

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs (CBVA) July Meeting

Date: 11 July 2025

Location: Steamboat Springs

Time: 9:00 AM

Break: 10:32-10:45

Members Present

Shelia Scanlon, Chair

Sheldon Smith, Member

Raymond Taylor, Vice Chair

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Lacey Golonka, Secretary

Members Absent

Howard Richards, Member - Excused

Jasmine Motupalli, Member- Excused

Staff Present

Bruce Cowan - Colorado Division of
Veterans Affairs Director

Lisa Stamm, CDVA Grants Administrator

Angela Ingalls, Veterans Memorial
Cemetery of Western Colorado
Administrator

James Poteet, Appeals and Hearings
Specialist

Darin Collazo, Western Region One
Source Administrator

Beth Maxwell, CDVA Operations

Katie McReynolds, CDVA Operations

Sharon DeVita, CDVA Operations

Guests

Ron Terry, Colorado DAV Montezuma
County Grantee

CBVA - July Minutes - Approved

Pat Hammon - Eagle County Veterans
Service Officer, VCLC Board of
Commissioners, UVC Representative

Richard Nagley - American Legion,
Veterans Coalition of the San Luis
Vallet

Chana Wiseman, Routt County Veterans
Service Officer

Duane Dailey, Grand and Summit
County Veterans Service Officer

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the June meeting were approved by all with the changes previously emailed. Mr. Taylor made the motion. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. Motion carried. Mr. Smith abstained.

Public Comments:

Mr. Dailey requested the results from the county survey regarding the possible changes to the VSO statute. Director Cowan confirmed the results show there will be no change.

Standing Reports

VCLC Board Updates- Pat Hammon:

The board received an update on the VCLC marketing campaign. The VCLCs in Rifle and Homelake are meeting their budget goals. The VCLCs in Walsenburg, Bruce McCandless, and Fitzsimons are each one resident below their budget. Due to a recent rise in COVID cases, the VCVL occupancy has dropped to 80%.

UVC Updates - Pat Hammon:

The board heard an update on the goals of the main organizations in the UVC for the next legislative session. These goals include getting money returned from the VTF and VAG funds that were taken by the state and increasing funding for Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs). A new federal bill, called the Richard Starr Act, would make

benefits tax-free for Veterans who are medically separated. The UVC is also working on a new federal bill to stop claim sharks and hopes to get support from other groups.

Legislative Report - Bruce Cowan

The General Fund is tight, and there will likely be a one-million-dollar shortfall in the 2027 budget year. Because of this, increases to current budgets will likely be denied. The board was thanked for providing \$87,000 to support the Veteran ID project. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is working on a plan to allow leftover VFT funds to be used by VAG grantees. The board will set the rules for how this new program will work. In August, the Board and DMVA leadership will travel to Durango to explore the idea of opening a new southern region one source in the former Durango Federal Post Office. They plan to drive to Durango on a Monday and return on Tuesday afternoon. There was also discussion of the HB25-1076 which will require DMA training for the requirements for the removal of the word permanent for the DV Plates requirement.

Director Report - Bruce Cowan

The Look, Listen, and Learn Tour will be heading to the eastern counties. Director Cowan and Mr. Winterrowd will visit 11 counties during the tour. Survey results are back from counties with fewer than 10,000 veterans. The plan to have a regional VSO work with these smaller counties will not move forward. Proposition KK has set aside \$5 million for Veterans mental health programs. The division plans to use some of this money to pay for two Veterans Service Officers who will work with veterans in jail or prison. Right now, the division is helping at the federal prison in Englewood because it is close to the VA regional office. This program is growing to support both state and federal facilities.

The division will released updated policies and procedures on August 6. Some of the changes will make sure VSOs work the same hours the counties are paying them for. The policy will also list the performance measures that county commissioners should follow for VSO work. A new tool called Community Platform will help the state and

counties share updates and changes more easily. It is a cloud-based system that improves communication about policies and staffing.

