

**Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs 2019
Meeting Minutes**

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes
Friday, 04 January 2019
Fitzsimons Veterans Community Living Center
1919 Quentin Street
Aurora, CO 80045

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Duane Dailey, Chair Jack Rudder, Vice Chair

Patricia Hammon, Member Norm Steen, Member Sheila Scanlon, Member

Longinos Gonzalez Jr., Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Mickey Hunt, DMVA Deputy Executive Director David Callahan, CDVA East Acting Director

Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Ashley Hersey, Admission and Marketing Director, Fitzsimons VCLC

Robby Robinson, CBVA liaison to SVCLC Commission and Veterans Monument Trust

Theresa Rudder, President, General Federation of Women's Clubs of Colorado Joan Schwaniger,
Director of Nursing, Fitzsimons VCLC

Heidi Tyrrell, Director, Heroes Clinic, UCD School of Dental Medicine

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 greeted all in attendance and invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Scanlon recommended that the conclusion of the 07 December meeting conversation regarding the DMVA women veterans program be explained in detail. Ms. Hammon moved that the minutes be approved with this change and Ms. Scanlon seconded. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Hammon said that the 08 December veteran health resource event in Edwards was not quite as well attended as anticipated, possibly due to snowfall the previous night. UVC is assembling a commission to address suicide prevention. Eagle County continues to see success with its yoga program and has added a class at a gym for the convenience of younger veterans.

Mr. Rudder said that helping veterans access VA Community Care has been a priority in the San Luis Valley. Prompt referrals and authorization can be difficult to acquire. Healing Waters continues to be active in the area.

Ms. Scanlon said that state veteran service officer Jaclyn Murrietta is tracking the time commitment required for a State Women's Veteran Coordinator to effectively implement the women veterans program. The program may need its own service officer rather than one with additional responsibilities. Proposed designs for the license plate are in circulation. Preparation for women veterans exhibits at the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC are underway.

Mr. Gonzalez said that the Pikes Peak Cemetery participated in Wreaths Across America in December. The event was well attended by veterans and the community. Significant veteran issues in El Paso County continue to be homelessness and mental health care.

Mr. Steen said the new legislative session convenes today. Transportation and health care access are both important issues in this budget cycle.

Mr. Dailey said that the Boulder vet center will be in Summit County for outreach on 11 December. The Warrior Bonfire Program will be in Grand County in February. This program hosts retreats that include therapeutic group activities for combat veterans such as hunting, fishing, and skiing.

Public Comments

Mrs. Rudder said that the local chapter of the Federal of Womens Clubs also assisted in Wreaths Across America, helping to lay more 1,800 wreaths this year.

Ms. Tyrrell told the Board and attendees about the Heroes Clinic, which offers free and reduced price dental care to student veterans and veterans with low income. They also refer veterans to

other veteran health resources such as the Marcus Institute for Brain Health and the Cohen Clinic.

Community Presentation

Ms. Hersey presented information on the mission of and services provided by the Fitzsimons VCLC. The facility offers long and short term care, Alzheimer's and dementia care, and hospice services. Eligible patients are honorably discharged veterans, veterans' spouse, and Gold Star parents. The facility capacity is 180 patients. They accept VA payment, private payment, and Medicaid. Fitzsimons has been able to maintain staffing levels in direct care. They are interested in pay range flexibility that would enable the facility to pay longtime employees the same or more and new hires.

Reports

Mr. Hunt said that the Western Slope One Source plans a soft opening in February with the ribbon cutting scheduled for 17 May. Both the Army and Air Guard will have deployments to Afghanistan this year, with a detachment departing in early January. He will attend gubernatorial inauguration on 08 January. The Office of Suicide Prevention plans to help address veteran suicide in Colorado.

Mr. Callahan gave personnel updates for CDVA East. James Poteet has been appointed Appeals Specialist for the Division and will be located at the Denver VARO beginning in February. A temporary employee is in place to cover the front desk and recruitment and testing are underway for two new veterans service officers, an office manager, and additional administrative support. The newest service officers will attend NVCVSO training in Nebraska in April. Upcoming job announcements will be distributed to Board members and county veterans service officers.

Mr. Robinson said the Veterans Monument Trust is collecting bids to repair the broken light. In regard in the SVCLC Commission, CDHS has provided and budget request to the JBC that would phase in salary increases and allow direct care CLC staff to start at the midpoint of the salary range. Statewide the staff vacancy rate is 25 percent with a turnover rate of 23 percent. The commission will prepare a letter in support of the budget proposal and has requested that the Board consider a similar action. Mr. Robinson volunteered to draft a letter for the Board should the body elect to submit one.

The Board here recessed at 10:49 and resumed labor at 11:02.

Reports

Ms. Hoagland explained the legend for the grant report, indicating which grantees will be asked to modify their contracts and return funds, which may be asked to do so, and which are already almost out of funds. Released funds will result in modified contracts, following which the disbursement of moneys returned to the VTF will be the decision of the Board. Requests for additional funds should be available

to the Board by February. She asked the Board to consider a grantee situation in which a vehicle was badly damaged in a no-fault accident and the VA-provided insurance totaled the vehicle. This grantee has a vehicle that can be used during the rest of the grant cycle, but it is a situation that could recur. The Board members agreed that grantees should be encouraged not to surrender vehicle titles to VA. In regard to other grant rules, Ms. Hammon said that VA now provides mental health services to veterans with a dishonorable discharge if they have been diagnosed with service-related TBI or PTSD. Should the grant rules adjust to allow grantees to serve this population? If amended new rules would apply to the next grant cycle, so this item was noted for future consideration.

Discussion

VAG Information for Board

Ms. Hoagland asked if detailed VAG reports could be provided to the Board quarterly, rather than on the same monthly basis and the VTF reports. The rationale is that the reports are time-consuming to produce and the VAG is not within the purview of the Board. The consensus was that quarterly reports will be provided.

State Funds and VSO Pay

Mr. Steen said that for many counties the fund provided by state in support of veteran services is not the sole course of compensation for county veterans service officers; it is a subsidy. Counties have to consider their pay scales when deciding whether to provide additional compensation to a CVSO. Ms. Scanlon said the CVSOs have been complaining that the state funds are used for different purposes altogether. Could the Board send a letter to county commissioners encouraging the use of these funds to support veterans services? Ms. Hoagland said historically

that has been done annually by the director of CDVA East. Mr. Steen said he will broach the subject with CCI and encourage commissioners to consider the fiscal ROI of veterans services.

CDHS Budget Proposal

The Board considered the timeline for submitting a letter in support of the CDHS budget proposal. Mr. Robinson had encouraged the Board to allow the SVCLC commission to submit their letter first. He will prepare a letter for the Board to review prior to the next meeting.

Strategic Plan

Mr. Steen recommended commencing effort and tracking progress on the strategic plan. Mr. Callahan said he should have hard copies of the plan available by the next meeting but encouraged the subcommittee to begin work. Mr. Steen recommended that the committee hold their meetings adjacent to the Board meetings since the members will already be assembled. No consensus was reached on a start date, as the February meeting is expected to be well attended by veterans and following two will be committed to VTF training and application evaluation.

Upcoming Meetings

01 February, VFW Post 1, Denver: meeting time adjusted to 10:00

01 March, Golden CBOC: time-limited meeting, agenda is grant training.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Rudder moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Gonzalez. The meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes

Friday, 01 February 2019

VFW Post 1 841 Santa Fe Drive

Denver, CO 80204

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:

David Callahan, CDVA East Acting Director Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Katy Barrs, Clinic Director, The Sturm Center

John Keene, Commander, VFW Post 1

Robby Robinson, CBVA liaison to SVCLC Commission and Veterans Monument Trust Theresa Rudder, President, General Federation of Women's Clubs of Colorado

Opening:

Mr. Dailey called the meeting to order at 1006 hours. Proceedings began with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops overseas. Mr. Dailey thanked all in attendance and invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Caldwell moved that the minutes of the 04 January meeting be approved as submitted and Mr. Steen seconded. The motion carried.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Rudder said that homelessness among veterans continues to be a problem in the San Luis Valley, exacerbated by the cold weather. Suicide prevention is an ongoing priority. His office has been assisting residents of the Homelake Domiciliary who experience a gap between the rent and

their available income.

Dr. Caldwell said that Porter Adventist Hospital is implementing the Columbia protocol to assist in screening for suicide risk and effective prevention. Dr. Caldwell is creating a training on this protocol to be used within the Centura Health network and will include specific screening for veterans and military.

Mr. Steen said that as a member of NACO's Veterans and Military Services Committee, he will participate on a call this week regarding nationwide strategies to reduce veteran suicide. The goal is to assemble practices to reduce the suicide rate among veterans, military, and family members. Recent proposed legislation would provide federal funding for county veterans service officers.

Ms. Scanlon said that the plan to include woman veterans in the exhibits at the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC is to incorporate artifacts into the current displays. They are currently seeking items to include. Efforts are underway to secure funding for state Women Veterans Coordinator, which will be a dedicated position not partially allocated as a general service officer.

Ms. Hammon said a recurrent problem for veterans seeking emergency room care is that veterans assume that the hospital notifies VHA. This is not the responsibility of the hospital and veterans receive unexpected bills for emergency care. The Western Slope One Source is nearly complete including the interior and the grand opening is scheduled for 09 May. The WSOS is holding open houses to market the facility to nonprofits. Healing Waters and Comeback yoga continue to be active and well attended. Total Health Alliance of Eagle County is preparing crisis management training for first responders.

Mr. Gonzales said that El Paso County has been working to assist veterans and others adversely affected by the government shutdown. The Lindstrom CBOC in Colorado Springs will hold a mental health awareness training on 02 February.

Mr. Dailey said he attended a S.A.V.E. presentation at the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC, which was also attended by the county veterans service officers from Arapahoe and Broomfield counties. He recommended that CDVA include S.A.V.E. in its annual training. Beginning in February the VAMC will provide a mobile veteran medical center in Grand County; this even will recur every third Tuesday for a 6-8 month trial period. The Boulder Vet Center is providing

outreach to Summit County. Veterans' town halls are scheduled to be held in Frisco in and in Kremmling in April. The event will include the Summit County veteran service office, community organizations, and representations from both VBA and VHA.

Community Presentations

VFW Post 1

Mr. Keene provided the history of VFW Post 1 and its current work in the community. The post was established in 1899 in the wake of the Spanish-American War. The intent was to advocate for and organize benefits and rights for veterans involved in overseas conflicts. Post 1 established its current location five years ago, as part of effort to modernize the organizations and increase its community involvement. They have utilized their new location in the midst of Denver's art district to display and sell veterans' art. Today they also display art from additional artists in the community, with approximately 80 percent of the wall space reserved for veterans. They offer wellness programs for veterans and families, participate in the district's First Friday events, and collaborate with a wide variety of veteran and community organizations. Long-term plans include acquisition of an apartment building to use for affordable housing for veterans.

The Sturm Center

Dr. Barrs provided information on The Sturm Center. The Center is part of the University of Denver School of Professional Psychology Center designed to train students to provide direct behavioral health services to veterans, service members and their families. The Center has four missions: training, clinically relevant research, outreach and community educations, and direct clinical services. The Sturm Center clinic offers behavioral and mental health services, with a sliding scale used to increase accessibility. They can assist with DBQ's for VA claims and with the documentation necessary for discharge upgrades.

