

**Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes
Friday, 07 September 2018
Veterans Memorial Cemetery
2830 Riverside Pkwy ~ Grand Junction, CO 81501**

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Duane Dailey, Chair
Jack Rudder, Vice Chair
Hollie Caldwell, Secretary
Sheila Scanlon, Member
Pat Hammon, Member
Norm Steen, Member
Longinos Gonzalez, Member – via phone

DMVA Staff Present:

Ben Mestas, CDVA East Director
Gail Hoagland, DMVA Grant Administrator
Joanne Iglesias, VMCWC Director
Steven Stogsdill, VMCWC Administrative Assistant
Leann Paul, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Guests Present:

Wendy Hoffman, Operation Revamp

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Guests Present:

Theresa Rudder
Mr. Jim Doody, previous Mayor of Grand Junction, Colorado

Opening

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Dailey at 0904 hours. Proceedings began with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance recited in unison, followed by a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops who are deployed and to the families who have given so much to our country. Mr. Dailey then invited introductions from around the room.

Mr. Dailey greeted all in attendance and the Board members identified themselves for the record and for the benefit of the guests.

Ms. S. Scanlon served in the United States Marine Corp for 32 years. Currently, she serves as a board member on the Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs.

Dr. H. Caldwell served in the United States Air Force as a Nurse during the Cold War Era. Currently she serves as the Secretary on the Board of Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs.

Mr. N. Steen served 32 years in the United States Army mostly in the National Guard. He now serves as Teller County, Colorado, Commissioner and as a board member on the Board of Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs.

Ms. P. Hammon served six years in the United States Army as a Nurse during Vietnam. Currently, she is a County Veteran Service Officer for Eagle County, Colorado and is a board member on the Board of Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs.

Mr. J. Rudder served in the Air Force specializing in Electronics. He is current a Veteran County Service Officer for Rio Grande County, Colorado and serves as the Vice Chair on the Board of Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs.

Mr. D. Dailey served as an Army Medic during Vietnam. Currently, he is a Veteran County Service Officer for Grand County, Colorado and serves as the Chair on the Board of Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs.

Mr. L. Gonzalez served 20 years in the United States Air Force as an Intelligence Officer. He completed two deployments to the Middle East. One deployment was to Saudi Arabia and the other one to Iraq. He has also completed a deployment to Latin America where he did intelligence in Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) and Counter Drug work. He taught 3 years of college Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and was a middle school teacher before becoming elected as El Paso County, Colorado County Commissioner and serves as a board member for the Board of Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. D. Dailey confirmed that the Board members present had an opportunity to review over the meeting minutes from Friday, August 3rd, 2018. He asked if there were any additions or corrections.

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Mr. Dailey entertained the Motion for Approval. Ms. P. Hammon moved and Dr. H. Caldwell seconded the motion. The Board in unison agreed with "I". The minutes were approved and submitted.

Board Member Comments

Dr. H. Caldwell expressed her deepest appreciation to the board while she attended the board meetings for the past few months in distance while she was taking care of a personal situation.

Ms. S. Scanlon spoke about Ms. Jaclyn Murrietta (State Service Office from Colorado Division of Veteran Affairs in Denver, Colorado) and a group from United Veterans Community of Colorado taking a tour of the new Rocky Mountain Regional Veterans Administration Medical Center (RMRVAMC). It was discovered that there was a lack of privacy for women who were in process of getting mammograms in the women's health center. Ms. J. Murrietta went back after the RMRVAMC said they had made corrections to the order of the procedure. Another concern that Ms. S. Scanlon spoke about was the lack of display of women veterans in the RMRVAMC. More focus was devoted to male Veterans. RMRVAMC has agreed that was a concern and are in the process of correcting the concern. Ms. S. Scanlon praised Ms. J. Murrietta on her work and is glad that there is an employee in this role for these concerns.

Ms. P. Hammon expressed her happiness for the increase of funds so that she is able to hire a new part-time assistant. Her new assistant was enlisted prior in the United States Navy.

Ms. P. Hammon spoke about the new OneSource it is currently under construction. The Advisor Committee for OneSource is currently working diligently with partnerships and sponsorships. The

plan for OneSource is to be open in January 2019 with a soft open in April and fully be operating by May during Armed Forces week. A job announcement for a Facilities Manager has already been posted on the State of Colorado's website. So far great progress has been made. Veterans Administration (VA) has agreed to renting out an office area towards the back of the building for Social Workers to aid in the help of homeless veterans. Though that will not be the main focused of the OneSource building due to many Veterans not wanting to do anything with the VA but OneSource is happy to have the VA available should Veterans want to take apart of their services.

