

**Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs
2021 Meeting Minutes**

Colorado Board of Veterans

January 8, 2021

WebEx Meeting

Opening

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order at 09:00 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POW's, MIA's, those deployed, their families, and all those killed in the line of duty.

Members Present

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice-Chair Sheila Scanlon, Secretary Duane Dailey, Member Lacey Golonka, Member Longinos Gonzalez, Member Norm Steen

Staff Present

David Callahan, DMVA Acting Deputy Director Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Director

Joanne Iglesias, DVAW Director

Richard Tremaine, DVAe Director

Gail Hoagland, DVA Grant Administrator

Heather Benjamin, DVAW Property Administrator Angela Ingalls, VMC Administrator

Megan Fraser, DVAe Administration

Guests

Amber Guerrero, CVSO Weld County Megan Gurka, CVSO Larimer County Gary Harbert, CVSO Prowers County

Tim Hutchinson, CVSO Broomfield County Sarah Kuhn, CVSO Montezuma County Duffy

Laudick, CVSO Larimer County

Tony Lee, CVSO Mesa County

Glen Marciniak, CVSO Kit Carson County Joshua Medina, CVSO Arapahoe County Steve

Otero, CVSO Gunnison County Trisha Reynolds, CVSO Larimer County Carolyn Schneider,

CVSO Eagle County Jay Scott, CVSO Otero County

Robert Sheetz, CVSO Adams County

Sheldon Smith, CVSO Montrose and Ouray Counties Raymond Taylor, CVSO Archuleta County

Dennis Tonneslan, Veteran

Linda Wilson, CVSO Delta County

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Steen motioned to approve, Ms. Hammon seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Public Comments

Mr. Smith requested to wait to speak until a specific agenda item was discussed.

Old Business

The SPI Quarterly report was presented by Mrs. Hammon.

SPI 1 – Advocate for State Veterans

- 1.1 Meeting by Congressional District – This is not possible during Covid. Ms. Hammon queried if the measure should be reworded or a note be made that this is not possible during Covid? Ms. Hammon stated that in an earlier meeting it was discussed that the staff from different Congressional Districts would get invited to each meeting. Ms. Hammon directed Ms. Fraser to add a comment regarding Covid and that Congressional staff will in turn be invited to each meeting. Mr. Dailey stated he feels that it is important for each and every Congressional office be invited to every single CBVA meeting. Mr. Steen stressed that the CBVA primarily discusses state issues, not federal. He believes that representatives from every state department should be present over the attendance of congressional offices and attendance of guests from different congressional districts should be recorded. Discussion ensued. County and State VSOs, Federal Representatives, Individuals from each CO state department will now be invited to every meeting.
- 1.1 Collecting surveys from each county annually is on track.
- 1.2 CVSOs consolidate and provide feedback – This measure is redundant for what the JBC does. Ms. Hammon inquired if the Board wants to continue with this project, pointing out this would be a burden to County VSOs. Discussion ensued. This will be discussed further by the SPI Working Group and thoughts presented to the whole Board at the next meeting.
- 1.3 Mr. Dorman stated that the Board’s Annual Report to the Legislature has not yet been turned in.
- 1.4 Communicate recommended changes to the CO VA Director - Mrs. Hammon inquired of Mr. Callahan if sending the same letter to the VARO Director that gets sent to the Governor and the Legislature. Mr. Steen pointed out that this measure is the actual ‘Advocating for Veterans’ that the Board is charged with after they have collected the information. This is to be discussed in the SPI Working Group. Mrs. Hammon instructed Ms. Fraser to keep a list of

running issues at all future meetings to help with this measure. Mrs. Hammon requested that both the East and West Director gather this information from their CVSOs that directly relates to the VA.

SPI 2

2.1 All first three measures are on hold do to finances and the lack of bandwidth to execute them at this time.

2.2 Fourth measure – Has already been discussed and many more individuals are being invited to attend Board meetings.

2.1 Outreach – we are on track!

2.2 We have a webpage and Ms. Fraser is keeping it updated.

SPI 3 - Grants

3.1 Ms. Hoagland stated the first round of non-monitoring site visits have already been conducted and she is ready to send out round two.

3.2 Ms. Hoagland this is being achieved through various methods: quarterly report feedback, end-of- year survey, and ongoing feedback.

3.3 Ms. Hoagland says this should be indicated as a ‘yes’. Best practices are collected and dispersed regularly, in addition to mentors who work with any struggling grantees. Mrs. Hammon requested the Ms. Hoagland contact the Board members who oversee this SPI individually. Mr. Gonzalez verified he can do his site visit virtually.

SPI 4

Ms. Hammon stated that we are not on target with that and suggested adding a note regarding Covid hampering this effort. Ms. Hammon and Mr. Rudder recommended requesting extra funding despite Covid, to have the request on record. Mr. Steen suggested writing a letter to counties requesting extra funding. Ms. Fraser was instructed to add a SPI 5.

SPI 5:

5.1 Annually contact counties regarding funding for CVSOs and veterans.

5.2 Always have at least one Board member attend the CCI meeting.

Mr. Steen modified this request: change SPI 4 to ‘Change to request funding’. SPI 4.3 will write a letter and disperse to counties before they set their budgets in April. SPI 4.4 always have a board member attend the CCI meeting. Ms. Scanlon volunteered to draft the letter to the counties and have it ready for the next meeting. Mr. Smith suggested adding exact numbers of how the VSO is positively impacting the monetary situation in each county. Ms. Hammon thanked everyone for their input and thanked Mr.Callahan for his assistance.

New Business

Women's Veteran Coordinator

Ms. Scanlon stated that more and more women veterans are needing assistance and all that exists is a temporary fix and that it needs a more permanent solution. She would like the Board to take the issue to TAG. Ms. Hammon expressed that she is interested in moving forward with this as well. Mr. Dorman reminded the Board that they are a Type 2 Board and cannot take a position on any legislation. Ms.

Scanlon stated that she understands that however this has been before the Board since 2018 and that more needs to actually be done on this topic. Ms. Golonka supported writing the letter and sending it to TAG. Ms. Scanlon stated she would write the letter and bring it to the Board for consideration.

Pandemic Effect on Veterans

Ms. Scanlon is trying to follow all legislation related to veterans and is trying to determine if the non- eviction notice has been extended. Ms. Hammon stated that this changes by city, county and state. Ms. Scanlon is concerned that when lifted, many veterans will be evicted. Mr. Rudder pointed out that this is a trickle-down effect that are causing many issues. There was a day when eviction prohibition lagged and many veterans were evicted on that day. There are also veterans that are unable to continue with their special agreement and are worried that they will be evicted. Landlords are getting creative with their evictions and kicking people out for alternate reasons that are not payments.

Ms. Hammon highlighted the increase in mental health issues, suicides and related problems in her area.

Board Annual Training

It was decided that the annual training of the Colorado Board Veterans Affairs will be held on February 23 at 1:00 p.m. via WebEx.

Reports

Mr. Dorman said that the calendar of the state legislature continues to change. Currently, the legislature will convene on 13 January to run a few critical bills, and then recess until February. This will delay the legislative cycle, including the timing of TAG's senate confirmation.

DMVA's SMART Act hearing before the Military and Veterans Affairs committee will be held virtually on 20 January at 0900. Interested parties were invited to attend remotely. He said that it was recently brought to the department's attentions that a law requiring an automatic sunset of

every fund on the state tax checkoff could affect the Military Family Relief Fund next year. This has prompted concern at DMVA and the National Guard, as the fund has been heavily used in recent years. The department is currently in conversations with the governor's office regarding prospective legislation to allow this item to remain on the checkoff. The Board was advised that the Veterans Memorial Cemetery is exempt from the sunset requirement and will remain on the checkoff regardless. Ms. Hammon request a link for the SMART meeting and Ms.

Fraser agreed to distribute it. Ms. Golonka spoke in support of the relief fund, citing how often it is used in her unit. Ms. Scanlon asked if the department needed any action from the Board. Mr. Dorman said it is not needed at this time.

Ms. Iglesias said that Mesa County is moving back on the COVID dial and that the Veterans Memorial Cemetery has a five-star variance. Still, the cemetery is encouraging clients to utilize direct interments and not to have a volunteer honor guard but to use active duty only. The administrative office is closed to walk-in. Staff members are in the office, making arrangement via phone or when necessary meeting clients outside. In regard to capital construction, she said that the new columbaria are up and the niche covers are on, ready to start interring. The lower pond is complete, the stream side is complete, and work is about to start on the upper pond. A carillon has been installed at the committal shelter; bells begin to toll hymns at 0800 and play every hour, ending at 1700 with Taps. A fourth groundskeeper started at the cemetery this month and that crew is now fully staffed. 4th The cemetery will soon stop faxing reimbursements requests and will transition to direct upload. The cemetery ended the year with a total of 332 interments, close to last year's total of 339. Regarding the WROS, she said that VA's HUD VASH and Social Work teams have moved in and are paying rent. The WROS continues to recruit tenants, with seven offices currently available. The parking project on hold pending Colorado Army National Guard involvement. The current projection for completion is a March-April timeframe. The DEERS office was closed recently due to equipment problems that have now been resolved. The Colorado Fallen Memorial sponsored by Alpine Banks has been installed and is open to the public. The WROS is fully staffed.

Mr. Tremaine said DVAe is proceeding with its plan for regional training, with state veterans service officers reaching out to their regions via webcasts. The trainings will be posted on the division's YouTube channel. Updates for the ECHCS indicates that vaccine distribution in its catchment area has been difficult. However, the Cheyenne Health Care System has open enrollment and intends to have vaccinations available in Loveland. Kaiser Permanente is another

vaccine option, as they have a state contract and can assist non-members. DVA is working with DMVA procurement on a new claims management system. State VSOs are looking ahead to when they will be able to travel and will be scheduling Town Halls within their respective regions. Town halls being scheduled. A meeting was held with stakeholders from the San Luis Valley on 23 December to alleviate concerns in regard to region assignments and communications. DVA has one VSO vacancy. Jay Scott asked what criteria was used to establish the DVA regions. The region his county is in has a mix of geographic areas as well as a mixture of urban and rural concerns. Mr. Tremaine said that veteran population and accreditation of CVSOs was considered when the regions were established, but the division is open to making changes. Ms. Scanlon asked if attendance at the training sessions is tracked and if so that the information be shared with the Board. Mr. Tremaine said that it is tracked and agreed. Mr. Dailey asked for veteran in the catchment area of the ECHCS can get the COVID vaccine if they aren't enrolled in VA health care. Ms. Hammon said that veterans should check with local hospitals with their county health departments.

Ms. Hoagland said new applications have been arriving for the next grant cycle. She has been providing grant application webinars for interested parties and she encouraged all Board members to feel free to attend. Ms. Hammon thanked Ms. Hoagland for her work. Mr. Scott said that he needs to reach out to Ms. Hoagland regarding a change of grant manager at the American Legion post in La Junta. Ms.

Hoagland said she is aware of the difficulties at the post. She informed the Board that to date, at least five grantees have had grant managers affected by COVID. She also said that grantees with transportation programs have been impacted as well. Both factors are expected to impact execution rates.

Mr. Rudder shared the report from Robby Robinson. There was no new report on regarding the Tribute to Veterans monument. They are waiting for decisions to be finalized regarding fencing at the park.

Community Living Centers have successfully vaccinated patients and staff who want the COVID vaccine.

Remarks

Mr. Steen said that he attended two outreach event on behalf of the Board within the past month. He said that his career took a turn the previous week as he began his first day as a member of the staff for Congressman Doug Lamborn. He said that DMVA leadership is checking to confirm

whether he can remain a member of the Board while engaged in this position. Congressional staff are also checking to ensure whether House rules will allow him to remain on the Board. Ms. Hammon congratulated Mr.

Steen and thanks him for his service on the Board thus far. Mr. Rudder also thanked Mr. Steen, saying he has been of great benefit to the Board and the hope is that he will be able to remain a member.

Mr. Gonzalez said that due to COVID-related business for the county and the holidays, he had nothing new to report.

Mr. Dailey said that he has no report.

Ms. Hammon said she attended five outreach events on behalf of the Board within the past month. She provided her report from UVC. The banquet has been moved to 27 June in anticipation that it can be perhaps be held in person. HR 7105 was passed in January. This act will address the administration VA programs and benefits for homeless veterans during the pandemic and should benefit woman veterans and other underserved populations. The VA Center for Women has introduced a pilot training for a

Women's Health Transition program. UVC warned of virus and vaccine related scams targeting veterans. She said that Colorado's Occupational Credential Portability Program went into effect on 01 January, allowing military spouses to obtain three-year temporary credentials for any profession or

occupation regulated by the state Division of Professions and Occupations if they hold a credential in good standing from another US state or territory among other requirements. Eagle County has been very busy. Local nonprofits shave been helping to assist veterans in need.

Ms. Golonka and Ms. Scanlon had both left the meeting due to other engagements.

Mr. Rudder said the attended one event during the past month on behalf of the Board. He has been taking calls for the Alamosa County veterans service office in addition to Rio Grande, but there have been no new claims recently likely due to the holidays. He encouraged everyone wanting the COVID vaccine to get on the list with their county health department. He reminded the Board of annual training on 23 February.

Mr. Smith commented in regard to a state women veterans coordinator. He has heard concern

from female veterans who are not comfortable with a male service officer in the position. Mr. Tremaine said the division does not currently have a women veterans coordinator. It has been encompassed in the duties of the Diversity and Inclusion state veterans service officer. The division did not receive any qualified female applicants for the position. Currently the division has a group of female county veterans service officers who are able to assist when a veteran requires a female service officer. Mr. Scott asked if the idea of a state women veterans coordinator could be revisited. Mr. Tremaine said that is a matter of consideration for department leadership.

Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting will be held on 05 February at 0900. Remaining meetings for this fiscal year will be held on:

05 March – training for VTF grant application review

02 April – VTF grant application vote and award decisions 07 May

04 June

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Rudder invited a motion to adjourn. It was so moved by Mr. Gonzalez and seconded by Ms. Hammon. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

February 05, 2021

WebEx Meeting

Opening

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order at 09:00 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POW's, MIA's, those deployed, their families, and all those killed in the line of duty.

Members Present

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice-Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Secretary

Duane Dailey, Member

Lacey Golonka, Member

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Staff Present

David Callahan, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director

Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Director

Joanne Iglesias, CDVA Interim Director

Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Heather Benjamin, CDVA Property Administrator

Angela Ingalls, VMC Administrator

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Diana DeBor, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Guests Present

Paul Arends, El Paso County Veterans Service Officer

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

Richard Brown, Dolores County Veterans Service Officer

Ron Brown, Yuma County Veterans Service Officer

Amber Guerrero, Weld County Veterans Service Officer

Megan Gurka, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer

John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer

Julian Hoschouer, Sedgwick County Veterans Service Officer

Tim Hutchinson, Broomfield County Veterans Service Officer

Duffy Laudick, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 2

Tony Lee, Mesa County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 3

Tessa Mauer, Legislative Performance Auditor, Office of the State Auditor, Congressional District 18

Ric Morgan, County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 2

Leon Pohl, Gilpin County Veterans Service Officer

Robby Robinson, CBVA Liaison to VCLC Commission and Veterans Monument Trust

Rudy Sabedra, Pueblo County Veterans Service Auditor, Congressional District 3

Robert Sheetz, Adams County Veterans Service Officer

Sheldon Smith, Montrose/Ouray Counties Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 3

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Rick Ward, Bent County Veterans Service Officer

Sean Woods, El Paso County Veterans Service Officer

Comments

Ms. Hammon said that two Eagle County employees were killed in an avalanche earlier in the week and it has been very difficult for their coworkers and colleagues.

Mr. Rudder said that due to the time and travel requirements of his employment with Congressman Lamborn's office, Mr. Steen has tendered his resignation to the Board. Applications for members are now being accepted and are under review by Mr. Callahan's office. Mr. Dorman shared the link for applications: [Boards and Commissions | Colorado Governor Jared Polis](#).

Mr. Gonzalez said that a Colorado Springs veteran who is also a personal friend died earlier in the week as a result of an avalanche in Alaska.

Mr. Bosworth said that the El Paso County office now has a room to use to virtual BVA hearings. This will help accommodate veteran who do not have the personal equipment for virtual hearings and those who would prefer not to drive all the way to the regional office in Lakewood.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Hammon temporarily assumed the gavel while Mr. Rudder addressed a technical problem. She said that she would like to correct the item referring to annual training on page two. It should specify Board training so that it will not become confused with the annual service officer training held by the division. Ms. Scanlon moved to approve as corrected. Returned to the meeting, Mr. Rudder seconded. The motion carried. Mr. Rudder reassumed the gavel.

Action Item

Ms. Hoagland said that having reached the midpoint of the grant cycle, there are contract

modifications to consider for the Veterans Trust Fund grants. Five grantees are seeking to decrease their grant awards and four grantees are seeking to increase their grant awards. She said that many grantees have had their programs impacted by COVID, particularly transportation programs. Those requesting to decrease their grant awards were:

VT21-09 American Legion Post 11, Trinidad, \$13,500

VT21-11 American Legion Post 0009, La Junta, \$ 8,000

VT21-13 American Legion Dept. of CO, \$30,000

VT21-15 VFW Post 5843, Meeker, -\$ 6,000

VT21-24 American Legion Post 2, Pueblo, \$ 7,500

Those wishing to increase their grant awards were:

VT21-04 American Legion Post 44, Steamboat +\$ 1,250

VT21-05 VFW Post 5231, Cortez +\$35,000

VT21-16 American Legion Post 22, Northglenn +\$15,000

VT21-17 VFW Post 3641, Pueblo +\$15,000

Ms. Hammon asked why the request for increase from VT21-05 was so much higher than the other requests for increase. Ms. Hoagland said that there are two other grantees in the area and through collaborations with those local organizations the post has been assisting a large number of veterans. Mr. Rudder said that the total amount of the decreased award requests was less than the total amount of the increased awards and asked if the grant had sufficient funds to cover the difference. Ms. Hoagland said that it did, since not all of the available funds had been allocated. Ms. Hammon moved to modify the grant agreements as requested. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried.

Old Business

Ms. Hammon said that there was no report from the Bylaws Committee. Ms. Scanlon said that she would like the Bylaws Committee to meet again to consider the Board's Conflict of Interest disclosure form and Ms. Hammon agreed. Ms. Scanlon requested that Mr. Dorman attend the committee meeting.

The CCI letter was awaiting confirmation from Mr. Rudder and Mr. Dailey. Mr. Rudder said he had no changes. Mr. Dailey said that he had not received a copy of letter. Ms. Snyder was asked to send it to him. The letter should be sent to CCI this month.

The letter regarding a state women veterans coordinator has been sent to the Adjutant General.

New Business

Ms. Hammon said that the University of Colorado College of Nursing is presenting a virtual conference titled Partnerships for Veteran & Military Health: Inspiring a Community of Care and Connection, scheduled for 23-24 April. Community partners for the event include CU's School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Depression Center, Marcus Institute for Brain Health, and Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, as well as the DU Graduate School of Professional Psychology/Military Psychology, and the Rocky Mountain MIRECC Suicide Prevention Program. Topics to be covered include military culture, moral injury, depression and suicide, post-traumatic stress, behavioral health & sleep disturbances, families' health, women's health, substance use disorders, veteran aging & end-of-life care, and dental health. Information will be distributed to the Board. A portion of the conference will feature a virtual exhibit hall for community organizations, and Ms. Hammon requested authorization to register the Board for the exhibit hall. There were no objection and Mr. Rudder instructed Ms. Hammon to proceed.

The Board has received an email from Diane Erickson, past department president of the American Legion Auxiliary. She wanted to inform the Board that Brandt Erickson, who has been serving as the state's point of contact for Operation Recognition, is not able to continue to serve in this capacity due to health. She offered to perform the duties with the Board's approval. The Board agreed. Ms. Hammon requested a copy of the email. She will respond to let Ms. Erickson know that it is fine to proceed and to offer any needed support from the Board.

Mr. Dailey asked to open discussion on the reorganization of the Division of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Rudder said that the topic was included in the DMVA report from Mr. Callahan, which was next on the agenda.

Reports

Mr. Callahan reiterated the information regarding Mr. Steen's resignation from the Board. Ms. Hammon requested Mr. Steen's email address, which Ms. Snyder will provide. Mr. Rudder said Mr. Steen's contribution to the Board will be missed. Mr. Callahan said that the Division of Veterans Affairs has been united as one division under one director. The reorganization of the

Division will be informed by a tiger team of stakeholders facilitated by the interim director. By 26 March, the interim director and tiger team will present recommendations to the department, currently leaving the team with 50 days to complete its task. Key changes already recommended by the department include the establishment of a VSO Supervisor position and supervisory responsibilities allocated to the Property Administrator of the Western Region One Source. Ms. Scanlon expressed concern that the Tiger Team now has 50 days in which to present recommendations while the Board has not yet received a decision in regard to its letter to TAG about the need for a statewide women veterans coordinator and a statewide women veterans program.

Mr. Dailey asked if it would be a requirement that the new division director be a veteran. Mr. Callahan said that has not been determined. Mr. Dailey said he is looking forward to the reorganized division entertaining the extant request to establish a state women veterans coordinator. Ms. Hammon said she encourages improved partnership between county veterans service officers and VBA.

Mr. Dorman said that DMVA is currently monitoring three legislative efforts. One is the Restoration of Honor Act, which would make veterans discharged due to sexual orientation or gender identity eligible for state benefits. Another effort is to remove the sunset date for the Military Family Relief Fund checkoff on state tax returns. The third is legislation to make required changes to statutes should the National Defense Authorization Act establish a Space National Guard as expected.

Ms. Iglesias said that the tiger team advising on the reorganization currently consists of 18 stakeholders of the veteran community. Its first meeting will be held on 05 February. The team's mission is to perform a holistic assessment of the division, to develop mission, vision, and value statements, and to create three courses of action that are feasible, acceptable, complete and distinguishable, specifically how the division could function as a centralized, decentralized, or hybrid organization. The first week, team members will conduct a SWOT analysis of current operations. Spring training for county veterans service officers is scheduled for 10-11 March. The training will be held at the WROS for those who elect to attend in person, and streamed for access across the state. Property Tax season is underway with more than 300 approval letters sent to veterans to date. The cemetery can now allow up to 10 persons attending committals; military honors continue to be performed by active duty personnel. Wreaths were removed last week. The construction of the upper pond is nearly complete. The Denver office is operating with 50% of

staff in the office. Efforts are underway to forward calls from the Denver office to the WROS to facilitate answering calls in person. The WROS has added a second work study position; the individual is majoring in mass communications and marketing and has 25 hours a week to assist the WROS.

Mr. Robinson said that there is no new report on the Veterans Monument, as they continue to wait for a decision to be made in regard to fending the park. The VCLC needs assessment is complete as of 11 January. Key findings indicate that a new VCLC is needed, not due to the amount of beds required statewide but that the current availability is not in the right locations. An overarching concern is funding, but also of concern is the fact that the current VCLCs do not meet the occupancy requirement that would justify a new facility. Ms. Scanlon asked if CDHS is expecting to pursue a change in the applicable statute. Mr. Robinson said it could be possible but the commission is currently constructing five, 10, and 20-year plans so exact details are not in place. There is more need for community care and less for skilled nursing. As of 02 February 92% of patients in the state's VCLCs have been vaccinated, exceeding the national average of 70%. In regard to staff 68% have been vaccinated, exceeding the national average of 38%. There is a consideration of whether staff can be required to be vaccinated. There are 52 cases among outbreaks at Colorado VCLCs, with Rifle being the only facility not currently experiencing an outbreak.

Ms. Hammon reported that UVC will hold its banquet on 27 June and is still hoping that it can be held in person, particularly since General Clellan is the keynote speaker. The masking and social distancing requirements may require the event to be virtual. Colorado's Military Retired Pay Exemption now allows all retirees under age 55 to exempt \$7,500 of their retirement pay from their taxable income. The goals of the legislative committee include increasing the budgets for the VCLCs and support for a state women veterans coordinator. The state has been assuming cash funds to supplement the budget and UVC is seeking a guarantee that the funds will be paid back with interest. A bill that would establish hiring priority for veterans is seeking a sponsor.

Ms. Hoagland said that the March meeting will feature the training on evaluation of applications for the Veterans Trust Fund grants and that awards will be decided at the April meeting. Ms. Scanlon asked why the American Legion of Colorado returned \$30,000 of grant funds. Ms. Hoagland said the department has several issues and that the decision was made at the highest level. They do have other funding to serve veterans. Ms. Hammon said that some of the reduced grant awards to posts are located in areas of need. Ms. Hoagland said that the affected grantees

have been mentored and coached and that will continue. She said that the VCLCs are progressing with their funded projects and are expected to expend their grants. Mr. Dailey asked about attendance at the application webinars. Ms. Hoagland said that the webinars for Veterans Assistance Grant are well attended but those for the Veterans Trust Fund Grant are not. Mr. Rudder thanked Gail for her work. Mr. Dailey said that she goes over and above in her efforts to assist applicants and grantees.

Remarks

Ms. Scanlon said that the Women Marine Association is still utilizing its grant and serving veterans. They will celebrate the anniversary of women's service in the Marines with a virtual banquet on 13 February. Ms. Hoagland extended her thanks to the Association for their work with the Veterans Trust Fund Grant.

Ms. Golonka said that Military Family Relief is very heavily used, noticeable since as a first sergeant she receives the requests. Many requests some from those who are underemployed. Ms. Scanlon offered to send job announcements to Ms. Golonka to share. Ms. Golonka said she is looking forward to the response from the Adjutant General in regard to the state women veterans coordinator.

Mr. Gonzalez said that he is in the process of completing his VTF grantee site visit. He said that he has been in contact with Duane France, El Paso County's Veteran of the Year in 2019, who is working to expand a local program that addresses suicide prevention among service members, veterans, and their families. Mr. Gonzales said that he is planning to meet with Mr. France next week to discuss the prospect. In outreach, Mr. Gonzalez attended a recent VFW meeting.

Ms. Hammon said that mental health needs are still high as counties cope with restrictions and lockdowns. The crisis group and the grief support group are helping to meet the great demand. Vaccine access has been difficult in rural areas because they often don't have the subzero storage facilities required. Veterans are encouraged to try other vaccine providers in addition to VA, such as local hospitals and county health departments. In outreach, she attended VFW and is participating on the Administrative Advisory Committee for the WROS. She thanked Ms. Scanlon for her continuing efforts in regard the state women veterans coordinator.

Mr. Dailey said that Grand County will host the Warrior Bonfire Program for Purple Heart recipients next week. A local park is being renamed in honor of veterans. The American Legion continues to meet regularly. The area continues to have increased mental health needs due to the fires last fall.