Reports

Mr. Callahan said that DVA East added two new service officers in January. They are currently training and will attend NACVSO training in Nebraska in April. Ben Mestas has returned to DVA East as a state veterans service officer. James Poteet will assume his appeals specialist role full-time and be located at the VARO beginning 01 March. A position of division director for CDVA East has been announced. He will attend the Annual Women Veteran Empowerment

Exposition in Houston in March. A bill is being drafted for the woman veteran license plate and sponsor are being sought. Further details from CDVA West are available in the submitted report from director Joanne Iglesias. He distributed copies of the Strategic Plan and the Board discussed whether to process with the SPI committees as confirmed. It was noted that if more than one board member serves on the same committee the meetings will need to be scribed and published.

Mr. Robinson said the Veterans Monument Trust is still soliciting bids concerning repair of the broken light. The CDHS budget proposal concerning salary increases for SVCLC employees is pending. JBC has not yet set figures. The letter of support from the Board has been sent DMVA leadership. The Spanish

Peaks SVCLC is seeking a new administrator. Groundbreaking for the transitional living facility being constructed on the Fitzsimons campus was held in December.

Reports

Ms. Hoagland said that current statistics indicate that the percentages of women veterans served by each grant stream are respectively 10.4 percent and 14.8 percent for the Veterans Trust Fund Grant and for the Veterans Assistance Grant. One VTF grantee has agreed to a downward modification of their contract.

Discussion/Action

There are currently four VTF grantees who are out of funds and have applied for additional funding. The requirements for additions funding is that the organization must have spent at least 65 percent of its grant by the middle of January, are in full compliance, demonstrate the need, and can provide assurance that the funds will be expended by 15 June. Requests submitted to the Board for consideration were:

American Legion Post 9, La Junta: \$2,000.00 for transportation. Mr. Gonzales moved that the funds be awarded as recommended. Mr. Rudder seconded. The motion carried.

VFW of Colorado, Lakewood: \$10,000.00 for veterans assistance. Mr. Steen moved that the funds be awarded as recommended. Ms. Hammon seconded. The motion carried.

VFW Post 5843, Meeker: \$4,000.00 for transportation. Ms. Scanlon moved that the funds be

awarded as recommended. Dr. Caldwell seconded. The motion carried.

American Legion Post 103, Littleton: \$5,000.00 for veterans assistance. Mr. Steen moved that the funds be awarded as recommended. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. Hoagland said a legislative change will be required to allow the VTF Grant to permit costs involved in vehicle ownership when granting funds for a vehicle purchase. Also to be considered is that DAV chapters are required by the national organization to surrender vehicle titles to VA.

Ms. Scanlon asked if there was an update on pay for county veterans service officers. Mr. Steen said as CCI has no standing committee concerning veterans, the annual conference may be the best opportunity to communicate with county commissioners. Ms. Scanlon suggested a letter in advance of the conference to the board s of commissioners, and Mr. Gonzales said that might give them notice of the topic and allow them time to research. Mr. Steen suggested tailoring the letters by county to give the exact dollar amount provided by the state. He and Mr. Callahan will work on the letter.

Upcoming Meetings

01 March, Golden CBOC: VTF application training

05 April, Aurora: VTF discussion and vote

Ms. Hammon suggested adjusting the date of May meeting to 09 May so that it might be held in Grand Junction and coincide with the grand opening of the Western Slope One Source. The ribbon cutting is in the morning so the meeting time would have to change to the afternoon. Mr. Callahan said that Board members who wish to fly to Grand Junction from Centennial have the option available. Mr. Dailey said the current meeting location has the advantage of having been arranged by congressional district. Ms. Hammon moved and Ms. Scanlon seconded that the May meeting be held on 09 May at the Western Slope One Source at 02:00 p.m. The motion carried with Mr. Dailey and Mr. Gonzales dissenting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Rudder moved to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Caldwell. The meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes

Friday, 01 March 2019

ECHCS Community Based Outpatient Clinic

1020 Johnson Road, Room 1372

Golden, CO 80401

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:

David Callahan, CDVA East Acting Director

Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Liaison/Resource Director Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant
Administrator

Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Bill Conroy, Former CDVA Director

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 welcomed Mr. Conroy and introduced him. He then invited introductions from Board members and staff. He reminded the attendees that the traditional agenda format was adjusted for the meeting to ensure sufficient time for VTF Grant application review training.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Gonzalez said corrected the spelling of his last name, which was correct in the attendance register but wrong elsewhere in the document. He also corrected line 8 in the summary of Mr.

Callahan's report, changing the word "process" to "proceed." Ms. Hammon moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Rudder seconded. The motion carried.

VTF Application Review Training

Ms. Hoagland provided a history of the VTF grant program and the current application, scoring system, and program policies. The existing standards are based on the results of the performance audit of the VTF Grant conducted by the Office of the State Auditor in FY 2013 and on the criteria of DPA's Grants Unit, which uses OMB's Uniform Grant Guidance to inform its requirements of state grant programs.

Mr. Conroy addressed the Board regarding VTF history and the 2013 audit. He said the initial grant processes assembled by DMVA distributed funds efficiently, which was a priority for the department. The performance audit found deficits in accountability and in the suitability of some budgets and budget items. The initial changes to the VTF grant program were in response to the problems identified by the audit.

Mr. Dailey said that he joined the Board immediately after receipt of the audit results, and he recalled that there were 114 program deficits in the report. He commended Ms. Hoagland on her work to create the current program and its structured accountability.

Mr. Dorman said that he was working for DMVA when the audit took place. He said that the State Auditor's office wanted more metrics and an even greater degree of accountability from grantees. The department successfully rebutted some of the recommendations because such requirements would place significant strain on grantees, and were likely to adversely affect service delivery.

Ms. Hoagland said that since the modifications made in response to the audit, other changes have been necessary due to the requirements of the DPA Grants Unit. One requirement is a pre-award risk assessment that is now part of the application materials. Risk assessments can be highly detailed and run up to 24 pages long, but to streamline the process for VTF applications the DMVA form uses a two- page check-box form. The form elicits critical information necessary to assess risk and determine how much monitoring a grantee organization is expected to need. VTF grantees are usually high risk as they are not traditional nonprofits. Volunteers often manage the

service programs and the organizations are unlikely to have complex accounting systems.

Ms. Hoagland distributed copies of the audit findings that are specific to the Board accompanied by the DMVA responses. A copy of the document is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Steen said that the audit report and recommendations seem inflexible and mechanical, and that service delivery should be the priority. Dr. Caldwell said that the recommendations should guide an objective process and that accountability from grantees is necessary. Mr. Dorman said it is difficult to maintain a balance between accountability and difficulty. Ms. Hammon said that she also serves on the CDPHE Board of Health and the DMVA grant process is much less stringent by comparison to the policies of that department with much more support available to grantees.

Mr. Conroy asked if training is available to applicants and grantees. Ms. Hoagland said that application webinars are conducted throughout the application cycle. Grantees receive a handbook of rules and policies at the beginning of the grant cycle and a kickoff webinar is required at the beginning of each grant year. Applicants are permitted to ask questions during the application process, which is not a common practice. However, this level of support is important to provide since most VTF applications are being prepared by post and chapter volunteers rather than professional grant writers.

Ms. Hoagland distributed copies of the 2019-2010 VTF application form. Ten webinar trainings were held to assist applicants during the process. The webinars follow the application exactly with explanations and examples of how to answer the questions.

She reminded the Board that VTF applications are considered private property of the applicants if and until the applications are funded. Neither the applications nor their contents can be disclosed to outside parties at this time. She reminded all of the conflict of interest policy: if a voting member is directly involved with any applicant organization, that person must disclose the affiliation and recuse themselves from scoring and discussion of that application. Board members must also recuse themselves in the case of any personal bias that might affect their objectivity regarding an applicant.

Ms. Hoagland distributed the scoring rubric, which describes how to score each category based

upon the published criteria. A copy of the rubric is attached to these minutes. She said that the Board will also receive a map showing the geographic location of all applicants. She then provided a fictional sample for scoring practice and led the Board through the exercise.

Ms. Hoagland said that applications are due by 3:00 p.m. on 01 March. She will review the application for completeness. They just have an original signature of the authorized representative and must have all the required attachments. All applications that meet those minimum requirements will be sent to the Board members for scoring. She asked the Board to send their scores no later than 29 March so that the scores can be compiled prior to the next meeting. Applications from CLCs need to be read but they do not need to be scored.

The Board VTF subcommittee will meet on 21 March and submit its recommendations to the Board. The Board will vote on all applications on 05 April.

The Board here recess at 10:43 a.m. and resumed labor at 10:58 a.m.

Mr. Dailey asked if there were any questions in regard to the scoring process and rubric. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Hoagland if information is available regarding the timeliness of grant reimbursements.

Releasing the gavel, he addressed the Board as a representative of a VTF grantee, saying that VTF reimbursement have been markedly slow during the current grant cycle.

Ms. Hoagland said that the issue is known and that Accounting has run behind due to staffing issues. Earlier in the week she was informed that a reimbursement request processed on 11 January had not yet been paid, and she notified the department Controller that the department is in violation its grant agreement. The grant agreements require that reimbursements be paid no late than 45 days from the processing date. Her understanding is that Accounting currently has only one staff person processing all of the payables.

Mr. Dorman said that he will advise the Deputy Executive Director. Dr. Caldwell asked if the Board should submit an official inquiry. Mr. Dorman said they are welcome to do so, but he is willing to relay the inquiry on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Dailey asked if it would help if grantees requested advances rather than submitting for

reimbursements. Ms. Hoagland said it probably would not, as requests for advance have to be approved individually by the Controller and thus usually take longer than reimbursements. Ms. Hammon suggested drafting a letter to department leadership that would be ready to send if there is no resolution by the date of the April Board meeting, and Mr. Gonzalez and Ms. Scanlon agreed. Ms. Hoagland said that the timing of reimbursement payments ebbs and flows according to the workflow and staff available in accounting but that these delays are a more pronounced than usual. She provided an update from her 01 March email, stating that reimbursements from 30 January are being processed. This brings the current wait time into compliance.

Mr. Dailey resumed the gavel and invited a motion concerning the Board's preference regarding a letter to the department. Ms. Scanlon moved that since the grant agreement violation is no longer active, the Board prepare a letter in case it is needed in April but to allow Mr. Dorman to relay the Board's interest in the meantime. Dr. Caldwell seconded. The motion carried. Ms. Hammon will draft the letter and Ms. Scanlon will review.

Discussion/Action

VTF Webinars

Mr. Dailey asked if all of the Board members have attended a VTF webinar. Three members have but only one within the past year. Mr. Dailey reminded the Board the VTF Grant is the Board's charge and encouraged all the members to attend at least one webinar per cycle.