Ms. P. Hammon reported Project Healing Waters in Eagle County has become official. The first trip was planned three weeks ago; however, the waters were too hot and the fish were stressed out. The new plan is for the up and coming week to have two trips planned. Ms. P. Hammon was very impressed with Project Healing Waters and have them a part of Eagle County, Colorado.

Ms. P. Hammon stated that she has been a part of five World War II funeral services. She appreciates the Honor Guard who comes up from Buckley Air Force Base (Aurora, Colorado) and Ft. Carson (El Paso County, Colorado) to be a part of these services.

Ms. P. Hammon praised Grand Junction Veterans Health Care System (GJVHCS). She reported that Woman Veterans Program Manager, Ms. Pamela Schultz's, is making efforts for a better change. Woman Veterans have their own waiting room and soon to be own entrance / exit door for privacy concerns.

Ms. P. Hammon gave an invite to the 1st anniversary at Jesse Buckius / Casey Owens Veterans Resource Center on Saturday, November 10, 2018 from 1600hrs – 2000hrs. Food, speakers and entertainment will be provided as well as a guest speaker will be presenting from the Medal of Honor Museum in Pueblo, Colorado.

Mr. N. Steen thanked the committee and chair for his excused absence last month.

Mr. N. Steen attended the Veterans Rally for Prisoners of War (POW) / Missing in Action (MIA) Recognition Ride on Saturday, August 18th, 2018 in Cripple Creek, Colorado. The ride celebrated its 31st anniversary this August 2018. Over 3,000 motorcycles participated in the event.

Mr. N. Steen also attend and spoke at Lance Corporal Eric V. Dickson's memorial unveiling dedication to Vietnam Veterans on Saturday, August 25th, 2018, at Woodland Park's Memorial Park in Teller County, Colorado. Over 500 attendees attended this ceremony.

Mr. N. Steen sets time aside to learn about new resources in his county for veterans. He spoke about Senior Veterans, Inc. Senior Veterans, Inc. is a Colorado based 501c3 charity that helps senior veterans and widows during their greatest need. More services are available through Senior Veterans, Inc.

Mr. N. Steen announced that he will be traveling to Washington D. C. on September 24-27, 2018, for Veteran and tax issues for the Pikes Peak Regions.

Mr. N. Steen announced Military Retiree / Spouse Information Day on Saturday, September 15th at 0800 – 1200hrs., at The Club (Building 1013) at Peterson Air Force Base. The event will offer community / base information tables, medical wellness checks and light

refreshments. Scheduled briefings include information on the Pikes Peak National Cemetery, potential budget / legislative impacts, Federal Long-Term Care Insurance and the impact of legalization of marijuana on retirees.

Mr. N. Steen is currently working with the VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) to improve access to the Internet for telehealth services for Veterans.

Mr. N. Steen attended a memorial service of a World War II Veteran in Woodland Park.

Mr. J. Rudder reported that his office has been steady, up until recently. Harvest and hunting season are now active which will slow down his office. Due to the weather conditions, harvesting came early this season. Mr. J. Rudder suggest to go to the Blue Mesa Reservoir to see how the weather conditions has effect his area. Blue Mesa is the largest and deepest reservoir in the State of Colorado and it is now dry. He also stated that the Rio Grande River is nearly dry.

Mr. J. Rudder stated that when he first became a CVSO he had one woman Veteran that he help get services for and several women Veterans years later. He has now had more women Veterans stepping forward needing services. He is happy to help them and glad that they are finding his office.

Mr. D. Dailey reported multiple fires in Grand and Summit Counties, Colorado. Three Veterans were effect by these fires leaving them homeless.

Mr. D. Dailey stated that he has been to the new RMRVAMC ribbon cutting ceremony. It is a great facility but it does have some room for improvements. One area of concern is their phone system. Letters were sent out by RMRVAMC with new phone numbers but unfortunately the phone numbers do not work and Veterans had to rely back on the old phone numbers to be able to get an operator.

Mr. D. Dailey spoke of the enjoyment of having a Woman's focused State Veteran Service Officer. He enjoys the idea that this position can bring more women Veterans to gain our services.

Mr. D. Dailey gave an invite to Grand County's 7th Annual Constitution Week 2018, September 17 – 22, 2018. Each day will be a new scholarly speaker, seven total during the week.

