

VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: December 18, 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, Lisa Watkins (CTS – Ex-Officio), Commissioner Weaver (Ex-Officio), Thomas Woerner

County Staff Present: Rosemarie Glowack, Francine Hahn, Jim Hillman, Mike Messina, Stacey Nash, Commissioner Ed Rothstein, Celene Steckel, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner, Shannan Zepp

Other Present: Kim Benson, Mel Blizzard, Ed Cramer, Bob Eney, Greg Kahlert, Alison Malachowski, Keith Midberry, Gil Muse, Barbara Ringrose, Gary Saylor, Gary Scarbeau, Elaine Scott, Jason Sidock, Charles Wheatley, Tom Williams

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 thanked Mel Blizzard and the Wreaths Across America program. He also shared that he made contact with a Veteran who needed assistance and thanked Gina Valentine and her staff for what they were able to provide him.
 - i. Commissioner Rothstein wished everyone a happy holiday and shared his appreciation for the Veterans Advisory Council and program staff. Both he and Commissioner Weaver welcome everyone's ideas and suggestions in assisting local veterans.

2. Old Business

- a. A quorum was established with 8 voting and 2 ex-officio members present.
- b. Approval of Minutes (Larry Burbank) – Draft minutes from the November meeting were presented. Bill Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Marc Fisher. All were in favor and the November 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) – November 2018:
 1. 24 new representations
 2. 60 claims submitted
 3. 7 home visits
 4. 58 in-office contacts
 5. 669 telephone contacts
 6. Return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$539,557.01 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$12,511,328.10 since inception of the program (October 2013)

7. Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$71,943.00
 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 noted that the numbers are holding stable. Expect to see an increase in the next 30-45 days as Mike Messina is trained and begins assisting clients.
 10. Jim Hillman also noted that there were minor errors in the reporting of awards from last month. After some minor revisions, he is confident of the numbers reported today.
- ii. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Lisa Watkins) – November 2018:
 1. 29 veterans were served, with 3 in wheelchair and 17 home pick-ups
 - a. Baltimore – 22 veterans – 60 trips
 - b. Loch Raven – 1 veteran – 1 trips
 - c. Fort Detrick – 4 veterans – 5 trips
 - d. Washington, DC – 1 veteran – 1 trip
 - e. Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 5 veterans – 11 trips
 2. Total Cost = \$6,925.00
 - iii. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update (John Veney) – No update.
- 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 5th Veteran's application is being processed.
 - e. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Shannan Zepp) – Currently, eight Veterans are receiving assistance with emergency housing. Recently in the program, six Veterans received permanent housing, eight were diverted from homelessness, and others have received assistance with security deposits, rent, food cards and mattresses. Three have received housing with HUD-VASH vouchers and another received a Housing Choice Vouchers.
 - i. An application for additional money from the Kahlert Foundation is being presented to the Board of County Commissioners on Thursday, December 20, 2018 at 10am during Open Session at the County Office Building. This money is used as part of the Veteran Services Program and assists Veterans with emergency needs.
 - ii. The collaboration between HUD-VASH vouchers and the Veteran Services Program Grant by the Kahlert Foundation has been able to keep local Veterans housed until they find permanent housing. This stability in housing has added to their success moving forward.
 - iii. The HUD-VASH application process is moving faster and smoother than previously. Currently there is one HUD-VASH voucher available.
 - f. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – No update. Although it was noted that Todd Mitchell should be thanked for the shirts given out last meeting.
 - g. Update on Carroll County Veterans Independence Project – CCVIP (Ed Cramer):
 - i. HHS Application Part 1 – Completed answers to second set of questions, coordinated with County, and submitted December 4, 2018. Questions included how we account for our homeless veteran numbers and explaining that the project would assist all in-need Veterans, not just those who are homeless.
 - ii. They have completed the environmental request and will ask HHS to accept Phase 1 from the County so they can move forward to Phase II.

- iii. 1st Annual Red, White & Blue Gala was a huge success. Held at Martin's on November 10, 2018, over 125 attended. Community and individual participation was 40 with 24 sponsors. Profit was more than double what was initially estimated. Pictures can be found on their website at www.carrollcountyvip.org.
- iv. Still receiving several individual and organization donations.
- v. VFW Post #467 held its annual Christmas party last Saturday. During the event, they awarded prizes to winners of the VFW's Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy contests. Also, the Women's Auxiliary held a dinner dance recently to benefit the CCVIP, resulting in a donation.
- vi. Getting the word out:
 - 1. Super article in Carroll Magazine
 - 2. Great coverage by Carroll County Times and WTTR (Frank did two recorded announcements)
 - 3. Continuing to pass out brochures and business cards
 - 4. Carroll County Chamber of Commerce PM Connection (sponsored by Barnes Bollinger) February 28, 2019 from 4-6pm at VFW Post #467.
 - 5. Speaking at various organization meetings – Roaring Run Lions Club, plus a donation.
 - 6. Gave property tour to VFW Union Memorial Post #8806, Union Bridge, who also gave a donation.
 - 7. Thank you for spreading the word about CCVIP.
- h. Update on Friends of Disabled American Veterans in Carroll County (Bill Murphy) –
 - i. Only 501(3)(c) in Carroll County offering Veteran transportation.
 - ii. They offer free non-emergency medical and dental transportation. Contact Bill Murphy at 443-798-5370 or wwwmurph42@peoplepc.com to enroll in their service.
 - iii. Have two wheelchair equipped vans and 14 unpaid volunteer Veteran drivers.
 - iv. In November – 7 pick-ups, five in Carroll County and another was a post-surgical transport to VA Greene Street in Baltimore.
 - v. Received many donations of equipment and materials.
 - vi. Currently in negotiations with Mission of Mercy to establish a Veteran Program in Taneytown, as they recently received a new mobile dental van.
 - vii. Bill is now on the Board of Directors for FR Mobility Foundation.
 - viii. Working on a website.
 - ix. They are available to assist the Veterans Shuttle with any pick-ups. To utilize the Veterans Shuttle please register at the Bureau of Aging & Disabilities.
 - x. CTS tickets are available the first of each month at a reduced rate. There are some tickets available for emergency situations.