SPI Committees

Ms. Hammon said that Board voted on SPI committees in October and those appointments were reviewed as follows:

SP 1

1.1.2 Two DVA Directors

1.2.1 Two DVA Directors

1.3.1 Board Chair, and two DVA directors or delegated representatives.

1.4.1 DVA appeals specialist, legislative liaison, two DVA directors.

SP 2

2.1.1 Chair or designated representative, two DVA directors

2.1.2 Dave Callahan, two DVA directors

2.1.3 Pat Hammon, Greg Dorman, DVA designated staff

2.2.1 Chair or designated representative, Dave Callahan, two DVA directors

SP 4

4.1.1. Norm Steen, legislative liaison, grant administrator, CDVA east director

4.2.1 Norm Steen, legislative liaison

Mr. Dailey said that the committees as created do not contain more than one Board member apiece and therefore are able to meet without public notice. Mr. Callahan recommended designating a lead for each committee so that committees can begin work. The committee leads that were decided are as follows:

SP 1

Tabled

May 09 Quorum

Mr. Dailey asked the Board to affirm an anticipated quorum on 09 May at the Western Region One Source. Mr. Rudder, Dr. Caldwell, Ms. Hammon, and Ms., Scanlon plan to attend, so a quorum is anticipated.

Reports

Mr. Dorman said that the Senate confirmation of the appointments of Mr. Gonzalez and Ms. Scanlon will be on 25 March at 01:30 p.m. He requested a copy if digital copy of the artwork for the Woman Veteran license plate to provide to the sponsors. He advised the Board regarding the letter to boards of commissioners encouraging support of county veterans service offices, saying the statute provides funds up to the specified amount to reimburse those spent in support of the

county veterans service office.

Mr. Steen will revise the Board's letter to capture the correct wording. Ms. Scanlon asked about the status of the letter in support of the CDHS budget proposal to raise the pay of CLC staff. Mr. Dorman and Mr., Callahan will confirm.

Mr. Callahan reported that CDVA East is hiring a director, an office manager, and an administrative assistant. Carissa Snyder is the LEAN champion for CDVA East. The four new CVSOs from CDVA East will attend NACVSO training in April. Six regional trainings will be conducted by state VSOs in April. The position of State Women Veterans Coordinator is being submitted for approval. It is unknown at this time whether the position will be under DMVA or CDVA East.

Ms. Hoagland said that she was invited to help create the state's Grant Management 101 training. She bought a request for a contract modification to increase the fund allocation for VT 19-17, American Legion Post 62 in Craig by \$2,000.00. Ms. Hammon moved to approve the modification. Mr. Steen seconded. The motion carried. Ms. Hammon asked if any additional information was available on the performance of VT 19-07, American legion Post 32 in Longmont or VT 19-20, American Legion Post 22 in Northglenn. Ms. Hoagland said that VT 19-07 has modified the grant agreement to decrease funding and that she has had three on-site meetings with VT 19-20. The post has appointed a new grant manager.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Hammon said that the Western Region One Source will hold an open house on 08 March from 04:00 p.m. – 08:00 p.m. There are 12 rental spaces available and five commitments to date. The One Source will have a state VSO and DAV will continue to have a VSO available at the hospital.

Mr. Steen said as chair of the Board of Directors of Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, part of their current mission is to support and protect veterans, military members, and families, including advocating for increased community-military relationships. The National Association of Counties Veterans and Military Services Committee will meet on 03 March in Washington, D.C. with a focus on suicide prevention and associated best practices.

Ms. Scanlon said that UVC will hold its awards banquet on 07 April at the Renaissance Hotel in Stapleton. Ticket prices will increase after 21 March. She encouraged Board members to let her know if they want to attend and if there are enough people she will reserve a table. March 2019 marks the 74th anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima. Survivors and family members will attend a remembrance ceremony on the island.

Mr. Gonzalez said that Senator Gardner has announced his VA Readiness Initiative. This includes several bills that are based on four pillars: expanding access to services, encouraging innovation, VA accountability, and empowering transitioning service members. Construction has begun in Colorado Springs on Freedom Springs, a housing development designed to offer permanent housing to homeless veterans.

Dr. Caldwell said the Columbia protocol has been rolled out to the Centura Health Network. This suicide risk assessment has been endorsed by both the DOD and VHA and can be used by laypeople.

Mr. Rudder said this March meeting mark his fourth anniversary as a member of CBVA and his seventh as a VSO. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve on behalf of Colorado veterans.

Mr. Dailey said the Veteran Town hall in Frisco will be held on 29 March. The Warrior Bonfire Program held an event in Granby in February and Parker's Platoon participated the Grand Lake Pond Hockey Classic. Warrior Bonfire is a multi-day retreat for post 9/11 Purple Heart recipients. Parker's Platoon assists veterans with TBI, PTSD and related diagnoses through activities and retreats.

Upcoming Meetings

05 April, Aurora Chamber of Commerce: VTF Grant 09 May Western Region Once Source
07 June, Westcliffe

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Rudder moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Scanlon. The meeting adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

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

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.

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

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.

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. Igelsias' 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.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes

Friday, 07 June 2019

Rancher's Roost, Westcliffe Bowling Alley

25 Main Street

Westcliffe, CO 81252

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 Joanne Iglesias, CDVA West Director

Myra Dollar, CDVA East Office Manager Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Dave Akin, veteran

Jennifer Constantine, spouse Bud Danley, veteran

Nancy Featherstone, advocate Betty Forand, veteran

Aaron Jones, veteran

Randy Knight, VFW Post 12063 Dan Lindvig, veteran

Kathy Lindvig, veteran Linda Marble, veteran Ric Parrent, veteran

Dave Piece, VFW Post 12063 James Phelps, VFW Post 12063

Theresa Rudder, President, General Federation of Women's Clubs of Colorado Michelle Ruehl,
veteran

Jim Silver, veteran Charles Vogel veteran John Watson, veteran Paul Watson, veteran Chuck
Williams, veteran

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

invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Hammon corrected her comments as reported in the April 2019 minutes, specifically that American Legion Post 50 will hold its annual tea at the Western Region One Source during the summer, and that the contribution from the Vail Health Foundation is to support behavioral health. Mr. Rudder moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Scanlon said that the governor has signed the legislation for the Woman Veteran license plate. The UVC meeting on 13 June will focus on the issue of veteran suicide. The UVC Women Task Force continues its efforts to establish a State Women Veterans Coordinator with the collaboration of DMVA.

Ms. Hammon said that new county veterans service officers have been hired in Garfield and Routt counties. She is covering Pitkin County until a new service officer is hired there. She attended the DMVA visit to CLCs in May. A women's American Legion post is being organized in Grand Junction; one currently exists in Littleton.

Dr. Caldwell said that Centura Health has now been using the Columbia protocol for three months and is tracking its efficacy. Intake is being modified to identify veterans at initial contact. She recently visited

Willamette National Cemetery in Oregon.

Mr. Steen said he will participate in a meeting with the Colorado Department of Transportation concerning the effort to assist veterans in accessing transportation to medical services. He spoke at the Armed Forces Day event in Colorado Springs on May 18. He continues work in conjunction with the director the Lindstrom clinic as VHA prepares for the June enactment of the Mission Act. Earlier in the week he attended the annual CCI conference, also attended by Mr. Hunt and Mr. Callahan.

Mr. Gonzalez said he attended the inaugural Memorial Day ceremony at the Pikes Peak National

Cemetery. He gave an address at Boys State on 06 June. On June 21 he will attend the Fort Carson change of command ceremony. He was in attendance at the Air Force Academy graduation and was one of the group to greet President Trump upon his arrival at the event.

Mr. Rudder said that a large concern in southern Colorado continues to be veteran suicide, which is double the national average in Colorado and in the San Luis Valley specifically the rate doubles again. Robby Robinson was the speaker at the Rio Grande Memorial Day ceremony. He attended the ribbon cutting for the Western Region One Stop on 09 May. There will be a community meeting in Alamosa on June 25 to discuss the Mission Act.

Mr. Dailey said that the April town halls in Frisco and Kremmling were well attended, although VA was not present at the Frisco event. He attended the annual Memorial Day ceremony on Hoosier Pass held the Sunday prior to the holiday

Public Comment

Dr. Phelps said that Custer County has a very low suicide rate, including among veterans, though it does have the highest number of veterans per capita in Colorado. There is a county clinic available for health care that is staffed with nurse practitioners and circulating doctors, and physical therapy services are available locally. He said that the 1993 assessment of the needs of Colorado veterans did not include Custer County.

Mr. Parrent said that the Choice program has been difficult for area veterans. The routes and mileage used by the program were often impracticable and incorrect. The travel office at the Denver VAMC was of help in resolving some of the complication, but that involvement made the process take longer.

Mr. Knight said one problem he has observed is that veterans receive incorrect information from VSOs. He asked who oversees the county veterans service officers in Colorado. Mr. Dailey explained the structure of the Division, identified the two directors, and said that annual training this year will be held in August.

Community Presentation

Dr. Phelps is the administrator of the Veterans Trust Fund Grant in Westcliffe. Their assistance program is available to veterans, surviving spouse, and dependent children. He said that

approximately 10 percent of the veterans in the area live at less than 50 percent of the poverty level. The greatest needs in the area are food and fuel, specifically firewood and propane. They do refer veterans to LEAP, but in

many cases the veterans are just over the income limit or they are renters. There is one grocery store in the county and this can make the use of gift cards for groceries difficult. The program works in conjunction with the VSO. They had a complication with the grant rules this year when a veteran needed a new furnace, and grant funds could not be used due to the disallowance of capital improvements.

Their other difficulty was the delayed payments. Mr. Dailey said that problem has been resolved. Several veterans expressed their appreciation for assistance received through the VTF.

The board here recessed at 10:30 a.m. and resumed at 10:50 a.m.

Reports

Mr. Hunt said the legislature's capital development committee will visit the Veterans Memorial Cemetery and the WROS the week of June 09. The week of July 04 they will visit the Glenwood Springs resource center.

Ms. Iglesias said the WEOS grand opening went well. National Doughnut Day, which was the day of this meeting, was attracting media and veterans as the WROS had doughnuts available. The annual women veterans' tea will be held in August. The Vietnam Veteran Memorial traveling wall be in Delta through June 09. DVA West has hired a state veteran service officer, who is training at DVA East this week.

On behalf of Mr. Robinson, Mr. Dailey said that the new light has been installed on the Veterans Trust Monument and shared the photo with the group.

Ms. Hoagland thanked Dr. Phelps for his time and effort spent administering the VTF grant. Dr. Phelps thanked the Board for the increased grant award for next year.

Discussion/Action Items

Ms. Scanlon said that UVC and the American Legion are involved in efforts to make more funds available for the surviving spouses of veterans, and inquired whether the Board would like to

take a position. Ms. Hammon said the Board could send a letter to the governor through DMVA expressing support and requesting federal lobbying. Ms. Scanlon so moved, Ms. Hammon seconded. Ms. Scanlon and Ms.

Hammon will draft the letter.

Election of Officers

Chair: Ms. Hammon nominated Jack Rudder for the office of Chair. Dr. Caldwell seconded. Mr. Rudder was unanimously elected and he accepted.

Vice Chair: Ms. Scanlon nominated Pat Hammon for the office of Vice Chair. Dr. Caldwell seconded. Mr. Dailey nominated Norm Steen for the office. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The vote went to written ballot. Seven members voted for a majority of four. Tellers were Ms. Hoagland and Ms. Snyder. The majority was won by Ms. Hammon. She accepted.

Secretary: Ms. Hammon nominated Sheila Scanlon for the office of Secretary. Dr. Caldwell seconded. Ms. Scanlon was unanimously elected and she accepted.

