**Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs**

April 02, 2021

WebEx Meeting

**Opening**

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order at 0903. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POW’s, MIA’s, those deployed, their families, and all those killed in the line of duty.

**Members Present**

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice-Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Secretary

Duane Dailey, Member

Lacey Golonka, Member

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

**Staff Present**

David Callahan, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director

Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Director

Joanne Iglesias, CDVA Interim Director

Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Heather Benjamin, CDVA Property Administrator

Angela Ingalls, Veterans Memorial Cemetery Director

Tommy Heckler, DVA Work Study

Diana Debor, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Jessica Quackenbush, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

**Guests Present**

Marshall Bosworth, El Paso County Veterans Service Officer Congressional District 5

Renee Franklin, Pueblo County Veterans Service Office

Megan Gurka, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer

John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer

Duffy Laudick, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer Congressional District 2

Jim McCracken, Washington County Veterans Service Officer

Joshua Medina, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer Congressional District 6

Trisha Reynolds, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer

Robby Robinson, BVA Liaison to VCLC Commission & Veterans Monument Trust

Rudy Sabedra, Pueblo County Veterans Service Officer Congressional District 3

Carolyn Schneider, County Veterans Service Officer

Sheldon Smith, Montrose/Ouray County Veterans Service Officer

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Eric Winterrowd, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer

Sean Woods, El Paso County Veterans Service Officer

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Dailey moved that the minutes of the February 2021 meeting be approved as presented. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

**Public Comments**

Ms. Ingalls asked that Board consider the cemetery’s request for funding from the Veteran’s Trust Fund, as the improvements specified in the request would mitigate safety concerns and enhance ADA accessibility.

Mr. Rudder said there was an amendment to the published agenda, which would be an update from the Bylaws Committee.

**Action Item: Veterans Trust Fund Application Review**

Ms. Hoagland asked if the Board would like to start consideration with the request from the cemetery or with the applications from the SVCLCs. The consensus was to begin with the SVCLC applications. She asked the Board to be mindful of conflict of interest, including making known any previously undisclosed conflicts and recusing from any discussion on applications where conflict exists. In the virtual environment this can be done by muting the meeting sound. Public comments were not encouraged during the application deliberation.

Mr. Dailey asked if the Board members could supply the date on which they attended the VTF application webinar. He attended two. No other Board members had attended an application webinar.

Deliberation opened with the applications from the SVCLC followed by the request from the cemetery.

**VT22-20 McCandless**

The application requested funds in the amount of $23,102.40 for resident nameplates, military memorabilia showcases, and the annual maintenance fees for the Scandent system. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Mr. Gonzalez so moved. Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at $23,102.40**

**VT22-22 Homelake**

The application requested funds in the amount of $31,734.69 for improvements to the bathing area for patients. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Hammon so moved. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at $31,734.69**

**VT22-21 Rifle**

The application requested funds in the amount of $24,800.00 to complete the outdoor garden project fund by the VTF in 2019. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Hammon so moved. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at** **$24,800.00**

**VT22-23 Fitzsimons**

The application requested funds in the amount of $40,818.70 for new dining room tables. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Scanlon so moved. Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund at $40,818.70**

**VT22-19 Spanish Peaks**

The application requested funds in the amount of $100,334.17 for dining room tables and chairs. The committee recommended funding this application in part, by awarding the funds needed for the tables in 2021-2022 with the opportunity for the CLC to reapply for additional funding in the next cycle if needed to complete the project. Mr. Gonzalez explained the reason for that recommendation is that the application requested a significant amount of funds for the furniture, and that the tables that are designed of be adjustable height could be used for their primary purpose either with or without new chairs. Ms. Hammon so moved. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in part at $39,822.51**

**Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

The request for $32,212.33 would provide for the renovation of the committal shelter, the installation of ADA doors in the administration building, and for sealing, staining, and painting work in the administration building. Mr. Dailey raised a point of procedure, asking if the request dated of 11 March was sufficient to render it eligible for the current cycle. Ms. Hoagland said that it is, as the cemetery is not bound by the application process. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Hammon so moved. Ms. Golonka seconded. Five members voted in favor. Mr. Dailey opposed. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at 32,212.33**

The remaining applications were considered in numerical order.

