

**Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes**  
**03 August 2018**  
**American Legion Post #55**  
**338 N. Railroad Street**  
**Buena Vista, CO 81211**

**Members and Guests**

**Members Present:**

Duane Dailey, Chair  
Jack Rudder, Vice Chair  
Hollie Caldwell, Secretary  
Lacey Golonka, Member  
Pat Hammon, Member  
Sheila Scanlon, Member

**DMVA Staff Present:**

Mickey Hunt, DMVA Deputy Executive Director  
Dave Callahan, DMVA Strategic Planner, CDVA West Interim Director  
Gail Hoagland, DMVA Grant Administrator  
Carissa Snyder, CDVA Administrative Assistant

**Guests Present:**

Darryl Atherton, American Legion Post 55  
Dave Butler, American Legion Post 55  
Clarence Champion, American Legion Post 55  
Jim Dexter, American Legion Post 55  
Judy Joler, American Legion Post 55  
Jeremiah Pedrie, Park County Veteran Service Officer  
Jan Quick, American Legion Post 55  
Dave Rossborough, Quartermaster VFW Post 1166  
Don Scanlon, Sheila's spouse  
Chrissy Tortorigi, guest  
Arthur Volk, American Legion Post 55

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**Opening**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Dailey at 0900 hours. Proceedings began with the pledge of allegiance recited in unison, followed by a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops overseas.

Mr. Dailey identified the Board and explained its mission to all in attendance. Roll call identified the Board members and Mr. Dailey welcomed Ms. Scanlon to her first meeting as a member of the Board. Ms. Scanlon retired from Marine Corps after 22 years of active duty and is an active advocate for issues faced by women veterans.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Rudder moved to approved the minutes of the meeting held on 01 June 2018. Ms. Hammons seconded. The minutes were approved as submitted.

## **Board Member Comments**

Ms. Hammon said that the Western Slope veterans resource center is now open two days a week. They have been in communication with Cohen group about expanding the reach of that organization to other areas of Colorado and to include other than post 9/11 veterans. The Eagle County rodeo honored veterans at its Patriotic Night on 28 July. The Veterans Charity Ride was in Eagle en route to Sturgis on 02 August and a community event was held to welcome them. The coalition has been working with the Grand Junction VAMC on access to community care. A new unit has begun for Project Healing Waters.

Ms. Caldwell has been travelling and had no comments at this time.

Ms. Golonka said that veteran unemployment is at all-time low rate. She said that the National Guard has been activated for deployment and that training starts in two weeks. She expects to deploy at the end of September and return next June. Due to the extended absence she will resign her current position on the Board but looks forward to reapplying after her return. Mr. Dailey thanked her for her contributions during her tenure.

Mr. Rudder said that fires in the San Luis Valley have destroyed 140 homes in Costilla and Huerfano counties, including some belonging to veterans in Huerfano County. The American Legion post in Alamosa held Vietnam Veterans Night in July with approximately 120 in attendance. Del Norte held a pig roast in association with its Covered Wagon Days event and the proceeds were donated to the veterans' organizations.

Ms. Scanlon said that she has been working with state veteran service officer Jaclyn Murrietta on subjects of interest or concern to women veterans in Colorado. One has been the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center. Ms. Scanlon, Ms. Murrietta, and representative from UVC toured the facility and observed some flaws in the area designated for mammography, in particular some problems with privacy. There is also not a separate women's clinic at the new hospital. The hospital is considering suggestions for improvement.

Mr. Dailey said that he attended the groundbreaking for the Western Slope One Source on 20 July and the ribbon cutting for the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center on 21 July. The latter ceremony he reported as well-attended. including the VA acting secretary, two senators, and four congressmen, as well as Mickey Hunt, Ben Mestas, and many veterans from the surrounding community.

## **Community Presentation**

### American Legion Post 55

Ms. Quick said the local post is very active. Post representatives lead the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and Apple fest parades, decorate veterans' graves with flags in acknowledgement of military holidays, and provide funeral honors upon request. Memorial Day services are conducted by the post at Hoosier Pass and at Mount Olivet Cemetery. The post also pays the dues for members of Cub Scout Pack 72. They hold various fundraisers to help support the needs of local veterans including breakfasts, fall colors tours, and Friday night bingo. She introduced Dave Butler, the post's veteran service officer. The auxiliary prepares and ships care boxes for troops overseas.