Upcoming Meetings

The Board set the following locations for the meetings for the upcoming year:

August 02, Grand Junction, WROS (visits to VMC and VAMC) September 06 Boulder

October 04, Florence, SVCLC

November 06, Aurora, Wings Over the Rockies December 06 Littleton

January 03, Lakewood, Denver VARO

February 07, Colorado Springs, Mount Carmel (Mr. Steen and Mr. Gonzalez to facilitate) March 06, Burlington

April 03, Aurora, Chamber of Commerce May 01 Cortez

June 05, Steamboat Springs (Ms. Hammon to facilitate)

Adjournment

There being no further business, Dr. Caldwell moved to adjourn. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes

Friday, 02 August 2019

Western Region One Source 482 28 Road

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice Chair Sheila Scanlon, Secretary Hollie Caldwell, Member Duane Dailey,
Member

Longinos Gonzalez Jr., Member Norm Steen, Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Mickey Hunt, DMVA Deputy Executive Director Joanne Iglesias, CDVA West Director

Rich Tremaine, CDVA East Director

Jessica Morratto, Veterans Memorial Cemetery Director Myra Dollar, CDVA East Office
Manager

Meighan Marquis, WROS Property Manager

Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Dana Brosig, Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Erin Cavit, CVSO Hinsdale
County

Jim Doody, Vietnam War Memorial Park Wendy Hoffman, Operation Revamp Dave Krutsinger,
CDOT

Glen LeDoux, VFW

Dale LNU, Army veteran

Alyssa Logan, Regional Representative for Sen. Michael Bennett Kathleen Lyons, Eagle County

DHS

Fred Marshall, UVC

Gary Parrot, Commander Grand Valley Honor Guard

Theresa Rudder, President, Colorado Association of Women's Clubs

Opening

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order at 0936 hours. Proceedings began with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops overseas. Mr. Rudder explained the role of the Board to the attendees and invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Snyder advised that addition corrections to the June minutes had been received from Ms. Hammon and Mr. Gonzales. It was moved by Mr. Dailey and seconded by Mr. Gonzalez that the minutes be approved as corrected. The motion carried.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Dailey said that both Grand and Summit Counties have seen an increase in the number of veterans who locate there during the warmer months. His office participated in the annual July 04 parade in Granby. The event continues to grow with more than 7,000 attendees in 2019.

Dr. Caldwell said the Centura Health Network is continuing its effort to identify veterans who register for inpatient or emergency care by adding the query to the registration system and including it in the electronic health record. They have employed the Columbia rating scale to evaluate suicide risk and use this assessment to inform the care team when planning approaches and treatment. The goal is to provide culturally consistent for veterans.

Ms. Hammon said that the Eagle County area also sees a lot of veteran who are there seasonally, and they have had an increase in incarceration of veterans with mental health issues. The hospital in Vail has opened a six-bed crisis unit. New county veterans service officers have been hired in Garfield, Pitkin, and Routt Counties. All three will attend statewide annual VSO training in August. There is now a Blue Star Family Club in Eagle that has been very well received.

Ms. Scanlon visited the Normandy American Cemetery adjacent to Omaha Beach and the American Cemetery at Meuse Argonne where her great uncle is buried. There are 25 overseas cemeteries for

American service members, all managed under the jurisdiction of the American Battle Monuments

Commission. She was also able to assist a family member to obtain two medals that he had earned but were not in his collection. She encouraged attendees to assist older veterans who might need this assistance. She will represent the Board at the UVC meeting on September 10.

Mr. Gonzalez said he served on the selection committee for El Paso County Veteran of the Year, which will be announced in September. He attended the Korean War armistice memorial ceremony held in Memorial park the last weekend of July. He also attended the change of command ceremonies for the Striker Brigade at Fort Carson and for the 21st Space Wing at Peterson AFB.

Mr. Steen said the Colorado Department of Transportation is actively working on plans to assist veterans with transportation for health care services. Mr. Krutsinger attended the meeting to brief all attendees on the most recent developments. He attended a July stakeholder meeting concerning creating a new state veterans' Community Living Center in the Pikes Peak Region. Current estimates show that with the high veteran population in that area, the need for this care will exceed availability by 2035. The intent is to create a facility with a public-private partnership modelled on the one in use in Walsenburg.

Mr. Rudder said that in the San Luis valley and much of southern Colorado the prevalent issue is access to medical care. The San Luis Valley transit board is working to address the problem. The VA town hall held in Alamosa did discuss the Mission Act, but few answers were available on practical application of the act's provisions.

Public Comment

Mr. Doody invited attendee to visit the Vietnam War memorial park in Fruita. Also referred to as the Field of Dreams, the park is dedicated to those who served in support of that conflict. A prominent feature is a static display of a UH-1H Huey helicopter, which has motion activated

audio to enhance the visitor experience. A memorial wall has the emblems for each of the U.S. military branches and names of service members from Colorado's western slope who died in the conflict are on the wall. The park has recently added Welcome Home statues and has plans to augment the memorial with additional art, including a map of Southeast Asia.

Mr. Marshall said that the Board meetings might not be accessible to many veterans while held on a weekday. He would like to see the Board represented on social media. He is concerned that someone within the state or VHA may be providing mailing lists of veteran to vendors. He is seeking records from VA town halls sponsored by the American Legion approximately two years ago. He said the Mission Act may prove more if the VA can contact more community providers.

Ms. Cavit said transportation will always be a concern in very rural areas of Colorado. The Mission Act provides the best prospect for relief, but that local care needs to be coordinated through VHA and the provider needs to be paid. Currently the VAM in Grand Junction and the VOA in Durango try to help to coordinate care, but both are so distant from Hinsdale County that complications are constant. Mr.

Dailey said he will provide a VOA contact that is specific to Colorado's mountain areas.

Mr. Parrot said that as a representative of the Honor Guard, he believes that 501(c)(19) organizations should be eligible to apply for the VAG Grant. He said they are charitable organizations, and that the honor guards provide for the final needs of veterans as they are laid to rest.

Glen LeDoux said that the Western Region Resource has been a valuable addition to the community. It has strengthened the supportive atmosphere experience by veterans on the western slope.

Ms. Lyons thanks the veterans present for their service, and thanks the county veterans service officers for their continued support of veterans in Eagle County.

Ms. Hoffman said that many veterans have been moving to the area, which has resulted in an increase of the number needing assistance. The Western Region One Source has been a valuable resource.

Ms. Brosig said her organization in partnership with CDOT is developing a 2035 regional transportation plan for Grand Valley. They are just beginning the public involvement phase and welcome input from local veterans. She had sign up forms available for attendees who might wish to participate. They have a trainer available who can provide outreach to community groups to help educate people on how to use mass transit. Discounted service is available to veterans and daily service is available from Grand Junction to Denver and from Grand Junction to Durango.

Mr. Dale provided a handout and encouraged support for a prospective veterans' prostate cancer support group based on the PCRI model created by Dr. Mark Scholz. Dr. Scholz is a prostate cancer educator who founded the Prostate Cancer Research Institute and has created successful support groups in California.

Community Presentations

CDOT

Mr. Krutsinger said that CDOT is in the planning process to improve statewide access to health care transportation for veterans. The three overarching goals are safety, mobile options, and transparency. They are currently holding county meetings throughout the state to seek local input and well a performing other outreach at events such a county fairs. He supplied an information packet and indicated where attendees could locate maps of the current state highways and veterans' medical facilities. The need to increase regional transportation has risen since Greyhound no longer provides legacy services within the state. He said CDOT is trying to increase partnerships with local transportation providers, particularly in Grand Junction, Gunnison, and Montrose. The intent for the developing new services is to provide wheelchair-capable buses with reclining seats, chargers, wifi, and restrooms. Ms. Cavit suggested they consider the feasibility of a voucher system for payment, as veterans have to wait for VA travel reimbursement and may not be able to afford the fare up front.

Veterans Memorial Cemetery

Ms. Iglesias and Ms. Morratto said that the total internments for FY 2019 was 4,449. Funds for capital construction were included in the Long Bill. The \$25,000,000 will fund irrigation, expansion, and additional columbaria. The cemetery has difficulties with VA reimbursements

due to a change in VA's process. Reimbursements are often significantly delayed and often unidentified, complicating tracking. To date no reimbursements have been received for internments since March. This is a known nationwide issue.

Western Region One Source

Ms. Iglesias thanked all in attendance for their support of the Western Region One Source. The community has been very generous with donations of equipment, furniture, and flags. The DEERS

office served 82 veterans in May 89 in June, and 11 in July. State Veterans Service Officer Brian Only had 28 appointments over the eight days that his WROS office was open in May, followed by 51 appointments in June and 71 in July. VA will send a public contact representative to the WROS one day per month in addition to the one week per month they are at the VAMC. The WROS provides a weekly newsletter to its counties and attends weekly VFW breakfasts to continue connecting with local veterans. The latest tenants moving in include VOA, Transportation of America, and employment services. They will host the women veterans' tea on August 17.

Reports

Mr. Hunt presented a plaque to Mr. Dailey to thank him for his service as Chair from 2016-2019. He said his last day with the department will be in two weeks. His replacement is currently being selected. In response to a concern earlier expressed by Mr. Doody, he assured attendees that the state does not sell or otherwise provide veteran mailing lists. He said that an additional cash fund has again been provided to the Veterans Assistance Grant and that the department would welcome recommendations from the Board on how the funds might be best utilized. Mr. Rudder presented Mr. Hunt with a gift from the Board to thank him for his service to the Board and to Colorado veterans. Ms. Iglesias and Ms. Hammon also presented gifts and thanks to Mr. Hunt.

In Mr. Dorman's absence, Mr. Steen reported that the Legion Act has been signed into law. All veterans from World War II forward are now eligible for Legion membership.

Mr. Tremaine said he has now been with the DVA East for 120 days. He thanks Mr. Hunt for his service. He introduced the DVA East staff present at the meeting. He said DVA-E is

implementing technological improvements to facilitate communication and training. Video conferencing and training will be available to all county veterans service officers. The state has provided webcams to each county and will create a video training library to make remote training accessible at any time. The statewide annual training conference will be held the last week in August. Three state veteran service officers attended the Colorado Mental Health Summit. One state veterans service officer has been designated to specialized training with the Marcus Brain Institute to increase a subject matter expertise regarding veterans and traumatic brain injury. Mr. Tremaine will attend the annual conference of the National Association of State Directors of Veteran Affairs later this month.

Ms. Hoagland thanked Ms. Hoffman for her attendance and said the only item in addition to the submitted report was to inform the Board of the cash fund for the Veterans Assistance Grant. Mr. Steen asked if grantees could assist veterans with regional transportation cost by paying for bus tickets or passes. Ms. Hoagland said they could if that was included in their approved line item budget. The grantee would need to provide a receipt for the payment method and maintain a signed log showing to whom passes were distributed and when.

The Board here recessed at 11:29 and resumed at 11:43

Discussion/Action Items

Mr. Tremaine requested that the Board allocate \$15,000 for this fiscal year from the Veterans Trust Fund for CBVA travel expenses for 2019-2020, and that the Board allocate \$50,000 from the Veterans Trust Fund to support the Census 2020 complete count project. Ms. Scanlon questioned whether \$15,000 would be a sufficient allocation for travel. Ms. Hammon concurred and recommended that the Division consider \$20,000. Mr. Tremaine modified his request to \$20,000.00. Ms. Hammon moved that the Board allocate \$20,000 for this fiscal year from the Veterans Trust Fund for CBVA travel expenses for 2019-2020. Ms. Scanlon seconded. Mr. Dailey said the Board could consider whether some of the established travel is necessary. He asked Mr. Hunt if the Board is required to visit the Veterans Memorial Cemetery each year. Mr. Hunt said that the current bylaws require a meeting to be held west on the continental divide and added that that rule was made when the Board was based in Denver. He said ~~he~~ **this** could be less necessary since the staff at CDVA West will be regularly reporting on the cemetery.