Mr. Rudder said that while virtual meetings lack the context of person to person, they are in still in widespread use and he often has days of back to back virtual meetings. He is still covering VSO duties for Alamosa County as well as Rio Grande and filed four new claims for Alamosa County veterans last week. Operation Healing Waters has held virtual fly tying instruction. Kits are delivered to the veteran's home and instructions are delivered via YouTube. He expressed appreciation to the Board members for their continued service.

Ms. Hammon requested that the March agenda include updates from the Strategic Plan committees. Ms. Scanlon confirmed that the annual Board training is scheduled for 23 February at 1:00 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings

05 March, VTF application evaluation training – allow meeting time until 1:00

02 April, VTF application review and award decisions

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Rudder invited a motion to adjourn. Ms. Hammon so moved.

Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

March 05, 2021

WebEx Meeting

Opening

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order 0900. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POW's, MIA's, those deployed, their families, and all those killed in the line of duty.

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Jessica Olsen, DEERS Operator

Jessica Quackenbush, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Guests Present

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

Gary Harbert, Prowers County Veterans Service Officer

John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer

Adrian Medina, Pueblo County Veterans Service Officer

Joshua Medina, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer Congressional District 6

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

Rudy Sabedra, Pueblo County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 3

Robert Sheetz, Adams County Veterans Service Officer

Roxie Smith, Crowley County Veterans Service Officer

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Rick Torres, Montezuma County Veterans Service Officer

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Hammon moved that the minutes of the February 2021 meeting be approved as presented.

Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried.

Action Item: Veterans Trust Fund Application Evaluation

Ms. Hoagland presented to the Board the requirements and best practices for scoring applications for the 2021-2022 Veterans Trust Fund Grant. She first reminded the Board that the applications are confidential and are the property of the applicant. The only information that can be considered for the purpose of evaluating and scoring an application is the information provided in the application packet and the specific supplemental information regarding compliance, spending. Copies of applications must be destroyed after the grant award process is complete. The application scores are an aggregate of the scores provided by all of the Board members.

The pre-award assessment is required by 2 CFR 200. It is used to assess risk after a decision has been made to fund an application but prior to deciding the award amount. It can be used to apply funding thresholds and to determine the level of monitoring and support that could benefit specific grantees. She shared the spreadsheet received by Board members last month that tracks the data supplied by the pre-award assessment. The other addendum to the application tracks the compliance and pending level of current grantees who are also current applicants. Ms. Hoagland cautioned the Board that COVID has caused spending issues for some grantees. The Board then reviewed the scoring rubric used for all applications.

Mr. Gonzalez asked if the individual Board members scored within a normal variance when reviewing the previous year's applications. Ms. Hoagland said that was the case with few exceptions and use of the rubric should continue to aid in that effort. Ms. Hammon asked about what timelines are projected. Ms. Hoagland said that Board members will receive their individual scoring sheets, supplemental information, and the application either the middle or end of the following week. The individual score sheets need to be submitted to Ms. Hoagland by 30 March so that the final scores can be calculated and distributed prior to the April meeting. Mr. Rudder inquired about a meeting for the review committee. The committee will schedule no later than 25 March.

Old Business

The Bylaws Committee has not had an opportunity to meet. Mr. Steen was the third member and Ms. Hammon requested that another member be appointed to replace him. Mr. Dailey volunteered

and was appointed. They will consider the proposed bylaw changes and the Conflict of Interest form. Ms. Hammon asked Ms. Hoagland to comment on the current form. Ms. Hoagland said they are required. Conflict must be clearly identified prior to the VTF Grant application review. This was an important item on the audit. Government employment is an important disclosure because the Board assist with the Veterans Assistance Grant application review, and government entities are eligible to apply for that grant. Disclosure of individual political positions that differ from an official position assumed by DMVA can avoid any circumstance in which a Board member was asked to testify to a position they do not support. Ms. Hammon suggested that Mr. Dorman participate in the form review. Mr. Dorman affirmed. Ms., Scanlon requested applicable statutes to ensure that standard is met. Ms. Hoagland said that other than the previous statutes cited and the statute requiring annual training, the other information is the audit report. Ms. Scanlon asked that the audit report requiring a conflict-of-interest form be signed be sent to her. Ms. Hoagland agreed.

The CCI letter has been sent to CCI and to the individual county commissioners.

New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

Reports

Mr. Callahan said that he has conferred with the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions regarding the vacant position on the Board. That office will apply diversity analytics to help evaluate the applications. The hope is to fill the vacancy by the next Board meeting. In regard to the state veterans women coordinator and program, he said that the Division is still in the reorganization process. The addition of a new staff position will need to be evidence based and would require a decision item. Ms. Scanlon asked that the program still be implemented even it has to share a staff position. Mr. Callahan said the item would be referred to the Tiger Team.

Mr. Dorman said that the appointment of Brigadier General Clellan as The Adjutant General was confirmed by the Senate. The Restoration of Honor bill has passed the state Senate and moved to the House. Testimony on suspending the sunset of the tax form check box for the Military Families Relief Fund legislation is schedule to take place on 08 March. A memorial for lives lost to COVID will be presented on 05 March by the governor's office. A departure ceremony for Bravo Company 1157 Infantry is scheduled for 06 March as that company prepares to deploy to Africa. Mr. Dailey asked whether DMVA has a position on proposed legislation to reimburse Honor Guard participants. The answer was not at this time. Ms. Hammon said this proposed legislation is experiencing some opposition from volunteer Honor Guards and Mr. Dailey agreed.

Ms. Iglesias said that the united Division is working on synchronizations of operations. The Tiger Team is one month into its efforts. The Denver DVA office is open. Calls are being answered. The Denver phones have been forwarded to the WROS where they can be either forwarded to a phone in Denver or answered by staff at the WROS. Ben Mestas is retiring from the Division and his last day in the office will be 12 March. Mineral County Veterans Service Officer Mike Atwater has died. Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer and Rio Grande County Veteran Service Officer Jack Rudder assisting Mineral County veterans. Mesa County is now at Level Blue and WROS is able to resume indoor events including the coffee club. Social distancing and masks are still required.

Ms. Hoagland has no additions to her submitted report.

Mr. Robinson said admission are still down at the VCLCs. Some veteran are reluctant to enter care and the 14 days of quarantine often required of a new admit or after hospitalization has caused a strain, particularly since the CLCs are structured for dual occupancy. Ms. Scanlon said the availability of vaccines may alleviate some the need for quarantine. Mr. Robinson said that they do anticipate some changes in the guidelines but accommodations will still be required for veterans who are not vaccinated. To date vaccines are not mandatory.

Ms. Hammon said that UVC's proposed legislation regarding the disabled veteran property tax exemption will not move forward this year due to the fiscal note. Other possible legislative items of interest are the statewide women veterans coordinator and improving wages for CLC staff. Legislation for the development of veterans treatment courts has been sponsored. The UVC banquet is still schedule for 21 June with the hope that it can be held in person. TAG will be keynote speaker.

Remarks

Mr. Gonzalez said that he has completed his last non-monitoring VTF grant visit in Cortez and has submitted his report. On 11 March he will attend the State of the Military Affairs Committee and received updates on local military and veterans affairs including Space Command. Also on 11 March he will attend a meeting at Mount Carmel Veterans Service Center comprised of stakeholders and Mount Carmel ambassadors regarding how to help local veterans.

Mr. Dailey said that Warrior Bonfire held events in Grand County recently. In regard to a specific case, he said that he has been attempting to determine whether a veteran is enrolled in VHA. He has left three messages with no return yet. There are long call waits to wait on hold. The weekly meetings from the ECHCS have been discontinued.

Ms. Scanlon said the Women Marines Association continues to meet virtually. They have grant funds remaining and continue to assist veterans.

Ms. Hammon said the women's American Legion is holding virtual meetings. The local VFW post in Eagle has been meeting by Zoom but is considering a lunch gathering in the near future. The Grand Junction VAMC reported that they have not had a single flu case this year. They have seven affiliations with academic institutions and will now have interns at the hospital. The Elks Club in Aspen has donated funds for pajamas and bathrobes for woman patients at the VAMC. A HUD-VASH office is now located at the WROS and they have added 10 additional vouchers for the area. The Mobile Medical Unit is in Eagle County for two days once a month. Food shortages and mental health difficulties continue to be common problems in the area.

Mr. Rudder said that there is a new VSO in Alamosa County. Mayra Aranda is a former Marine and her office is open full time. Mr. Rudder has had the opportunity to work with her and endorses her abilities. He said that he also is assisting some veterans in Mineral County as many of those residents consider themselves residents of the San Luis Valley. His honor guard attended one funeral this week and has two scheduled for next week. Several are pending for Homelake. They expect a busy summer as services that were postponed during the pandemic begin to be scheduled.

Ms. Iglesias said that Mr. Atwater has been interred in California. A memorial service may be held in Creede at a later date.

Mr. Rudder said that the VTF decisions will be done at the April meeting and June will be election of officers. Ms. Scanlon suggested that Carole Donsbach from the women veterans program at the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC be invited to the May meeting to discuss that program. Mr. Rudder and Ms. Hammon agreed.

Mr. Rudder thanked all in attendance and Ms. Hammon invited any additional comments from visitors.

Mr. Scott said that in his area of the state, veterans from multiple posts volunteer to compose honor guards. Compensation is offered the hosting post from the family members, but individual members are not compensated. He said that he is preparing to exit his position as president of the Colorado County Veterans Service Officer Association. There is no current vice president and he asked attendees to help spread the word that officers are needed.

Mr. Dailey recommended extending an invitation to TAG to attend a future meeting. Mr. Rudder agreed.

Upcoming Meetings

02 April, VTF application review and award decisions

07 May

04 June, Election of officers

Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Hammon moved to adjourn. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

April 02, 2021

WebEx Meeting

Opening

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

Members Present

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice-Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Secretary

Duane Dailey, Member

Lacey Golonka, Member

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Staff Present

David Callahan, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director

Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Director

Joanne Iglesias, CDVA Interim Director

Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grant Administrator

Heather Benjamin, CDVA Property Administrator

Angela Ingalls, Veterans Memorial Cemetery Director

Tommy Heckler, DVA Work Study

Diana Debor, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Jessica Quackenbush, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Guests Present

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

Renee Franklin, Pueblo County Veterans Service Office

Megan Gurka, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer

John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer

Duffy Laudick, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 2

Jim McCracken, Washington County Veterans Service Officer

Joshua Medina, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 6

Trisha Reynolds, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer

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

Rudy Sabedra, Pueblo County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 3

Carolyn Schneider, County Veterans Service Officer

Sheldon Smith, Montrose/Ouray County Veterans Service Officer

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Eric Winterrowd, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer

Sean Woods, El Paso County Veterans Service Officer

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Dailey moved that the minutes of the February 2021 meeting be approved as presented. Ms.

Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

Public Comments

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

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

Action Item: Veterans Trust Fund Application Review

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

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

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

VT22-20 McCandless

The application requested funds in the amount of \$23,102.40 for resident nameplates, military memorabilia showcases, and the annual maintenance fees for the Scandent system. The committee

recommended funding this application in full. Mr. Gonzalez so moved. Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$23,102.40

VT22-22 Homelake

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

Decision: Fund in full at \$31,734.69

VT22-21 Rifle

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

Decision: Fund in full at \$24,800.00

VT22-23 Fitzsimons

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

Decision: Fund at \$40,818.70

VT22-19 Spanish Peaks

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

Decision: Fund in part at \$39,822.51

Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The request for \$32,212.33 would provide for the renovation of the committal shelter, the

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

Decision: Fund in full at 32,212.33

The remaining applications were considered in numerical order.

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

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

Decision: Fund in full at \$35,000.00

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

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

This application requests \$5,700.00 for a transportation program. This is a current grantee, compliant with excellent performance. The committee recommended funding this application in

full. Ms. Scanlon so moved. Ms. Hammon seconded. The motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$5,700.00

VT 22-03 VFW Post 5812, Pueblo West,

Average Score: 85.4

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

Decision: Fund in part at \$6,000.00

VT 22-04 American Legion Post 62, Craig,

Average Score: 62.9

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

Decision: Fund in part at \$4,000.00

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

agreed.

VT 22-05 VFW Post 5231, Cortez,

Average Score: 84.6

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

Decision: Fund in full at \$60,000.00

VT 22-06 DAV Chapter 44, Cortez,

Average Score: 67.6

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

Decision: Fund in part at \$50,000.00

VT 22-07 American Legion Post 75, Cortez,

Average Score: 75.6

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

Recommendation: Fund in part at \$40,000.00

VT 22-08 VFW Post 12063, Westcliffe,

Average Score: 91.6

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

Decision: Fund in part at \$70,000.00

VT 22-09 VFW Post 5843, Meeker

Average Score: 75.9

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

Decision: Fund in part at \$5,000.00

VT 22-10 Department of Colorado VFW, Lakewood

Average Score: 83.4

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

Decision: Fund in full at \$50,000.00

VT 22-11 DAV Chapter 2, Pueblo

Average Score: 57.1

Ms. Hoagland said that since the average score is below 60, the application was not eligible for consideration. Mr. Rudder clarified that this application was missing a page. Ms. Scanlon asked if

the missing page was the applicant's error. Ms. Hoagland said that it was. She said the applicant submitted the application four times and never did submit all of the information. The committee did not consider this application. The Board did not consider this application.

