

## Frederick County Veterans Advisory Council Minutes

Wednesday, February 17, 2021  
By Web Ex and Facebook Live Streaming

### Attendance

Voting Members	Present	Absent	Excused
Deb Childers	X		
Paul Hunter	X		
Sharon Jacko	X		
David Kaye	X		
Wilfred Plumley	X		
Fred Schumacher	X		
Fred Wood	X		
Ex-officio members			
Dee Harrison	X		
Michelle Day	X		
Andrea Walker			X
Michael McLane		X	
County Councilman Steve McKay	X		
Delegate Carol Krimm		X	
Nan Mann	X		

Guests: Colleen Bernard, Denise Green, Tina Lehmann, Cynthia Cavaliere, Stan Seidel, Jay Hessler (for Andrea Walker). Staff: Linda Bergofsky, Ingrid Nicolau

### Welcome and Introductions

Sharon Jacko called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Establishment of a quorum: After a review of attendance, Sharon Jacko determined that a quorum of voting members was present.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: David Kaye made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. Deb Childers seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

### Old Business

Approval of the meeting minutes from January 20, 2020: Fred Schumacher made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting as submitted. Paul Hunter seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Update on action items from prior meeting: Linda Bergofsky reported on the status of the action items as follows -- email addresses and phone numbers were shared among the January meeting speakers; Frederick City Parks and Recreation confirmed that its military discount applies to all military Veterans, not just retirees; the YMCA will not be instituting a military/Veteran discount at this time but is considering one as part of a membership drive prior to Veterans Day; Will and Nan are waiting to hear

from County Parks and Recreation before planning the Veterans' Wellness Fair, and questions for this meeting's speakers were forwarded in advance. Fred Schumacher also noted that he reached out to Kevin McGlynn of Team RWB but has not been able to follow up with him yet.

Additional information on Veteran Health and Recreation: Tina Lehman, Frederick County Parks and Recreation, was unable to participate in January's meeting and graciously agreed to attend this evening. Tina noted that she currently does not have approval for any specific programs for Veterans nor does the Department currently offer Veteran/military discounts. However, she will work with her leadership to revisit the issue in the fall. She mentioned that some programs under consideration could be Veteran walks or runs; because she oversees turf fields (which are open mid-March to mid-November), there could be Veteran specific team sporting events as well. If the VAC wished to sponsor an event, it could make the request through the website. The VAC continued its discussion of a Veteran Fitness and Wellness Fair that could incorporate all of these elements for members of the military, Veterans, and their families. The VAC agreed to form a subcommittee to work on planning this event, possibly in October. Tina will work with her colleagues on the Community team to see what is possible from the County's perspective.

**Chair's Comments:** Sharon Jacko deferred making any comments.

**Presentations:** Frederick County Public Schools

Colleen Bernard, Curriculum Specialist, Secondary Social Studies, provided an overview of how her program currently works with the military and Veteran communities. The school system and Board of Education have instituted an annual Veteran in Education Service award that goes to an FCPS employee who most exemplifies excellence in service to FCPS and the community. Individuals are nominated in September and then undergo a review by a team of judges in October. All nominees are then honored at a Central Veterans Day Program. This year, Fred Schumacher served as a judge and attended the program on Veterans Day, along with Col. Nunnally, Garrison Commander at Ft. Detrick.

Denise Green, a special education and science teacher at Walkersville High School for the past 6 years, was this year's recipient. Denise retired from the US Air Force, where she was an officer in the Biomedical Science Corps. During her time in the USAF, she tutored students in math at every duty station and decided to make education her second career when she retired after 21 years. She was honored to be selected and was completely surprised by the award.

Colleen also described how information about the military is incorporated into social studies curriculum in grades 6 through 11. FCPS works with guest speakers to support teacher and student programs, including Student Service Learning, on a wide variety of military-related topics. FCPS is also active in community projects, including the Veterans Remembrance Garden at Windsor Knolls.

The VAC discussed how its members could support these efforts already underway. Colleen noted that she receives requests from teachers and looks to her contacts to identify speakers on military topics from the community. She suggested that a Veterans and military speakers' bureau would be welcomed. She also mentioned the possibility of creating a partnership agreement between the VAC and FCPS to ensure a common understanding of how we could work together.

## Public Comment

Linda introduced guests Cynthia Cavaliere of the Federal Executive Board and Stan Seidel of the Maryland Veterans Commission. No public comments were submitted through the designated public input portal.

## New Business

Frederick Veterans Service Network Employment Sub-committee: Linda reported on the formation of a sub-committee that will bring together agencies and organizations at the Federal, State, and local levels to assess opportunities and gaps in helping Veterans achieve their desired employment outcomes. The group, which includes Cynthia and Stan, will have its inaugural meeting next week. Linda will keep the VAC apprised of the group's deliberations.

COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts: Linda reported on the latest guidance from the VAMC in Martinsburg on how Veterans should signal interest in obtaining a vaccine. Both she and Jay noted that while the County vaccination program is operating at full capacity, the number of doses sent is insufficient to meet demand. The VAC discussed other available venues and strategies for informing Veterans.

Diversity and Inclusion: Sharon raised the issue of whether all Veterans are being given equal access to the vaccine and other services. Linda noted that this concern is not unique to Frederick County; Howard County's Commission on Veterans and Military Families recently launched a survey of Veteran perceptions of racial and ethnic equity. The VAC discussed the importance of this issue and a desire to better understand the current environment. To that end, Linda will approach the new Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer and request that he present at our April meeting.

## Announcements

Linda noted that the calendar of events on the website is current through March. There are a number of activities that are available and encouraged members to keep her apprised of anything that can be added.

The next meeting of the VAC will be held on **Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 6:30 pm**. We will be discussing how local foundations are supporting Veterans and how the VAC may be able to work with grant funding organizations to help fill gaps in services to Veterans.

## Action Items and Adjournment

### Action Items:

1. Linda will keep the VAC apprised of developments with the FVSN employment sub-committee.
2. Linda will follow up with Colleen Bernard regarding the formation of a military and Veteran speakers' bureau.

3. Linda will continue to work with Will and Nan and County Parks and Recreation to plan for a Veterans wellness fair in October (tentative date).
4. Linda will approach the Frederick County Equity and Inclusion Officer about presenting at the April VAC meeting.

David Kaye made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 PM. Paul Hunter seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Submitted by Linda Bergofsky

APPROVED