

## Carroll County Veterans Advisory Council Meeting

Meeting Date: September 20, 2022

Start Time: 2:00 pm

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

Chairperson: Bill Nash

Vice-Chair: Steve Whisler

| 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 (Appointed VAC Members are in bold)</b> | Kathy Barna, Jessica Cook, <b>Jack Curran</b> , Lindsay Davis, Bob Eney, <b>Marc Fisher</b> , Francine Hahn, Bobbie Lawrence, Nan Mann, Kristen Maszarose, <b>Bill Murphy</b> , <b>Bill Nash</b> , Rick Pollard, <b>Elaine May Stem</b> , Gina Valentine, Commissioner Weaver, Charles Wheatley, <b>Steve Whisler</b>  |
| <b>Welcome and Introductions</b>                      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Chair's Comments</u> – Bill Nash opened the meeting, by welcoming everyone.</li> <li>2. <u>Attendee Introductions and Announcements</u> – Jessica Cook from Ben Cardin's Office</li> <li>3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Nash.</li> <li>4. <u>Commissioner's Report</u> –               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Commissioner Weaver:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. State Budget Committee is working together with the Hampstead American Legion. The state has funding that must be applied for by the end of October.</li> <li>ii. The South Carroll Freedom Area opening soon.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><u>Public Comment</u> – N/A</p>  |
| <b>Old Business</b>                                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A quorum (6 + voting members) was established with six voting members present.</li> <li>2. <u>Approval of July 2022 Meeting Minutes</u> – A motion was made by Bill Nash and second by Jack Curran. After a vote the minutes were approved as presented.</li> <li>3. <u>Monthly Program Reports:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Report for June 2022: (Rick Pollard)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. 25 Claims submitted (July) &amp; 40 Claims submitted (Aug.)</li> <li>ii. 10 New Representations (July) &amp; 33 New Representations (Aug.)</li> <li>iii. 57 Office visits (July) &amp; 66 Office Visits (Aug.)</li> <li>iv. 1 Home Visits (July) &amp; 2 Home Visits (Aug.)</li> <li>v. 37 Phone appointments (July) &amp; 33 Phone appointments (Aug.)</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol> |

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- vi. 1190 Telephone and Email contacts (July) & 1523 Telephone and Email contacts (Aug.)
- vii. Monthly return on investment, based on known awards is approximately \$1,672,402 for compensation and pension with an increase of 3% in August.
- viii. Yearly return on investment, based on known awards is approximately \$50,718,380 since inception of the program in October 2013. Growth Rate from 12/2021 to 9/2022 is 21%.
- ix. A lot of new claims due to the added presumptive conditions.
- x. New clients and walk-in are up due to PACT ACT.
- xi. 6 new claims in August already, just waiting on the VA.
- xii. Timelines may increase due to the number of claims coming in.
- xiii. There is a steady rise in monthly payments.
- xiv. There are 31 new VA Facilities to assist with the expanded screening.

Francine Hahn presented a success story. She was able to successfully process a Military Sexual Trauma (MST) case with a Veteran. There were errors in the Veteran's diagnosis early on which made this case very difficult. Francine was able to support this claim with evidence and assist the Veteran in obtaining her compensation and obtain the necessary mental health support she needs.

b. Veteran's Shuttle Report – Aug. 2022:

- i. 28 Veterans were served with 20 home pick-ups
  1. Baltimore – 17 Veterans served with 24 trips
  2. Loch Raven – 0 Veteran served with 0 trip
  3. Fort Detrick – 2 Veterans served with 3 trips
  4. Martinsburg – 6 Veterans served with 8 trips
  5. Halethorpe – 1 Veteran served with 1 trip
  6. PCP 61 – 1 Veteran served with 1 trip
  7. Laurel – 1 Veteran served with 1 trip
  8. Walter Reed – 1 Veteran served with 1 trip
  9. Rosedale – 1 Veteran served with 1 trip
  10. Glen Burnie – 1 Veteran served with 1 trip