Decision: Ineligible by score

VT 22-12 American Legion Post 09, La Junta

Average Score: 82.9

This application requested \$20,387.40 for an assistance and transportation program. Ms. Hoagland said the program will have a new grant manager in the upcoming year. The committee recommended funding this application at a round figure of \$20,000.00. Mr. Dailey so moved. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

Decision: Fund in part at \$20,000.00

VT 22-13 American Legion Post 103, Littleton

Average Score: 83.3

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

Decision: Fund in part at \$25,000.00

VT 22-14 AL Post 11, Trinidad

Average Score: 77.4

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

Recommendation: Fund in part at \$17,000.00

VT 22-15 American Legion Post 22, Northglenn

Average Score: 67.1

This application requests \$40,000.00 for an assistance program. This is a current grantee, compliant with good performance. The committee recommended funding this application in full.

Ms. Hammon said she had concern regarding the application's low score. She noted lack of detail on collaboration and a low number of unduplicated veterans. Ms. Hoagland said the grantee received a modification increase in the current year and Mr. Dailey said that the need justifies the amount. Ms. Golonka moved to fund this application at \$40,000.00. Mr. Dailey seconded. The motion carried.

Decision: Fund in full at \$40,000.00

VT 22-16 VFW Post 3641, Pueblo

Average Score: 70.1

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

Recommendation: Fund in full at \$40,400.00

VT 22-17 American Legion Post 9-11, Palmer Lake

Average score: 78.6

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

Recommendation: Fund in part at \$3,000.00

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

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

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

Old Business

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

Article II Section 4 Members and Procedures

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

Article III: Meetings of Members

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

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

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

Article IV: Officers

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

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

- To send out notifications of upcoming meetings.
- To send out notice of agendas with attachments to board members 7 days before the meeting.
- Prepare minutes of the board meetings within two weeks of the board meeting.
- Post online all board meeting minutes in a timely manner at least two weeks after the next monthly meeting.
- Record the board meeting.
- Prepare documents for signature for the Chairman of the Board.
- Determine the location of the meetings in the Colorado counties or cities in cooperation with the board

- Coordinate the continuing education of the Board.
- Conduct annual training of the board to include statutory mandated information, best practices and expectations of board member.

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

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

New Business

There was no new business.

Reports

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

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

Hammon inquired about the status of the Purple Heart Recipient Free State Park Access bill. It has been sent to Appropriations.

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

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

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

Remarks

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

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

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

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

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

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

Upcoming Meetings

07 May

04 June

Election of officers

Adjournment

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

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

May 07, 2021

WebEx Meeting

Opening

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

Members Present

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice-Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Secretary

Duane Dailey, Member

Lacey Golonka, Member

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Staff Present

David Callahan, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director

Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Director

Joanne Iglesias, CDVA Interim Director

Heather Benjamin, CDVA Property Administrator

Angela Ingalls, Veterans Memorial Cemetery Director

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Guests Present

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

Wes Carter, C-123 Veterans Association

Duffy Laudick, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 2

Joshua Medina, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer, Congressional District 6

Russ Miller, National Vice Commandant Marine Corps League, Chairman Pikes Peak Veterans
Council

Matthew O'Brien, President, National Marine Corps Business Network - Colorado

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

Robert Sheetz, Adams County Veterans Service Officer

Sheldon Smith, Montrose/Ouray County Veterans Service Officer

Rick Torres, Montezuma County Veterans Service Officer

Approval of Minutes

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

Public Comments

Mr. Dailey inquired of Mr. Sheetz whether the city of Brighton was still scheduled to host the traveling wall in September. Mr. Sheetz confirmed that it will arrive on August 31 and be available through September 5. He said that the city is seeking volunteers for the event and those interested can sign up on the city web site.

Old Business

Bylaws Committee: Ms. Hammon asked Ms. Snyder to provide a new copy of the bylaws with the changes voted on at the last meeting. She said that Ms. Scanlon has done research into the requirements regarding conflict of interest and a new COI form has drafted. That draft is being reviewed by Mr. Dorman's office and that of the attorney general, with the intent that the new form will be available at the next meeting. Ms. Scanlon said that the committee will meet again to confirm that conflict of interest is addressed correctly in the bylaws, and that Mr. Dailey has suggested the committee review the number off absences permitted. Ms. Hammon thanked the other committee members and Mr. Dorman for their efforts.

New Business

Ms. Benjamin presented a funding request to the Board on behalf of the WROS. The request is for \$75,000.00 to fund both the triage staff position and operation costs, specifically utilities. Mr. Rudder and Mr. Dailey asked Mr. Dorman to confirm that the statute permits money from the Veterans Trust Fund to be used for the administrative costs of the Division. Mr. Dorman said that is allowed by the statute and placed the citation from Title 28 in the chat. Ms. Scanlon moved that the Board fund the request as presented using money from the trust principal. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

Reports

Mr. Callahan said that the job announcement for CDVA Director has been posted and the intent is to hold interviews on May 21. The Department is also working on filling an upcoming vacancy on the Board. Ms. Scanlon asked if any Board members would participate in the interview board for the director and Mr. Callahan said that Ms. Hammon has agreed to serve.

Mr. Dorman said that the Senate confirmation for Ms. Golonka and Ms. Motupalli is scheduled for June 1. The Department bills this year have passed. The federal Defense budget may not be available until next year. Mr. Robinson asked if funds swept from the Veterans Trust Fund and

Veterans Assistance Grant have been restored in the Long Bill and Mr. Dorman confirmed they have not. Mr. Dailey asked for the status of SB 21-015, regarding stipends for veterans service organization when they provide honor guards at funerals. Mr. Dorman said it has passed the Senate and is now in House Appropriations.

Ms. Iglesias said that the cemetery hit 5,000 interments in April. Interments have begun in the new columbarium. The new computer system and gravesite locator have been installed and she conveyed thanks from the cemetery director to the Board for funding those projects. The Memorial Day event will not be held in person this year because the gathering would be too large. Flags will be placed on the graves the Friday before Memorial Day and a wreath will be laid on the day. The WROS east parking lot has been completed as a joint project among the Colorado National Guard, the city of Grand Junction, and Mesa County. The property tax exemption applications are now coming to Jessica Olsen at the WROS and she has been streamlining the process. The Division will retain VetraSpec as its claim management system for the next year. The Division is working on finding locations for its field service offices.

Mr. Robinson said that the traveling wall will be in Walsenburg June 18-20. He said that the Veterans Monument Preservation Trust committee has contracted to repair the damage done to the monument last summer and the work is expected to be complete by Memorial Day. The CLCs submitted a required budget reduction, but concern continues as they continue to lose almost \$2 million a month due to low occupancy. All of the CLCs are now open to visitors, with social distancing and masks required, and the homes have resumed communal dining and some activities. The next meeting of the board of commissioners is scheduled for June 3.

Ms. Hammon said the UVC legislative committee has had a busy season so far. The banquet is scheduled for 27 June and ticket sales have been slow. Tickets are available on the web site and Ms. Scanlon has reserved a table for the Board. The Adjutant General will be out of the country on orders and so will not be available as the keynote speaker.

Remarks

Ms. Scanlon welcomed Ms. Motupalli to the Board and congratulated her on her upcoming confirmation. The new speaker for the UVC banquet will be Brigadier General Scott Sherman, Director of the Joint Staff, Colorado National Guard. Business is proceeding smoothly in the Women Marines Association with everything being conducted virtually.

Ms. Golonka asked if the Military Family Relief Fund tax form checkoff was extended. Mr. Dorman said that it was, but it must accrue a minimum of \$50,000 per year to remain on the form.

Xcel is seeking locations for volunteers to assist with flag setting for Memorial Day.

Ms. Hammon said Eagle County will set their flags the weekend before Memorial Day with assistance from Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops. The Memorial Day service will be held this year. She has been nominated to a committee sponsored by VA to survey community-level risks for veteran suicide and is working on outreach to high-risk groups. Veterans service offices have been very busy with claims work. She recommended visiting VA's We Are Not Invisible web site in support of women veterans. She and Ms. Iglesias attended the National Guard Association meeting in Beaver Creek in April. She will have surgery on June 3 and may not be able to be in attendance at the June 4 meeting.

Mr. Gonzalez said that he participated in The Adjutant General's Colorado Outreach Exchange luncheon in April. El Paso County's Don Stratton and USS Arizona Survivors exhibit has been moved from the airport to its permanent location at the Colorado Springs East Library. On Memorial Day he will give the main remarks at the service held in Fountain, and later that day will read the proclamation at the National Cemetery.

Ms. Motupalli said she is grateful to join the Board and thanked the members for their welcome.

Mr. Dailey said he is looking forward to Ms. Motupalli's input on the Board. Summit County is using the SMART program to help people avoid incarceration. There will be a Memorial Day service at Hoosier Pass. Grand County is supplying flags for local cemeteries and is working on repairing markers damaged by the fires. Services will also be held in Hot Sulphur Springs and Granby, and Grand Lake will hold its traditional parade. The Grand County American Legion will be in Walden performing an honor guard for previously unmarked graves of WWI and WWII veterans.

Mr. Rudder said that he can access his office at Homelake again, but clients do not have access yet. Alamosa County's new VSO is doing well in the position but is seeing a lot of veterans from Costilla and Saguache Counties. Football players from Adams State will help set the flags for Memorial Day.

Mr. Carter said that he worked with the Board five years ago on adding disabled military retirees to the property tax exemption and continues to pursue the benefit of behalf Gold Star spouses. It is a small population and the cost to the state is estimated at less than \$100,000. He recommended including a line of duty death as a provision of the statute, to include Gold Star spouses and survivors of activated Guard members. On a different topic, he brought to the Board's awareness

VHA's veteran-directed care, which is utilized for veterans who need assistance with activities of daily life. VHA can help provide supportive services to keep the veteran able to live at home safely. The program is coordinated through the social work teams at VA medical centers.

Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Dailey said he would be unable to attend the June meeting. Ms. Scanlon said she would not be there as well, and there is a likelihood Ms. Hammon will be absent. She suggested moving the election of officers to a different meeting, Ms. Golonka said she also might be unavailable in June. As the Board determined they would be unlikely to have a quorum at a June meeting. Ms. Hammon recommended moving the meeting to July 9 and the members concurred.

09 July, Election of officers

06 August

Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Hammon moved to adjourn. Ms. Golonka seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:07 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

July 09, 2021

WebEx Meeting

Opening

Mr. Rudder called the meeting to order at 0900. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POW's, MIA's, those deployed, their families, and all those killed in the line of duty.

Members Present

Jack Rudder, Chair

Pat Hammon, Vice-Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Secretary

Duane Dailey, Member

Lacey Golonka, Member

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Sean Maday, Member

Jasmine Motupalli, Member

Staff Present

David Callahan, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director

Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Director

Joanne Iglesias, CDVA Interim Director

Angela Ingalls, Veterans Memorial Cemetery Director

Diana Debor, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Guests Present

Gary Harbert, Prowers County Veterans Service Officer

Tim Hutchinson, Broomfield County Veterans Service Officer

Richard Nagley, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley

Nickie Phillips, Weld County Veterans Service Officer

Jay Scott, Otero County Veterans Service Officer, President Colorado County Veterans Service Office Association

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Report

Mr. Callahan said that he will serve in the capacity of Interim Deputy Executive Director of DMVA until August, when he will be succeeded by Greg Dorman. He welcomed Mr. Maday to

the Board and reminded the Board members that this meeting is Mr. Rudder's last both as Chair and as a member of the Board. He said a recognition ceremony will be held for Mr. Rudder at Joint Forces Headquarters on 15 July. He thanked Mr. Rudder for his service and his leadership. He said that DMVA is pursuing funding for the Women Veterans Service Officer and that progress continues on recruitment and hiring for Division leadership and in securing office space for field service offices. Mr. Dorman welcomed Mr. Maday also and thanked Mr. Rudder for his service.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Scanlon said that General Sherman's name was spelled incorrectly in the May minutes. Mr. Dailey moved that the minutes of the May 2021 meeting be approved as corrected. Ms. Hammon seconded. The motion carried.

Old Business

Mr. Dailey said that he had some items to bring before the Board, including inquiries regard the grants. He asked if Mr. Callahan would be remaining throughout the Board meeting. Mr. Callahan said that he would.

Conflict of Interest Form

Ms. Scanlon said that the current draft of the new form has been presented to the Board, and that Mr. Dorman was checking it with the Attorney General's office. Mr. Dorman said he has not yet received a response.

Bylaws Committee

Ms. Scanlon said that the committee should convene to consider the question of how many absences should be permissible for a Board member. Ms. Hammon agreed. Mr. Dailey asked Mr. Dorman if that was necessary in the bylaws or if the rule is made by the Governor's office. Mr. Dorman said the Board should adjudicate the question and he will confirm that the decision does not conflict with instructions from the Governor's office. Ms. Scanlon said the bylaws currently do not mention this and that any bylaw regarding the matter should refer to unexcused absences. Mr. Rudder said that in his opinion absences with advance notice could be excused. Ms. Hammon said she will call a committee meeting. Ms. Hammon reminded the Board that the current bylaws have been distributed and are in effect.

New Business

Election of officers

Mr. Rudder nominated Ms. Hammon for the position of Chair. Ms. Hammon accepted the nomination. Ms. Scanlon seconded. Ms. Hammon was elected by unanimous vote.

Mr. Rudder opened nominations for the office of Vice Chair. Ms. Hammon nominated Ms. Scanlon. Ms. Scanlon accepted the nomination. Ms. Golonka seconded. Ms. Scanlon was elected by unanimous vote.

