

## VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: July 17, 2018

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, Jack Curran, Marc Fisher, Bill Murphy, Ed Rothstein, John Veney (DLLR Representative), Crystal Winebrenner (CTS Representative)

**County Staff Present:** Francine Hahn, Sara Handwerger, Jim Hillman, Commissioner Doug Howard, Stacey Nash, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner, Shannan Zepp

**Other Present:** Kimberly Benson, Ramenta Cottrell, Marvin Frush, Alison Malachowski, Joseph Meneeley, Keith Midberry, Gil Muse, Bill Nash, Travis Rahill, Gary Saylor, Gary Scarbeau, Pete Turner, Frank Valenti, Thomas Williams, Tom Woerner

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Chair's Comments (Larry Burbank) – Larry opened the meeting with a welcome then everyone went around the room and introduced themselves.
- b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Murphy.
- c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver): No report.

### 2. Old Business

- a. A quorum was established with 7 members present.
- b. Approval of Minutes (Larry Burbank) – Bill Murphy made a motion to approve the June 2018 minutes, second by Marc Fisher. All were in favor and the June 2018 meeting minutes were approved.
- c. Monthly Program Reports (Veteran Services Staff) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served.
  - i. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports (Sara Handwerger and Francine Hahn) – June 2018:
    1. 9 new representations
    2. 55 claims submitted
    3. 4 home visits
    4. 48 in-office contacts

5. 670 telephone contacts
    - a. Spike in telephone calls due to outreach initiatives.
  6. Return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$498,456.08 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$10,683,964.25 since inception of the program (October 2013)
  7. Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$62,169.00
  8. 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.
- ii. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Crystal Winebrenner) – June 2018:
1. 31 veterans were served, with 2 in wheelchair and 17 home pick-ups
    - a. Baltimore – 21 veterans – 45 trips
    - b. Loch Raven – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - c. Fort Detrick – 4 veterans – 9 trips
    - d. Glen Burnie – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - e. Washington, DC – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - f. Gaithersburg – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - g. Frederick – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - h. Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 7 veterans – 14 trips
  2. Total Cost = \$8,925.00
  3. Crystal reported that one veteran who had been using services every day has begun to limit his trips.
  4. Crystal asked for guidance on how best to determine guidelines for hours of operation for the Veterans shuttle. A recent shuttle trip had a driver working 16 hours and the veteran getting a hotel room due to more testing the following morning. Can the shuttle require that all appointments be scheduled no later than 3pm so that the driver can return to Carroll County at an appropriate time? The VAC will support the shuttle program in whatever they deem appropriate. These guidelines would need to be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.
  5. Commissioner Howard expressed concern that the locations and trips were becoming unlimited and asked if a policy could be developed that if the veteran was held late at an appointment that the driver would be released to return to Carroll County and funds would be available for the Veteran to acquire other transportation to return home.
  6. The Veteran Choice Program, recently approved by President Trump, will allow veterans who are not given an appointment at a VA medical facility within 30 days the ability to be seen at civilian locations.
- iii. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update – John Veney reported that the last job fair was successful and another is scheduled for the fall. The final numbers for last quarter:

19 veterans assisted, 7 have found employment. Continual outreach at the local libraries (Mt. Airy, Westminster, and Eldersburg) as well as the MVA.