Ms. Hammon asked what the travel expenses were for 2018-2019. Ms. Hoagland referred to the end of year report, which lists a total of \$11,316.48. However, not all expenses were submitted so the real total was probably higher. Also the Board's strategic plan requires a greater number of non-monitoring site visits to VTF grantee organizations in this fiscal year, which could have costs attached. Ms. Hammon asked if \$25,000 might be more appropriate. Mr. Tremaine said that the Division would support

\$25,000. Ms. Hammon amended her motion to allocate \$25,000 for this fiscal year from the Veterans Trust Fund for CBVA travel expenses for 2019-2020. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The motion carried.

Mr. Steen said that the Board members should ensure that any travel reimbursed by these funds is to the benefit of veterans. He encouraged the Board members to help publicize the meetings and encourage attendance from veterans and the community. Mr. Tremaine said that his office will publicize the meetings in DVA East. Ms. Scanlon said that she announces them at each UVC meeting. Mr. Rudder said that a new American Legion directory should be available soon and he will share those contacts with DVA East. Ms. Hoagland said that she notifies and encourages attendance from grantees.

The Board next considered the proposed allocation for the Census 2020 project. Mr. Dailey asked specifically how the funds would be used and Mr. Tremaine said that is not yet known. Mr. Hunt said that David Callahan is spearheading this project and should have more information. The Board decided to table this request until additional data is available.

Ms. Hoagland said that the current VTF grant award to the Spanish Peaks CLC is to buy a van. The CLC has found a van for approximately \$9,000 less than the original bid, and has requested to modify their grant agreement to put the now remaining grant funds toward the purchase of another, smaller van to assist with additional transportation needs. Dr. Caldwell so moved and Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried.

Unfinished Business

Ms. Scanlon said the letter she and Ms. Hammon agreed to prepare in regard to the "widows' tax," wherein retirement benefits are reduced for surviving spouses as they are offset by VA

benefit payments, may no longer be needed. All of Colorado's congressional representatives currently support the effort to permit concurrent receipt. Mr. Steen suggested instead contacting those representative to thank them for their continued support. Board members could volunteer to testify. Ms. Scanlon asked ~~is~~ if that was permissible. Mr. Hunt said that is was but it make sure The Adjutant General knows about it first. The Board decided that Ms. Hammon and Ms. Scanlon will write the letter to these revised guidelines.

Mr. Dailey asked if there was still an intent for the Board to write to CCI encouraging support and funding of county veterans service officers. Mr. Steen that the issue was addressed effectively in person 6

when David Callahan attended the CCI spring conference. He recommended further in-person advocacy. Mr. Hunt suggested that a representative from DMVA leadership address CCI at each meeting. The next meeting will be at the end of November. Mr. Steen said with notice they could prepare a panel discussion.

Mr. Steen asked if the strategic plan needed to be addressed at the time. Ms. Hammon said the SPIs had been reviewed at the Board's training session and specific action will probably wait upon the advice of Mr. Callahan.

New Business

Mr. Rudder appointed a bylaw review committee consisting of himself, Ms. Hammon and Ms. Scanlon. Mr. Dailey said he intends to invite a VHA representative to speak at the October meeting in Boulder.

Upcoming Meetings

September 06 Boulder Public Library – meeting time 10:15 October 04 Florence, SVCLC

November 06 Aurora, Wings Over the Rockies

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Dailey moved to adjourn. Mr. Steen seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes
Friday, 06 September 2019
Boulder Public Library 1001 Arapahoe Avenue
Boulder, CO 80302

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice Chair Sheila Scanlon, Secretary Hollie Caldwell, Member Duane Dailey,
Member

Longinos Gonzalez Jr., Member Norm Steen, Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Greg Dorman, DMVA Interim Deputy Director Rich Tremaine, CDVA East Director

Myra Dollar, CDVA East Office Manager Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Nicole DeNari, veteran spouse and advocate

Lana Frankenfield, VHA Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation Training

Specialist Ana Yelen, Healing Warriors Executive Director

Opening

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order at 1017 hours. Proceedings began with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops overseas. Mr. Rudder explained the role of the Board to the attendees and invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Dailey and seconded by Mr. Gonzalez that the August 2019 minutes be approved as presented. The motion carried.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Dailey said that he attended the CDVA annual training conference held the week August 26

in Westminster. Attended The Vail Veterans Program held at the Diamond Star Ranch in mid-August for approximately 50 veterans and families, mostly from Brooke Army Medical Center in attendance.

Dr. Caldwell said that she appreciated the tour of the Western Colorado VAMC in Grand Junction, noting that it was particularly interesting to see the physical therapy and prosthetics units. Centura Health is finalizing the technological implementation for identifying veterans upon admission.

Ms. Hammon said that the Western Colorado VAMC is recruiting a new director with a temporary director in place for the interim. Renovations are underway at the medical center, with patient care moving now moving to the fifth floor. The third floor will be dedicated to an inpatient substance abuse unit. A congressional forum was held on 05 September in Grand Junction to discuss a program wherein new physicians serve their residencies at VA medical centers in exchange for assistance with education costs. The Western Slope Veterans Coalition will continue its Veteran Day outreach events, with visits planned to 17 schools to date. Mental health and access to treatment continue to be a difficult issue for veteran in Eagle County and the surrounding area.

Ms. Scanlon donated several items of memorabilia to the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC their display featuring women veterans items from American Legion Post 206 and the Women Marine Association CO-1. She offered to facilitate future donations if anyone has additional item to contribute. She addressed the statewide CDVA training concerning woman veterans. The Women Marine Association now taking female navy vets w/ fleet marine force badge.

Mr. Gonzalez participated in the Korean Independence Day celebration held in Colorado Springs on 10 August 10. The event commemorates the end of World War II in the Pacific theater. On Monday 09 September, he will attend the Stand Up of U.S. Space Command at Peterson AFB. He will attend the 9/11 memorial at Memorial Park in Colorado Springs and the 21st Space Wing State of the Wing on 25

September. He reported that William Shuttleworth successfully completed his 3,000-mile walk.

Mr. Steen attended a July meeting also attended by Governor Polis, General Loh, and executive

director of CDOT to determine ways to identify and address the medical transportation of Colorado veterans.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 September and will be a work session. Other issues of interest are the prospective SVCLC in the Pikes Peak region and how CBVA can better connect with county governments and their boards of commissioners. CBVA and DMVA may have an hour at the podium at the CCI statewide convention in December. Mr. Steen suggested a panel about veterans' issues.

Mr. Rudder said that he also attended the CDVA statewide training and appreciated the opportunity to connect with other county veterans service officers. Access to health care is a continuing problem for veterans in the San Luis Valley, with a nine-month waiting list at the clinic in Alamosa. He is encouraging veterans to utilize community care and the Mission Act.

Community Presentations

Nicole Denari

Ms. Denari thanked the Board for allowing her to address the room on behalf of the proposed SVCLC in the Pikes Peak region. Ms. Denari's spouse has service-connected disabilities that have progressed beyond his ability to live at home, and while VHA has been able to pay for LTC care through PACE, that contract is ending and Ms. Denari said that many veterans like her husband would not be able to find inpatient nursing care in their community. The veteran community has identified a need for a facility with roughly the same capacity as Fitzsimons, perhaps as a public-private partnership similar to the model used at Spanish Peaks.

Lana Frankenfield

Ms. Frankenfield introduced the Board and other attendees to the VHA concept of Whole Health. This approach to health care is designed to empower patients to take charge of their health and well-being. Instead of using a disease and problem based methodology, Whole Health is person-based. She referred the Board to Whole Health information available on You Tube and provided explanations of the model's key components. Whole Health integrates community care and support, personal health plans, and health well-being coaching. VHA Colorado does not feature any of the flagship sites for Whole Health, but some facilities are incorporating aspect of the program.

The Board here recessed at 11:29 a.m. and resumed at 11:43 a.m.

Reports

Mr. Tremaine reported for DMVA and CDVA East. The annual training saw 22 new VSOs trained. Longtime state veterans service officer Renee Pace is retiring at the end of November and her role in planning the annual training will be reassigned. The current training curriculum is certified through NAVSCO and in the future CDA hope to accredit directly through VBA. CDVA East is working with the Eastern Colorado VHA on an MOU to allow a state VSO to provide working outreach in the VAMC PTSD unit. CDVA is researching and gathering bids of veterans' benefits CRM systems to see how other systems compare to VetraSpec, the system currently used by the state. Webcams were provided to county veteran service officer to help facilitate access to training, and CDVA East will create a webinar training library for easy access. Ms. Scanlon asked if a notification would be distributed concerning woman veteran license plate. Mr. Tremaine said that the final proof of the plate should be available any day, and once it has been approved notification can commence. Ms. Scanlon agreed to help draft the notification.

Mr. Rudder asked if the Board would like Robby Robinson to continue as the Board's representative the CLC commission. The consensus as unanimous and Amr. Rudder will confirm the appointment with Mr. Robinson.

Ms. Hoagland thank Ms. Yelen for attending. She praised both the work and the grant performance of Healing Warriors. The search is still underway for a storage container for Providers' Resource Clearinghouse.

Discussion/Action

Strategic Plan - This item was postponed in favor of waiting for Mr. Callahan.

Bylaw Review – The committee will meet adjacent to the stated meeting in October.

Veterans Assistance Grant Cash Fund Recommendation – Ms. Hoagland distributed the identified opportunities for use of the additional cash fund and asked the Board members to email her directly with their recommendations. She will also compile a Q&A to distribute to the Board

containing responses to questions received from Board members.

Unfinished Business

Widow's Tax Letter – Ms. Scanlon will distribute the current draft to the Board via the CBVA email address and Board members were asked to respond using that address.

New Business

Ms. Hammon offered to invite a representative for the staff of the Board of Public Health to address the Board about working within the parameters of the open meetings law.

Mr. Steen proposed a discussion at the next meeting in regard to scripting questions for the CCI panel and deciding who will sit on the panel.

Upcoming meetings

04 October, Florence SVCLC

06 November, Wings Over the Rockies, Aurora 06 December 2019 - Littleton

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Dailey moved to adjourn, Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes

Friday, 04 October 2019

Bruce McCandless Veterans Community Living Center

Florence, CO 81226

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice Chair Sheila Scanlon, Secretary Hollie Caldwell, Member Duane Dailey,
Member

Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., Member Norm Steen, Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Richard Tremaine, CDVA East Director Myra Dollar, CDVA East Office Manager Gail
Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Larry Crowder, state senator

Betty Hanawalt, veteran

Barbara Moore, McCandless CLC Administrator Aaron Tremain, Mount Carmel Center for
Excellence Michelle Ruehl, veteran

Opening

Mr. Rudder 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. Rudder invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Dailey moved that the October 2019 minutes be approved as presented. Mr. Steen seconded. The motion carried.