Mr. Rudder opened nominations for the office of Secretary. Ms. Hammon reminded the Board that per the bylaws, the Board can request clerical assistance from the Division so the position does not necessarily contain much secretarial work, but the Secretary has the duty of writing letters on the Board's behalf. Ms. Scanlon said that the Secretary also needs to ensure that minutes are taken at committee meetings. Ms. Hammon asked Mr. Gonzalez if he would accept a nomination. He said he would accept but invited other nominations. Ms. Hammon inquired whether Ms. Golonka would accept a nomination. Ms. Golonka said that she was willing but was concerned regarding drills occurring on first Fridays. Mr. Rudder said that may not be an issue since Division staff will take meeting minutes. Ms. Hammon nominated Ms. Golonka for the office of Secretary. Ms. Scanlon seconded. Ms. Golonka was elected by unanimous vote.

Meeting Schedule

Mr. Rudder invited suggestions for 2021-2022 meetings, including whether the Board would like to resume meeting in person. Ms. Hammon said that she recommends meeting in person beginning in August. She proposed either the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC, where DVA is slated to have a field service office, or the VA Regional Office, as that office had a new director. She added that the Board might also like to select a more distant location while good weather is likely to hold for travel.

Ms. Scanlon asked which locations the Board was scheduled to visit before the pandemic required remote meetings. Mr. Rudder he did not have the complete list but he knew that two of the locations were Burlington and Cortez. Mr. Rudder suggested Burlington and the other Board members concurred. Mr. Dailey said that location is important because there were no grant applications received from northeastern Colorado.

Ms. Scanlon suggested that the September meeting be held in the Denver metro area to help avoid excessive holiday traffic, as the first Friday in September is Labor Day weekend. Ms. Hammon suggested Routt County, as it was also one of the cancelled locations last year. Ms. Hammon said accommodations might be difficult because of the holiday. Mr. Rudder said the meeting could be moved to September 10. The Board members concurred.

Mr. Dailey asked when the Board would do annual training, which would include orientation for the newer Board members. Ms. Hammon said October could be a good time, with the meeting

held in the San Luis Valley. Training could be on 30 September with the stated meeting following on 01 October. Mr. Rudder said he would secure a meeting location.

Mr. Scott asked if veteran service officers are invited to every Board meeting. Mr. Rudder said they are and Ms. Hammon added that they are encouraged to participate.

Mr. Maday asked if it would be possible to get a list of local veterans events so that Board visits could then coincide. Mr. Rudder said that the Division might be able to assist. Ms. Hammon said she would also reach out VSOs. Mr. Dailey agreed that aligning with community events could be an effective strategy.

Annual VSO Training

Ms. Iglesias said that the annual training conference for VSOs is scheduled for 21-24 September with both in-person and virtual options. The in-person event will be held at Joint Forces Headquarters. Mr. Dailey asked if a central hotel would be selected for the event. Ms. Iglesias confirmed that is the case but that the Division is researching adjacent hotels for those who wish to travel.

DACOWITS

Ms. Scanlon said that in January the Secretary of Defense discontinued the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DACOWITS). The mission of providing advice and recommendations regarding women in the service was reassigned to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. She said that DACOWIS had been in place since 1951 and she has made preliminary inquiries about requesting that Congress reinstate it. If the Board is interested in supporting the position, she volunteered to write the initial draft of the letter to then be referred to the new Board secretary. Ms. Hammon asked how DACOWIS was funded. Ms. Scanlon said was funded through the Department of Defense, and funding includes two staff and supports expenses for 15 volunteer board members. Ms. Hammon said it did sound better as a stand-alone committee but asked if the Board could get more information. Ms. Scanlon said she will prepare a preview and recommendations for the Board to consider at the next meeting.

Reports

Mr. Dorman said the legislature is preparing for the next session. Ms. Scanlon asked for an overview of passed legislation that was supported by or affects DMVA. Mr. Dorman said the bills supported by DMVA all passed. The primary that affects the Department is the new program established stipends for honor guards. The deadline for implementation is 15 January. Ms. Scanlon asked if there were any issues for next year. Mr. Dorman said any new legislation from

the Department would be made public on 01 November.

Ms. Iglesias said that DVA has two temporary administrative assistants in place at the Denver office and that Carissa Snyder has been relocated to the VARO while working on the grant program in the administrator's absence. VSO Richard Armijo accepted a position with Family Programs. WROS Property Administrator also resigned and a temporary administrator has been installed there. The job announcements for Division Director and VSO Supervisor closed on 30 June. Interviews for the VSO Supervisor will be scheduled for next week. Jessica Olsen and Jessica Quackenbush at the WROS have been finishing the year's property tax applications with support from a temporary employee. The application deadline was 01 July. The DEERS office served more than 400 veterans within the past month. Regarding the reorganization, DVA has secured an additional office suite at the VARO to house the Director and VSO Supervisor. An office has been secured for the Denver Metro Field Service Officer at the Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC and that VSO will be located there beginning the first week of August. The Division has met with leadership from La Plata and Pueblo Counties regarding prospective field offices and both have been receptive and have made offers of office space. Greeley is being considered as the office location for the northeast region. Mr. Dailey asked when the selection process for the Director would take place. Mr. Dorman said he is working with a panel on this project but summer travel has interfered. Ms. Scanlon asked how many candidates would be interviewed for the position of VSO Supervisor, and Ms. Iglesias said there would be six. Mr. Dailey asked if there is a target date to hire a Director and Mr. Callahan said it could be by the end of July. Mr. Scott asked how many candidates were being considered for the position of Director. Mr. Dorman said the referral list from Human Resources is not yet available.

Ms. Ingalls said the cemetery has been receiving positive feedback regarding services and the grounds. There has been an increase of nearly 20% in interments from the end of the prior fiscal year to the end of the one that just closed. An NCA site compliance audit is scheduled for 10-11 September. The improvement to the committal shelter has been postponed due the extensive use of the shelter. Fort Logan is scheduling six weeks out for interments and VMC is scheduling four weeks out. Mr. Maday said that the increase in interments must be difficult for the cemetery staff and inquired if there was any way that the Board could recognize their contribution, perhaps a letter of recognition. Mr. Rudder said that honor guards have also been very busy with multiple services in a day. Ms. Ingalls agreed and expressed her appreciation. Ms. Scanlon thanked Ms. Ingalls for her leadership and extra effort and offered to assist with the letter. Mr. Maday said he would prepare an initial draft. Mr. Dailey said that perhaps a letter could also be sent to honor

guards. The Board members concurred. The letter will be prepared and referred to the Division to distribute.

Mr. Taylor asked what office locations are being considered in Durango. Ms. Iglesias said they are the Commons building adjacent to VOA, the county office, and the DAV resource center.

Mr. Rudder said there was no report from Mr. Robinson. Ms. Hammon said she would provide an article from Colorado Sun regarding the new statue in Lincoln Veterans Park. It is dedicated to General Rose and currently being bronzed in Loveland.

Ms. Hammon said UVC held a successful banquet at the end of June with General Sherman as the keynote speaker. For the benefit of new members she explained that UVC is the United Veterans Coalition, originally founded for the purpose of advocating for veteran-related legislation, and which later provide instrumental in the establishment of the Rocky Mountain Region VAMC. The current focus is both legislation and veteran community events. They are currently compiling a statewide event calendar, which would complement Mr. Maday's suggestion to align Board meetings with community veteran activities. UVC has a new slate of officers: Admiral Dick Young is the new president and Bob McLaughlin from Mount Carmel Veterans Service Center is the new vice president.

Mr. Dailey requested a discussion regarding grants. Ms. Iglesias relayed the grant report submitted by Carissa Snyder, which noted that the VTF grant program was impacted by the absence of the grant administrator particularly in the prompt payment of requests for reimbursement. Grant agreements for 2021-2022 have been distributed. Mr. Dailey said that at one point, the Division had sought an additional staff person to support the grant program, but the current draft of the organization chart does not show such a position. He said that with current Grand Administrator out on leave, the assignment of another staff member to serve the grant program has caused a gap in other areas. He said the delay in reimbursements is a significant problem. Ms. Iglesias said that moving forward, the Division is considering a redistribution of workload among the administrative staff so that at least one position will contain a duty allocation for grant support. Mr. Dailey asked how much that allocation would be and Ms. Iglesias said 50%. Mr. Dailey said emphasis must be placed on serving veterans in need and that a plan is needed so that a staff absence does not put the program in disarray. He inquired whether the difficulty is with the Department or with the Division. Mr. Callahan said continuity is needed in various parts of the Division and the reorganization is designed to address that. Mr. Dorman said that lack of available training in the grant program is a complication. Mr. Dailey recalled the

2013 audit and the myriad findings that had to be repaired. He said that the grant administrator used to have support but a few years ago that was removed. He asked where the grants fall in DMVA priorities. Mr. Callahan said it is of primary importance and will receive additional attention and resources.

Remarks

Ms. Hammon said she has been on medical leave for the past month and working intermittently. Eagle County has also been busy with funerals and with resuming in-person veterans services. The July 4 parade usually presented by the VFW was cancelled this year in favor of a “static parade” consisting of booths. She suggested an overview of Board roles and terms for Ms. Motupalli and Mr. Maday. She thanked them both for their participation and attendance.

Ms. Scanlon thanked Ms. Hammon for recent assistance with specific veterans, including her husband and a 92-year-old veteran who was hospitalized. The Women Marines Association does not meet in July but did receive a Veterans Assistance Grant again this year. She said she is leaving for Army War College Carlisle, PA to teach a graduate seminar.

Ms. Golonka said she enjoyed seeing people at the UVC banquet. August 6-9 is her sergeant major’s academy orientation, so she may be calling in to the next meeting. She will soon have formal invitations to a 05 November event heralding Xcel energy’s new program to offer interviews to recruits once they complete their AIT.

Ms. Motupalli said she is happy to assist in plans to measure impact of veterans programs particularly with underserved populations.

Mr. Gonzalez said he attended an art exhibit and fundraising event at Mount Carmel on 02 July. On 05 August he will attend a fundraising dinner at the Home Front Military Network. The El Paso County Fair and Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo will occur over the next few weeks, with discounted entrances and appreciation days extended to veterans.

Mr. Dailey said the American Legion Post 88 from Granby/Grand County ventured to Jackson County and performed an honor guard in May for five rediscovered veteran from World Wars I and II. Ms. Iglesias also attended. The Memorial Day event in Grand Lake was held successfully with a good turnout. The parade site will henceforth be known as Veterans Memorial Park. Local posts are also very busy with honor guards, already scheduled into September. The western side of the Grand Lake cemetery was burned out in recent fires and efforts are underway to repair and replace veteran headstones. The July 4 parade in Granby was very well attended. He thanked Mr.

Rudder for his outstanding leadership of the Board under unprecedented conditions.

Mr. Maday thanked the Board and said he is looking forward to serving in this venue.

Mr. Rudder said that Homelake has been busy with funerals as well as honor guards. He expressed appreciation for his time on the Board and the friendships he has gained during his tenure.

Ms. Hammon said that know and working with Mr. Rudder has been an honor and that he will be missed. She appreciates his effort for veterans and for the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Ridder thanked her for her compliments.

Upcoming Meetings

06 August, Burlington

10 September, Routt County

01 October, San Luis Valley (training on 30 September)

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

September 10, 2021

Ambulance Shed

1576 Lowell Ave, Burlington, CO 80807

Opening

Ms. Hammon called the meeting to order at 0907. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POW's, MIA's, those deployed, their families, and all those killed in the line of duty.

Members Present

Pat Hammon, Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Vice-Chair

Lacey Golonka, Secretary

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Sean Maday, Member

Jasmine Motupalli, Member

Staff Present

Joanne Iglesias, CDVA Interim Director

Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grants Administrator

Diana DeBor, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Elizabeth Maxwell, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Jessica Quackenbush, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Guests Present

Marshall Bosworth, El Paso County Veterans Service Officer

Mary Cornum, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley

Jim Kliesen, Cheyenne County Veterans Service Officer

Glen Marciniak, Kit Carson County Veterans Service Officer

John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer

Tim Hutchinson, Broomfield County Veterans Service Officer

Joshua Medina, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer

Cindy Meyer, Teller Count Veterans Service Officer

Richard Nagley, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley

Ray Odom, Las Animas County Veterans Service Officer

Jay Scott, Otero County Veterans Service Officer/President Colorado County VSO Association

Roxie Smith, Crowley County Veterans Service Officer

Adam Sutton, Boulder County Veterans Service Officer

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Scanlon said the word “Marine” should be capitalized on page one. She then moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. Ms. Golonka seconded. The motion carried.

Public Comments

Mr. Scott complimented Ms. Hoagland’s administration of the grant program, particularly the streamlined application process. He said the program provided by American Legion 009 in La Junta that provides transportation for veterans to medical appointments. He said that payments during this grant cycle have been slow and this has affected service delivery. The post requested an advance in mid-July that has not yet been received. He asked that this issue be addressed. Other matters affecting veterans in southeastern Colorado are the withdrawal from Afghanistan and difficulties with Community Care. Community Care has been recertifying their providers and the process has left many veterans with a gap in care. The La Junta CBOC does not have a medical provider on staff. School loan repayment programs have helped assuage this problem in the past. Ms. Hammon thanked Mr. Scott for his comments. She said the Board will take his comments under advisement and act when possible.

Old Business

Conflict of Interest Form

The new conflict of interest form is complete.

Bylaws Committee

Ms. Hammon said that the Bylaws Committee has not met to discuss the member absence policy.

Mr. Dailey has resigned from the Board and that has left a vacancy on the committee. She asked Mr. Maday if he would be willing to serve and Mr. Maday agreed that he would.

