

## VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: April 16, 2019

Time: 2 p.m.

Location: American Legion Post #31, 2 Sycamore Street, 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, Bill Murphy, Bill Nash, Elaine May Stem, John Veney (DLLR), Commissioner Richard Weaver (Ex-Officio), Steve Whisler, Tom Woerner

**County Staff Present:** Jim Hillman, Mike Messina, Stacey Nash, Celene Steckel, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner, Chris Winebrenner, Shannan Zepp

**Other Present:** Kim Benson, Adam DeLauter, Deric Dunn, Bob Eney, Josiah Guthland, Alison Malachowski, Bill McKenna, Keith Midberry, Gil Muse, John Pomory, Barbara Ringrose, Gary Scarbeau, Gary Saylor, Frank Valenti, Tom Williams

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Chair's Comments (Larry Burbank) – Larry opened the meeting with a welcome. Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves. A special thank you to the American Legion for hosting today's meeting.
- b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Elaine May Stem.
- c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – Commissioner Weaver introduced Chris Winebrenner, Director of Communications for the county. Please look at the county's new website, which will now be mobile responsive, allowing better viewing on phones and tablets. George Owings of the VA will be speaking at the Freedom District Lions Club on April 24<sup>th</sup>.
- d. New Meeting Structure (Gina Valentine) – The Veterans Advisory Council will be serving in more of an advisory capacity in future meetings. The Council will be sitting in a U shape at the front of the room. If you would like to present or have someone present at a future meeting, please forward your request to Leslie or Gina. Any announcements or public comment can be made at the end of the meeting. VAC will be working on gathering a list of community businesses that provide discounts or discounted services to veterans. Please forward that information to Leslie or Gina.
- e. Introduction of all council members and our newest VAC member, Steve Whisler.

### 2. Old Business

- a. A quorum (5 + voting members) was established with 9 voting and 1 ex-officio members present.
- b. Approval of Minutes (Larry Burbank) – Draft minutes from the March meeting were reviewed. Bill Nash made a motion and Elaine May Stem seconded. All were in favor and March's minutes were accepted.
- c. Monthly Program Reports (Veteran Services Staff) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served.
  - i. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports (Jim Hillman) – March 2019:

1. 20 new representations
  2. 56 claims submitted
  3. 4 home visits
  4. 76 in-office contacts
  5. 893 telephone contacts
  6. Return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$601,411.00 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$14,244,759.00 since inception of the program (October 2013)
  7. Veteran Directed Care Program's numbers were incorrect. Will provide corrected amount next month.
- ii. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Stacey Nash) – March 2019:
1. 25 veterans were served, with 1 in wheelchair and 12 home pick-ups
    - a. Baltimore – 13 veterans – 34 trips
    - b. Loch Raven – 2 veteran – 2 trips
    - c. Fort Detrick – 4 veterans – 4 trips
    - d. Washington, DC – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - e. Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 6 veterans – 10 trips
  2. Total Cost = \$6,555.00
  3. Stacey reported they are still looking at other ways the Veterans Shuttle can be funded.
- iii. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update (John Veney) – April started a new quarter and has seen three Veterans employed. Their next Job Fair is May 2<sup>nd</sup>. A flyer announcing the fair as well as listing the employers that will be present was handed out.
- 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. Carroll County currently has four Veterans in the program with one opening. This program is run through Maryland Department of Aging and their Fiscal Intermediary is changing. So there is a period of transition ongoing with new online training for staff. The current veterans must be dual enrolled, therefore, new applications may be held until the transition is complete.
- e. Updates on Veteran Services Program Grant (Shannan Zepp) – Currently five veterans have been diverted from homelessness, with three placed in a hotel and two in permanent housing. Food cards, rental assistance, gas, bus tickets and transportation have been provided to those Veterans seeking assistance.
- f. (removed from agenda) Update on Carroll County Veterans Independence Project – CCVIP (Ed Cramer) – CCVIP will be having a Car Show fundraiser on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at Len Stoler and their Red, White and Blue Gala will be on November 16<sup>th</sup> at the Westminster Riding Club. A fundraiser also took place on April 4<sup>th</sup> at Thunderhead Bowling.
- g. Update on Friends of Disabled American Veterans in Carroll County (Bill Murphy) – Bill reported that they have received several donations of scooters and other supplies and medical equipment to provide veterans and their spouses. They were able to provide transportation to a local Veteran who needed to be at the hospital for surgery at 5am. May 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for the Kahlert Foundation grant application. They will be seeking assistance in vehicle maintenance updates.

