

## VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: June 20, 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:** Larry Burbank, Joe Everett (CTS), Mick Schmidt, Ed Rothstein, Elaine May-Stem, Frank Valenti

**County Staff Present:** Mike Chandler, Sara Runkles-Handwerger, Celene Steckel, Leslie Wagner

**Other Present:** Beverly Caperton, Jeff Collins, Ed Cramer, Marvin Frush, Rev. Lynne Humphries-Russ, Bryan Lyburn, Keith Midberry, Todd Mitchell, Phil Mullikin, William Murphy, Bill Nash, Tom Shaffer, Pete Turner, Charles Wheatley

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Chair's Comments (Frank Valenti) – Frank welcomed everyone and reminded everyone that this is his last meeting as Chair and that there will be an election later in the meeting. Joe Everett, Executive Director of Carroll Transit System, was introduced.
  - b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Burbank.
  - c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – No report.
2. Old Business
  - a. Approval of Minutes (Frank Valenti) – Mick Schmidt made a motion to approve the May 2017 minutes, second by Larry Burbank. All were in favor and the May 2017 meeting minutes were approved as written.
  - b. Monthly Program Reports (Mike Chandler) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served.
    - i. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports (Mike Chandler) – In the month of May 2017, 8 new representations, 57 claims submitted, 26 home visits, 106 in-office contacts and 343 telephone contacts. The return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$351,950.80 per

month for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$5,964,194.76 since inception of the program; and for the Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$38,639. It was noted that the word has spread, because new Veterans being served are coming from new locations in Carroll County. Mt. Airy – 2 new Veterans served in May; New Windsor, Taneytown and Walkersville – each had 1 new Veteran served in May; Union Bridge and Woodbine – each had 3 new Veterans served in May; Eldersburg – 5 in April and 2 in May; Finksburg – 1 in April and 1 in May; Hampstead – 2 in April and 5 in May; and Westminster – 17 in April and 19 in May.

- ii. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Joe Everett) – In May, 40 veterans were served with one in a wheelchair, for a total cost of \$5,847.60. Trips included: Baltimore – 28 veterans served with 14 trips; Fort Detrick – 3 served with 3 trips; Glen Burnie – 1 served with 1 trip; Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 11 served with 11 trips; Park Heights – 1 served with 1 trip; Lutherville – 1 served with 1 trip. Joe is looking into whether the 11 veterans served with 11 trips to Martinsburg is an unduplicated number. It was asked whether there have been any demands for in-county transportation for services such as hospice, chemo, etc. Celene knows of one trip that the VA approved for a veteran to have a test done locally as opposed to traveling to Baltimore or Martinsburg. Staying within the county is certainly cost-effective.
  - iii. Veteran's Job Report (Todd Mitchell) – No report.
  - iv. Subcommittee Reports (Access, Mentoring, Outreach) – No report.
- c. Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Sara Runkles-Handwerger) – 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 Veterans Administration. Ed Rothstein informed the Council that he has been in contact with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation and is looking into getting their resources in our area to possibly help more than the 5 veterans allowed by the State.

- d. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Mike Chandler) – Mike reported on a veteran who faces health challenges and has home improvement projects. Currently he is building trust so that services can be provided. Bryan Lyburn from Habitat for Humanity, Wesley Freedom Church and Home Depot have been contacted by Mike so that some home projects can be coordinated. Frank suggested that possibly Kahlert money can be used to cover the cost of a portable oxygen system for this veteran, as well as Meals on Wheels for some of our other veterans. Mike reported that within the last 2 weeks they have received 3 requests for rental assistance due to eviction notices. Celene made everyone aware that the Veteran Services Program works to find them sustainable resources and not just pay their rents. Recently several donations have been made by local veteran organizations, the Kahlert foundation has donated an additional \$50,000 and any monies left over from last fiscal year has been approved to roll over to provide services for next year.
- e. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – Frank and all those present congratulated and thanked Todd for a wonderful Memorial Day Observance at Gerstell last month. A keepsake video is being created and will be available shortly. Several suggestions for the 9,000 flags: pass along to other counties to display, or make available to local veteran organizations. Larry said that his VFW will take 1,000. Todd said that there is no intention to hold this annually, unless someone would like to coordinate.
- f. US Army Recruiting/Reserve Building Project (Frank Valenti) – Frank is meeting with several visitors at the USAR after the meeting today. Also, if anyone is interested, there will be a photo opportunity on June 28<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at the USAR where Point Breeze Credit Union will be presenting their donation.

### 3. New Business

- a. Frank will be meeting with Greg Kahlert to report on their current numbers.
- b. It was suggested that a press release be forwarded to the Carroll County Times, Northern News, Hampstead/Manchester Merchandiser and Taneytown Record, to inform the community of the contact information for the Veteran Services Program of Carroll County. Celene will handle.
- c. Rev. Lynne Humphries-Russ of Morgan Chapel United Methodist Church in Woodbine presented on her church's Food Pantry, Pet Pantry and God's Garden. They are looking for ways to help those interested and in need of these services.

They are willing to deliver as well as accept volunteers to work in their pantries and garden.

- d. Keith Midberry invited everyone to a Veterans end of life learning group at the American Legion Francis Scott Key Post 11 in Frederick on Saturday, August 12<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 12noon.
  - e. A quorum was present and council members voted on a new Chair and Vice-Chair. Larry Burbank will now be serving as the Council Chair and Elaine May Stem will be serving as the Council Vice-Chair. Both were congratulated on their new positions.
4. Next Meeting: July 18, 2017 at 2 p.m. at the Department of Social Services.