Mr. L. Gonzalez reported he attended El Paso County Medal of Honor ceremony on Monday, May 28th, 2018. Three names were inscribed into the memorial.

Mr. L. Gonzalez is anticipating interments to begin at Pikes Peak Veterans Cemetery by November 2018. Interments will begin this year but the official opening will not be until 2019.

Community Presentations

Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado in Grand Junction, Colorado

Ms. J. Iglesias and her staff was first acknowledged by Mr. D. Dailey for their hospitality of the Board meeting accommodations. Ms. J. Iglesias first introduced to the Board, Mr. Jim Doody who was the former Grand Junction Mayor. Ms. J. Iglesias has worked with him on previous projects.

Ms. J. Iglesias read a letter she had composed of the appreciation of unspent Veterans Trust Fund monies for the various maintenance concerns of the cemetery.

Ms. J. Iglesias submitted in capital construction request for \$2.6million for eight new columbaria's (1,344 niches). The columbaria niches are filling up quickly and more is needed to continue with future demands.

Ms. J. Iglesias reported local Boy Scouts have completed their Eagle Scout project awards with preventive maintenance of the corrosion and paint peeling on the iron work around the cemetery.

Ms. J. Iglesias reported a partnership with Saluting Branches. Saluting Branches will be providing much needed services to the cemeteries trees for various reason. She is grateful for their donation of resources and services.

Ms. J. Iglesias reported concerns with the lifting and shifting of the sidewalks, potentially resulting in tripping hazards. Currently, she is in the process of gaining quotes for repairs to this concern.

Ms. J. Iglesias reported that the Regional Center to the west of the cemetery is in the process of closing its doors. It will be at least two more years before the remaining clients are moved off site; however, concerns lie with whom will be purchasing this State of Colorado owned land. She had the same concerns with the land to the east, when Colorado University wanted to build student housing, but the project did not continue.

Ms. J. Iglesias reported that National Cemetery Administration will be conducting a triennial review of the cemetery in 2019. To best prepare for this audit they are using the previous audit to make sure they are with-in full compliance to achieve Shrine Status which is the highest rating a cemetery can receive.

Ms. J. Iglesias made mention about the success of several events to include:

*On Thursday, March 29th, 2018, National Vietnam War Veterans Day was celebrated at Western Slope Vietnam War Memorial Park in Fruita, Colorado. This event was well attended and will be held every year on March 29th.

*Memorial Day ceremony was well attended with over 1,700 attendees. Parking unfortunately is always an issue and our newly acquired gold cart will assist in shuttling.

*Quarterly Military Honors have been a big success. The cemetery honored 109 Veterans during eight military honors services. The next Quarterly Military Honors will take place on Monday, October 1st, 2018 at 10:00hrs.

*First annual Saluting Branches day will be on Wednesday, September 19, 2018.

*Has had success with the community with pre-planning for burial's.

Ms. J. Iglesias provided an updated on the upsetting practices of Sunset Mesa Funeral Home located in Montrose, Colorado. Sunset Mesa Funeral Home owner (Megan Hess) was conducting body broker services of the deceased. There are a few interred Veterans in the cemetery who have been received from Sunset Mesa Funeral Home; however, with the active investigation of the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), families have not made any decisions regarding their loved ones. Ms. J. Iglesias is currently working on a few options for grieving families needing answers when they are ready to know more.

As of Friday, September 7th, 2018, the cemetery has been open for sixteen years. They have interred 2,989 Veterans, 1,161 spouses and 12 dependents for a total of 4,162 interments.

Operation Revamp

Ms. Gail Hoagland introduced Wendy Hoffman with Operation Revamp. Operation Revamp is located at 307 South 12th Street, Grand Junction, Colorado 81501. Ms. W. Hoffman gave a presentation on Operation Revamp who is a Veterans Assistance Grant recipient. Their mission is to:

- *Create opportunities for a variety of healing activities for Veterans, military family members and others suffering from trauma related mental injuries.
- *Raise awareness of psychological scarring and Traumatic Brain Injuries and benefits of artistic practices in healing.
- *Provide art related opportunities to aid in healing of mental health issues through personal exploration and skill building.
- *Provide resources for those suffering from the hidden wounds of trauma and partner with other agencies and non-profits.
- *Establish functional creative art studios, galleries and museums for use of veterans, military families and other suffering from trauma related mental health issues.