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|                            | <p style="text-align: center;">11. Total cost - \$4,640.88</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ii. The main travel location was Baltimore and there were 3 no shows in August.</p> <p>4. <u>Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant</u> (Francine) – Three clients are being served. There is a new VA Fiscal Agency that Rick and Francine are working on getting our Veterans switched over to. Training is being held on October 5<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>5. <u>Update on Veteran Services Program Grant</u> (Bobbie Lawrence &amp; Gina) –</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. Kahlert Foundation Funding request was submitted 9-1-2022 and if awarded for the new grant it will be awarded 10-1-2022.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii. 2 Veterans are currently receiving emergency housing services, one of whom has obtained a new job and has found a unit and will move 10-1-2022</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">iii. 15 food and gas Cards were given out in August.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">iv. The grant was able to help 3 Veterans with back rent.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">v. A selection has been made for the VSO position.</p>                                    |
| <p><b>New Business</b></p> | <p>1. <u>PACT ACT</u>- Rick discussed some of the new presumptive conditions under the PACT ACT and will share the flyer with everyone. The PACT Act expands and extends eligibility for Veterans with toxic exposures of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras. It has added more than 20 new presumptive conditions for burn pits and other toxic exposures.</p> <p>2. <u>Agent Orange</u> – Rick &amp; Francine discussed that the area of exposure has expanded for Vietnam Veterans exposed to Agent Orange. They are currently reaching out to former clients to notify them of the change. Compensation is done on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>3. <u>Camp Lejeune Case</u> – Clients cannot double dip on claims through a lawyer and through VA. VA compensation is tax free. Court ordered payments are not tax exempt.</p> <p>4. <u>North Carroll Pickle Ball</u>- North Carroll Pickle Ball is set to start soon. They are in need of sponsors; signups are through Rec. &amp; Park.</p> <p>5. <u>Grant Funding</u>- There are grant options for funding projects such as The American Legion or for shuttling veterans. Jessica Cook from Senator Cardin’s office said that there are 2 routes to fund these projects and that</p> |

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|                                 | <p>anyone interested should reach out. FY24 grant applications are due in the spring of 23'. Senator Cardin's office will meet for a 30-minute discussion on earmarks. USDA funding may have less competition.</p> <p>-Funding is also available through Jamie Raskin's Office.</p> <p><u>6. Veterans Court discussion – tabled for the October 18, 2022 meeting as the item needs to be on the agenda prior to the posting and distribution of the meeting agenda.</u></p>  |
| <p><b>Announcements</b></p>     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The VA on Green Street's parking garage is closed, but they are offering a shuttle. (Jack)</li> <li>2. Healthcare Open enrollment begins November 14<sup>th</sup> and runs through December 13<sup>th</sup>. The Open Season is for Active Duty and Retired (Pension) – Steve Whisler</li> <li>3. Many Veteran's Day celebrations coming up:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Dinner at the American Legion Post 200 from 1-3pm</li> <li>ii. Veteran's Day Celebration at Longwell Armory – Begins at 4pm</li> <li>iii. Carroll Community College – Veteran's Celebration begins at 11am</li> <li>iv. Vehicles for change is giving away 10 vehicles on Veteran's Day. It is being held at Mile 1 in Owing Mills November 10<sup>th</sup>, at 10 am. If anyone thinks a Veteran may be eligible they can reach out to Bobbie Lawrence to discuss sponsorship. The program focuses on those Veterans who are working or have a job offer.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Bridging Life is holding a national event on September 25<sup>th</sup> at Dove House called "Let's Light the Night for Our Heroes". Lighting begins at 7pm.</li> <li>4. Bill Murphy shared that we lost two Veteran's recently.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>Next Meeting Date</b></p> | <p><b>Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at 2pm at the American Legion Post #31, 2 Sycamore Street, Westminster.</b></p>   |