

Board Minutes
09 September 2016
Mount Carmel Center for Excellence
530 Communication Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Duane Dailey, Chair
Rene Simard, Vice Chair
Hollie Caldwell, Secretary
Christopher Holden, Member
Robert "Bob" McLaughlin, Member
William "Robby" Robinson, Member
Jack Rudder, Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Mickey Hunt, DMVA Deputy Director
David Caldwell, DMVA Strategic Planner
Ben Mestas, CDVA Director
Gail Hoagland, DMVA Grant Administrator
Carissa Snyder, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Guests Present:

Tim Anthon, Pikes Peak Community Workforce
Terry Culler, Family Care Center
Amy Cutler, The Home Front Cares, Inc.
Kate Hatten, Peak Military Care Network
Corby Meyer, Family Care Center LLC

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Dailey at 0900 hours. Proceedings began with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops overseas. Mr. Dailey then invited introductions from around the room, followed by comments.

Comments

Ms. Caldwell said she was excited to have opportunity to learn about Mount Carmel Center, as roughly 15 percent of the students at her institution are veterans, many of whom live in Colorado Springs.

Mr. Simard asked the board members to let him know how many tickets are needed for the upcoming Veterans Salute. He said that the Aurora Defense Council has been concentrating on homeless veterans, holding monthly drives to collect items that this population needs.

Mr. Dailey said the upcoming week would be the 5th annual Grand Lake Constitution Week celebration. The last day will feature a veterans parade. The keynote speaker will be Sherriff David Clark from Milwaukee County.

Mr. Rudder said the VA held a forum in the San Luis Valley that was attended by approximately 25 veterans. It was disappointing that the VA representatives were unable to answer most of the veterans' questions or address their concerns. He said at the least the VA was able to get a feel for the concern of San Luis residents. The VA representatives toured La Puente. Mr. Rudder spoke with Renee Murphy, director of Denver Regional Office of the VA, and told her that the main concerns in the valley are medical care and transportation.

Mr. McLaughlin said that he and Ms. Hatten met the VA chief of staff and that the meeting was productive, underscoring the importance of communication between VA and the other agencies serving veterans in local communities. In connection with Patriots Day, Mount Carmel was able to offer means to 40 military-connected families in need. He recently attended a VOA meeting with the Cohen group, which expressed interest in establishing two free behavioral health clinics for veterans on Colorado's Front Range.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Dailey announced that the board would take a break from comments to review the minutes of the meeting and retreat held on 03 August 2016. Mr. Robinson provided one correction to the meeting minutes and they were approved as corrected. The retreat minutes were approved as presented. Comments then resumed.

Comments

Mr. Holden said he traveled to Fort Carson in mid-August and met the new leadership, and in the near future will become acquainted with the Air Force Academy and Peterson Air Force Base transition teams.

Ms. Cutler said the The Home Front Cares would like the opportunity to connect with veterans service officers to provide services and referrals. Mr. Dailey agreed that in his capacity as a VSO, partner agencies have been valuable in helping to serve veterans in rural areas. Mr. Rudder said that El Paso County has one VSO stationed at Mount Carmel and that he should be able to provide contact info for the rest of the team. Ms. Hatten stated that referrals are especially helpful in cases where veteran need emergency financial assistance. Ms. Caldwell asked what the prevailing causes to be of veterans financial problems, whether it was a lack of preparation when leaving the military or mismanagement of funds. Ms. Hatten said both are big contributing factors and that the causes run the gamut, with another leading one being the high cost of living in both Colorado Springs and Denver.

Ms. Hatten stated the Peak Military Network addresses these problems through both partner agencies and case management, to keep veterans and their families out of crisis.

Mr. Anthon agreed that employment assistance and emergency assistance are both prevalent needs, particular when wages are not equivalent to the cost of living in metro areas. He said many of the clients of Pikes Peak Community Workforce have deficits in long-term planning, but expensive housing can be an even greater difficulty. Ms. Caldwell agreed, stating that necessary wage to live in Denver now has risen to \$20.21 per hour. Ms. Hatten also agreed that affordable housing is a problem.