Ms. Scanlon said that DACOWITS is the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the services. It was created in 1952 to advise the Secretary of Defense on matters and policies relating to the recruitment, retention, employment, integration, well-being, and treatment of servicewomen in the Armed Forces. In January 2021, the Secretary disbanded the committee and relocated its responsibilities under Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. There is an effort underway to encourage Congress to reinstate the committee. UVC is one of many organizations considering the issue including several national groups. She asked that she be permitted to draft a letter for the consideration of the Board that could be if approved be sent to the Governor’s office. The Board

members agreed.

Honor Guards

Ms. Snyder said that county veterans service officers across the state have provided information on local honor guards and a comprehensive list is available. Ms. Hammon asked that the list be distributed to Board members. Ms. Hammon said that Mr. Maday has completed a draft of a letter of recognition to be sent to the staff at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery and that same draft could be appropriate to also use for honor guards. Mr. Maday distributed a copy of the letter to Board members. He suggested that the Board might establish a formal recognition program.

New Business

VMC Recognition Letter

Ms. Scanlon moved that the Board adopt and distribute the letter drafted to recognize the staff at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery and Honor Guards. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried.

Reports

Ms. Hammon provided the report on behalf of DMVA in Mr. Dorman's absence. Interviews are underway the CDVA Director. DMVA continues to monitor potential legislation in anticipation of the next General Assembly.

Ms. Iglesias said that the Veterans Memorial Cemetery continues to execute triple the usual number of interments, which has been the case for the past quarter. This places continual pressure on the staff and honor guards. A groundskeeper will be leaving within the next few months. The capital construction project is nearly complete with a water feature to be added after 01 November. The triannual compliance review by NCA is also complete. There were some corrective actions issued attributable to the increased number of interments and new grounds crew. The cemetery is participating in VA's Compensated Work Therapy program and has a temporary employee through that system. One groundskeeper is departing within the next few months. The cemetery participated in Beaconfest in Grand Junction and was able to outreach to approximately 300 attendees. The WROS will lose its DEERS operator in September and that position has been announced. The Property Administrator position has not been announced. A temporary employee is filling that role part time. There are two new prospective tenants. The Mental Health Summit will be held at the WROS in September. The Colorado Boulevard office for the Denver DVA is now closed to the public and there are no staff there. Administrative staff have been relocated to the VA Regional Office in Lakewood. The Denver phone number has been forwarded so anyone calling the published telephone number will still reach the DVA office. The hiring process is underway for both the Appeals Specialist and four state VSOs. Office space for

Durango should be finalized next week. Office space has been secured in Pueblo beginning 01 October. The Division is still seeking office space in Greeley. The annual training conference begins on 21 September. There are approximately 50 people scheduled to attend in person, with more than 30 planning to attend virtually. Ms. Scanlon said that she appreciated the detailed monthly reports provided by Ms. Iglesias' office. Ms. Hammon suggested that the Board send a letter of acknowledge to departing DEERS representative Jessica Olsen, who was also integral in the opening of the WROS.

Ms. Hammon said that she had no new information regarding the CLCs but she will check with Mr. Robinson. Increased hospitalizations due to COVID continue to impact admissions. She said that the new UVC president has created regional vice presidencies to help expand UVC's reach statewide. UVC would like to work more closely with the Board, particularly regarding prospective legislative efforts. Ms. Scanlon asked if the Board members could receive UVC newsletters and updates and Ms. Hammons aid she would see that they are added to the distribution list.

Ms. Hoagland said that payments to grantees continued to be significantly delayed. Within the past two weeks the final payments were issued from the 2021 grant cycle. She is receiving daily complaints from grantees awaiting funds. Many grants are seeing a marked increase in requests from veterans and the slow payments are impacting service delivery. The grants office processes reimbursement requests immediately, but staffing issues in DMVA accounting are holding up the release of funds. Ms. Hammon proposed that the Board send a memo to Mr. Dorman and TAG expressing concern over the impact to the grant program and the Board members agreed.

Remarks

Ms. Hammon asked the Board members provide their place of work and Congressional district for the benefits of the audience.

Ms. Scanlon is in the 6th congressional district. She said that the Women Marines Association is still assisting veterans and has also seen an increase in requests. Last weekend she attended a memorial service for a 90-year-old WW II woman Marine. She was a sergeant in the Marine Corps. There is now one remaining WW II woman Marine. Ms. Scanlon works for the Colorado Division of Homeland Security.

Mr. Maday is in the 2nd congressional district. He attended a memorial service for an Army veteran last week and it underscored the effort put forth by honor guards. In August H.R. 1448, the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act (PAWS) became law.

This law requires the VHA to implement a five-year pilot program to provide service dog training to benefit eligible veterans who are diagnosed with PTSD.

Ms. Golonka is in the 4th congressional district. She said that invitations will be forthcoming for Xcel Energy's November 05 signing ceremony to celebrate their partnership with the Army's Partnership for Youth Success.

Ms. Motupalli is in the 6th congressional district. She said that for the past several weeks she has been volunteering with nonprofit organization Allied Airlift, which is working to evacuate US passport holders, permanent residents, green card holders, and their families from Afghanistan. Most have young children and are in difficult circumstances. She is the head of financial experience data team at Gusto, a tech startup, and co-chair of the organization's veteran affinity group.

Mr. Gonzalez said he attended Mount Carmel Patriot Day, a food and services drive, in Colorado Springs on 03 September. El Paso County honored 2021 Veteran of the Year Skyler Nelson at a ceremony on 09 September. He will attend the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony at Peterson Space Force Base. Mr. Gonzalez serves as an El Paso County Commissioner.

Ms. Hammon is in the 3rd congressional district and serves as the VSO for Eagle County. She is looking forward to the annual training conference. UVC and other advocates continue to encourage the addition of a women's veterans service officer for CDVA. She asked that Ms. Iglesias report the concern to Mr. Dorman. Ms. Scanlon encouraged the Board, the Division, and UVC to present a unified effort and Ms. Golonka agreed.

Upcoming Meetings

Ms. Scanlon suggested making the next meeting virtual due to increased COVID cases and the other Board members agreed. Ms. Hammon said that it would be also be helpful to wait to do the annual training once a new board member is appointed to fill the current vacancy. The annual training is now planned for November in conjunction with the meeting, still scheduled for Steamboat Springs.

Upcoming Meetings

01 October, Virtual via WebEx

05 November, Steamboat Springs (annual training 04 November)

03 December, VAMC Aurora

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Maday moved to adjourn. Ms. Golonka seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

October 10, 2021

WebEx

Opening

Ms. Hammon called the meeting to order at 0900. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POW's, MIA's, those deployed, their families, and all those killed in the line of duty.

Members Present

Pat Hammon, Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Vice-Chair

Lacey Golonka, Secretary

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Sean Maday, Member

Jasmine Motupalli, Member

Staff Present

Greg Dorman, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director, Resource and Legislative Director

David Callahan, CDVA Director

Joanne Iglesias, WROS Property Administrator

Gail Hoagland, CDVA Grants Administrator

James Poteet, CDVA State Veterans Service Officer Supervisor

Diana DeBor, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Jessica Quackenbush, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Guests Present

Marshall Bosworth, El Paso County Veterans Service Officer, Regional Vice President UVC

Mary Cornum, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley

Destry DeWolf, Huerfano County Veterans Service Officer

Frank Griggs, Veterans Puppy for Life

Megan Gurka, Larimer County Veterans Service Officer

John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer

Joshua Medina, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer

Cindy Meyer, Teller Count Veterans Service Officer

Richard Nagley, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley

Ray Odom, Las Animas County Veterans Service Officer

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Rick Ward, Bent County Veterans Service Officer

Eric Winterrowd, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Maday moved that the minutes from the September 2021 be approved as presented. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion carried.

Public Comments

None

Old Business

Bylaws Committee

Ms. Hammon said that the Bylaws Committee has not yet met.

DACOWITS

Ms. Scanlon said that the DACOWITS concern is resolved. The Secretary of Defense has reconstituted the committee.

Honor Guards

Mr. Dorman said that a process will be in place no later than 15 January to reimburse honor guards from congressionally chartered veterans service organizations. The program will be administered by the Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Ms. Hammon said that it might be helpful to reach out to veterans service organizations that have a lot of honor guards to make sure the reimbursement process is accessible. Mr. Dorman said that state law requires accessibility, including online access, of required forms. He also announced that David Callahan is the new CDVA Director as of 01 October. He said that DMVA is migrating to Office 365.

Public Attendance

Ms. Hammon said there were only three veterans in attendance at the meeting in Burlington, which is similar to previous meetings held in that part of the state. The county VSO advised that meetings during workdays can be difficult for veterans to attend. She suggested that the Board consider including evening meetings in the schedule to increase the availability to veterans.

New Business

Restoration of Honor Act

Mr. Dorman said that Board has been charged by the legislature with the process of adjudicating other than honorable discharges issued on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. The Act goes into effect on 11 November. The Board and Division will need to determine what documentation should be requested. He advised that the VA has issued a policy statement that

administratively achieves the same end result. DMVA is working to whether the VA policy meets the requirement of the state law. Ms. Hammon asked if the VA policy negates the need for the Act how the Board should proceed. Mr. Dorman said in that case the Board could be refer veterans to the VA to pursue benefits. However, the state process would remain in place for veterans who prefer a remedy by the state. Ms. Hammon asked Mr. Poteet to comment. Mr. Poteet said that the VA policy and process are sufficient to address veteran status, and that the Act successfully updates statutory language in regard to state benefits. Ms. Hammon recommended having a standard VA referral letter and a review process in place in case it is requested. Ms. Scanlon said that the reason for discharge can be difficult to determine absent specific codes and that VA referral will be the most effective route as they have access to the complete record. Mr. Gonzalez concurred. Mr. Maday recommended communicating the availability of the VA policy and act on the website and in external newsletters. Ms. Hammon said the Board will draft a letter and work on newsletter and web site communication.

Retiring Member Recognition

Mr. Hammon asked the Board for opinions on recognition for Duane Dailey, recently retired from the Board. She asked that the Division order a plaque for recognition and the Board will determine when to hold the recognition depending in the location of future meetings.

Visits to CLCs

Ms. Hammon asked to the Board to consider a visit to the state's CLCs in the spring. Visitation is currently still curtailed due to COVID. Mr. Dorman said that he will assist. For the benefit of Board members, he explained that usually 2-3 Board members attend on each trip.

Veterans Puppy For Life

Mr. Griggs thanked the Board for the invitation. The organization started in 2014 through the Military Order of the Purple Heart. The intent was to place a single puppy with a veteran to be trained as a PTSD service dog. Upon learning that the cost to train a PTSD service dog can be up to \$30,000, Mr. Griggs sought certification as a trainer and started a nonprofit to provide this service to veterans. Veterans Puppy for Life places eight-week-old puppies with veterans diagnosed with PTSD and the puppy and veteran train together. There is no charge to the veteran for the dog or the training. The bonding process from a young age has proved beneficial to the service dog-veteran relationship and encourages veterans to socialize as they work to socialize the puppy. Eight-week-old puppy Barley was introduced to the Board. A university study in underway to determine whether on training your own service dog is a viable alternative to pharmaceutical treatment. The organization has graduated 74 puppies since 2014 with five ready

to graduate within the next month. A current difficulty is that veterans unable to get prescriptions through VAMC for a PTSD service dog and this has affected referrals. Veterans Puppy For Life is not accredited through Assistance Dogs International because the application costs several thousand dollars. The program is expanding to include first responders and will soon change their name to Heroes Puppy For Life.

Reports

Mr. Dorman said the budgeting process is underway and information should be available by 01 November. DMVA has no legislative requests this year.

Mr. Callahan said he is glad to be on the DVA team and serving Colorado veterans. The keywords are that all customers and employees should feel welcomed, valued, respected, and heard. The field service office locations have been secured in Aurora, Pueblo, and Durango and the Division is still seeking office space in Greeley. Interviews for VSO positions in Pueblo and Durango should be held within the next two weeks. He thanked Ms. Iglesias for her service to DVA and leading the reorganization effort. Ms. Scanlon asked if at the next meeting Board members could be briefed on the prior organization of DVA as well as the current state. Ms. Hammon also thanked Ms. Iglesias and the DVA staff for their work during the reorganization process. She asked Ms. Golonka to draft a letter form the Board thanking Ms. Iglesias and her staff. She complimented the team on the success of the annual VSO training conference.

Ms. Hoagland said that she checked just prior to the meeting and grant payments have been processed up to 15 September. This is a significant improvement over recent weeks. The first quarter of the grant cycle concludes on 15 October. Ms. Scanlon asked if there are any areas of concern in regard to the Veterans Trust Fund. Ms. Hoagland said with recent delays in funds spending rates have been difficult to ascertain. The next quarter should provide additional information. The Division has had a Veterans Assistance Grant returned from Colorado Health and Wellness due to staff changes that include the departure of their grant manager. In January the Division will attempt to leverage funds back from grantees who are not anticipated to expend so that the funds can be reallocated to grantees who will be able to expend them. Ms. Hammon thanked Ms. Hoagland for her work and for her presentation at the VSO training.

Mr. Robinson was on vacation.

Ms. Hammon said she was no at the most recent UVC executive meeting. Mr. McLaughlin is still working in regional vice presidencies to increase statewide involvement. The UVC web site will now have veterans events listed. Any interested organization is encouraged to contact UVC about

how to list their veterans' events.

