Nash, Dale Sears, Tom Shaffer, Wilson Thomas, John Veney

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Chair's Comments (Larry Burbank) – Larry welcomed everyone and those present went around the room and introduced themselves.
- b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Elaine May Stem.
- c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – The Carroll County Veterans Independence Project (CCVIP) has given themselves an August 31st deadline for application completion. Several individuals are working on the application. Commissioner Weaver has spoken with most of the Federal Senators and they are behind the CCVIP. They may have some lead and asbestos issues they will deal with once those tests are completed. Ongoing funding will be more critical than the initial fundraising. Local VFWs, American Legions, Elks Clubs as well as the Kahlert Foundation have contributed to the fundraising efforts. Once completed and up and running, CCVIP should be a model for the state of Maryland.

2. Old Business

- a. Approval of Minutes (Larry Burbank) – Bill Murphy made a motion to approve the June 2017 minutes, second by Bill Nash. All were in favor and the June 2017 meeting minutes were approved as written.

- b. Monthly Program Reports (Gina Valentine) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served.
 - i. Veteran’s Program Coordinators’ Reports (Gina Valentine) – In the month of June 2017, 16 new representations, 56 claims submitted, 23 home visits, 114 in-office contacts and 327 telephone contacts. The return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$353,103.84 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$6,231,382.69 since inception of the program; and for the Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$40,449. All numbers are based on known awards, which is information given to program staff by veterans since the program is not notified by the VA. Sara Runkles-Handwerger has been tracking veterans seeking assistance with the program by zip code. In June: Eldersburg 6, Finksburg 2, Hampstead 1, Keymar 1, Manchester 2, Taneytown 1, Union Bridge 1, Westminster 13 and Woodbine 1.
 - 1. Commissioner Weaver would like to see all veterans in Carroll County (14,000) entered into the VA data base, whether they are currently in need of services. Currently 5,000 Carroll County veterans have been entered into VA’s system. Program staff are making presentations at VFWs, Raven’s Roost, Brightview and at Taneytown’s Business Breakfast in September. A presentation at the County VFW level was suggested and Mike will be attending next Monday at 6pm at Post 120 in Taneytown. The Commissioners have a weekly radio address on WTTR and Commissioner Weaver would like to have Larry or Elaine be his guest. Other ideas include: Veterans Media Program at the Media Center in the fall, post flyers at BERC, set up tent/booth at local carnivals. There is an Outreach sub-committee that will be notified of the need. Gina will have more flyers printed.
 - ii. Veteran’s Shuttle Report (Joe Everett) – In June, 36 veterans were served with 2 in a wheelchair, for a total cost of \$5,391.81. Trips included: Baltimore – 25 veterans served with 47 trips; Fort Detrick – 12 served with 13 trips; Germantown – 1 served with 1 trip; Glen Burnie – 1 served with 1 trip; Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 11 served with 16 trips; Timonium – 1 served with 1 trip. In answer to last month’s question of whether these veterans are unduplicated, the answer is yes. Currently the fleet is in good shape and experiencing no issues.