**VT 22-01, American Legion Post 88, Hot Sulphur Springs Average Score: 83.2**

Mr. Dailey recused himself for this deliberation. The application requests $35,000.00 for an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Hammon so moved. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at $35,000.00**

While the Board waited for Mr. Dailey to return, Mr. Rudder asked Mr. Callahan if any update was available on the Board vacancy. Mr. Callahan said that a top candidate has been identified and reference checks are underway. The candidate should be submitted to the governor’s office within the next week. He reported that he attended a recent meeting of the boards of commissioners from the San Luis Valley. He was able to describe DMVA’s structure and provide information on the DVA reorganization. The department accepted the recommendation of the Tiger Team to use a regional structure for the division. The next task for the team will be to recommend the specific regions and locations for field service offices. The following goal for the Tiger Team will be to provide a recommendation on the need for a state women veterans coordinator no later than 1 June. Ms. Scanlon asked if the Board could receive an update on the Tiger Team’s progress at the next meeting. Mr. Callahan agreed. Mr. Dailey had since returned, and deliberations continued.

**VT 22-02, American Legion Post 44, Steamboat Average Score: 88.7**

This application requests $5,700.00 for a transportation program. This is a current grantee, compliant with excellent performance. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Scanlon so moved. Ms. Hammon seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at $5,700.00**

**VT 22-03 VFW Post 5812, Pueblo West Average Score: 85.4**

This application requests $10,000.00 for an assistance program. This is a new applicant. Ms. Hoagland reminded the Board that funding thresholds will apply. The committee recommended funding this application at $6,000.00, to fund the program while also allowing grants to possibly fund other applications in the area. Mr., Dailey moved to accept the committee’s recommendation and fund the application at $6,000.00. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in part at $6,000.00**

**VT 22-04 American Legion Post 62, Craig Average Score: 62.9**

This application requests $6,000.00 to fund a transportation program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The committee’s average score for this application was 54.7, so the committee did not consider the application for funding. Ms. Scanlon asked why committee’s scores were low. Ms. Hoagland said that there are sections of the application that are not addressed. Ms. Hammon agreed that the application appeared incomplete but noted the service gaps in the geographic area. She suggested funding the application in part due to the extant need. Ms. Scanlon agreed. The Board members asked that Ms. Hoagland caution the applicant regarding the problems with the application. Ms. Hoagland agreed. Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application at the amount of $4,000.00. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in part at $4,000.00**

At this point in the proceedings Mr. Dorman advised the Board that the department intends to request $73,000.00 in funding for the Western Region One Source. Mr. Rudder asked Ms. Hoagland to estimate the impact that would have on the amount available for grants. Ms. Hoagland asked if the request was for the funds to be provided from the VTF Grant allocation or as an additional amount from the trust, as was done last year. Mr. Dorman said either source would suit the need of the department. Ms. Hammon said that as previously this type of funding request had been funded directly from the trust, this request could be similarly accommodated. She asked if the department could provide a request in writing at the next meeting. Mr. Dorman agreed.

**VT 22-05 VFW Post 5231, Cortez Average Score: 84.6**

This application requests $60,000.00 to fund an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with excellent performance. This grantee also serves as a mentor to other grantees who are either new or struggling with the grant process. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Hammon so moved. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at $60,000.00**

**VT 22-06 DAV Chapter 44, Cortez Average Score: 67.6**

This application requests $62,500.00 to fund an assistance and transportation program. This is a current grantee, compliant with minor documentation issues. They are expected to expend their current grant. The committee recommended funding this application at $40,000.00 due to concerns raised by the low score of the application. Ms. Hammon wondered if a grant award of $40,000.00 would suffice to meet the need, and suggested funding at the current level of $50,000.00. Ms. Scanlon agreed, Mr. Dailey recommended funding the application at the committee’s recommendation. If there is a mid-cycle need for additional funds the grantee could request a modification. Ms. Hammon moved that a decision on this application be held until the end of the deliberations to help base the decision on available funds. Mr. Gonzalez asked if Ms. Hoagland could clarify whether unallocated funds would remain at the end of the deliberations if the application was funded at the recommended level. Ms. Hoagland confirmed that was the case. Ms. Scanlon seconded the motion on the table. The motion carried. Upon revisit before the conclusion of deliberations, Ms. Hammon moved to fund this application at $50,000.00. Ms. Scanlon seconded.

