

## VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: November 20, 2018

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, Elaine May-Stem, Bill Murphy, Bill Nash, Mick Schmidt, John Veney (DLLR), Lisa Watkins (CTS – Ex-Officio), Commissioner Weaver (Ex-Officio), Thomas Woerner

**County Staff Present:** Francine Hahn, Jim Hillman, Stacey Nash, Celene Steckel, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner, Shannan Zepp

**Other Present:** Kim Benson, Mel Blizzard, Bob Eney, Alison Malachowski, Bill McKenna, Ted McNett, Keith Midberry, Todd Mitchell, Diane Morley, Barbara Ringrose, Ed Rothstein, Gary Saylor, Gary Scarbeau, Jason Sidock, Joe Watts, Charles Wheatley

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Chair's Comments (Larry Burbank) – Larry opened the meeting with a welcome.
  - b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Elaine May-Stem.
  - c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – Commissioner Weaver reported that he attended the Red, White and Blue Gala, a CCVIP Fundraiser. It was a great event and raised a lot of money for the project.
2. Old Business
  - a. A quorum was established with 9 voting and 2 ex-officio members present.
  - b. Approval of Minutes (Larry Burbank) – Draft minutes from the October meeting were presented. Marc Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Bill Murphy. All were in favor and the October 2018 meeting minutes were approved.
  - c. Monthly Program Reports (Veteran Services Staff) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served.
    - i. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports (Jim Hillman) – October 2018:
      1. 23 new representations
      2. 60 claims submitted
      3. 10 home visits
      4. 51 in-office contacts
      5. 679 telephone contacts
      6. Return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$544,186.00 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$12,182,875.00 since inception of the program (October 2013)
      7. Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$69,409.00
      8. 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.

9. Jim Hillman thanked everyone for continuing to pass out literature and spread the word about the Veteran Services Program of Carroll County.
  10. Gina reported that Mike Messina has been hired for the part-time vacancy in the program. He will begin next Thursday.
  11. Francine Hahn reported that the VA pension regulations have changed for Veterans and their survivors. This will lengthen the time for staff to process claims, as they learn the new regulations.
- ii. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Lisa Watkins) – October 2018:
    1. 34 veterans were served, with 2 in wheelchair and 18 home pick-ups
      - a. Baltimore – 24 veterans – 82 trips
      - b. Loch Raven – 2 veteran – 3 trips
      - c. Fort Detrick – 3 veterans – 3 trips
      - d. Washington, DC – 1 veteran – 1 trip
      - e. Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 9 veterans – 19 trips
    2. Total Cost = \$9,675.00
    3. Stacey Nash introduced the new Executive Director for Carroll Transit System, Lisa Watkins.
  - iii. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update – John Veney reported that their Job Fair was successful with 3 Veterans finding employment. This was their last fair for the year, and their first with evening hours. They have found that the daytime fairs were more successful. John also distributed statistics for Maryland Veterans that he found interesting.
- d. Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Gina Valentine) – This program is funded by the VA and provides personal care for Veterans to remain in the community. Each county has the capacity to provide services to a maximum of 5 Veterans. We currently have 4 Veterans, with the 5<sup>th</sup> Veteran enrolled and services beginning the first of the year.
  - e. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Shannan Zepp) – Currently, six Veterans are receiving assistance with emergency housing. Recently in the program, one Veteran has been found ineligible, another has located housing, seven have been diverted from homelessness, four have received assistance (yard work, food, supplies), three have received HUD VASH vouchers and another has begun the application process, and one Veteran has received a Housing Choice Voucher.
  - f. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – Todd reported that 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Veteran of the Year and Veteran-friendly Employer of the Year Awards luncheon was successful with about 135 attending.
  - g. Update on Carroll County Veterans Independence Project – CCVIP:
    - i. Commissioner Weaver noted that CCVIP is still waiting for the deed designation revision from the Federal Government.
    - ii. CCVIP board members have been presenting the project everywhere and money is being raised.
    - iii. There is a \$4.5 million budget and CCVIP board members will be requesting additional funds from the legislation.
    - iv. A special thanks to all the veteran organizations such as the American Legions and VFWs for their ongoing support and giving.
3. New Business

- a. Commissioner Weaver introduced the newly elected Commissioner, Ed Rothstein. Ed announced that Governor Hogan has proclaimed November as Hire a Veteran month and Carroll County has followed suite. By doing so, we are continuing to bring awareness to keeping our Veterans employed.
- b. Ted McNett spoke of the The Luna Moth Project, designed in honor and memory of SSgt James “Jimmy” Malachowski, USMC, Hampstead native, who was killed in action in Afghanistan on March 20, 2011. This is a collaborative memorial project where a Luna Moth sculpture, 36 inches from tip to tail and standing almost 5 feet above the ground, will be built. This memorial sculpture will be installed at the Bear Branch Nature Center, pending formal approval, in a location where SSgt Malachowski led an insect observation and collection night program. The second component of the project will be creating life-sized Luna moths, 4 ½ inches, that guests can assemble to commemorate a veteran from their life. These memorials may be taken home, given in memory of someone, or contributed to the memorial sculpture. The dedication will take place sometime in March, 2019. You may contact Ted for drawings of the moth to print for use on paper, wood, etc.
- c. Thanks to Carroll Hospice on their Veteran Breakfast.
- d. Wreaths Across America event at Deer Park cemetery on December 15<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon. Thanks to the many Veteran organizations that sponsored a wreath. Currently 10 cemeteries in Carroll County are also participating.
- e. Bill Murphy reported on Friends of Carroll County Disabled American Veterans (FCCDAV). They have begun working in tandem with the Carroll County Veterans Shuttle. The Shuttle takes Veterans to appointments at VA sites outside of the county, while FCCDAV provides in-county transportation for Veterans to medical and dental appointments. FCCDAV currently have 12 Veteran volunteer drivers and they are looking for more.
- f. Bill McKenna spoke about the Marriage Resource Center, which provides assistance to couples. They also work within the school system with healthy relationship programs in Middle and High schools.
- g. Bob Eney presented Friends of Carroll County Disabled American Veterans with a check for \$5,000 the proceeds of their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pickleball Tournament.
- h. Dedication of the World War II Flagpole at Charles Wheatley’s home is being shown on Comcast.
- i. Carroll Hospice is always looking for Veteran volunteers.
- j. Keith Midberry of Frederick Hospice announced that their Veterans Advisory Council has 14 members, 7 appointed by Frederick County and 7 ex-officios.
- k. American Legion in Hampstead is working on an expansion project to enlarge their hall.
- l. Elaine May-Stem attended the World War I Memorial Dedication ground-breaking on November 8<sup>th</sup>. This Memorial will be at General Pershing Park in Washington, DC with construction to begin next year.
- m. VAC shirts were provided to all present, courtesy of Todd Mitchell.
- n. Any Veteran needing a Thanksgiving dinner to attend, David Bailey in Manchester will be hosting an open meal. He also has furniture, carpet, and firewood for Veterans.
- o. Marc Fisher noted that CCVIP’s Red, White and Blue Gala was the same evening as the Marine Corps Ball. He would like to work with CCVIP on next year’s planning so that both events can be held on different days. Marc also announced that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year for Catholic War Veterans in Carroll County with 30 members and growing. They meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at

6:30pm in the Portico at St. John's Catholic Church. Catholic War Veterans is one of two faith-based chartered Veteran organizations in the country (Jewish War Veterans is the other).

p. Congratulations to Larry Burbank on the great Carroll County Times article.

4. Next Meeting: December 18, 2018 at 2pm at VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Rd, Westminster.