

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes
Friday, 05 April 2019
Aurora Chamber of Commerce
14305 E. Alameda Avenue
Aurora, CO 80012

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Duane Dailey, Chair
Jack Rudder, Vice Chair
Hollie Caldwell, Secretary
Patricia Hammon, Member
Norm Steen, Member
Sheila Scanlon, Member
Longinos Gonzalez Jr., Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Mickey Hunt, DMVA Deputy Executive Director
Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Liaison/Resource Director
Will Thomson, DMVA Controller
David Callahan, CDVA East Acting Director
Myra Dollar, CDVA East Office Manager
Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator
Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

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Guests Present:

Cynthia Francis, Chair, Aurora Veterans Affairs Commission
Theresa Rudder, President, General Federation of Women's Clubs of Colorado

Opening:

Mr. Dailey called the meeting to order 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 requested that all in attendance turn off mobile devices to prevent interruptions. He then invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Steen moved to approve the March 2019 minutes as presented. Mr. Rudder seconded. The motion carried.

Attendee Comments

Ms. Francis advised the Board of the purpose of the Aurora Veterans Affairs Commission, which is to advise the city council regarding issues and concerns relating to veterans, make recommendations, and to serve as a source of information to veterans about resources and services. The commissioners also liaise with state veterans organizations. Veteran homelessness and employment are priorities for the commission. A veterans job fair will be held in April and an Aurora Stand Down is being planned for October 2019.

Mr. Thomson addressed the Board in response the concerns over grant payment discussed at the March meeting. He reviewed the process steps employed when a grantee submits a request for reimbursement. The grant administrator audits each request and any corrections, clarifications, or requests for documentation are made at that time. Once the request is complete, it is referred to Accounting. It is audited again by Accounting staff before payment is processed. Grant payments comprise approximately 15-20 percent of the department's payables. He confirmed that the late payments discussed in March were the result of a staff shortage. Accounting intends to provide more cross training among staff to help prevent such difficulties. Mr. Dailey asked what grantees can do to help expedite the process. Mr. Thomson advised that grantees ensure that their requests are complete and thoroughly documented and that the supporting documentation is legible.

Veterans Trust Fund 2019-2020

Mr. Daily prefaced the VTF discussion and vote with a review of the Board's grant procedures. To date an appointed subcommittee reviews the applications as a group and makes recommendations to the full Board prior to the April meeting. The Board has those recommendations to consider but each application is evaluated and voted on at the April meeting.

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Ms. Scanlon requested clarification on who makes the final decisions on grant award. Ms. Hoagland said that the Board vote is the final decision for the Veterans Trust Fund Grant, and that the Adjutant General is the final adjudicator for the Veteran Assistance Grant.

Mr. Steen asked how much money will be available for the Veterans Trust Fund Grant. Ms. Hoagland said current estimates range from \$829,000.00-\$871,000.00. In addition to the grants given to the veterans service organizations, there is a request for \$14,000.00 for Board travel per the strategic plan and a request for \$50,000.00 for DVA East to support the census project. Mr. Hunt said that funds not allocated can be used at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery or at either branch of DVA.

Mr. Dailey opened deliberations, stating that the applications would be considered in numerical order. He reminded Board members to recuse themselves from discussion and vote as necessary per the conflict of interest necessary.

VT 20-01, American Legion Post 9, La Junta

Composite score: 89.8

Requesting: \$18,000.00 for medical transportation

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$18,000.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved that this application be funded in full. Ms. Scanlon seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$18,000.00

VT 20-02, VFW 8661, Conifer

Composite score: 79.8

Requesting: \$8,400.00 for medical transportation and veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$8,400.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved that this application be funded in full. Ms. Hammon seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$8,400.00

VT 20-03, American Legion Post 62, Craig

Composite score: 69.4

Requesting: \$8,000.00 for medical transportation and veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$8,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Steen moved that this application be funded in full. Ms. Hammon seconded. Ms. Hammon said that funding medical transportation in this region could overlap with funding requests in application 20-05 and 20-15. Ms. Hoagland said the subcommittee discussed this possibility.

Transportation for veterans from multiple location can be unmanageable due to varying appointment times and routes required by weather conditions.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$8,000.00

VT 20-04, American Legion Post 88, Hot Sulphur Springs

Mr. Dailey recused himself and left the room.