- h. Executive Committee (Gina Valentine) – The Executive Committee is made up of Chair Larry Burbank, Vice-Chair Elaine May-Stem and Council Members Marc Fisher and Bill Nash.
  - i. Their meeting structure recommendations were discussed at the start of today’s meeting. They met on April 10<sup>th</sup> and will be meeting monthly.
  - ii. The Executive Committee also discussed the Carroll County Times articles and will provide more information at May’s VAC meeting. Suggestions for articles can be forwarded to Gina.
  - iii. They will also be coordinating outreach at community events. The VAC will be participating in Westminster’s Memorial Day Parade, May 27<sup>th</sup> at 11am and with a booth at the 4-H Fair July 27<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Volunteers are needed. Bob Eney volunteered to carry the Memorial Day Parade banner.

### 3. New Business

- a. Seniors on the Go Expo Update – Following the Expo, Veteran Services Program staff spoke actively with 75-80 Veterans and are waiting for about 33 more to return messages. Larry registered 14 Veterans to be interviewed in the fall for Community Media Center. Leslie announced that there were approximately 2,000 attendees and the Veterans Alley was a successful location for all of the Veteran organizations present. The VFW handed out over 400 flags and said it was the most Veterans they’ve seen yet. Any suggestions or comments can be forwarded to Leslie.

### 4. Announcements:

- a. Civil Air Patrol gave a short presentation on their programs, Homeland Security and Cadet. They do not recruit for the military but provide search and rescue services to their communities. Their Color Guard cadets have won national competitions. One-third of their members are youth and they offer a free STEM program. They are run completely by volunteers and currently meet at Hilltop Assembly of God in Westminster.
- b. A representative of Merry Maids announced that they are looking to provide a disabled veteran in Carroll County with 2 hours of cleaning for free.
- c. A burial lot at the Evergreen Cemetery in Finksburg has been donated to a veteran. See Gary Saylor.
- d. Carroll County Veterans Book Club is still meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at the Finksburg Library. Books that are historical or military based are read and discussed.
- e. Alison Malachowski thanked everyone who attended her son’s Luna Moth Sculpture dedication.
- f. Josiah Guthland is an Admissions Counselor and Army Veteran from Carroll Community College. He reminded everyone that Veterans can see him and he will assist them in processing their Veteran college benefits.
- g. There will be a Welcome Home to Vietnam Era Veterans on April 27, 2019 from 1-4pm at the VFW Post #467.
- h. Celene Steckel announced that the Bureau of Aging & Disabilities will be coordinating their Area Plan for the Maryland Department of Aging. They will be conducting a Community Needs Assessment and would appreciate everyone’s help in distribution.
- i. Carroll Hospice will be celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with Taste of Carroll on April 29<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm. Volunteers are still needed.
- j. Carroll Hospice will also be holding a Volunteer Training Course for the Veterans program in June.
- k. May 3<sup>rd</sup> starts the VFW’s Cruisin’ Fridays beginning at 5pm on every Friday over the summer.

- l. Bill McKenna announced the God Bless the USA event on June 1<sup>st</sup> at 7pm and June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 3pm at Carroll Community College. Tickets are discounted for Veterans.
  - m. McDaniel College's Admissions Coordinator, Jonelle, spoke of their military scholarships for Veterans and their dependents providing a minimum of \$25,000/year.
  - n. Barbara Ringrose from BB&T asked that flyers on any events or programs be sent to her so she can place on their lobby table.
  - o. Keith Midberry asked if the Frederick VAC could visit next month. They are brand new and are currently seeking guidance on meeting and council structure. They also have a 20 hour/week part time position available to support their council.
  - p. Drug and Violence Awareness Expo is Thursday at the Ag Center.
  - q. Bill Nash announced they will be updating and dedicating Hampstead's War Memorial on Memorial Day. See Bill for the paperwork if you would like to add a name to the memorial.
  - r. Hampstead American Legion Post #200 Auxiliary will be having a Car Show on May 11, 2019.
5. Next Meeting: May 21, 2019 at 2pm – VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Road, Westminster.