

**Board Minutes**  
**June 2, 2017**  
**State Veterans Community Living Center**  
**851 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Rifle, CO 81650**

Duane Dailey, Chair, called the meeting to order at 0901 hours. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed for our POW, MIA, troops in battle or harm's way and all service members.

**Roll Call of Members and Introduction of Staff & Guests**

Board Members Present:

Duane Dailey, Chair  
Rene Simard, Vice-Chair  
Hollie Caldwell, Secretary  
Robert McLaughlin, Member  
William "Robby" Robinson, Member  
Jack Rudder, Member  
Pat Hammon, Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Reuben Mestas, CDVA Director  
Gail Hoagland, DMVA, VAG Administrator  
David Callahan, DMVA, Strategic Planner  
Claire Dean, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Guests Present:

Barbara Grossman, Nursing Home Administrator  
Greg Bak, Garfield County Service Officer  
Theresa Rudder, president-elect of CO Federation of Women's Clubs and Jack's wife  
Lynne Ciancio, retired US Army Veteran  
Larry Valesquez, Resident Council President

**Approval of Minutes from May**

Approved.

### **Board Comments**

Duane Dailey: There were 375 veterans in attendance at Grand Lake's Memorial Day Luncheon that was accented by two F16 Airplane fly overs. Mr. Dailey is taking part in the inventory of Veterans Memorials throughout northwestern Colorado. An Apache gun helicopter was recently installed at the memorial in Kremmling. Mr. Dailey stated that a town hall meeting will be held on October 5<sup>th</sup> in Durango.

Hollie Caldwell: Both the unique issues in the four corners area and the meeting attendance at last month's Board meeting in Durango left quite an impression on Ms. Caldwell.

Robert McLaughlin: The Federal VA held a town hall meeting in Colorado Springs. They will also hold a town hall meeting in Trinidad on July 25.

Robby Robinson: The Board of Veterans Community Living Center Commissioners will be meeting in Rifle on Monday and Tuesday of next week. One of the topics of discussion will be permanent supportive veterans housing at Fitzsimmons.

Jack Rudder: Thirty-six resident Vietnam Veterans were honored in a ceremony at Homelake over Memorial Day weekend. Some veterans and their families are being priced out of the independent living Homelake cottages. An assisted living State-license for some of the domiciliary units may solve the pricing loophole.

Pat Hammon: Ms. Hammon introduced the new Garfield County Service Officer and Navy Veteran Greg Bak and mentioned numerous Memorial Day and graduation activities in Eagle County along with her usual issues of mental health cases and the housing shortage.

Rene Simard: With it being his last meeting, Mr. Simard thanked the Board and staff members for all of their hard work and offered meeting space at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce should the Board need it.

### **Community Presentation**

Barbara Grossman: Ms. Grossman thanked the Board for coming. The Community Living Center had serious staffing issues last summer. Surveyors visited in late October and found that several construction projects that were scheduled for completion in July were not finished. Being down one bathhouse, the residents grew upset that their bath time was being cut short. The center received two "G deficiency" (harm) grades that included wound care/ infection control and frequent falling. Skid strips were not present in one room when the surveyors toured the facility. The Nursing Director was encouraged to step down and replaced by Irene Salbridge.

The center competes with the private nursing home wages in the area. Retention bonuses will be offered in July. A CNA course was offered through the Rifle Veterans Community Living Center. In an effort to retain students, the program offered paid training. Since receiving the deficiency grades and a \$95,000 fine, the CNA course was cancelled. Thirty-five percent of the fine was waived. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will have to approve the course

before it can get reinstated. Ms. Hammon suggested that the program be run through Colorado Mountain College.

The area has been growing steadily. If a bond measure is passed this November, the adjacent nursing home, owned and operated by Grand River Health will be expanded as well as the local hospital. Ms. Caldwell suggested that the CNA course be either run through an area nonprofit or create a private company that has loyalty to the center. Ms. Hammon requested current job openings be sent to her electronically so that she can help find staff. Mr. Dailey asked how many employees are needed to be fully staffed. Ms. Grossman replied that the center is down 14 CNAs and two nurse managers. The nurse manager positions have been changed from salaried to hourly and will be filled from within.

Theresa Rudder: As president-elect of CO Federation of Women's Clubs, Ms. Rudder will be attending the International Convention in California to speak on Domestic Violence.