Composite score: 81.4

Requesting: \$30,200.00 for medical transportation and veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$30,200.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved that this application be funded in full. Mr. Steen seconded. Ms. Scanlon asked about the line item for vision care, saying that optical services are available at the Rocky Mountain Region medical center. Ms. Hammon said that those services are only available to veterans who have specific service connected disabilities. She said there are no optical services available through Community Care in Grand County. Ms. Hoagland said that the grantee also assists veterans who are not enrolled in VA health care. She said that veterans who can receive services through VHA would already be excluded from receiving services paid for by VTF funds as that would be a duplication. Ms. Scanlon said the line item amounts were not well justified. Ms. Hoagland said that VTF does not require a rigid budget, so if the full amount budgeted for a line item exceeds the demand, the grantee can use the funds to support other line items.

Vote: The motion carried with Ms. Scanlon dissenting

Decision: Fund in full at \$30,200.00

VT 20-05, American Legion Post 44, Steamboat Springs

Composite score: 84.1

Requesting: \$5,700.00 for medical transportation and veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$4,500.00

Discussion: Mr. Rudder moved to fund this application at \$4,500.00. Dr. Caldwell seconded. Ms. Scanlon asked why the subcommittee recommended funding the application in the amount of the current award. Mr. Rudder said the grantee has a history of compliance problems. Dr. Caldwell said the grantee may not spend the award this year and an increased award was not justified. Ms. Scanlon moved to amend the motion to fund at \$5,000.00. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. Dr. Caldwell said a grantee failing to spend their award can waste funds that could have been allocated elsewhere.

Votes: The vote to amend the motion failed. The motion carried with Mr. Steen dissenting.

Decision: Fund in part at \$4,500.00

VT 20-06, VFW Post 12063, Westcliffe

Requesting: \$83,500.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$60,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Gonzalez moved to fund this application at \$62,500.00. Dr. Caldwell seconded. Mr. Steen said that \$70,750.00 was justified in the application and he would support higher funding. Ms. Hammon said that Custer County has a high poverty rate and a proportionately large veteran population. She moved to amend the motion to fund the application at \$70,000.00. Ms. Scanlon seconded. Mr. Gonzalez withdrew the motion and Ms. Hammon moved to fund the application at \$70,750.00. Dr. Caldwell seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in part at \$70,750.00

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VT 20-07, DAV Chapter 44, Cortez

Composite score: 64.9

Requesting: \$66,926.00 for medical transportation, veterans assistance, van purchase

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$55,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Steen moved to fund this application at \$55,000.00. Dr. Caldwell seconded. Ms. Hammon said the grantee has had problems with compliance and performance. Dr. Caldwell said the number of unduplicated veterans was small in proportion to the total number of veterans served. Mr. Steen said the application requested an 11 percent increase but was planning to serve a smaller number of veterans. The van purchase request was not eligible for consideration because the required bid sheet was not submitted.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in part at \$55,000.00

VT 20-08, VFW of Colorado, Lakewood

Composite score: 80

Requesting: \$50,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$50,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Rudder moved to fund this application in full. Mr. Gonzalez seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$50,000.00

VT 20-09, American Legion Post 103, Littleton

Composite score: 78

Requesting: \$37,500.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$37,500.00

Discussion: Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application in full. Ms. Scanlon seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$37,500.00

VT 20-10, VFW Post 4171, Golden

Composite score: 66.3

Requesting: \$15,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$15,000.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved to fund this application in full. Mr. Steen seconded. Ms. Hammon said she would have liked to see a more detailed application from this grantee. Ms. Hoagland said she will counsel them prior to the next application cycle.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$15,000.00

VT 20-11, DAV Chapter 48, Durango

Composite score: 87.3

Requesting: \$110,331.00 for medical transportation, veterans assistance, van purchase

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$94,000.00

Discussion: Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application at \$94,000.00. Dr. Caldwell seconded. The van purchase request was not eligible for consideration because the required bid sheet was not submitted.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in part at \$94,000.00