3. New Business

- a. VAC Logo (Celene Steckel) – The logo we use right now for the VAC was created by a VAC member, but we hold no trademark. There is a group, Southern Carroll Cornhole that uses the same logo, which they had created and is used on their boards, bags, and online presence. They have offered to host a free fundraiser for our Veteran Services Program. After much discussion as to revising the logo for us, trademarking the logo for us to use, or not doing anything, it was decided to contact the County Attorney and see what our legal options might be, and how much it may cost to trademark this logo or another.

- i. Tom Williams recommended that Southern Carroll Cornhole hold tournaments at all the VFW and American Legion locations in the county and raise funds for Veterans and awareness of the benefit of being a member of such organizations.
- b. The Luna Moth project will be dedicated on March 30, 2019 at the Bear Branch Nature Center in Westminster. The rain date is April 6th.
- c. To obtain a copy of the DD214 form:
 - i. Can visit VA at 31 Hopkins Plaza in Baltimore. If they have on record (not burned in the St. Louis fire) they will mail you three certified copies.
 - ii. Make an appointment with a Carroll County Veteran Services Program coordinator and they can submit a request for you to receive.
 - iii. If your record was destroyed in the St. Louis fire, the VA will issue a certificate of discharge, which can take 4 to 6 months as they must reconstruct the record.
- d. A DVD of the World War II Veterans flag pole dedication is available. Charles Wheatley will provide a copy to each American Legion and VFW in the County. Anyone else who would like a copy, see Charles.
- e. Mike Messina, Carroll County's new Veteran Services Program Coordinator, was introduced.
- f. Carroll Hospice announced that they are a Level 4 "We Honor Veterans" Program and are working towards their Level 5 status. There is certain criterion that needs to be met and the requirements for Level 5 are ongoing and will include their involvement with other "We Honor Veterans" programs.
- g. TSC in Westminster now has two designated Veterans parking spaces. Lowe's does as well.
- h. FR Mobility has mobility wheelchairs and scooters available for free for Veterans. See Bill Murphy if you know of someone who can benefit.
- i. Wreaths Across America – Marc Fisher was a guest speaker at the Meadow Branch Cemetery for the event, where wreaths were laid at over 400 graves. All cemeteries in the Babylon Vault Company also had wreaths laid on their Veteran graves. Mel Blizzard gave thanks to all that volunteered. He shared that 847 wreaths were laid at the 7 Babylon Vault Company cemeteries and 171 at the Deer Park Cemetery. Ellsworth Cemetery's wreaths were delivered to the wrong place, ending up in Western Maryland. All extra wreaths they had on hand were laid at Ellsworth. In all, a successful and wonderful event for Carroll County and their Veterans.
- j. Larry Burbank, VAC Chair, stated that the Veterans Advisory Council would be closing the meeting to discuss an appointed Council Member's absence in attending meetings and that this meets the statutory exception in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article, Subsection 3-305(b)(1). He stated that the meeting is being closed because public discussion would include an appointed member's personal information. Larry made a motion and Bill Murphy seconded. All members in attendance voted yes, to close the meeting. Therefore, the meeting was closed with only Council members, Gina Valentine, Aging & Disabilities Supervisor, and Leslie Wagner, VAC Recording Secretary in attendance. This meeting was held at the VFW Post #467 at 3:10pm.
- k. The meeting was re-opened with a motion made by Larry Burbank and seconded by Bill Nash.
- l. VAC members have been asked by the Commissioners to make a presentation regarding the Veterans Advisory Council during their open session. Marc Fisher volunteered to assist Larry and Elaine on the power point. Gina will be coordinating a meeting for Marc, Larry, Elaine and her to meet to coordinate the presentation, which would include the VAC's history and progress.

- m. It was discussed to have placed on January's agenda, the formation of an Executive Committee of the VAC. This discussion would include the formation and the frequency and size, as well as the purpose of the Executive Committee as to future focus for the Veterans Advisory Council.
4. Next Meeting: January 15, 2018 at 2pm at VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Rd, Westminster.