Mr. Meyer stated that the Family Care Center also offers case management, and while this program is new they are observing similar patterns, although behavioral health is also a factor. Ms. Caldwell inquired what the leading mental health issue are among their clientele. Terry said she did not have that

data with her and did not have an estimate to provide, as she has only been with the agency for a few months. She said she came to the agency from Crawford House, where the most frequently presenting diagnosis was PTSD.

Reports

Mr. Hunt prefaced his report with a comment that if Ms. Cutler needs assistance or information in regard to connecting with VSOs, she should contact Mr. Mestas, and might also consider being placed on the agenda of the division's annual training conference in April. He began his report with the announcement that Richard Sandrock is no longer with the governor's office and thus will not be in attendance at future board meetings. Mr. Sandrock is now on active duty with Colorado National Guard. He reintroduced Mr. Callahan to the group, stating that Mr. Callahan retired from the army after 30 years of service and expressing his anticipation for Mr. Callahan's contribution to the team. He said that strategic planning has always been a weakness for the department and Mr. Callahan's contributions are intended to rectify that. He said the single item submitted by the Department to the Joint Budget Committee this year is the proposal for the veterans' one-stop in Grand Junction. The state has requested two FTEs, a director and a state veterans service officer, to supply that one-stop along with various partner agencies. VOA has already expressed its interest in being included. The location is already selected and is proximate to the VA hospital. Another issue is Amendment 72, a proposed tax on tobacco products with proceeds to benefit veterans programs. UVC has strongly supported this measure without the concurrence of the American Legion, which has withdrawn entirely from UVC in disagreement over the matter. Mr. Hunt stated that the department is neutral and will remain so unless and until the measure passes in November.

Mr. Callahan reported that while his is a new position the current priorities area departmental strategic planning, improvements to the LEAN process, and safety. There is a strong initiative to aid underserved veterans in Colorado and it is a priority to help the board develop a responsive plan. Mr. Hunt added that it will include translating planning from military speak into plain language.

Mr. Mestas said he has submitted his report and his addition is that the Grand Junction cemetery will be audited by the National Cemetery Association the week of 12 September. He will have the results of that audit at the next board meeting, but the audit is expected to have positive results. The division is currently providing regional trainings as indicated in his report. He inquired whether the Board received copies of the cemetery report and asked the members to please contact him if they need a copy.

Ms. Hoagland provided an update to her submitted report, stating that the reimbursements increased since the report was generated. She estimated that the amount of available funds remaining could be reduced by \$50,000 per grant program.

Mr. Robinson reported that a commission was supposed to meet this day at Homelake, but the event was cancelled. Homelake itself recently celebrated an anniversary celebrating its inception in 1889. Mr. Robinson also reported that the state still owns 15 acres of land adjacent to the Anschutz medical campus and the intent is to use to provide for care for veterans other than skilled nursing. The Colorado Department of Human Services is preparing a proposal and intends to break ground on the project in 2018. Mr. Robinson is serving on an advisory group that is seeking veteran's input regarding the purpose of the property. Possibilities to date include support for single mothered. Suggestions need to be sent to Mr. Robinson prior to October 31.

Mr. Hunt reported that the Colorado Department of Local Affairs wanted to use the new Fitzsimons property and transitional housing for homeless veterans. There is some opposition to that proposal since the building would be in close proximity to the Fitzsimons CLC. Mr. Simard added that space nearer to the new VA hospital is also being considered for that project.

Election

The next item of business was the confirmation of the election of the secretary. Ms. Caldwell accepted the nomination made at the previous meeting and her election is confirmed.

New Business

Dates and locations were discussed for upcoming meetings. Mr. Dailey stated that southwestern and southeastern areas of the state remain to be visited, and that the November meeting will be held on 09 November at Wings Over the Rockies for their annual event. That meeting will start at 08:00 a.m. to coordinate with the luncheon. Otherwise it was decided that meetings will start at 09:00 a.m. The schedule to date is as follows:

October 07, 2016	Longmont
November 09, 2016	Wings Over the Rockies
December 02, 2016	tbd
January 06, 2017	Fort Lyon
February 03, 2017	tbd
March 03, 2016	CDVA
April 07, 2016	CDVA
May 04, 2016	Durango

Adjournment

Mr. Dailey requested a motion to adjourn. Said motion was made by Mr. Robinson and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin. The meeting adjourned at 10:13 a.m.