VT 20-12, American Legion Post 1980, Woodland Park

Composite score: 68.3

Requesting: \$18,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$15,000.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved to fund this application at \$15,000.00. Mr. Rudder seconded. Ms. Hammon said the application had a low number of veterans service. Ms. Scanlon said the application lacked detail. Mr. Dailey said the grantee has had problems with compliance and spending and asked if a site visit had been performed. Ms. Hoagland said that it had and the grantee has improved but the grantee continues to struggle. Spending has been slow, outreach is poor and the program has a complex access process. The current grant agreement was modified to return \$5,000.00 of the allocation but the grantee still may not expend. Dr. Cadlwell withdrew the motion. Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application at \$12,000.00 based on the grantee's current spending. Mr. Gonzalez seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in part at \$12,000.00

VT 20-13, American Legion Post 16, Huerfano

Composite score: 83.3

Requesting: \$10,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$10,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Rudder moved to fund this application in full. Ms. Hammon seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$10,000.00

VT 20-14, VFW Post 5431, Cortez

Composite score: 79.3

Requesting: \$40,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$25,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Gonzalez moved to fund this application in full. Ms. Hammon said the increase was possibly too large for the grantee to absorb in one year. Ms. Scanlon said the application justified the amount requested. Dr. Caldwell said the grantee has good partnerships but the increase from \$4,000.00 to \$40,000.00 was outsized for one grant cycle. The motion failed with no second. Ms. Hammon moved to fund the application in the amount of \$25,000.00. Dr. Caldwell seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried.

Decision: Fund in part at \$25,000.00

VT 20-15, VFW Post 5743, Meeker

Composite score: 79.1

Requesting: \$9,000.00 for medical transportation

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$6,000.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved to fund this application at \$6,000.00. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. Ms. Hammon said that additional funds could help expand the reach of the program in an area that requires extensive and sometimes difficult travel. Ms. Scanlon said the numbers of unduplicated veterans served are high. She said she would support full funding. Mr. Gonzalez agreed and withdrew his second. The motion failed with no second. Ms. Scanlon moved to fund this application in full. Ms. Hammon seconded.

Vote: The motion carried with Mr. Dailey and Dr. Caldwell dissenting.

Decision: Fund in part at \$9,000.00

VT 20-16, American Legion Post 22, Northglenn

Composite score: 65.1

Requesting: \$25,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$16,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Rudder moved to fund this application at \$16,000.00. Dr. Caldwell seconded. Mr. Gonzalez asked about the grantee's problems with compliance. Ms. Hoagland said a new grant administrator has been appointed and compliance has improved.

Vote: The motion carried with Mr. Gonzalez dissenting.

Decision: Fund in part at \$16,000.00

VT 20-17, VFW Post 2461, South Denver

Composite score: 70.0

Requesting: \$40,000.00 for veterans assistance and local Stand Down

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$40,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Rudder moved to fund this application at \$40,000.00. Mr. Steen seconded. Ms. Hammon said the amount for assistance could be excessive for a new applicant that is also assisting with a new event. Ms. Caldwell agreed that the budget for housing assistance was high. Mr. Rudder withdrew his motion. Mr. Steen moved to fund this application at \$20,000.00. Ms. Hammon seconded.

Vote: The motion carried with Mr. Dailey dissenting.

Decision: Fund in part at \$20,000.00

VT 20-18, American Legion Post 9-11, Palmer Lake

Composite score: 80.3

Requesting: \$5,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$5,000.00

Discussion: Mr. Rudder moved to fund this application at \$5,000.00. Ms. Scanlon seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Decision: Fund in full at \$5,000.00

VT 20-19, VFW Post 1, Denver

Composite score: 74.3

Requesting: \$12,000.00 for veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$8,000.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved to fund this application at \$8,000.00. Mr. Rudder seconded. Mr. Rudder reiterated the concern voiced in subcommittee that the assistance program was available to the post's membership without outreach to the surrounding veteran community. Mr. Dailey objected to the line item of Operation Independence, which in practice appears to serve only one post member.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Decision: Fund in part at \$8,000.00

VT 20-20, American Legion Post 32, Longmont

Composite score: 68.9

Requesting: \$30,000.00 for medical transportation and veterans assistance

Subcommittee recommendation: Fund at \$17,000.00

Discussion: Dr. Caldwell moved to fund this application at \$5,000.00. Mr. Rudder seconded. Ms. Hammon asked about the grantee's compliance and spending problems. Ms. Hoagland said the grantee will not expend this year's grant award. The original allocation was modified down to \$41,440.00 and current projections indicate the grantee will expend approximately \$18,000.00. Dr. Caldwell withdrew the motion. Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application at \$20,000.00. Mr. Gonzalez seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Decision: Fund in part at \$20,000.00