## **Guests**

Mr. Dailey identified the department and division staff in attendance. He explained the role of the grant administrator in regard to the Board's involvement with decision regarding the Veterans Trust Fund. He then asked the guests in attendance to identify themselves as well.

## **Reports**

Mr. Hunt met recently with the director of the Denver VA Regional Office and the direct of the National Cemetery Administration. He addressed the UVC legislative council at their meeting in July. He and Adjutant General Loh visited Project Sanctuary in Grand Lake. Upcoming legislative efforts will include funding for the Western Slope One Source and a women veterans license plate. In department staffing, a position description has been created for the West Division Director and the position will be announced in August.

Mr. Mestas said that the division's regional trainings will take place in September. Longtime staff member Hillary Hutson will retire on 28 September. He said that the meeting locations recommended in his submitted report are based on congressional districts. The division is considering participation in the PARIS project, which is designed to help veterans on Medicaid access federal benefits for which they qualify, and a staff member recently travelled to Washington to become acquainted with how the project works in that state.

Ms. Hoagland said that the execution rate of the Veterans Trust Fund Grant fell this past year, although the execution rate for the Veterans Assistance Grant was 98%. To0date it has been required that grantee organizations track the gender of the veterans served but many of them do so anyway, and that data shows a percentage of approximately 11-12% female veterans. Grantees will be encouraged to capture this data. The list of current grantees is available on the web site. The situation in Huerfano County is being closely monitored to ensure the needs of veterans in that area are met. A group of grantees is partnering to help create a standard of best practices.

## **Action Items**

### VTF Funding Requests

Ms. Hoagland reported that the Veterans Trust Fund has \$86,000.00 unallocated and funding requests have been received from the Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Grand Junction and from the Division of Veterans Affairs.

The cemetery has resubmitted its request for \$21,966.00 to perform a site assessment study to address silt and soil issues. It was moved by Ms. Hammon to grant this funding and seconded by Ms. Caldwell. The motion carried.

The Division has requested \$12,000.00 to pay for Board travel expenses. Previously these expenses have been paid from the administrative allocation of the Veterans Trust Fund, but the encumbrance on that allocation is expected to increase this year with additional travel required for the Grand Administrator. It was moved by Mr. Rudder to grant this funding and seconded by Ms. Hammon. The motion carried. Ms. Hammon requested that the Board be kept apprised of its travel expenses at Board meetings. Mr. Dailey said a structured process may be needed to authorize or approve travel and this will be discussed at the annual retreat in September.

*The Board here recessed at 10:21 a.m. and resumed labor at 10:38 a.m.*

**Action Items**

CDHS Staff Funding

Ms. Hammon reminded the Board that permission for CDHS to offer salaries outside of the state salary ranges for employees at the state veterans CLCs was not approved at the recent legislative session. This has left the CLCs with a continuing problem of securing and retaining staff as they are often unable to compete with market salaries. Ms. Hammon encouraged the Board to support CDHS in this continuing effort. Mr. Hunt said that the Board could send a letter of support to designated recipients CDHS executive director, the chair of Joint Budget Committee, and the governor’s office. He encouraged the Board to attend the Joint Budget Committee hearings. Ms. Hammon moved that she draft the letter from the Board, which she will provide to Mr. Hunt upon completion. The motion was seconded by Ms. Scanlon and carried.

Strategic Plan

Mr. Callahan congratulated the Board on completing its strategic plan. It is available on the web site and in hard copy, and formal copies are currently being professionally bound. He said that the next step is to decide how to track the metrics. Several subcommittees are needed to align with the published goals. Mr. Dailey said that he will add this to the agenda for the upcoming retreat.

Veterans Monument Committee

Mr. Dailey said that absent any objections, Robby Robinson has agreed to represent the Board as its designee on the Colorado Tribute to veteran Monument trust committee. There were no objections.

**New Business**

Mr. Mestas referred the Board to the suggested meeting and location schedule for the upcoming year that is in his submitted report and requested feedback. The Board will make a final determination at the September retreat.

**Upcoming Meetings**

07 September	Grand Junction
05 October	Greeley
07 November	Aurora-Wings Over the Rockies
07 December	VA Regional Office
04 January	Fitzsimons SVCLC
01 February	Denver
01 March	Golden
05 April	Aurora/Centennial
03 May	Boulder/Grand/Summit County
07 June	Westcliffe, election of officers

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mr. Rudder made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Ms. Hammon. The meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.