- d. Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Gina Valentine) – Program has a maximum of 5 veterans. There was one vacancy. VA forwarded a referral that is in the process of being enrolled.
- e. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Shanna Zepp) – Three homeless Veterans are currently being served under this grant with emergency housing and additional assistance, with ages ranging in the 40's and 50's. One is moving tomorrow into permanent housing, and one family is waiting for eligibility in the HUD VASH program. Three veterans have been diverted from homelessness with rental assistance.
  - i. Shanna has reach out to the pre-trial staff that has contact with veterans who may need the kind of assistance this program offers. A meeting is scheduled for August.
  - ii. HUD VASH – Six referrals with four approvals. The process can take several months. HUD issues the vouchers and VA oversees the case management.
  - iii. Recently a homeless veteran passed away with no burial benefits. Many organizations in the community donated the funds necessary for him to have a service at Eline's Funeral Home in Hampstead and burial at Garrison with a head stone.
  - iv. In case this happens again a plan should be put in place. A trust fund can be established at Eline's, who own Hampstead Cemetery. This could benefit families of veterans who do not have the funds for a proper funeral or burial.
  - v. 5<sup>th</sup> regiment should be able to conduct a full military burial. If they do not have the rifle squad, VFW Post #467 rifle squad can assist.
- f. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – No report.
- g. Update on Carroll County Veterans Independence Project - CCVIP (Frank Valenti) – Federal Department of Health & Human Services has requested that CCVIP resubmit their application (to change the deed) in a different format. They did receive the \$100,000 Bond Bill from the Maryland legislation. Pep Boys has donated equipment for the project that will be stored on-site, and they will be carrying \$1 million in insurance. Still meeting with Northrup Gruman about their support. CCVIP is having a car show fund raiser on August 11<sup>th</sup>.

### 3. New Business

- a. Ft. Meade Initiative – Commissioner Howard:

- i. Carroll County's marketing team met with a Ft. Meade representative. Ft. Meade is conducting a survey of their service members regarding what community attributes they are looking for in a place to settle. Ft. Meade will share the results with us.
  - ii. We are also looking to conduct outreach via a Workforce Development grant that provides great incentives (regarding employment) for spouses and service members that have less than 4 years left in their service.
  - iii. Ft. Meade is having a National Night Out event on August 7<sup>th</sup> 6-9pm Anyone interested in representing Carroll County by attending this event, please email Celene Steckel ([csteckel@ccg.carr.org](mailto:csteckel@ccg.carr.org)). Possibly shirts and hats will be provided and maybe a tablecloth for their information table. This is a big event with approximately 10,000 attending.
  - iv. A calendar of activities is being developed so that Carroll County can attend Ft. Meade events to promote the county.
- b. Outreach Initiatives – Jim Hillman has set up a table in front of the Westminster and Eldersburg Walmarts and has received a good response. Three appointments have been scheduled for those eligible and qualified and an additional 15 individuals have requested that their family member be contacted to see about eligibility for benefits. Jim will be at the Hampstead Walmart on July 26<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 12pm and will be giving a presentation at Lorien Mt. Airy on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Reaching out and marketing to outlying areas is his next strategy.
- c. Veteran Logo was reviewed. Bill Murphy made a motion to use the logo being reviewed. Ed Rothstein seconded and all were in favor.
- d. Travis Rahill of Melwood Veteran Services provided information on their program. Located in Charles County, they have a 5 day program for men, women, and couples that have either been diagnosed or self-identify with PTSD. Six retreats are scheduled between now and December, with another 14 scheduled in 2019. There is no charge, but corporate sponsors are welcome.
- e. Keith Midberry of Frederick Hospice handed out Veteran demographics for Carroll County that he found online and thought helpful. They will also be benefitting from a golf fundraiser scheduled for September 14<sup>th</sup>. "Thank You for Your Service" documentary will be shown on October 17<sup>th</sup> with a panel discussion after. He also offered to conduct a learning workshop on death, burial, and end of life options for veterans.
- f. The Flagpole Memorial for Veterans of World War II will be this Saturday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at 2pm at 707 Wheatley Drive in Westminster.
- g. Carroll County Friends of Disabled American Veterans in currently has 9 Veteran drivers with good driving records. A second van has been donated and there is a 1999 Windstar that is being repaired to be donated to a Veteran in need. They are waiting for their second insurance quote.

- h. Corey Sanders will be having a CCVIP fundraiser at the Coon Club in Hampstead on August 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - i. Any veteran related volunteer service opportunities for our youth should be forwarded to the Board of Education.
4. Next Meeting: August 21, 2018 at 2pm at VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Rd, Westminster.