Ms. Iglesias said that capital construction at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery has been put on hold. The irrigation water will go off in a few weeks and then the contractors should be back on site. The cemetery is still having difficulties with reimbursements and the National Cemetery Administration is aware. The paper check process has been problematic. Interment rates are still high, having increased from an average of 15-20 a month to 40-50 a month. There is some backlog from COVID but it is mostly due to the aging veteran population. This has created a lot of pressure on the cemetery staff. There are new tenants at the WROS. Medicare Mentors are moving in October 01 and will be in the building 20 hours a month. Spectrum Sounds Design and Shield Security have renewed their lease and are moving from part-time to full-time tenants. Liberty Mutual will be moving is shortly, and there is a real estate company that may want more than one office. The Mental Health Summit was streamed from the WROS in partnership with the VA. The weekly coffee club has approximately 50 attendees per week. The electronic parking gates project is going out to bid. The job announcements has closed for the DEERS operator but the applicant list has not yet been received. Saluting Branches was held in September and nearly 60 trees were planted with the help of more than 1000 volunteers. The Veterans Day Ceremony will be held in Fruita at the Veterans Memorial Park on 11 November, and Wreaths Across America will be the second week of December.

Remarks

Ms. Golonka said that invitations have been sent for Xcel Energy's Partnership for Success event on 05 November. For Veterans Day they will acknowledge the Tomb of the Unknown and are seeking a member of the Old Guard to speak at the event.

Ms. Scanlon said that the Colorado Women Marines Association is experiencing a high volume of assistance requests. 10 November is the Marine Corps birthday and she will be a guest speaker for the Young Marines on 16 October.

Ms. Motupalli said that she works for Gusto as a co-lead of their Veterans Affinity Group. The company's Veterans Heritage Month is in November and there is a series of events planned, including speakers, panels, and a donation campaign to benefit Afghanistan evacuation resettlement efforts. Gusto is a people platform for small businesses. They are a financial tech company that provides payroll, benefits, and HR services to businesses up to 500 employees.

Mr. Maday said he was recently introduced to DOD's Skillbridge program through his employer, Google. They currently have 28 service members who are within the last 180 days of their

enlistment serving an 11-week internship to help gain civilian skills and experience. He is in the process of transferring from the Air Force Reserve to the Michigan Air National Guard, where he will serve as the Director of Innovation.

Mr. Gonzalez said some refugees from the resettlement will be coming to El Paso County. El Paso County's first Veteran of the Year, Dick Fernandez, died in September. He was instrumental in the founding of the Pikes Peak National Cemetery.

Ms. Hammon said she has been busy with the annual VSO training, which went well. It was both virtual and in person. She has just returned from a hut trip with 20 veterans on Tennessee Pass. One of the veterans was a 90-year-old who flew fighter planes in Vietnam and another was a 49-year-old woman veteran who served in Iraq. Veterans Day will have school events, some virtual and some in person. Red Canyon High School is doing a history unit on Vietnam and is having Vietnam veterans come to speak to the students. COVID vaccine boosters are available in Eagle County and efforts are underway to get boosters for veterans of age 65. The annual Rotary Public Safety Council and Veterans Night will be held in November. The veterans service office is busy with veterans claims for benefits and has heard from many veterans affected by the situation with Afghanistan.

Mr. Taylor thanked Ms. Hammon for serving as MC for the annual VSO training and thanked Ms. Iglesias and her staff for the effort.

Upcoming Meetings

Ms. Hammon said the November is scheduled for Steamboat with the annual board training to be held the day before. She asked if the members would still like an in-person meeting for November. Mr. Maday suggested either a virtual meeting out of caution or perhaps one in the local area to enable Board members to attend the Xcel Energy event on 05 November. Ms. Hammon said she will check on availability at the VAMC. Ms. Scanlon suggested doing the training virtually and the meeting in person, and the Board members agrees that a virtual option for the training would be helpful.

Mr. Taylor suggested that the Board might be interested in scheduling a meeting in Archuleta County. There is a Vets 4 Vets group that meets every Tuesday, and it may help with veteran attendance. Sometimes veterans from La Plata and Montezuma Counties attend as well. The Board agreed that could be a good opportunity.

Ms. Hammon asked if the Board would like go to Routt County in December. The Board

members agreed and Mr. Maday recommended extending a virtual option as well.

Upcoming Meetings

05 November, VAMC Aurora (virtual training 04 November)

03 December , Steamboat Springs

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

November 5, 2021

WebEx

Opening

Ms. Hammon called the meeting to order at 0902. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was held for POW's, MIA's, Support for our troops in action, at this time. Added moment of silence to families who lost Veterans this month.

Members Present

Pat Hammon, Chair Sheila Scanlon, Vice-Chair
Longinos Gonzalez, Member Sean Maday, Member

Staff Present

Laura Clellan, Adjunct General of the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs
Greg Dorman, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director, Resource and Legislative Director
David Callahan, CDVA Director
Beth Maxwell, Administrative Assistant Dee Debor, Administrative Assistant
Drew Stem, CDVA State Veterans Service Officer Jessica Quackenbush, CDVA Administrative Assistant Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Guests Present

Destry DeWolf, Huerfano County Veterans Service Officer John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer Richard Nagley, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer
Ralph Charlip, Chairperson of the Aurora Veteran Affairs Commission Adam Sutton, Boulder County Veteran Service Officer
Karen Townsend, Boulder County Veteran Service Officer James Roxie Smith, Jon Paul De Lisi

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Scanlon requested a change to include "Colorado Women Marine Association" verse "Colorado Women Marine Foundation". With the correction, Ms. Scanlon motioned to approve the October Minutes. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comments

Aurora Veteran Affairs Commission

Mr. Charlip stated there are two separate commissions I the State, Adams County and Aurora County. They are structured different than the board but share the same goals to support and

navigate the veterans in our community. The Aurora Veteran Affairs Commission report to City Council and serve a three-year term, with a possibility to be reappointed.

This year they are working to promote military service with the youth. Along with veteran stand downs and job fairs when able to meet in large groups. The Aurora Veteran Affairs Commission are looking for commissioners as they are down three members. Please contact Mr. Charlip if you are interested in downloading an application with a possible interview. Mr. Charlip is thankful to attend the Board meeting and would like to see if it is possible to work with the AVAC in the future.

Ms. Hammon recommended Mr. Charlip to speak with the Aurora Veteran Service Officer, to announce to veterans in the community. Mr. Charlip stated his plans to speak with the Aurora VSO as well as the American Legion and VFW posts.

Old Business

Restoration of Honor Act

Mr. Callahan stated this Act will be effective 11 November, Veteran's Day. This Act will allow the Board to enable Board to approve veterans for certain state benefits, by granting them LGBT discharge. The Veteran will file with the VA for Federal and State Benefits. If the Veteran chooses to just file with the Board, the board will consider a veteran's petition to be discharged as an LGBT Veteran. The veteran will have to supply the board with their DD214, a personal affidavit and supplement information to the board. If the board grants the petition, then the veteran will be eligible for certain state benefits, License Plates, burial and internments at Home Lake, tuition assistance, certificates of Graduation and so forth. The DMVA staff will present the board with the applicants information at either a special session or during a board meeting. Mr. Callahan recommended the board to review and vote on the applications during a board meeting for transparency, understanding the veteran's personal identifying information would remain confidential. To do this the board would be reviewing applicate A, Applicante B Applicante C etc.

Mr. Callahan clarified the board will be the Board of Veteran Affairs

Ms. Hammon requested Mr. Callahan to add the applicants to the Board's agenda as needed.

Ms. Hammon requested the applicants to be numbered with the year they apply i.e., applicante 2021-1, applicante 2021-2, applicante 2021-3 etc. This would allow for each applicante to have a name associated with a number for a blind review process.

Ms. Hammon agreed transparency would be better through public board meetings.

Mr. Callahan would like to post this information through an announcement through veteran service organizations, press release, all the CVSOs, UVC, community partners and through the Adams and Aurora Veteran Affairs Commission, per the request of Mr. Charlip. Ms. Hammon requested each organization to continue spreading the information out through their distribution list.

Mr. Gonzalez requested to ensure there is a notation on the Act to be “following federal guidance. “This is to clarify this is a federal regulation. Mr. Callahan stated this is a part of “Don’t ask don’t Tell,” which at its tenth anniversary.

Mr. Callahan clarified this Act is not to change DD214s at a federal level, this is at a state level to allow the board to review the packets and determine if the veteran is LGBT discharged or not. This is a state item that will possibly allow a veteran to receive state benefits they do not qualify for previously.

Ms. Scanlon questioned the paperwork required for the applicant such as the reenlist code and what program they were discharged. Mr. Callahan confirmed the personal affidavit to help with extenuating circumstances for the discharge. Mr. Gonzalez stated this sounds different from last month’s discussion on the topic. Mr. Dorman explained the preferred route is going through the VA and how a veteran can

go through the process just with the state and avoid the VA. Mr. Dorman recommended the board to include a question on the application of “Did attempt to go through to the VA process? If so what was the outcome?” The board will need to review what this is or isn't so there is transparency.

Ms. Hammon and Mr. Dorman confirmed the preference is for the veteran to go through the VA. And then go through the board if they, the veteran, are denied or if they prefer going through the Board for the LBGT discharge and not through the VA.

New Member Update

Mr. Dorman spoke with Board and commission department regarding the additions to the board. The delay could be due to the bandwidth of the board and commission department.

Annual Board Training / Retreat

Ms. Hammon will schedule in a few months in hope of a new board member as well as including the new state employees.

New Business

Grants

Mr. Callahan reported DMVA is in the process of interviewing for the grants position and hopes to selection early next week, in the interim Ms. Snyder will be helping with grants. Ms. Snyder reported on the application for the Veteran Trust Fund Application and Instructions for 2022-2023 were updated by Ms. Hoagland before her departure. The only changes were updating the dates on the application from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023. There are not any changes to the Federal changes such as, CFR200 or the Uniform Grant Guidance.

Ms. Hammon asked for the deadline Ms. Snyder stated application cycle starts 1 December needs to be published on the website on 1 December, due to this deadline the Board reviews the application to be published at the November Board meeting. Ms. Hammon asked when the applications are in by, Ms.

Snyder replied applications have a hard deadline of 1 March as this is an electronic submission and electronic time stamp.

Ms. Snyder stated the Webinars have been helpful in the past and would like to schedule the webinars for this year as well, starting in December through February. Ms. Hoagland has made the grants office available to advise on grant applications, Ms. Snyder would like to continue this practice and phone number will be continued. Ms. Hammon stated there has been some changes due to COVID in the grants program and is waiting changes with the Grants program. Ms. Snyder agreed there has been turnover.

Ms. Hammon asked about broadband issues for applicant in rural areas. Ms. Snyder recited the electronic submission began in the 2020-2021 grant year. This being said the grants program has not experienced broadband with the one test year, if there is a situation that arises then adjustments would be considered. Ms. Snyder stated some applicator would need to separate attachments and not submit the full package at one time. The primary questions the grant program receives are content based questions such as “demonstration of need.” Ms. Hammon stated her major concern for the rural areas and less technical savvy applicants. Ms. Snyder agreed it should be noted on the website to call the grants program for technical assistance.

Ms. Scanlon commented that some of questions on the grants application are complicated and redundant. Ms. Scanlon presented a possible solution of reducing the redundancies of question such as “How many veterans are in the area? How many veterans receive duplicate services?” To a simple fill in the blank Question. Ms. Hammon agreed and suggested “Provide the number

of veterans and unduplicated veteran” Ms. Scanlon pointed out a third number question of “how many duplicate veterans do you plan to serve?” Ms. Scanlon suggested just having the numbers in one area without the sentences and Ms. Hammon agreed as long as a data source was cited. Ms. Hammon resolved question 2, 5, and 9 to be changed to a plotter where numbers are filled in with an area for the applicator to insert their data source. Mr. Gonzalez agreed the data source, in a sentence, is needed for clear understanding of the application. Ms. Scanlon questioned which data sources would be used, such as the organization? Ms. Snyder confirmed the data would come from the organization’s collected data; however, a new organization will not have historical data to use.

Mr. Gonzalez asked for a definition of a duplicated and unduplicated veteran. Ms. Snyder defined a duplicated veteran to be a veteran who received the services more than once in a fiscal year. Ms. Snyder further explained it is to capture the “repeat customers” verses original customers.

Ms. Hammon requested Ms. Snyder to combine the three questions into boxes and room for a really good data source to be reviewed by board via email, upon its completion. Ms. Snyder agreed fewer questions would be less intimidating for the applicants. Ms. Scanlon agreed this is a response to concerns voiced by the veterans.

Mr. Maday is looking forward to reviewing and watching the grants process. Ms. Snyder invited Mr. Maday to review any and all Webinars to understand the questions and concerns of the grantees. Ms. Hammon ask for the information to be shared with our organizations of the application being published on 1 December.

Reports

Brigadier General Laura Clellan updated the Board on the approval of a Women Veteran Service Officer in the 2022 State Budget, plan to hire for this position in the summer of 2022. DMVA has requested a pay raise for the State Veteran Service Officers to bring them up to equality with the County Veteran Service Officers. Mr. Dorman and the Governor are working to get the 7th board member on board.

Mr. Dorman state the Department is filling positions and has been in several interviews this weeks. The budget has been released which has been the current focus. Mr. Dorman has a temporary Legislative Liaison (LL) to attend sessions when Mr. Dorman is not able to attend. There is a meeting on 19 November for the Capital Building Advisory Committee. This committee will be discussing the Civil War Monument new location, hopefully at Joint Force

Head Quarters. This would be a win-win as the statue is a monument for the Nation Guard members who fought in the Civil War as well as providing a space for a new memorial the legation would like to create and place in the previous area.