**Decision: Fund in part at $50,000.00**

**VT 22-07 American Legion Post 75, Cortez Average Score: 75.6**

This application requests $50,000.00 to fund an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with minor documentation issues. The committee recommended funding this application at $40,000.00, which is the amount of the current grant award. There are other grantees in this geographic area. Mr. Dailey moved to fund the application at $40,000.00. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried.

**Recommendation: Fund in part at $40,000.00**

**VT 22-08 VFW Post 12063, Westcliffe Average Score: 91.6**

This application requests $80,500.00 to fund an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The post will have a new grant manager in the upcoming cycle. The committee recommended funding this application at $70,000.00 due to the amount of the request balanced against the need throughout the state. Mr. Dailey said that $70,000.00 was generous and that he has concerns about the grantee’s assessment of individual need. Ms. Hammon acknowledged the need in the area and recommended funding the application at $75,000.00. There was no second. Ms. Hammon moved that the application be funded in the amount of $70,000.00. Ms. Golonka seconded. Five members voted in favor. Mr. Dailey opposed. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in part at $70,000.00**

**VT 22-09 VFW Post 5843, Meeker Average Score: 75.9**

This application requests $6,000.00 to fund a transportation program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The committee recommended funding this application at $5,000.00, which represents an increase over the currently funded amount of $3,000.00. Ms. Hammon so moved. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in part at $5,000.00**

**VT 22-10 Department of Colorado VFW, Lakewood Average Score: 83.4**

This application requests $50,000.00 to fund an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. This grantee serves as a mentor grantee, particularly to VFW posts. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Golonka so moved. Ms. Hammon seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in full at $50,000.00**

**VT 22-11 DAV Chapter 2, Pueblo Average Score: 57.1**

Ms. Hoagland said that since the average score is below 60, the application was not eligible for consideration. Mr. Rudder clarified that this application was missing a page. Ms. Scanlon asked if the missing page was the applicant’s error. Ms. Hoagland said that it was. She said the applicant submitted the application four times and never did submit all of the information. The committee did not consider this application. The Board did not consider this application.

**Decision: Ineligible by score**

**VT 22-12 American Legion Post 09, La Junta Average Score: 82.9**

This application requested $20,387.40 for an assistance and transportation program. Ms. Hoagland said the program will have a new grant manager in the upcoming year. The committee recommended funding this application at a round figure of $20.000.00. Mr. Dailey so moved. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

**Decision: Fund in part at $20,000.00**

**VT 22-13 American Legion Post 103, Littleton Average Score: 83.3**

This application requests $30,000.00 for an assistance program. Ms. Hoagland said this current grantee was slow to connect with veterans this year but has been improving. They were affected by both COVID and by a complete change of staff at the county veterans service office. The committee recommended funding this application at$25,000.00 in accordance with its work in outreach and spending. Mr. Dailey so moved. Mr. Gonzalez seconded.

**Decision: Fund in part at $25,000.00**

**VT 22-14 AL Post 11, Trinidad Average Score: 77.4**

This application requests $20,000.00 for an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The committee recommended funding this application at $17,000.00, which is less than the amount of the request but an increase over the current funding of $13,500.00. Ms. Golonka moved to fund this application at $17,000.00. Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried.

