

VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: May 16, 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: Mick Schmidt, Elaine May-Stem, Frank Valenti, Commissioner Richard Weaver

County Staff Present: Mike Chandler, Faith Hayes, Christine Kay, Scott Singleton, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner

Other Present: Beverly Caperton, Ed Cramer, Scott Kutkat, Bryan Lyburn, Keith Midberry, Todd Mitchell, William Murphy, Roger Muse, Bill Nash, Gary Saylor, Tom Shaffer, Wilson Thomas, John Veney, Charles Wheatley

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Chair's Comments (Frank Valenti) – Frank welcomed everyone and announced that he will be retiring June 30, 2017. Next month's meeting we will have a ballot to vote for a new Chair and Vice Chair.
- b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Weaver.
- c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – Commissioner Weaver updated everyone on Governor Hogan and his cabinet's visit last Thursday, as a great and positive day all around. Having the entire cabinet visit throughout Carroll County was a highlight and many Cabinet members mentioned coming back to observe more, as they felt one day wasn't enough time. The Governor and his Cabinet were easy to talk with and expressed their desire to help Carroll. In regards to the Armory project, they have told us they are ready to help out as soon as the Federal government has done their part. The proposed budget is out, there was a hearing last night and it should pass on the 25th. Money for the Armory project has been left in the budget in anticipation of it moving forward. Commission Weaver reminded everyone that there are many Memorial Day events taking place in and around Carroll County.

2. Old Business

- a. Approval of Minutes (Frank Valenti) – Mick Schmidt made a motion to approve the April 2017 minutes, second by Elaine May-Stem. All were in favor and the April 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 April 2017, 14 new representations, 43 claims submitted, 16 home visits, 71 in-office contacts and 283 telephone contacts. The return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$341,650 per month for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$5,602,380 since inception of the program; and for the Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$36,829. A highlight of this past month was a veteran with 100% service connected disability who Veterans Services staff assisted with filing a claim with the VA. The Veterans received a retroactive award of \$20,000 and will receive \$3,500/month.
 - ii. Veteran’s Shuttle Report (Gina Valentine) – There are now 261 vets registered to use the shuttle, with 10 new in April and another 5 new in May (to date). CTS supplied Gina with their report. In March, 54 veterans were served with one in a wheelchair, for a total cost of \$5,338.15. Trips included: Baltimore – 35 veterans served with 68 trips; Loch Raven – 1 served with 2 trips; Fort Detrick – 8 served with 12 trips; Martinsburg – 7 served with 15 trips; Johns Hopkins – 1 served with 1 trip; Reisterstown – 1 served with 2 trips. In April, 29 veterans were served with one in a wheelchair, for a total cost of \$4,358.70. Trips included: Baltimore – 17 veterans served with 18 trips; Loch Raven – 1 served with 1 trip; Fort Detrick – 2 served with 2 trips; Glen Burnie – 1 served with 1 trip; Martinsburg – 8 served with 7 trips. When there is a backlog at VA facilities they offer alternate locations to receive services. Recently the shuttle has been transporting veterans to alternate locations such as Gaithersburg, Timonium, Rockville, Baltimore and Reisterstown. Most requests are for out of county but on occasion there is a request for in county transport.
 1. The Veterans Shuttle fleet has 4 vehicles, one of which is modified for a wheelchair.

2. The shuttle does not begin running until 8am, per the County's contract with CTS. Early morning appointments can provide a problem, so if other accommodations cannot be made, Veterans have to reschedule their appointments. Commissioner Weaver asked to be advised of any problems if that proves to not be the case.
 3. Gina was assured that Joe from CTS will be present at the June meeting. It was noted that CTS has not been present at meetings the past several months.
- iii. Veteran's Job Report (Todd Mitchell) – Five referrals in just the last few days thanks to John Veney at BEREC. John reported that since he has started with BEREC he has been able to input 25 veterans into the Maryland Workforce Exchange.
 - 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 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 5 veterans are being served, which fills all the slots allotted to us by the State. There have been difficulties with the written (and unwritten policies) of this program, which change constantly. Gina did clarify that those in the program must do their own hiring for personal care and it cannot be through an agency.
 - d. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Mike Chandler) – In the month of April, Mike provided 16 home visits and had 2 veterans staying in a hotel. Both in the hotel have found housing, with one moving on Saturday and the other very shortly. They will be placing another in a hotel tomorrow due to the relative they were staying with getting evicted. This veteran is already looking for a place to live. This past month they had one veteran whose family member mismanaged their VA money and therefore they did not have their rent for the month. They are working directly with the landlord to assist in that case. For another case, a veteran who was chronically homeless, was able to find an apartment.
 - i. A discussion ensued that instead of veterans sitting in the hotel all day that possibly they could work in the community, maybe with non-profits

utilizing their skills or even as volunteers. People tend to feel better when they feel useful. Bill Murphy could look into the veterans being interviewed at the Media center so that the community gets to know them. Mentors are another idea when it comes to volunteering and/or internships. Peer to peer events are better because trust factor is important when working with veterans.

- e. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – Todd gave an update on the Memorial Day Observance. They are looking for volunteers to help place the 9,000 flags at Gerstell on Friday, May 26th at 10am. In regards to the Memorial Day event, Secretary Owings and Deputy Secretary Flynn will be present. The Gerstell choir will be performing 2 songs as well as a Gerstell 9th grader singing the National Anthem. They also have a TAPS player and the Maryland Army National Guard will be giving a 21 gun salute. The Board that was created for this event will be voting on how to disseminate the excess money raised, most likely Veterans charities.
- f. US Army Recruiting/Reserve Building Project (Frank Valenti) – The application package was reviewed with Charles Wheatley and they are awaiting letters from other members of the County to be included. Charles spoke with Senator Cardin who has volunteered his assistance with the GSA.

3. New Business

- a. Greg Kahlert has been nominated for a humanitarian award. The Governor also gave out several citations on his visit last week.
- b. Frank and Gina need to meet to discuss how much money they need for the veterans grant. Last year they requested and received \$130,000.
- c. Ed Cramer attended the DAV event last month. He is a Vietnam veteran and is interested in assisting in any way with the Veterans center building project.
- d. Bill Nash would like to thank Commissioner Weaver for attending the American Legion Carroll County meeting to inform everyone of the Veterans center building project. Bill and Commander Frush will be having a discussion with every post in Carroll County to set up a fund for the project.
- e. Keith Midberry would like to invite everyone to a Veterans end of life learning group to meet some time in August. His goal is to have someone from each post in Frederick send someone to this group and once the date is set he would like to

invite all of Carroll County's posts to attend. He is interested in having something like this 2 to 3 times a year.

4. Next Meeting: June 20, 2017 at 2 p.m. at the Department of Social Services.