Mr. Gonzalez made a motion to use \$45,000 of VTF funds to purchase software from Community Platform for the division. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous. The board would like regular updates on how the Community Platform is assisting communication between the counties and the regional offices.

Veterans Services - Eric Winterrowd:

Veterans Services shared updates on outreach and community events. There was a video shared with the board from a local news station in Grand Junction that covered the Women Veterans Day event and the unveiling of a new woman veteran statue at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery. They also talked about the success of the prison program. In addition, they mentioned that an offer has been made for the Claims and Benefits Manager position.

Western Region One Source - Darin Collazo:

The WROS provided updates on tenants, events and outreach. Room 129 at the WROS still has a foul odor. There will be active remediation with this room to remove mold from the walls.

Veterans Memorial Cemetery (VMC) of Western Colorado - Angela Ingalls

There was an update on events, outreach, and good news. The National Cemetery Association (NCA) completed its audit. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery was only three points away from earning Shrine status. The NCA gave an award to the cemetery to recognize their hard work. There was also a delay with the software purchased by OIT. Testing and training were not finished by the end of FY 2025. The cemetery asked for \$20,000 from the VTF to complete the project. The board discussed the request. Mr. Taylor made a motion to not exceed \$20,000 for the software deployment, including training and development. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous. The stipend program spent \$64,589 out of \$70,000 for Military Honors stipend throughout the state.

Grants - Lisa Stamm:

Mr. Terry gave a presentation on behalf of DAV Chapter 44 Lindsey-Geer, a VTF grant recipient. The full year-end results will be available in August. A recap of June was shared, along with a reminder that upcoming training for the VCLCs is planned. Going forward, the VCLCs will be required to submit reimbursement requests every quarter. This new rule is being added because the VCLCs did not fully execute their funds in FY25. Ms. Stamm asked Ms. Hammon to notify the VCLCs about these changes. Ms. Scanlon will write a memorandum for the VCLCs to be shared at their next meeting on September 12th. Grants expended last FY 98.1% VAG and 93.9% VFT. VCLC Fitzsimmons only expended 40% of their grant's funds. That money could have been given to another grantee to spend if the board knew Fitzsimmons could not spend the funds in time.

Old Business:

Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony

Report moved to next meeting

Southern Region One Source

Travel dates to view the prospective facility site will be sent out.

Veterans Clearing House

No report

Women Veterans Subcommittee

No report

Legislative Session

Board recommended the DMVA support a legislative change to include allowing VCLCs to purchase comfort equipment. Another change could be reimbursing Regional VSOs for insurance deductibles if they are in a no-fault accident while traveling for work in their region.

Branding

The Board is looking into new ways to promote itself and connect with more Veterans in the communities they visit. They are also working with CVSOs to help share information about upcoming public meetings. Operations will create digital flyers to support the CVSOs in spreading the word.

Prescription letter for rural perception access

Ms. Scanlon will resend the letter to the interim Director of the Veterans Hospital Administration.

Transportation Grant

There will be a meeting on July 16 to discuss the grant. The application period has not started yet.

Albuquerque Collaboration with DVA

Mr. Taylor is working with the permanent director to schedule an in-person meeting with Ms. Scanlon, Director Cowan, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Richards.

New Business:

No new business at this meeting.

Board Remarks

Board members remarked on events they attended in June.

Statewide Veterans Issues:

Veteran food insecurity

Homelessness

Mental Health

Access to prescriptions

Veterans on fringes

Transportation

Upcoming Meetings

01 August 2025, 09:00

Glenwood Springs, Colorado

11 September 2025, 13:00

Training, Grand Junction, Colorado

12 September 2025, 09:00

Grand Junction, Colorado

08 October 2025, 09:00

La Junta, Colorado

15 November 2025, 09:00

Virtual

06 December 2025, 09:00

TBD

Adjournment

Mr. Smith made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Taylor seconded. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:21 AM.