Operation Revamp's Veterans Assistance Grant money received has been applied to multiple areas to include: art services, alternative heating, emergency services, food, gas, housing, transportation and Veterans Art Center. This has resulted in an increase in health and well-being for both the Veteran and their family, housing stability, mental health support, job stability, access to health care and a decrease in the need for food, gas and other various urgent needs.

Recess

The Board here recessed from 10:51hrs to 1101hrs.

Action Item: Strategic Plan

A motion was proposed for the Committee Strategic Plan to be tabled for next meeting, based upon Colorado's Sunshine Law compliance concerns. This was proposed by Mr. D. Dailey and second by Ms. P. Hammon. All were in favor.

Reports

Mr. D. Dailey read reports from Mr. M. Hunt and Mr. W. Robinson:

Mr. M. Hunt reported on the Capital Complex group to include trash receptacles will be replaced with rigid liners and match what the City of Denver has along the Colfax Regional Transportation District (RTD) stop. Funds will be added to a monthly pest control contract to address the rodents that are now under the trees and statues. Mr. Bob Toll with City of Denver Parks / Rangers, provided some basic cost for additional enforcement that will be put into the budget. As well, areas of the grass will be sectioned off so that grass can continue to grow and survive but that will have to come with the support of enforcement.

Mr. W. Robinson reported in Lincoln Park (on the block immediately west of the State Capital) a tall obelisk Veterans Monument with a light on top that was dedicated to Colorado Veterans in 1990. The light is not functioning and with the funds appropriated to the maintenance he would like to have the light operating again by Veterans Day 2018. Another concern was reported about Fitzsimons Living Center (Community Living Center also known as CLC) has resulted in the Administrator resigning (this last Administrator marks the 7th Administrator in five years). It has been reported that frustration over a perceived lack of timely

support from Colorado Department of Health Services, Human Relations Office and numerous other issues.

The Board has expressed their concerns with Fitzsimons Living Center. A motion was proposed by Ms. P. Hammon to have Mr. N. Steen, Mr. R. Mestas and Mr. W. Robinson meet to draft a letter about the concerns at Fitzsimons Living Center to include Human Resources, posting of employment positions, the employees moral, etc. The finished letter would have Mr. D. Dailey's signature representing the Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs. A copy would be sent to the The Adjutant General (TAG) office. This motion was second by Ms. S. Scanlon and the Board was all in favor with a unison "I".

Mr. R. Mestas first reported information about the upcoming Stand Downs. Though some of the upcoming Stand Downs had secured dates, times and locations the others were yet to be determined. Mr. R. Mestas will be preparing to work on the Governor's Report with in the near future. He informed the Board that the Western Director will be named before the next meeting. The State Veteran Service Officers will be going out in the month of September to the County offices to conduct training. Mr. R. Mestas stated that Ms. H. Hudson will be retiring on Friday, September 28, 2018 and all is welcome to attend her party. Due to Ms. H. Hudson's retirement, he has been in the process of hiring new employees to help in the Administrative Assistant support of the office. The Paris Project is still in the pre-planning stages. The Paris Project is a program that will remove Veterans from Medicaid services and place them on VA benefits.

Ms. G. Hoagland reported she has composed a Best Practice Team for all trust fund grantees. This was part of the Board's strategic plan. Ms. G. Hoagland explained her process of having two emails to help with the distinction of Grant Fund request reimbursements and other assignments of her job. She stated that this was very efficient for her.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Upcoming Meetings

- Friday, 05OCT2018.....Greeley / Weld County
- Wednesday, 07NOV2018.....Aurora (Wings Over the Rockies event)
- Friday, 07DEC2018.....Veterans Administrative Regional Office in Lakewood, Colorado
- Friday, 04JAN2019.....Fitzsimons SVCLC in Denver, Colorado
- Friday, 01FEB2019.....Post 1 in Denver, Colorado
- Friday, 01MAR2019.....Golden Veterans Administration Health Clinic in Golden, Colorado
- Friday, 05APR2019.....Aurora Chamber of Commerce in Aurora, Colorado
- Friday, 03MAY2019.....Boulder / Grand / Summit County ~ Mr. D. Dailey will provide location
- Friday, 07JUN2019.....Westcliffe (Election of Officers) ~ Ms. P. Hammon will provide location
- July 2019.....NO Meeting
- Friday, 02AUG2019.....Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Grand Junction, Colorado (Focus on OneSource)

A motion was proposed by Mr. D. Dailey to approve these venues for future meetings. Ms. P. Hammon moved and Mr. J. Rudder second the motion.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. D. Dailey entertained a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Mr. N. Steen. The meeting adjourned at 12:49hrs.