

Frederick County Veterans Advisory Council Minutes

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Note: This meeting was televised

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		
Andrea Walker		x	x
Michael McLane		x	
County Councilman Steve McKay		x	x
Delegate Carol Krimm		x	x
Robin Summerfield		x	

Guests: Teresa Spruill, Caitlin Ainge, Doug Silvern, Patrick Pierson, Keith Midberry, Julianna Albowicz

Staff: Monica Bearden, Miles Ward

Welcome and Introductions

Pledge of Allegiance: At 6:33 pm, Fred Schumacher opened the meeting by leading the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair's Comments: Fred Schumacher welcomed members and guests. He stated that the VAC has had a very productive month. The strategic planning meeting was held two weeks ago. Interviews have been conducted for the VAC Coordinator position. He reminded the attendees that this meeting is recorded and to use the microphone for public comments so they may be heard on the recording.

Establishment of a quorum: With all seven voting members and one ex-officio member present, Fred Schumacher stated that a quorum was present.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: John Shanton motioned to approve the agenda. David Kaye seconded. Agenda was approved unanimously.

Old Business

Approval of March 20, 2019 meeting minutes: Fred Wood moved to approve the minutes. Sharon Jacko seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Approval of April 3, 2019 meeting minutes: Fred Wood moved to approve the minutes. Daniel Campbell seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Heavy Metal Playground Event: David Kaye described Heavy Metal Playground, its purpose and relevance to Veterans' interests. David will confirm the availability of a Saturday date between July 20 and August 10. He will reach out to Veterans groups to sponsor a Veteran by paying Heavy Metal Playground directly. The VACs role is primarily coordination.

Status of Storage Facility or Barn for Serving Together Fundraiser: David Kaye reported that he has not received an affirmative response to his efforts to identify a warehouse for this purpose. Sharon requested information to share with her Rotary Club. Fred Wood suggested the former Middletown Fire Station building.

Permanent staff support for VAC: Monica Bearden reported that interviews have been completed and staff are in the process of checking references on top candidates.

Presentation

Services Offered by Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs: Phillip Munley, Director Veterans Service Program. Phil Munley provided a detailed description of resources offered by MD Department of Veterans Affairs.

- Cemetery and Memorial Program: Veterans are eligible to be buried in a national veterans cemetery at no charge. The national cemeteries in Maryland are full with the exception of some space in facility with room for cremains. However, Maryland has five state veterans cemeteries located throughout Maryland.
- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home: Located in St. Mary's County offering a continuum of care including assisted living, skilled nursing and memory care.
- Outreach and Advocacy: Develops ways to reach veterans and inform them about benefits and services. Phil recommended signing up for the electronic newsletter (<https://veterans.maryland.gov/maryland-department-of-veterans-affairs-outreach-and-advocacy-program/>)
- Veterans Trust Fund: A nonprofit organization that provides non-emergency, temporary financial assistance to veterans that have experienced an interruption in their income. Veterans can apply for funds. Applications are reviewed monthly. Funds are dispersed to vendors, not to the veteran directly.
- Service and Benefit Program: This is program Phil leads. Twelve locations in Maryland with one in Frederick County. The local program is staffed five days per week and is located in the courthouse. The majority of inquiries locally include questions about disability certification and non-service related disability benefits.

- Sharon Jacko asked how Frederick could have more staffing locally in order to serve the 17,000 veterans in the county. Phil suggested contacting state legislators to advocate for staffing.
- Sharon Jacko asked if the office could be moved out of the courthouse as it is difficult to access in that location. Phil said he would be amenable to moving to a new location if he could be confident that it was stable, such as in a county-owned building. He does not pay rent in the courthouse and is aware that if the office left the courthouse, it would not likely be able to return.
- Phil described the VA non-service connected pension program and the service-connected disability compensation program. He shared information on eligibility and the benefits available to eligible veterans and the dependents. He described the advantages of working with a Veterans Benefits Specialist at one of the offices.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

New Business

Subcommittees Sign Up: Members in attendance signed up for subcommittees as follows:

- Bylaws Subcommittee: David Kaye (chair), Fred Wood, Dan Campbell
- Speakers Subcommittee: Mike McLane, Fred Schumacher, Sharon Jacko, Rachel Nachlas (no chair assigned)
- VAC Handout/Trifold Subcommittee: Fred Wood, Michelle Day (no chair assigned)

Roberts Rules of Order: David Kaye described a “cheat sheet” on Roberts Rules that he has developed. He suggested that when the VAC established bylaws, Roberts Rules can serve as a guide to content.

Announcements

Fred Wood has contacted the American Legion and is working to obtain emergency funds for veterans.

Patrick Pierson, Guest, described the VFW process for speeding up access to emergency funds of less than \$500. Now available in less than a week under this process. Funds of more than \$500 require a little longer process.

Adjournment

Sharon Jacko motioned to adjourn. David Kaye seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Next Meeting: May 15, 2019 at 6:30 pm. Winchester Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room

Submitted by Monica Bearden