Community Presentations

Aaron Tremain

Mr. Tremain shared a PowerPoint presentation in support of the effort to create new state

veterans community living center in the Pikes Peak area. The area lacks capacity to support older veterans in need of an inpatient facility and current projections indicate a significant increase in that target population by 2035. Ideally the initiative would like to secure a property that would allow not only for a new facility with the approximate capacity of Fitzsimons, but would also have space available for permanent supportive housing. A possible site has been identified.

The facility would provide long term care, memory care, respite care, and rehabilitation. The intended model is a public-private partnership similar to that used in Walsenburg. Advocates are requesting the support of the Board because the state would pay 35% of the costs to establish the new facility.

Dr. Caldwell said that sustainability of the facility should also be considered, since while the population of older veterans in Colorado is projected to increase in the near future it is expected to then decline. Ms. Hammon asked if any legislative action would be taken this in the upcoming session. Mr. Tremain said that is currently uncertain. Mr. Crowder asked if the new facility would impact the census at McCandless and Mr. Tremain said that is probable.

Ms. Scanlon asked if the Board could encourage the support of The Adjutant General and the governor's office. Mr. Steen that without a concrete proposal there may be nothing yet to support. Mr. Gonzalez said the Board could offer general support of the strategic effort to support the need for long term care for older veterans in the Pikes Peak region. He cautioned the Board it might not be beneficial to support the legislation before it is written, as the product could include details that the Board would not support. The Board agreed with Mr. Gonzalez suggestion to support the strategic effort and he so moved. Ms. Hammons seconded. The Board will notify The Adjutant General and the governor's office that it supports the concept of a veterans community living center in the Pikes Peak region.

Betty Hanawalt

Ms. Hanawalt presented about the American Legion Auxiliary on behalf of Theresa Brandt, president- elect of The Auxiliary Department of Colorado. Both the National Auxiliary and the Department of

Colorado were founded by Congressional charter in 1919. The mission was to offer establish

rehabilitation and supportive care for soldiers returning from the war. Through World War II, the organization continued to provide and expand medical aid and assistance to veterans in need, adding a home services component in 1974. Today the Auxiliary advocates for veterans and promotes patriotism through a variety of community programs in hospitals, clinics, and schools.

The Board here recessed at 10:34 and resumed at 10:45

Unfinished Business

Widow's Tax Letter: the final corrections have been submitted and the letter is being finalized for Mr. Rudder's signature.

Bylaw Review: the bylaw committee intends to meet by phone prior to the stated meeting November. The meeting will have minutes kept and seven days' public notice will be provided.

CCI Panel: Mr. Steen presented his recommendations for the veterans' panel at the CCI winter convention on 02 December. He proposed including a county veteran service officer, a state veterans service officer as well as a member of the Board. The Board accepted his recommendations by consensus.

New Business

VTF funding request: Ms. Hoagland presented a VTF funding request from Veterans Memorial Cemetery. The cemetery requested \$24,400.00 for necessary repairs, specifically to replace concrete that allows water accumulation under the footing of the administration building, address shifting sidewalks throughout the cemetery, sidewalk cracks and joint repairs, and repair of water damage that affects the integrity of the mail roadway. It Mr. Steen moved and Ms. Hammon seconded to fund this request in the requested amount of \$24,400.00. The motion carried.

Ms. Scanlon asked the Board consider whether holding meetings in the evenings would allow a greater number of veterans to attend. Mr. Steen said that publishing a meeting calendar six months ahead would also help. Ms. Scanlon suggested that the December meeting could be held on Thursday evening rather than Friday morning. Mr. Dailey said that could prove difficult for Board members who work full time and need to travel to the meeting. Ms. Hammon said that she is willing speak to Post 103 in Littleton about meeting space in December and to inquire about

the possibility of an evening meeting and report back to the Board.

Ms. Hammon said that Michael Kilmer has begun his position as director of VHA ECHCS and that she would like to invite him to speak at the November meeting. Mr. Rudder said that he would speak to Rene Simard to ensure that the Board members attending the luncheon after the November meeting have a table together.

CLC Presentation

Barbara Moore introduced Dave, the president of the residents' council. She thanked the Board for the Veterans Trust Fund Grant awards current and past. It has helped them to afford essential construction

and is currently funding the establishment of a Scandent system. She said McCandless serves a wide range of care need and that the resident council is essential to McCandless because in their facility the residents drive the decisions concerning priorities and improvements. The group also selects the activities and events to ensure they are occasions that the residents enjoy. Dave also thanks the Board for the VTF funds and for the support. He said that enjoys the community at McCandless. He spent some time at another state CLC and was happy to return to Florence. Mr. Steen asked if there is pressure to keep a full census. Ms. Moore said there is not pressure but it is important. They have to have 94 residents to maintain their full funding. He asked if they experience any marketing challenges. Ms.

Moore said that one is that they have no private rooms, and the rooms they have are small. Redesigns of the space have been considered, but they are disruptive and very expensive.

Reports

Mr. Tremaine said that representatives from the woman veteran advocacy group met with the governors' office and that the meeting was productive. CDVA East will soon announce a VSO position that will emphasize diversity and inclusion. The MOU with VHA will allow VSOs to visit inpatient veterans for claims assistance is still in progress.

Mr. Ruder referred the Board to Mr. Robinson's written report and said that Mr. Robinson has accepted the appointment as the Board's liaison to the SVCLC Commission and to the Veterans Monument Trust. Ms. Scanlon reminded the Board that now that some compensation

improvements have been made in regard to CLC staff who provide direct care, the next anticipated legislation will probably concern compensations for nutrition and facilities staff.

Ms. Hoagland referred the Board to her submitted reports. Of note was that at year-end of the last cycle, veterans' self-reported outcomes match the statutory priorities of each grant, with the majority of VTF recipients reporting a decrease in urgent need and a majority of VAG recipients reporting improved health and well-being. Ms. Scanlon asked if Ms. Hoagland has concerns about any VTF grantees so far this year. Ms. Hoagland said that she is not concerned, but is proactively paying monitoring visits in October to grantees in Cortez and Durango.

Mr. Rudder referred the Board to Ms. Iglesias's written reports. CDVA West is in the final stages of hiring a new cemetery director. The WROS has two new tenants moving in and is working on various improvement projects, including parking, HVAC, acoustics, and creating a children's play area.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Scanlon said that Rocky Mountain Regional Medical Center has made improvements to its mammography unit, including more curtains for better privacy.

Dr. Caldwell said that she assisted Nicole DeNari, who attended the September meeting, get in touch with the Centura Health CEO.

Mr. Dailey said that he visited the Eyes of Freedom Lima Company memorial while it was on display at the Rocky Mountain Regional Medical Center. Snow Mountain Ranch will hold its annual Veterans Day event. The Commander of the American Legion of Colorado and a National Vice Commander of the American Legion will attend, the latter serving as the keynote speaker.

Mr. Steen said that the CDOT project to help make VA health care accessible to veterans using public transportation is in progress. He told the Board that recent changes have limited on-base health care to current servicemembers and not retirees. He has been reappointed to NACO's Veterans and Military Services Committee.

Ms. Hammon said that suicide prevention is still a topic of focus in Eagle County, as a veteran

committed suicide in the jail in September using a ligature method. Dr. Caldwell said that ligature risk prevention is a significant topic in health care and well as corrections. Ms. Hammon is serving on Senator Bennett's selection committee for the Air Force Academy.

Upcoming Meetings:

06 November, Wings Over the Rockies, Aurora December – date/time TBD – Littleton

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Dailey moved to adjourn. Ms. Hammon seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes

Wednesday, November 06, 2019

Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum

7711 E. Academy Blvd.

Denver, CO 80230

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Jack Rudder Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice Chair Sheila Scanlon, Secretary Hollie Caldwell, Member Duane Dailey,
Member

Longinos Gonzalez Jr., Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Major General Michael Loh, Adjutant General

Greg Dorman, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director, Resource Director and Legislative
Liaison Matthew Biniki, DMVA Legislative Liaison

Richard Tremaine, CDVA East Director Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Megan Fraser, CDVA East Administrative Assistant ₁

Carissa Snyder, CDVA East Program Assistant

Guests Present:

Colonel Brey Hopkins, Director of Joint Plans, Operations and Military Support Colorado

National Guard Robby Robinson, CBVA Liaison to the Board of Commissioners VCLC and

Veterans Monument Trust Theresa Rudder, President Colorado Federation of Women's Clubs

Opening

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order at 0903 hours. Proceedings began with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops overseas. Mr. Rudder invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Dailey moved that the October 2019 minutes be approved as presented. Dr. Caldwell

seconded. The motion carried.

Address of The Adjutant General

General Loh thanked the Board for their work and introduced Mr. Biniki and Colonel Hopkins for the benefit of the room. Mr. Biniki is a legislative liaison for DMVA and Colonel Hopkins has been appointed as the new DMVA Deputy Executive Director, scheduled to assume the position in January 2020. General Loh said that as the Department and the Board attempt to address the needs of Colorado veterans, the needs for data-driven decision making has increased. Survey-based feedback addressing the needs of veterans is available through CDVA and the county veterans service offices, but the needs of veterans who do not seek benefits or services are largely undetermined. This may particularly apply to underserved and minority populations. He proposed that the Department, Division and Board jointly support a Veterans Task Force to do a statewide needs assessment for Colorado veterans. He requested input and advice from the Board of the concept, possible methods of execution, and funding. He asked the Board to consider whether grant funds could be used to support this effort.

Mr. Dorman said that as the scope of the project is determined, funding needs will become more evident. He inquired whether the Board was interested in serving as on or the proposed task force.

Ms. Scanlon asked if there is a date by which the task force might be expected to begin work. General Loh said that his intent is the next fiscal year. Ms. Hammon said the assessment could take more than one year to complete. Mr. Robinson said that the CLC Board of Commissioners is also pursuing a parallel effort in a veterans' health care needs assessment. Mr. Rudder said that further discussion under the proposal will occur under New Business.

Unfinished Business

Widow's Tax Letter – the final letter was signed by Mr. Rudder at the meeting and referred to the Department for delivery.

Bylaw Review – Ms. Hammon is coordinating with Dr. Nelson to schedule a subcommittee meeting. Mr. Dorman asked to be included in the meeting when scheduled.

CCI Panel – Mr. Dailey said the panel is prepared to present during a breakout session at the

statewide CCI conference on 02 December. Ms. Scanlon said that UVC is also tracking the issues being discussed at the panel. She also inquired whether the Board should again consider a letter to county commissioners.

Mr. Tremaine said that he and Ms. Iglesias will continue to participate in CCI conferences and that the issue is consistently raised by CDVA with CCI. Ms. Hammon said that county veterans service officers need to be encouraged to advocate for their offices with their boards of commissioners. Mr. Dorman said that it could be helpful for the Board to directly reach out to the boards of commissioners and county treasurers in addition to current efforts. Dr. Caldwell recommended inviting the county commissioners to Board meetings when held in their counties. Ms. Scanlon volunteered to prepare the letter for the Board's consideration.