**Recommendation: Fund in part at $17,000.00**

**VT 22-15 American Legion Post 22, Northglenn Average Score: 67.1**

This application requests $40,000.00 for an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The committee recommended funding this application in full. Ms. Hammon said she had concern regarding the application’s low score. She noted lack of detail on collaboration and a low number of unduplicated veterans. Ms. Hoagland said the grantee received a modification increase in the current year and Mr. Dailey said that the need justifies the amount. Ms. Golonka moved to fund this application at $40,000.00. Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried

**Decision: Fund in full at $40,000.00**

**VT 22-16 VFW Post 3641, Pueblo Average Score: 70.1**

This application requests $40,400.00 for an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The committee recommended funding this application at $35,000.00. Ms. Hammon suggested funding this application in full due to the demonstrated need and good performance. She moved to fund the application at $40,400.00. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

**Recommendation: Fund in full at $40,400.00**

**VT 22-17 American Legion Post 9-11, Palmer Lake Average score: 78.6**

This application requests $4,000.00 for an assistance program. This is a current grantee, semicompliant with slow spending. Ms. Hoagland said that spending is slow because the grant manager is in Colorado for only part of the year. The committee recommended funding this application at $3,000.00. Ms. Golonka so moved. Mr. Dailey seconded. He questioned the effectiveness of a program that has struggled to spend a small award in their designated service area. Ms. Hammon agreed it would be good to monitor this grantee. With no further discussion, Mr. Rudder invited the vote. The motion carried.

**Recommendation: Fund in part at $3,000.00**

**Total Funding to Date:** $663,590.63 allocated of $750,000.00

This concluded decisions on the VTF grant applications. Ms. Hammon asked how many applications are usually received. Ms. Hoagland said about 25. She said she reached out to some organizations who did not apply and was informed that COVID has been a large factor. Due to the disruption, posts have had trouble finding a grant manager and need to stabilize the post themselves. Ms. Hammon thanked Ms. Hoagland and the committee for their work.

*The Board here recessed at 10:47 a.m. and resumed at 11:00 a.m.*

**Old Business**

Bylaws Committee: Ms. Hammon reviewed the recommendations from the attorney general’s office regarding proposed bylaw changes. Voting by email will not be allowed. The Board decided to review each proposed bylaw change individually, and then vote on the document as a whole. The proposed changes are:

Article II Section 4 Members and Procedures

All Board members must vote in person when initiated by the Chairman, which is satisfied by a member's physical presence at a meeting or a member's remote participation in a meeting via telephone or video tele-conferencing technology.

Article Ill: Meetings of Members

Section 3 Notice of Special Meetings: Notice of any special Board meeting shall be given to Board members and the public at least seven days in advance. except if the Chairman determines that the circumstances warrant less than seven days advance notice, in which case at least 24 hours advance notice is all that is required.

Section 4 Public Meetings: Executive sessions may be held in accordance with the law, at any regular or special board meetings upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the number of Board members fixed by statute.

Section 6 Quorum: A quorum for the transaction of public business is a majority of the number of members fixed by statute.

Article IV: Officers

Section 4 Secretary: The board may request a DVA Division staff with the DVA Directors consent to serve as administrative support to the Board Secretary.

Section 7 Duties of Division of Veteran Affairs: add the following:

* To send out notifications of upcoming meetings.
* To send out notice of agendas with attachments to board members 7 days before the meeting.
* Prepare minutes of the board meetings within two weeks of the board meeting.
* Post online all board meeting minutes in a timely manner at least two weeks after the next monthly meeting.
* Record the board meeting.
* Prepare documents for signature for the Chairman of the Board.
* Determine the location of the meetings in the Colorado counties or cities in cooperation with the board
* Coordinate the continuing education of the Board.
* Conduct annual training of the board to include statutory mandated information, best practices and expectations of board member.

Ms. Scanlon moved that the bylaw changes be approved as presented, Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried. Ms. Scanlon requested that the Bylaw Committee meet again to discuss the Conflict of Interest disclosure form and related reference in the bylaws. Mr. Dailey would like the committee to consider the need for a single source internet portal to convey the public information as required in the bylaws.