Larry Velasquez: An avid gardener, Mr. Velasquez has planted over 800 flowers on the grounds. He also enjoys building bird houses and makes potpourri for the residents. Mr. Velasquez serves as the Resident Council President.

Greg Bak: Twice a month Mr. Bak will visit veterans at the center to answer questions about VA benefits. The annual training conference was extremely helpful to Mr. Bak as he adjusts to his Garfield County Service Officer role. He will be spending half of his time at the Rifle office and other half in an office located in Glenwood Springs.

### **Staff Reports**

David Callahan: The third Strategic Planning Committee meeting was held last night. The Committee has approved mission and vision statements as well as identified core values. Communication outreach, health and wellness are some of the initiatives. The next meeting will be held on August 3 in Fort Lyon. Both the action plans and scorecards will need to be discussed. Everything should be in place by the end of the year. County Service Officers share outreach ideas with each other during their biannual training. Mr. Rudder added that the roundtable discussions at conference were very helpful in generating new ideas.

The Board toured the facility at 10:00 a.m. and resumed labor at 10:30 a.m.

Reuben Mestas: With the long bill now passed, County Service Officers will see an increase in their monthly payments which will help with their outreaches. The Western Slope One Stop was also approved and will be open in May 2019 in Grand Junction for the cost of about 3.4mil. The Division is working with the consulate in San Francisco to recognize Korean War Veterans. Mr. Mestas assisted with getting Metal of Honor recipient and Civil War veteran, William Evans a corrected headstone. Mr. Robinson stated that the Federal VA usually doesn't change headstones to those who served prior to World War I. Mr. Simard added that channel Fox 31 had recently run a story about Fort Logan.

Gail Hoagland: The Governor signed the long bill a week ago. Notifications and contracts are being sent out to grantees. Most will not be executed by July 1.

A new grant program will be commissioned in October for the nuclear submarine U.S.S. Colorado. The Department must decide to focus on events surrounding the commissioning, the media campaign or support of crew. The grant application will be on DMVA's website. The commissioning will take place in Connecticut. Where the submarine will be based is unclear. Mr. Robinson suggested speaking with retired Naval Captain Glen Kataoka, who may be on the Commissioning Committee. He also clarified that typically support of crew means purchasing silver service for the officer's mess. Ms. Hoagland replied that they want to establish scholarship programs, but monies from the general fund need to be fully expended by the end of June. Another idea would be for an auxiliary group to make black-out curtains for the crew. Ms. Hammon requested clarification on grantees with leftover money from the Veterans Trust Fund. New grant administrators, compliance issues and communication issues are some of the reasons for not all the money being spent. For those grantees who request advances, it is typical that they do not spend it all. The Veterans Assistance Grant deals with larger amounts of money that is spent faster.

### **Old Business**

New Mexico holds the licensing to the DAV van in Durango and refuses to allow transport of veterans to benefit appointments in Colorado. The issue will need to be addressed at the October town hall in Durango. It may require Congressional action to resolve.

### **New Business/Future Meetings**

Mr. Mestas proposed that next year's Board retreat be held the day before September's meeting and Mr. Dailey proposed that next year's meetings be held in the Congressional Districts.

- 04 August 2017-4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District - Fort Lyon
- 07 September 2017-Board Retreat in Grand Junction
- 08 September 2017-Grand Junction Cemetery
- 06 October 2017-5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District - El Paso County Area
- 08 November 2017-Wings over the Rockies
- 01 December 2017-VA Regional Office, Lakewood
- 04 January 2018 -2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District - Boulder Area
- 02 February 2018-3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District – Pueblo/Alamosa Area
- 02 March 2018-1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District - Denver Area
- 06 April 2018-6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District - Aurora Chamber of Commerce
- 04 May 2018-Northern Jefferson County
- 01 June 2018-Spanish Peaks Community Living Center, Walsenburg

Mr. Mestas expressed that he would like the Board's involvement with Congressional Districts other than their own, whether it be finding a location for the meetings or arranging keynote speakers for the Board meetings. Mr. Robinson stated his concern for not knowing who the

contact people are outside of his Congressional District and that Ben's office would be relied on heavily for those tasks.

On behalf of TAG, Deputy Director Mickey Hunt and Division Director Ben Mestas, Mr. Simard was presented with a gift of appreciation for his service on the Board.

With Mr. Simard stepping down as Board Vice-Chair, the two-year position is available. Mr. Robinson nominated Jack Rudder for Vice-Chair. Ms. Hammon seconded the nomination and it was approved by unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned 11:27 a.m.