December meeting – Ms. Hammon said the date and location for the December meeting are still in progress. She has not been able to communicate with American Legion Post 103. The post does not have a building but holds its meetings at a nearby recreation center. Ms. Hoagland said that the grant contact for the post will invite veterans to the meeting but did not have suggestions on a meeting location. Ms. Hammon said that the county veterans service officer confirmed that the county can make space available for a daytime meeting, but it would be behind a secured door. She said that the recreation center utilized by Post 103 could accommodate an evening meeting, but she has not heard back from them in regard to availability on 05 December. The Board discussed whether to hold a day or evening meeting. Ms. Hoagland said that the CVSO opined that veterans in Littleton aren't likely to attend an evening meeting, particularly one held the night after the post meeting. Dr. Caldwell said the Board will need to strategize how to engage veterans, particularly in younger age groups. Mr. Tremaine suggested a live feed of the meetings so that veterans who cannot attend in person could still participate. Ms.

Hammon asked if CDVA could supply the technological resources. Mr. Tremaine said not at this point but that perhaps the Department could, with which Mr. Dorman agreed. Ms. Hammon recommended a formal effort to focus on these strategies and the Board concurred. Dr. Caldwell will lead the effort and will consult with Mr. Dorman in regard to Department support. Ms. Hammon will continue to work on a meeting location for Friday, 06 December at the usual stated time. Mr. Rudder reminded the Board that he will be absent from the meeting and Ms. Hammon

will preside.

New Business

Mr. Rudder announced the committee appointments. Ms. Hammon will represent the Board at the CDVA annual training. The VTF subcommittee will be comprised of Mr. Rudder, and Mr. Gonzalez. Mr. Rudder and Dr. Caldwell will serve at the Board advisors to DMVA concerning the VAG.

Mr. Rudder reminded Board members that travel reimbursements must be submitted within 90 days in order to be paid.

Ms. Hoagland asked if the Board had any changes to make to the VTF application. Dr. Caldwell asked if Ms. Hoagland had any suggestions. Ms. Hoagland said it could be beneficial to consider geographic distribution as a separate category, as it is currently scored in conjunction with identification of service gaps. The Board agreed and discussed whether the score value should be changed. A change to the value for the new category could change the total number of possible points. The Board decided to leave the total number of possible points at 100, thus establishing five points possible for geographic distribution and five points possible for identification of service gaps. The Board approved the application with these changes.

Mr. Rudder asked the preference of the Board regarding new business items: to be submitted in advance to be considered at a stated meeting or whether introduction at the meeting is sufficient. The consensus of the Board was to provide new business items in advance, but when that is not possible The Board will continue to allow them to be introduced at the meeting.

The item regarding VTF and honor guards was withdrawn. Discussion of the task force proposal was held after Reports.

Reports

Mr. Dorman said that there are two bills the Department is actively tracking. One would remove statutory provisions that limit the appropriation and allocation of money for tuition assistance for members of the National Guard. The other would increase the amount of active service pay for members of the National Guard, which is currently capped at \$20.00 per day.

Mr. Rudder referred the Board to Ms. Iglesias' submitted report. CDVA West has hired a new cemetery director scheduled to start on 02 December. The One Source has identified a staffing need as they have no office support. Mr. Dorman said that funding for this is included in the proposed budget.

Mr. Tremaine said DVA East is currently averaging 300 appointments per month. Training needs are being discussed, with the intent to add new content to the annual training conference in 2020 and to begin to make a virtual training library available to VSOs beginning in January. He said that Myra Dollar has accepted a position with the Colorado State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training and will begin with that agency on 02 December. A job announcement is being prepared for her position. Two announcements have been released for state veterans service officers due to the upcoming retirement of Renee Pace and an additional vacancy. One of these SVSO positions is specified for diversity and inclusion. He said he will attend the Grand County Veterans Day event with Mr. Dailey on 11 November. The Division is continuing work with VHA to create an MOU to allow service officers access to mental health units at the VAMC.

Mr. Robinson said there is no update from the Veterans Monument Trust. Barbara Grossman has resigned as administrator of the Rifle CLC and recruitment is underway for her replacement. He said the current budget request from CDHS will use cash funds rather than profits to fund the salary increases approved last year. Ms. Hammon asked if there is any legislative effort to increase the pay for nutrition and facilities employees at the CLCs. Mr. Robinson said that while the topic was raised, it did not make the top five this year. Ms. Scanlon offered to prepare a letter to CDHS to encourage them to continue to pursue the issue.

Ms. Hoagland referred the Board to her submitted report. She noted that VTF grantees with compliance issues have been noted on the report. Compliance issues recorded on the report are major issues such as lack of spending and failure to submit quarterly reports. Problems with reimbursement requests are not recorded as compliance issues on the report. Ms. Scanlon asked if Ms. Hoagland could in the future indicate on the report which grantees are new recipients this year and Ms. Hoagland agreed to do so.

Discussion

Mr. Rudder invited discussion regarding General Loh's task force proposal. Mr. Gonzalez agreed with Ms. Hammon's earlier statement that the assessment could take up to two years. Mr. Dorman said that while grant funds might be possibly fund the effort, they are not the only option. The Department might consider contracting with an organization that already has resources throughout the state, such as CCI. He said other state departments may be consulted and involved, such as CDHS, CDLE and Higher Education. Ms. Hammon moved that the Board establish a subcommittee to define the cope of the work. Ms. Scanlon seconded. The motion carried. Mr. Rudder appointed Ms. Hammon, Ms. Scanlon, and Mr. Steen to the committee.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Gonzalez said that he attended the Adjutant General's leadership luncheon on 31 October. He also attends the October meet and greet event for the new garrison commander at Fort Carson. He will attend the investment ceremony of Terrance Mc Williams as a Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army.

Dr. Caldwell said that it has been determined that multiple systems across 17 states are used to identify veterans in health care. The data can be used to provide information on current trends to indicate needs ⁴and service gaps. A joint effort is underway as different health systems combine their data.

Ms. Scanlon attended the retirement ceremony of Brigadier General Laura Clellan, assistant adjutant general, Army, commander of the Colorado Army National Guard on 19 October. The women veterans exhibit is on display at the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC. UVC will meet on 12 November and Ms.

Scanlon will communicate their legislative goals to the Board at the December meeting.

Ms. Hammon said that Comeback Yoga now holds 55 sessions a week in Edwards and Denver. She encouraged the Board members to attend Stand Downs. She participated in Senator Bennett's panel for nominees for the Air Force Academy. The Western Slope Veterans Coalition held an open house at the Glenwood resource center in October that was attended by 75 veterans.

Mr. Dailey said that The Grand County Veterans Day ceremony will be attended by Mr. Tremaine as previously mentioned, and by Michael Kilmer from the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC.

Upcoming Meetings

03 January, Denver VARO, Lakewood

07 February 2019, Mount Carmel Center for Excellence, Colorado Springs

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Dailey moved to adjourn. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Minutes

Friday, December 6, 2019

Arapahoe Community College

5900 S. Santa Fe Drive

Littleton, CO 80120-1801

Members and Guests

Members Present:

Pat Hammon, Vice Chair Sheila Scanlon, Secretary Hollie Caldwell, Member Duane Dailey, Member Longinos Gonzalez Jr, Member Norm Steen, Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Greg Dorman, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director, Resource Director and Legislative Liaison Matthew Biniki, DMVA Legislative Liaison

David Callahan, DMVA Strategic Planner Richard Tremaine, CDVA East Director

Gail Hoagland, CDVA East Grant Administrator Megan Fraser, CDVA East Administration

Guests Present:

Pam Arceo

Nick Arceo – Commander of Attachment of Colorado Sons of American Legion Harry Ciruli -
Commander Colorado Sons of American Legion Post 103

Joel Mendelson - American Legion Post 103 Commander

Dominic Pillitteri - Student success facilitator at Arapahoe Community College

Opening

Pat Hammon called the meeting to order at 0903 hours. Proceedings began with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for POWs, MIAs, and troops overseas. Mrs. Hammon invited introductions from Board members, staff, and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Norm Steen noted that he was excused for the meeting and that ‘appointment’ should be

‘appointed’ in regards to Colonel Hopkins. Longinos Gonzalez moved to approve as amended, Hollie Caldwell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Public Comments

Mrs. Hammon invited public comments.

Nick Arceo is involved with ‘Volunteers for Hospitalized Veterans’ which sets up a popcorn stand and sells popcorn and other veteran items associated with all branches. Last year they generated \$31,000 for veterans. They concentrate on donating to a locked psych unit of 30 beds. Veterans are supplied with underwear, socks, sleeping bags, and haircuts. In addition, pizza parties and ice cream socials are funded throughout the year and 30 Christmas bags are delivered to the unit on Christmas. Nick Arceo was recently voted ‘volunteer of the year’ for Sons of the American Legion due to his volunteer work with ‘Volunteers for Hospitalized Veterans’. Discussion ensued about the difference between the Sons of the American Legion vs. the American Legion, and the history and requirements for membership for each.

Dominic Pillitteri works to support veteran’s success in school and assist with financial difficulties. Some students are in Voc-Rehab. His program operates on 8 keys to veteran’s success in college. There is a separate space provided for veterans with card access only. He provides lots of referrals to outside resources when needed. The program is under AmeriCorps but is also connected with Second Mission.

Joel Mendelson shared about American Legion Post 103. Joe Cordova is their VTF grant administrator. Fundraisers are conducted, medical mobility equipment is provided when needed, young men are sponsored to go to Boys State, and college scholarships to grandchildren of members of the post are given annually. Last year they gave out 8 college scholarships. Rich Callan, a retired Navy Chief, has a passion for the Boys State program and will interview anyone anywhere for this program; Post 103 sponsors more men than anyone else although this is not their objective. Joel said they will gladly take all the grant monies they can receive as they get lots of requests for assistance. They have had to establish borders for primary assistance and assist beyond those borders when able to. Post 103 is at 79%-member capacity with WW2, Korean and Vietnam veteran members all active.

Hollie Caldwell inquired of the guests present: If you were to speak with TAG, what are the top two needs to be addressed in the state of Colorado for veterans? Joel Mendelson said his immediate response was service officers and the need for money/assistance but he would like to get back to her with a more solid answer. He suggested that Dean Casey and Will Davis will be good contacts to answer this question as they handle lots of PTSD cases. Nick Arceo's answer was homelessness, education, and the suicide rate; our support groups for veterans are not working, we need to rethink them.

Unfinished Business

CCI Panel Norm Steen educated County Commissioners across the state about how important VSOs are. The perception is that VSOs are being shortchanged. It is not within the legislative authority to direct the County Commissioners so the approach was to educate them i.e.: the funds that are transferred, reimbursement program, best practices, connect, serve, identify and follow-up with vets. Panel was a component of statewide Colorado Counties Inc., conference that met last week. Duane Dailey, Marshall Bosworth, Sheila Scanlon, Longinos Gonzalez, David Callahan and Brian Oney also attended. Board members did not talk to each other.

Data was shared according to the VA GDX. In Colorado we are just under 400,000 veterans that are registered with the VA. VA estimate that 20-30% of veterans are not counted nationwide. Veterans bring in 3.6 billion dollars for compensation, pension, medical care, etc. in the state of Colorado. The vet health index of 2016 shows that veterans vote in higher rates and volunteer in their community more than non-veterans.

Sheila Scanlon recommended supporting Chaz Tedesco, Adams County Commissioner, when he requests to increase VSO hours in counties and accordingly requests a larger reimbursement for funds for VSOs in counties. She will bring a letter to be distributed to County Commissioners and County Treasurers to be approved to the next board meeting. This letter is an explanation of how the financial reimbursement from the state to the county is actually supposed to work for VSOs so that should an increase happen, it reaches the VSOs. Should this letter be approved at the next board meeting it will be passed along to Rich Tremaine for next steps.

