

VETERAN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: May 17, 2016

Time 2 p.m.

Location: DSS Conference Room

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 that the enrichment and enhancement of life for our men and women and their families.

Council Present: Frank Valenti, Melissa Barber, Larry Burbank, Mick Schmidt, Elaine May-Stem

County Staff Present: Commissioner Howard, Commissioner Weaver; Jeff Collins, Jim Hillman; Christine Kay; Gina Valentine;

Other Present: Anita Farinetti; Bill Murphy, Tom Shaffer, Secretary Owings

I. Welcome and Introductions

- A. Chair's Comments (Frank Valenti) – Frank thanked those who attended the Veterans Transportation Shuttle dedication.
- B. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – Commissioner Weaver thanked Frank for his assistance with the Veterans Transportation Shuttle dedication. He also thanked the Carroll County Sheriff's Department for providing the Color Guard. Commissioner Weaver shared that the proposed County operating budget includes funding for a third person to work with Jeff Collins and Jim Hillman. He and others are working on making Access Carroll a Veterans Medical facility so Veterans do not have to travel out of the county for medical and dental treatments. Access Carroll also has a pharmacy on site. Lastly, Commissioner Weaver wants to seek mileage reimbursement for the Veterans Shuttle.

II. Old Business

- A. Approval of Minutes (Frank Valenti) – The April 2016 meeting minutes were approved as written.
- B. Monthly Program Reports (Brief Written Summary and Monthly Numbers Served)
 - 1) Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports (Jeff Collins and Jim Hillman)

Jim Hillman reported on client distribution, performance statistics and return on investment for April 2016. The complete report is available upon request. They shared that it takes multiple meetings with a Veteran to gather all the information needed to file a claim. There are delays with claims submitted to the Baltimore VA; it takes months for claims to be scanned into their system. There are issues with claims being wrongly denied.
 - 2) Veteran's Shuttle Report (Anita Farinetti and Gina Valentine)

Anita Farinetti reported that 28 Veterans utilized the shuttle in April 2016 and a total of 59 trips were provided. Frank asked how many Veterans are registered to utilize the shuttle: 190 Veterans are registered.

- 3) Veteran's Jobs Report (Roslyn Jones and Todd Mitchell)
No report.
- 4) Subcommittee Reports (Access, Mentoring, Outreach)
 - a. Outreach- Steve Yinger was unable to attend the meeting but he provided his report via email:
Steve met with two staff members from the Carroll County Public Library, Heather Owings (Finksburg branch manager) and Kim Smithson (CCPL HR), on May 12th to discuss the possibilities for a partnership with CCPL and the potential creation of Carroll County Veterans Book Club.
They are exploring applying for a grant from the Maryland Humanities Council in order to create the Veterans Book Club. The meeting was very positive and the initiative looks promising.
- 5) Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Jim Hillman) – Jim Hillman reported that the Veteran Directed Home and Community Based Services Program is currently operating at capacity. Jim is working with 6 veterans who are enrolled in the program.
- 6) Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – No report.

III. New Business

- A. Secretary Owings attended the meeting. He stated that Carroll County is doing more with its Veteran Services Officers than most counties. He recognized Mike "Mad Dog" Sater for his work. He reported that there is a Veterans Trust Fund that currently has \$116,000 available to assist Veterans. Mark Hendricks is the Administrator for this program. The monies are only for Veterans; spouses are not eligible. He also reported that he is in discussions with DHMH to turn Rosewood into another Veterans facility and to expand the Garrison Cemetery. Charlotte Hall now permits a Veteran's spouse to stay at the facility. There are only 5 State employees who work at Charlotte Hall. The vendor who runs Charlotte Hall will soon be replaced.
- B. Commissioner Howard added that Carroll County wants to perform outreach to newly discharged Veterans. The Secretary shared that a Welcome Packet is given to newly discharged Veterans. Frank asked if we could provide a letter to go in the packet (to provide information about Veteran Services available in Carroll County). The Secretary said yes.

IV. Next Meeting: June 21, 2016 at 2pm at the Department of Social Services.