

VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: October 17, 2017

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, Joe Everett (CTS), Elaine May-Stem, William "Bill" Murphy, Ed Rothstein, Mick Schmidt, Commissioner Richard Weaver

County Staff Present: Rosemarie Glowack, Sara Runkles-Handwerger, Commissioner Doug Howard, Christine Kay, Celene Steckel, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner

Other Present: Michael Gallagher, Tracy Hauser, Dominic Mancuso, Keith Midberry, Roger "Gil" Muse, Gary Saylor, John Veney, Georgia Wells

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Chair's Comments (Larry Burbank) – Larry welcomed everyone to the meeting. A special thank you to Gil Muse, Commander of VFW Post 467 for use of the facility, set-up, and snacks. Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves.
- b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Elaine May Stem. Georgia Wells of Hospice of Frederick performed all five service songs.
- c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – Thanks to the Pickleball Tournament for raising and donating \$2,500 for the Veterans Independence Project (VIP). The County Attorney has reviewed the VIP paperwork and returned to Frank Valenti for a few revisions. Frank will then formally present to the Board of Commissioners before submitting to the Federal Government.

2. Old Business

- a. Approval of Minutes (Larry Burbank) – Bill Murphy made a motion to approve the September 2017 minutes, second by Mick Schmidt. All were in favor and the September 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 September 2017, 7 new representations, 39 claims submitted, 2 home visits, 40 in-office contacts and 273 telephone contacts. The return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$391,015.82 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$7,305,097.10 since inception of the program; and for the Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$45,879. 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. Sara Runkles-Handwerger has been tracking veterans seeking assistance from the program by zip code. In September: Eldersburg 5, Finksburg 2, Hampstead 1, Manchester 3, Mt. Airy 1, Taneytown 1, Westminster 10, and Woodbine 1. They will continue to keep track of veterans served in each zip code so that they can reach out to those areas that may be underserved. The Program currently has one job opening. This open position is funded through the Kahlert Foundation grant. Gina will be meeting with Greg Kahlert on 10/31/17 prior to advertising the opening. In addition, a new staff member has been hired for a different position in the program and will begin 11/2/17. This new hire has a background in human services as well as being an attorney and the Maryland VA has approved them to be trained as a VSO.
 - ii. Veteran’s Shuttle Report (Joe Everett) – In September, 38 veterans were served with 3 in a wheelchair, for a total cost of \$6,252. Trips included: Baltimore – 21 veterans served with 43 trips; Loch Raven – 1 served with 1 trip; Fort Detrick – 7 served with 11 trips; Glen Burnie – 1 served with 3 trips; Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 6 served with 14 trips; Johns Hopkins – 1 served with 4 trips; Mt. Manor – 1 served with 1 trip; and Washington, DC – 1 served with 1 trip.
 - iii. Veteran’s Job Report (Todd Mitchell) – John Veney of BERC and DLLR reported that since the last VAC meeting 7 veterans have been employed with 3 pending. Their annual Job Fair will be held on Thursday, October 19th 9am to 1pm. It is open to everyone, not just veterans, and 60 employers will be available to accept applications and discuss open positions. Point Breeze Credit Union reported that they have posted the Job Fair flyer on their lobby TV. Mick Schmidt announced that there will

be a Veterans luncheon on Wednesday, November 8th at 12pm at American Legion Post 31 where Business of the Year and Veteran of the Year will be announced.

iv. Subcommittee Reports (Access, Mentoring, Outreach) – Gina is still working to connect with Steve Yinger to discuss the sub-committees. Gary Saylor reported that they are still having the Veteran Book Club at the Finksburg Library the 3rd Monday of the month. Gina also is seeking volunteers for a sub-committee to review the current VAC by-laws. Larry Burbank, Bill Murphy and Mick Schmidt all volunteered.