SVCLC Applications

VT 20-21, Homelake

Request: \$29,537.60 for recliners for resident rooms

Action: Dr. Caldwell moved to fund this application. Ms. Hammon seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Funding: \$29,537.60

VT 20-22, Rifle

Request: \$24,400.00 for repair/restoration of picnic area, gardens, patio

Action: Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application. Mr. Steen seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Funding: \$24,400.00

VT 20-23, McCandless

Request: \$23,500.00 for Scandent system for residents' property

Action: Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application. Mr. Steen seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Funding: \$23,500.00

VT 20-24, FitzSimons

Request: \$24,752.00 to replace furniture in common areas

Action: Dr. Caldwell moved to fund this application. Mr. Gonzalez seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Funding: \$24,752.00

VT 20-25, Spanish Peaks

Request: \$60,182.00 for a van for resident transportation

Action: Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application. Dr. Caldwell seconded.

Vote: Unanimous, the motion carried

Funding: \$60,182.00

The Board recessed at 12:25 p.m. and resumed labor at 12:35 p.m.

Reports

Mr. Callahan provided a report from Mr. Hunt. Richard Tremaine has been appointed director of CDVA East and will assume his position on 15 April. The Woman Veteran license plate bill has is now out of committee. The grand opening of the Western Region One Source will be held on 09 May. In his report, he introduced Myra Dollar, Office Manager for CDVA East. She is conducting interviews to fill the vacant administrative assistant position at CDVA East. CDVA East is piloting an internship program through Metropolitan State University and the initial intern assignment will be in Grants. The department is still determining the most effective way to fill and assign the forthcoming position of State Women Veteran Coordinator. The possibilities are to add a new full-time employee, to add the assignment to an existing job description, or to reclassify an existing position within CDVA.

Mr. Dailey referred the Board to Ms. Iglesias' written report for updates from CDVA West and to Mr. Robinson's report for information on SVCLCs and the Veterans Monument Trust.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Scanlon said that UVC Banquet will be held on 07 April with three members attending from CBVA. The Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC will open a spinal cord clinic on 08 April. Groundbreaking for the new Rocky Mountain Fisher House will be held on 16 April. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Exhibit will be in Arvada June 20-23. She will send copies of the flier to Board members.

Ms. Hammon said that the Western Region One Source is interviewing for a Facility Manager and will soon interview candidates for State Veterans Service officer. American Legion Post 50 may hold their annual tea in conjunction with the One Source grand opening on 09 May. The Eagle County veterans service officers is working to add additional hours to its schedule to increase availability. The Vail Health Foundation has contributed \$60,000,000 to the effort to create a local crisis center.

Dr. Caldwell sent the Columbia protocol tool to the Board members. The screening tool is designed to be usable by laypersons. Anyone identified as being high risk should be taken to emergency care.

Mr. Gonzalez said the American Legion celebrated its centennial on 15 March. El Paso County will hold a veterans benefits class on 23 April at Mount Carmel. The USS Arizona exhibits will open at Colorado Springs airport on 24 April. The Pikes Peak Workforce Center will host a veteran employment exhibition on 29 May.

Mr. Steen said he continues to meet monthly with the director of Colorado Springs CBOC. SB 504, The Legion Act, was introduced in Congress in February. This legislation would open American legion membership to any veteran who has service in the military since WW II.

Mr. Rudder said the Alamosa CBOC still does not have a physician. Many patients are referred to the telehealth clinic based in Salida. Healing Waters continues to thrive in the San Luis Valley.

Mr. Dailey distributed copies of the flier for the 11 April town hall in Kremmling and the 18 April town hall and resource fair in Frisco.

Upcoming Meetings

Ms. Hammon confirmed that the 09 May meeting is scheduled for 11:00 at the Western Region One Source in Grand Junction.

Other upcoming meetings:

- 07 June Westcliffe – election of officers
- 02 August TBD

Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Hammon moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Rudder. The meeting adjourned at 01:26 p.m.