Duane Dailey recommended that the Board and the Division office need to get together. El Paso gets \$29,400/year for 7 VSOs plus admin, while Grand County gets \$29,400 for the year as well

(only one VSO). Teller County only gets 14k and they have 4 VSOs. The funds going to Mesa County need to be reviewed as well. Mesa County has a Memorandum of Understanding with Moab County, Utah and are funded in part by them. There are six tiers of counties in the state of Colorado, with A,B,C, and D sub- tiers, and the commissioners and Veteran Service Officers are paid off of this table by the state government. Duane Dailey suggested that a presentation at VSO annual training be made and a think tank of the entire Board be formed to suggest improvements on the current pay structure before any further steps are taken to adjust pay to County VSOs. Discussion ensued. Pat Hammon had the think tank placed on the agenda as a work session after the regular session in February 2020.

Bylaw Review/ TAG Task Force-

Pat Hammon gave a brief explanation to guests about the task force that TAG brought to the Board at the last meeting. The subcommittee including Jack Rudder, Norm Steen, Sheila Scanlon and Pat Hammon attempted to meet via phone conference but Pat Hammon was informed they could not have a conference call so she cancelled the meeting. Therefore, she feels the bylaws are antiquated and need to be changed. Leeann Morrill from the Attorney General's offices needs to be reached for consultation. Sheila Scanlon is interested in adjusting from the 7-day notice in the bylaws to the state sunshine-law requirement of 24 hours. Greg Dorman stated that CRS 24-602 is the sunshine law for meetings. The wording is "local public boards" not "state boards" so he wants to check with a lawyer. Any communication is a public meeting.

Sheila Scanlon moved to change the bylaws to read "we need to give public notice 24 hours ahead of time before a meeting." Norm Steen seconded. Duane Dailey amends: "pending legislative liaison office that we are doing this within the law." Discussion ensued as to how the Board can balance letting the veteran community know at least 6 months in advance of their meeting times with also having the need for the Board to be able to conduct business in a variety of formats. Discussion closed. Everyone except Norm Steen voted in favor. Norm Steen abstained.

Pat Hammon requested to have an informational working meeting. She would like members of the Board to have an opportunity to discuss with Leeann Morrill what rules they still need to adhere to in task force meetings. There will be someone to take notes and no decisions will be

made.

Greg Dorman shared that any meeting can be public, but the public may not always have input; therefore, a conference call is okay but you need to have call-in capability. He sees no problem with the task force meetings. Greg stated that the DMVA is probably going to end up giving the Board members emails that will then be searchable under the CORA laws.

Pat Hammon stated that both the Subcommittee on By-Laws and the Subcommittee on TAGs Task Force will meet before Christmas.

Pat Hammon requested a working meeting on how we communicate and Sheila Scanlon suggested they receive input from the guests in the room who are leaders of their various veteran agencies. Guests shared about their regular email communication to members and who to reach to have information placed on a statewide email blast to veterans. For the American Legion, Pat Smith is the contact required. Discussion ensued about where Board information is currently posted on the DVA website and what adjustments could be made. Whom to contact at the United Veterans Coalition, the VFW and the CCC system was also discussed. This will be placed on the January agenda to continue discussion.

New Business

Reports:

Greg Dorman reported that he met with Headstrong yesterday and received an overview of their program. They are already operating in Denver and Colorado Springs. Their intent is for care to be within 30 min of the veteran's home. They claim that they cure PTSD. Headstrong does not require a DD214, they take the veterans word. They have a 48-hour response time for primary intake and then get the veteran to a provider to do a secondary intake. One of the first things they do is ask where you are so if they assess that you are emergent they will send an ambulance immediately to that vet.

Statistically only 6/24 vets per day that commit suicide are known to the VA. If you are a veteran diagnosed with PTSD getting treated by the VA you are twice as likely to commit suicide as a veteran with PTSD who is not getting helped by the VA. 150 veterans have already been helped in CO; their goal

is 500 next year.

Pat Hammon shared on behalf of Joanne Iglesias that a new cemetery director has been hired. Various groups meet at Western Region OneSource regularly. The hospital has a golf cart that takes people back and forth between facilities. Our state VSO is located in OneSource, there is a veteran intern working with him. Joanne is looking for money from the state to man the front desk and more employees.

Recently TAG and the Governor spent an entire day at the OneSource. Hollie Caldwell noted that the property manager resigned. Joanne Iglesias is in the process of rewriting that job description; what is really needed is someone great with people and scheduling skills and experience with nonprofits.

Rich Tremaine shared that there had been two regrettable losses in the department. Myra Dollar moved on to the education arm of department, and has been replaced by Carissa Snyder. He is still having issues filling the VSO positions, as there was only one qualified candidate who applied, they have relisted the position. He will resend out the position to everyone. For the position he is hoping to find a woman veteran in so much as possible under the law.

Mr. Tremaine requested the following funds from the Veterans Trust Fund: DVA West \$30,023, DVA East \$62,000. He explained that the DVA East funds are primarily for the VetraSpec case management system; the double licensing alone exceeds \$30,000. A Statement of Work is being prepared as the Division explores alternatives to VetraSpec. The other funds for DVA East would furnish four offices that need furniture and boost a 110-voltage line that keeps tripping and causing several DVA-E offices to lose power. The office furniture is required to update the configurations in order to provide staff with escape routes. The voltage line is not covered in the Division's current lease as the lease contains a tenant improvement allowance,

Ms. Hammon asked if training would be provided in the event of changes to cases management and Mr. Tremaine said that is included in the SOW. Mr. Dailey said that he had been previously informed that VetraSpec was what everyone should be using for veterans case management. Mr. Tremaine said that VetraSpec has been a major funder of industry conferences and that there are many other systems available. Dr. Caldwell inquired whether it was allowable for the requests to

be funded through VTF. Mr. Tremaine replied in the affirmative and Ms. Hoagland agreed. Funding for the Division is in the statute. Ms. Hoagland said that sufficient funds are available and would leave approximately \$26,600 for possible grant modifications. Mr. Tremaine asked the Board to note that when the Division gained a west office, the budget remained the same and now there are two offices to maintain. The funds for Division West would support acoustical division, artwork, and hanging flags at the Western Region One Source.

Ms. Hammon stipulated in regard to the acoustical difficulties at the WROS. There are acoustical panels in the classroom but the hallways and other rooms are problematic. Light music in the hallway and acoustic panels in the ceiling would reduce overall noise and allow the state veterans service officer leave his office door open when a veteran is in the office. The artwork and hanging flags requested are also for sound acoustics. There is special artwork made on acoustic panels that they can hang in the hallway. Ms. Iglesias has quotes to support her request.

Ms. Hoagland reiterated that there unallocated funds available in the VTF. Mr. Dorman concurred that “costs incurred by the division” is permissible by statute. Mr. Steen wanted to verify that this would not take funds from veterans’ programs. Ms. Hoagland stated that sufficient funds would remain for grant modifications and noted that she will probably have some modification requests by January. While some may be other upward modification, others will be downward modification and the current grantees will not use all of the additional funds available. Ms. Hammon said that all of this would help veterans: VetraSpec assists the counties and the Division to serve veterans and improving the One Source will be helpful. Mr. Dorman said that is preferable to spend the funds available than to return it to the Trust unspent.

Ms. Scanlon and Dr. Caldwell suggested to specify that the DVA West funds are for acoustic mitigation. Pat Hammon asked if there was any further discussion, hearing none, a motion was invited.

Ms. Scanlon motioned to approve the DVAs request for a total of \$92,023. Dr. Caldwell seconded.

Mr. Dailey amended “artwork and hanging flags” to “acoustic mitigation.” Dr. Caldwell, Mr. Dailey, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Hammon, and Ms. Scanlon, voted in favor. Mr. Steen opposed. The

motion carried.

At 11:17, the Board adjourned for a 13 -minute break

No report was received from Robby Robinson.

Gail Hoagland dispersed a report and asked the Board to note that 100% of new grantees are non-compliant in their paperwork. She has thus far been doing phone monitoring and has not visited them in person. There are currently 14 webinar trainings scheduled in preparation for the next grant year.

Sheila Scanlon and Pat Hammon asked Greg Dorman how National Guard pay would be increased. Greg Dorman said the monies will come from the emergency fund so it has no balance. The bill is not therefore considered to have a fiscal note.

Megan Fraser was tasked with checking on the report to the Governor.

Board Member Remarks

Pat Hammon lifted the two-minute cap.

Hollie Caldwell shared that Centura Health registration committee has requested the National Guard active and reserve added to the Centura Health intake form.

Longinos Gonzalez has been conducting lots of outreach, spoke at Colorado Springs Senior Center on November 8th; on November 11th he attended a flag raising in Fountain. His county approved a Pearl Harbors Proclamation for a remembrance day tomorrow, and is speaking tomorrow night for the VFWs 'Voice of Democracy' and will participate with Wreaths Across America on Dec 14th at Pikes Peak National Cemetery.

Norm Steen met with Aaron Tremaine at the CCI conference and asked for updates. He asked if Aaron would update the board in February 2020. He attended an event on Dec. 2nd and did networking there. He is working separately from the Board on state and federal legislation for transportation funding and spent a half day with Governor Polis on that topic the day before. From Feb. 29th – Mar. 4th he will attend a conference of the National Association of County Counties in DC which Longinos Gonzalez will also attend. Discussion ensued about which topics

the board would like promoted at the conference in regards to better caring for veterans, surviving spouses and mental health needs.

Sheila Scanlon is going to Buckley Air Force Base next Wednesday with the One Marine Association to feed everyone and bring Christmas presents. She is doing Wreaths Around America at Ft Logan Cemetery on Dec. 14th. The women veterans license plate has been reviewed by the Dept. of Revenue, it now has to go to two senators and two representatives. She is also working on state legislation for a women veterans program. Starting on 1 January 2020 you can purchase the plate for \$50. A DD214 is required for application and the plate with a random alpha numeric assignment will be mailed to the woman veteran.

Duane Dailey attended a focus group with National Veterans Experience Office at Rocky Mountain Hospital. Rich Tremaine was his guest speaker for Veterans Day. The American Legion Dept.

Commander and National Vice-Commander spoke at the American Legion in front of about 375 attendees. There was also a RAF woman speaker, 102 years old and Dawn Thomas who is a Jefferson County administrator spoke about 3 min. He spoke on the positive things that veterans bring to their communities and Duane requested he speak at the January meeting for 5 min.

Pat Hammon did 22 school programs for Veterans Day. Several veterans participated for the first time and said it was the highlight of their year. In high school veterans speak in classrooms, in elementary school the kids prepare presentations. She is participating at Wreaths Across America in Grand Junction on the 14th. Their Blue Star group is growing. They sent off 8 packages to active duty family members for Christmas. There have been 3 funerals in the last month. She has 4 crisis going on right now, which piqued her interest in Headstrong, she also had one suicide and believes the holidays are really hard. She said there is no housing for the homeless vets which is really difficult with their weather; several vets are living in cars.

Upcoming Meetings

January 3rd at VARO – 2nd floor, Directors Conference Room February 7th – at Mt. Carmel, Colorado Springs

Two subgroups will meet before the next meeting.

Adjournment

Adjourned at 12:03pm.