Mr. Dailey informed the members of the Board that Cheyenne County Veterans Service Officer Zane Meis has passed away. James Kliesen is the new service officer. Mr. Rudder said that Mineral County Veterans Service Officer Mike Atwater also passed away recently. Ms. Iglesias said that there was another loss in the community as well, former Douglas County Veterans Service Officer Sam Baldridge. A moment of silence was held for all three at the DVA Spring Training in March.

**New Business**

There was no new business.

**Reports**

Ms. Iglesias said that the cemetery’s capital construction project is almost complete, on time and under budget. Mesa County is at Level Blue, so the cemetery is able to have up to 250 attendees at services. Quarterly military honors are scheduled for 05 April, but the Memorial Day celebration will remain remote this year. The WROS has been able to reopen to groups and hosted six CVSOs who attended the spring training in person. The phones are back on at the Denver office and being answered in person. Denver staff are again in the office five days a week. DEERS Operator Jessica Olsen is managing the property tax project this year and has employed some process improvements, such as emailing approved applications to county tax assessors. The Tiger Team completed its first 60-day assignment and is working on defining the regions for DVA. She reminded Board members that Ms. Hammon represents the Board on the Tiger Team, and Board members are encouraged to contact her with feedback or suggestions.

Mr. Dorman said that DMVA supported the legislation for Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, which has been signed by the governor. The bill regarding the tax checkoff for the Military Families Relief Fund has made it out of its House committee and will soon proceed to the House floor. The Restoration of Honor bill has passed and awaits the governor’s signature. The Space Force National Guard bill will be heard on 05 April. The Long Bill is in the House this week. Ms. Hammon inquired about the status of the Purple Heart Recipient Free State Park Access bill. It has been sent to Appropriations.

Ms. Hoagland said that many grantees are getting back on track after disruptions related to the pandemic. Grantees that provide housing assistance have found their execution rate impacted by increased federal funding and eviction prohibition. Third quarter reports are due on 15 April and will help project the final execution for the VTF Grant, but it is anticipated that total expenditures will be lower than usual.

Mr. Rudder said that Mr. Robinson reported that the attempt to increase the budget for the CLCs was denied by JBC.

Ms. Hammon said that the UVC banquet is scheduled for 27 June. Board members should notify Ms. Scanlon if they plan to attend and would like to be seated with the Board. She will email the reservation link. In addition to the legislative items mentioned by Mr. Dorman, UVC is also following one that would augment a program currently employed by the Colorado Health Care Service Corps under the management of CDPHE to add geriatric medicine to the list of included specialties.

**Remarks**

Mr. Gonzalez said that veteran activities have been quiet in El Paso County. He continues his participation in the Mount Carmel Veterans Service Center ambassador program.

Ms. Scanlon said the Colorado Woman Marine Association is still going strong, having attended a national meeting held via Zoom. They still have grant funds available to assist veterans.

Mr. Dailey said that Grand Lake intends to have a Memorial Day parade but is waiting for final approval from public health authorities.

Ms. Hammon said that Eagle County’s Memorial Day program will be offered both live and virtually. A new memorial wall is being constructed and groundbreaking was 30 March. The viewing of the movie Almost Sunrise was held on 31 March, followed by a panel discussion with local veterans and the veterans featured in the film. The veterans service office has been very busy.

Mr. Rudder said that he had one outreach, with the Action 22 committee. He continues to assist Alamosa County and claims have been coming in from surrounding counties. He can now access his office at Homelake, but it is not yet available to the public. He has weekly VSO outreach to Del Norte that has proved successful.

Ms. Scanlon suggested the Board consider future meeting locations if meetings can be held in person. Mr. Rudder suggested the Denver metro area in case staff is unable to travel. Ms. Hammon that since the Board is a state body, the same travel restrictions will apply. Ms. Hammon said that the Board still needs to visit Cortez but might not want that to be their first destination. The Board will consider a possible June meeting location.

**Upcoming Meetings**

07 May

04 June Election of officers

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ms. Hammon moved to adjourn. Mr. Dailey seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.