

Frederick County Veterans Advisory Council Minutes

Wednesday, March 20, 2019

Attendance

Voting Members	Present	Absent	Excused
Daniel Campbell	x		
Sharon Jacko	x		
David Kaye	x		
Rachel Nachlas	x		
Fred Schumacher	x		
John Lynn Shanton	x		
Fred Wood	x		
Ex-Officio Members			
Dee Harrison	x		
Michelle Day		x	x
Andrea Walker	x		
Michael McLane	x		
County Councilman Steve McKay	x		
Delegate Carol Krimm	x		
Robin Summerfield		x	

Guests: Andrea Jones, Teresa Sprail, Phillip Munley, Doug Silvern, Christine Schiller, James Cox, Richard Tymocil, Sean Moore, C James Olson, Mark Stevanus

Staff: Monica Bearden, Miles Ward

Welcome and Introductions

At 6:34 pm, Fred Schumacher opened the meeting by leading the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair's Comments: Fred Schumacher commented that the agenda for this meeting is very full. He stated that he continues to be impressed by the work and enthusiasm of the VAC membership and is appreciative of staff support.

Establishment of a quorum: After review of attendance and finding all voting members present, Fred Schumacher stated that a quorum was established.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: Meeting agenda was approved by consensus.

Old Business

Approval of February 2019 meeting minutes: Daniel Campbell motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting on January 23, 2019. David Kaye seconded. The minutes were approved with Del. Krimm abstaining.

Open Meetings Act Training Update: Members Fred Schumacher, Michelle Day, Fred Wood, Sharon Jacko and Rachel Nachlas have completed OMA training since the February meeting. David Kaye (member) and Monica Bearden (staff) had previously been trained. Having a number of members trained will make it much easier to ensure that an OMA-trained member is on hand for all meetings. As members take this training, please forward your certificate to Monica to keep on file.

Review of data: Fred Schumacher shared data provided by Keith Midberry. This data included information about veteran health, suicide, demographics and a community environmental scan.

Permanent staff support for VAC: Monica Bearden shared that a .5FTE (20 hours/week) Veterans Advisory Council Coordinator position has been approved by County Executive Gardner and is in the process of recruitment. She also shared the probably timeline and steps involved in a County recruitment. Members asked if a VAC member could participate in the interview process. Dr. Bearden will find out from Human Resources if there is precedent for that type of involvement from a board, council or commission and let the membership know.

Presentation

Veterans Health Care: Dee Harrison shared a very informative presentation titled, *VAC Healthcare Presentation* and a flyer describing Fort Detrick health services. Veterans with a clear background check may be seen at the outpatient clinic at Fort Detrick. Those who do not have a clear background check will have transportation to Martinsburg VA or to the Hagerstown clinic. At the Fort Detrick outpatient clinic, three primary care providers serve approximately 3600 veterans. The clinic is open Monday through Friday, eight hours per day. Ms. Harrison provided details of available service at the clinic and additional supports and resources available through the Martinsburg VA. Both locations are adding resources. Fort Detrick outpatient clinic is planning to add ophthalmology and optometry, an additional primary care provider and a psychologist for the behavioral health team. Martinsburg VA is opening a short-stay rehabilitation facility and has plans for a new dental building, expanded surgical services and Hepatitis C screening.

Del. Krimm would like to have had this meeting televised so that the presentation information could be shared widely. The presentation and flyer will be posted to the VAC website.

Public Comment

Public comment was extensive and followed the following themes:

- VA healthcare services seem to be focused on retirees and are not reasonably accessible to working veterans due to distance, hours available, and security on Fort Detrick.
- Healthcare services may not meet the needs of younger veterans and women veterans.
- A system geared toward veterans and modeled after a 2-1-1 style service is needed. A model in Florida, Mission United, might be a possibility to explore.
- Dental services are not available at the Fort Detrick clinic.
- A way to “vet” charitable organizations to prevent donations to fraudulent agencies or individuals is needed
- Funds are needed to respond to immediate emergency needs of low income veterans
- The VAC should consider ways to create a one-stop-shop for funding for veterans’ needs.
- Maryland Veterans Trust is a 501(c)3 that can grant non-emergency, temporary financial assistance that can assist veterans who will be self-reliant after receiving assistance. This program is funded by a partnership with casinos’ slot revenue.

New Business

Process for April 3 meeting for development of mission, strategic priorities: David Kaye sent out a proposed draft of a format. Once developed, the VAC mission statement should be made available to every veterans’ organization in the community. Monica Bearden has compiled the mission and strategic priorities for County appointed veterans boards in Carroll, Howard, and Anne Arundel counties. She will make sure these as well as the bill that created the VAC will be available for the April 3rd meeting. This meeting meets the criteria for the OMA and will be open to the public.

Discussion of subjects and speakers for regular April meeting and future meetings: The following suggestions were made for future speakers:

- Transition Assistance Program at Fort Detrick: Darlene Carver
- Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs: Phillip Munley and Rose Bean
- Maryland Veterans Trust Fund: Mark Hendricks
- Role of Frederick County VAC in State Legislation issues: Roger Wilson
- Veteran Mental Health Services: Need a contact

Heavy Metal Playground event: David Kaye proposed coordinating a Veterans Day at Heavy Metal Playground. He suggested approaching veterans groups to sponsor the participation of veterans who may wish to consider heavy equipment operation as a career choice. Mr. Kaye made a motion for the VAC to explore this. Sharon Jacko seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Kaye will take the lead on this project. Proposed timeframe is to plan for a Saturday after July 10, 2019 (Veterans Recognition Day) which may be an opportunity for sharing information about the event.

Community Foundation Grant for Veterans: Rachel Nachlas reported that she followed up with the Community Foundation and obtained information about permanent and pass through grant funding options. If the VAC were to work with the Community Foundation for a permanent fund, the base funding is \$25,000 and the fund would need to reach that level within one year of committing to it. Fred Wood shared the idea of creating a 501(c)3. Del. Krimm suggested an income tax donation check off as a possibility.

Status of Storage Facility or Barn for Serving Together Fundraising Event: David Kaye has reached out to realtors through the local realtor list serv. To date, he has not been able to locate vacant storage property that can be made available for this project. He has one more contact to make. Rachel Nachlas will check on whether any option might be available at Frederick Community College.

Announcements

- March 28, 2019, American Legion Post 11 hosts Vietnam Veterans Recognition Dinner
- March 28, 2019, Opioid Resource Event at Frederick Fairground
- *Thank You for Your Service*, a 2015 documentary film that will be shown Friday, March 29th at 6pm at SoldierFit gym, 8420 Gas House Pike, Suite Z, Frederick, MD 21701.

Adjournment

John Shanton moved to adjourn. Daniel Campbell seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Next Meetings:

Strategic Planning Session: April 3, 2019 at 6:30pm.

Regular monthly meeting: April 17, 2019 at 6:30 pm.

Both meetings will be held in Winchester Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room

Submitted by Monica Bearden