- 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 referrals to Gina. This program serves a maximum of 5 veterans, who are assessed and given a monthly budget (maximum of \$2,804) to purchase needed services such as personal care. Currently 4 veterans are being served. The referral for a 5th veteran was received, however, they declined. They are currently waiting for another referral.
- d. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Gina Valentine) – Currently there are no changes from last month.
- e. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – No report.
- f. Update on Carroll County Veterans Independence Project - CCVIP (Ed Cramer/Frank Valenti) – Ed and Frank were not present. It was discussed that an updated Business Plan presentation be done at the November meeting.

3. New Business

- a. Tracey Hauser, Public Relations Director of Talmar Farms (Therapeutic Alternatives of Maryland), a non-profit 10 acre farm in Cromwell Valley Park in Baltimore, presented on their Veterans-To-Farmer's Training. Talmar's "Breaking New Ground" is a farmer's training geared towards military veterans, providing a certificate in sustainable agriculture gained through course curriculum and field lab work. Graduates then receive a vacant county or city land parcel to begin their "agri-business." For more information contact Tracy at 410-825-2020 or tracyhauser@talmar.org (www.talmar.org).

- b. If you are a Vietnam veteran or know of someone who is, the Veterans History Project as part of the Community Media Center will be conducting interviews on October 21st. The interview will be aired Veterans Day weekend on Channel 19 and streamed online, as well as filed in the National Archives in Washington, DC. Contact Larry Burbank or Bill Murphy if interested. Celene reported that the request for interviews have been posted at all senior centers as well as advertised in their newsletters.
- c. Mary Shunk, Director of The Retreat at Beckleysville in Hampstead, has offered to provide therapeutic riding lessons to all veterans for free. She can be reached at 443-465-7809 or www.retreatatbeckleysville.org.
- d. Mental Health providers are available for active and retired military at www.giveanhour.org.
- e. Gary reported that the Dove House paid for the tickets of an 89 year old Korean War Veteran and his son and daughter to attend the Air Show last weekend. The air show staff then gave the money back. It was a great display of supporting our veterans.
- f. VFW Post 467 will be sponsoring one Wednesday night each month for 6 months at the Brass Hat Café of the local Salvation Army. These meals will meet the needs of many in the community.
- g. In follow-up to a discussion a few meetings ago, Commissioner Howard reported that there will be a roundtable regarding veteran needs in our community tentatively scheduled for January 19, 2018. He would like everyone to compile a list of what organizations and businesses should be invited. Local veterans should be made aware of what services, offers, and discounts that are available to them in our community. Point Breeze Credit Union responded that they provide a Military Value Packet, which includes special financial rates, for all Veterans.
- h. Commissioner Howard would like to have representation and materials available at all the upcoming community Veterans Day events and activities. He would also like to see any Veteran needing transportation to these events be provided such. He has reached out to the Board of Education to compile their list. Elaine May Stem discussed getting materials from Celene Steckel to have available at the Francis Scott Key High event. Coverage will need to be coordinated.

- i. Hospice of Frederick County and Hood College will be hosting a live performance entitled “Dusk” and speaker Dr. Angelo Volandes on November 2nd at 6pm.
 - ii. Carroll Hospice will be hosting a “We Honor Veterans” Breakfast on November 8th 8-9:30am at the Shauck Auditorium in Carroll Hospital.
 - iii. Winters Mill High will be having a Veterans Day breakfast on November 9th at 7:30am with a program at 9am.
 - iv. Manchester Valley High School will hold a Veterans Celebration Dinner and Theater on November 11th at 5:30pm.
 - v. All Senior Centers will be hosting Veterans Day Celebrations. Please check your local center for date and time.
- i. Celene announced that they will be holding a Caregiver’s Conference Saturday, October 21st 8:30am to 2:30pm with their Veteran Services Program staff presenting information on the services they provide. Registration for the conference ends Thursday, October 19th. There will also be an opportunity for medication disposal.
4. Next Meeting: November 21, 2017 at 2 p.m. at Department of Social Services, 1232 Tech Court, Westminster.