- iii. Veteran's Job Report (Todd Mitchell) – No report.
- iv. Subcommittee Reports (Access, Mentoring, Outreach) – No report.
- c. Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Gina Valentine) – This program provides services to veterans to remain in their homes. Perry Point directs veterans to the Maryland Department of Aging and they then forward referrals to Gina. This program serves a maximum of 5 veterans, who are assessed and given a monthly budget to purchase needed services such as personal care. Currently 4 veterans are being served, with one having come off the program end of June. They are waiting for a referral from the VA and Maryland Department of Aging for the one opening.
- d. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Mike Chandler) – Currently 24 veterans have been assisted as follows: 15 permanent placements, 2 in treatment, 3 unaccounted and 4 in a hotel. As previously discussed, Mike has talked with those receiving services from the program grant about volunteering to give back. In the month of June 2 veterans receiving services volunteered four hours for the program. Also in June a staff member of Tevis Oil donated their time to put in an air conditioning unit for a veteran.
- e. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – No report.
- f. Carroll County Veterans Independence Project - CCVIP (Ed Cramer) – Since a name was needed for the application, the committee decided on the Carroll County Veterans Independence Project. They decided on Project instead of Program as project shows they are constantly moving forward as opposed to using the term Program.
 - i. Application – many are working on completing the application which is quite long. Once done it will be forwarded to the County Attorney for the final part to be completed before submission.
 - ii. State and Federal Support – virtually all support the project, however, they are looking for a more “hard commitment.” They are set to visit with Secretary Owings to seek such support soon.
 - iii. Funding – There are two types needed: funding to get the project started and ongoing to keep it running. Audrey Cimino and Tammy Black have both been helpful in their advice about seeking the necessary fundraising to make this project successful. Other suggestions include Sandy Dutton,

head of the Board at McVets who receive almost half of their money from HUD grants, the local Boys and Girls Club who are currently seeking to raise \$5 million for their new location, and Perry Point who is currently building a large homeless shelter from possible VA money. Monies have already been received from the Kahlert Foundation and Point Breeze Credit Union. There will be a CCVIP fundraising committee established to look into all of these.

- iv. Project Components – A Facility Handbook is also being written, using North Point Veterans Program in Hagerstown as their model. CCVIP will provide services for homelessness, transition, training, education and case management. Eight staff positions are being considered and job descriptions are being written using State mandates.
- v. Building Logistics - A conceptual floor plan is being designed and they are currently looking at having 10 single rooms, 4 family rooms, day lounge, kitchen/dining, laundry, gym, classrooms, counseling rooms, and first aid area. Because of the age of the building there may need to be asbestos or lead abatement. The piping has been tested and no asbestos was found. Still to be tested are the floor tiles and the indoor firing range. They've received an estimate of \$130,000-\$150,000 to replace the roof. They have requested a second estimate. Best guess is that the construction will cost about \$2.6 million and the furnishings another \$400,000.
- vi. Project Timeline – Application approval could take about 6-12 months. Once the architect has finished the floor plans it should take 12-18 months to do the building modifications. However, all this is contingent on securing the necessary funds to start a \$3 million project.

3. New Business

- a. Roslyn Jones reported that John Veney is trying some new things at BEREC to assist finding veteran's jobs. Currently John is managing 23 veterans and in the last 4 months was able to find employment for 15 vets.
- b. Website for the Carroll County Veteran Services Program needs to be updated. Gina will handle.
- c. The new Acting Director of the Department of Social Services has agreed to allow the Veterans Advisory Council to meet in their conference room each month.

- d. Bill Murphy has completed the Gerstell Memorial Day Event video and within the next month it will begin airing on Channel 19. It will also be available on YouTube.
 - e. Celene is continuing to work on a press release to be forwarded to the Carroll County Times, Northern News, Hampstead/Manchester Merchandiser and Taneytown Record, to inform the community of the contact information for the Veteran Services Program of Carroll County.
 - f. Keith Midberry informed everyone that the date for the Veterans end of life learning group at the American Legion Francis Scott Key Post 11 in Frederick has changed to September 23rd from 9am to 12noon. The next group meeting will take place in Carroll County. He also notified the council that the Hospice of Frederick County became one of 12 hospices nationwide and the second in Maryland to become a Commemorative Partner of the USA Vietnam War Commemoration whereby they can present the official Vietnam Veteran Commemoration pin and copy of proclamation to eligible Vietnam era Veterans (who are also hospice patients).
 - g. Les Mariner of the Elk Club presented a check to Mike for the Veteran Services Program. They will also be hosting a fundraiser in October, as well as working on a National Elks Club grant to raise more money for the program.
4. Next Meeting: August 15, 2017 at 2 p.m. at the Department of Social Services.