Ms. Hammon asked for clarification of the meeting, “If the meeting was just to move the statue to Hea Quarters?” Mr. Dorman stated he did not review the entire agenda, but stated DMVA was attending to discuss the statue.

Ms. Scanlon asked who would be paying for the move of the statue. Mr. Dorman responded determining the scale of cost to move the statue will be discussed as well as determining this cost could be added to the department’s budget or would it be possible to fundraise for the cost of the move. Mr. Dorman stated there are pending questions of the restoration and risk management being in the risk management portfolio, since this is an insurance type of event.

Ms. Hammon asked when the JBC hearing on the budget will take place and would the department like the board to assist or to attend. Mr. Dorman replied the staff briefing will be 2 December at 1:00 pm, Mr. Dorman will view it remotely. The Hearing will be on 14 December at 9:00 am, Mr. Dorman will advise the Board once a preference has been made from The Adjunct General.

Ms. Scanlon asked how Mr. Dorman is able to show support from the UVC for the VSOs and the Veteran Woman Coordinator. Mr. Dorman replied this can be done through multiple ways, a letter to the committee, speaking with senators, or through the UVC speaking of the importance of this compensation increase to the JBC, as this is stakeholder driven. The Board can support by drafting a letter. Ms. Hammon stated the Board will draft a letter to be sent after the staff hearing on 2 December to be send out when it is appropriate. Ms. Hammon stated she would like to attend as the Women Veteran Coordinator position is of interested to her and other on the Board. Ms. Hammon asked Mr.

Dorman to brief the General that some of the Board member would like to be present at the hearing, if possible.

Mr. Callahan the Division is moving forward with the reorganization. Recently Hired Eric Moncibias the Field Service Office VSO for Pueblo and Drew Stem the Field Service Office VSO for Aurora started on 1 November and to be accredited within 90 days, January 2022. Selected Kristy Cunningham Field Service Office VSO for Durango who will come onboard on 15 November. The Appeals Specialist position closes today will review the applicate list and

have interviews in the coming weeks.

Ms. Hammon requested clarification of the titles given to the State Veteran Service Officers as Field Representatives or Field Service Officer or Field Veteran Service Officers or Regional Veteran Service officer or State Veteran Service Officer? Mr. Callahan stated a VSO is a VSO they can be called a State VSO they will be working in one of the five regional offices.

Clarifying further there will be a State VSO in a Field Service Office, to expand assistance to the rural communities.

Ms. Hammon requested a review of the current State Field Offices and their counties. A map of Colorado was displayed with the 64 counties divided into five regions with the GDX number of Veterans in each county in the VA system as of 2019. The Gold Stars represent accredited VSOs and the Blue stars represent the Field Service Offices.

Greeley - The North East Region will be operating out of the Windsor Readiness Center through a partnership with the National Guard. This center is approximately 15 minute drive northwest of Greele DVA will have use of the space for a year, while we look for a permanent location.

Aurora – The Denver Metro Area. Pueblo – South East region. Durango – South West region.

Grand Junction – North West region.

Ms. Hammon confirmed there is permeant space for the VSOs in the other locations. Mr.

Callahan confirmed the Greeley location is for a year, while the VSO establishes the area. The Aurora VSO is located at the VA Hospital. The Pueblo VSO will be in a county facility, at no charge the Durango VSO is nominal lease with the Volunteers of America in the Commons and the Grand Junction VSO will contin to be at the WROS. Mr. Callahan reminded the Board the division was paying \$56,000 annually on the lease for the Colorado Boulevard location. So there will be cost savings with the new locations.

Mr. Charlip would like to understand the differences of the County Veteran Service officer and the Regional Veteran Service Officer. Mr. Callahan stated the State Veteran Service Officers will collaborate with the County Veteran Service Officers in their Region. The State Veteran Service officers will continue in the training to the Veteran service Offices as per the CRS, assist with the accreditation of the county service Officers. They will also take claims and assist when they need to. Thus leading to 50% of Training/Outreach and 50% of working claims. The State VSOs are community member who live in the area and can assist the countries with resources specific to the region.

Mr. Callahan stated this is draft four or five of the regional divisions. The regions are divided by terrain, mountain passes and relationship through the counties. Through the years the regions can change as needed to assist our counties.

Ms. Hammon requested Mr. Callahan to invite the new VSOs to the December Board Meeting. Mr. Callahan stated Mr. Stem was in attendance and asked for Mr. Stem to introduce himself.

Ms. Scanlon stated this is a great map to have and requested the map to be sent to all the board members, bearing in mind the number of veterans on the map are only the number of veterans registered with the VA. Mr. Taylor requested the map to be sent to the County VSOs.

Mr. Callahan presented a color coded chart of the field office, contact information for the VSO and counties in the field office region. Used as another tracker for the Division. Ms. Snyder reported this tracker is already out of date, as of yesterday, as Alamosa just hire a new VSO.

- Blue - for accredited and non-accredited VSOs
- Green - Accredited
- Amber – Non Accredited
- Red – Vacant

Ms. Hammon requested this chart to be sent out. Mr. Callahan agreed and stated this tracker will be updated monthly.

Ms. Hammon Requested a report on the Cemetery and One Source. Mr. Callahan replied the Cemetery hired a .5 FTE to assist with the Admin of the cemetery and to work on the stipend. Mr. Dominic E was working at both the Cemetery and oversight of the stipend. He is now working at the Cemetery managing the program, working through the Act to receive the funds and making payments through accounting. This stipend is up to \$75 for an honor guard to attend a funeral. If there is a second or supplicant service is up to the division to decide the amount received. This would also cover mileage an per diem to the honor guard. The Act is for \$20,000 or 266.6 services. Some Honor guard can attend upwards of a six services in a day. Due to this, we will offer \$75 for the first service and up to \$50 for a second and \$25 for a third Honor Guard Service for a maximum of \$150. To allow for Honor Guards to receive the funds as some Honor Guards attend six to eight services while others attend one service in day. This is will be socialized to determine how the Act will play out.

Ms. Hammon requested how Mr. E is working Temporary at .5 FTE how will this work for this program? Mr. Callahan stated Mr. E is .5 FT for nine months state temporary. The position is allow .3 FTE through the Act, Mr. Callahan is working with a friend in budget and found a .2 for Mr. E with the long term of bring this position to a 1 FTE plus other items at the Cemetery.

Ms. Hammon Requested a regular report on this stipend to be in old business on the future meeting agendas. Mr. Callahan confirmed with an effective date of 15 January.

Mr. Callahan reported the Western Region One Source, has a vacancy for the DEERs operator. The current number of applicants from the Human Resource office showed 17 applicants. There was a discrepancy of the testing so it was opened for a final time last week to be complete this weekend. DVA should be given the names of the top six candidates to be interviewed. It will take about a month to fill this position.

Ms. Hammon asked if hiring a temp would be effected due to the backlog. Mr. Callahan confirmed the discussion of hiring a temporary employee resulted in not being a good use of the department's energy as some of the candidate already possess the clearance required for the position. Mr. Callahan is also working with the Army side to help with training. This training will have the new DEERs Operator train at Join Force Head Quarters then return to Grand Junction to reduce the learning curve.

Ms. Hammon reported on the United Veteran Council, appointed Bob Mc Glocklen, from Mt. Carmel, as the first Vice President as the UVC to see about enlarging the scope of the UVC to State wide with Vice Presidents in different regions. UVC is mostly Legislative work for Colorado veterans and spreading the word about resources for veterans. Admiral Young met with Mr. Callahan and the TAG. Admiral Young stated "it was a very nice meeting". The UVC is collecting information on resources and outreach for their website. New member are on the Federal Level and the banquet committee. The federal level submits letters to the Federal legislations. The banquet committee works on banquets as the primary fundraisers for the UVC. The Award banquets are separate.

Ms. Scanlon, would like to think the Adjunct General and Legislative Liaison for adding the Women Veteran Coordinator to the budgets. Than you Mr. Callahan for your update on the reorganization. Ms. Scanlon asked Mr. Callahan where the location of his office is and if he received a nice office with the new position. Mr. Callahan confirmed he is located at Join Force Head Quarters in the same location.

Ms. Scanlon stated the Women Marine Association is working on the Marine birthday 10 November there will be a celebration tomorrow at 13:45 at the Marine Memorial. The Key note Speaker will be Staff Sargent Major Warner. The Women Marine Association will have Breakfast at Buckley they are not sure what the breakfast will look like this year on 8 December. The Association has depleted their grant monies for this year and will be using donations to assist Veterans for the remainder of this year. Ms.

Scanlon was the key note speaker, in uniform, at the Young Marines Ball. The uniform for the female marines will be changing to same uniform the males wear. Ms. Scanlon is authorized to wear the old uniform but would like to have a updated uniform as well.

Mr. Gonzalez did attend a Mt. Carmel Veteran Appreciation and fundraiser on 23 October. On 28 October Mr. Gonzalez attended the Rodeo Or Bust Foundation social. They fundraise monies to be returned to organizations within the community i.e. non-profits or military bases in El Paso County. El Paso County Commissioners approved a Veterans Day Proclamation on 2 November. Will attend the Colorado Springs Veteran Day Ceremony on 11 November at Memorial Park. Mr. Gonzalez will attend the Veteran's Day Parade and Reception on 6 November in Colorado Springs. Mr. Gonzalez will attend the Hoe down for Hero's on 5 November fundraiser for local veterans. The keynote speaker will be a Sargent major.

Mr. Maday presented to the Secretary of Defense, executive fellows cohorts on 20 October. This is a corporate fellowship for 04 and 05s from all branches who spend one year in a cooperate fellowship. The 16 service members will learning from the industries and how that will transition back to the Department of Defense. Google announced 20 million dollar commitment to hiring heroes. 8,000

veteran, service members and their spouses in the career forward initiative to learn skills necessary for high demand careers in the tech industry.

Ms. Hammon requested a flyer for the program to be sent to the VSO. Mr. Maday agreed to send out the blog post with the details.

Ms. Hammon briefed the Eagle County Commissioners will present a resolution on Tuesday, 9 November, thanking the Eagle county employees who are veterans. There will be eight employees who will receive a certificate. Veterans Week the Commissioners and VFW Post has presented to the schools, this year half will be virtual and the other half will be in person. The Virtual programs are filmed by the Eagle County High School Students, after the presentation

the filmed interviews are sent to the library of Congress. Eagle County has their annual Freedom Park on Veterans Day, 11 November at 16:00. The keynote speaker will be a retired Female Colonel. The One Source Advisory comity will be held this month. Eagle County will be doing Trauma healing yoga healing waters is getting ready with their fly- tying programs. Home Depot have a program to assist veterans with repairs on their homes.

Remarks

Ms. Hammon stated December is traditionally a bad weather month coupled with the rise in COVID hospital rates, she requested to hold a virtual board meeting in December. Ms. Hammon also requested to get the community vaccinated along with the children as their have now been approved for the vaccine. She also requested the audience and their friends to get vaccinated, to wear a mask, wash hand and social distance.

Mr. Gonzalez confirmed there is a surge in his county however it seems the rise in deaths and hospitalities are for the populations who are 50-60-70. Mr. Gonzalez requested to concert the effort for the older populations.

Ms. Hammon confirmed the rates hospitalization rates are on the rise, however the data is showing most of the population in the hospital are unvaccinated. Ms. Hammon stress having children and adults should receive the vaccination.

Ms. Scanlon stated her daughter had the J&J, she was able to receive a booster shot as it is not a challenge to receive the shot.

Ms. Scanlon agreed to have a virtual meeting on 3 December but would like to meet at the VA hospital on 7 January.

Ms. Hammon remarked the VA Hospitals have a few rooms large enough for a socially desistance boar meeting however the rooms are currently being used for vaccine clinics. The exception is in Glendale, the Visons,. Another place to meet would be at the VARO, as the board would have an opportunity to visit the two suites the board approved the VARO meeting unanimously. Ms. Hammon asked Ms. Snyd to secure a space for the January board meeting.

Ms. Scalon requested the location of the VARO. Ms. Hammon stated it is located at the VA Regional Office, 155 Van Gordon St, Lakewood.

Ms. Hammon remarked we have been very low staffed due to vacancies and the few staff we has is working extraordinary hard with extraordinary hours. Ms. Hammon stated Mr. Poteet is

interviewing f the vacant positions while running appeals and supervising the Veteran Service Officers. Mr. Oney is alsoworking appeals. Ms. Hammon gave a huge thank you to the staff. Ms. Hammon asked Ms. Snyder if the letter Ms. Golonka, wrote for Ms. Iglesias went out. Ms. Snyder replied she has not received it. Ms.

Scanlon suggested reviewing a previous draft to be reviewed by Ms. Snyder and signed by Ms. Hammon to ensure the letter we out on 5 November.

Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming Meetings

03 December, Remote via Webex

07 January, Lakewood at the Veteran Administration Regional Office (VARO)

Adjournment

Ms. Scanlon motioned to adjourn the meeting Mr. Gonzalez seconded the motion, the meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

December 3, 2021

WebEx

Opening

Ms. Hammon called the meeting to order at 0901. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was held for MIA's, POW's, and our friends who didn't come home, Support for our active troops all over the world, at this time.

Members Present

Pat Hammon, Chair

Sheila Scanlon, Vice-Chair

Lacey Golonka, Secretary

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Sean Maday, Member

Jasmine Motupalli, Member

Raymond Taylor, Member

Staff Present

Greg Dorman, DMVA Interim Deputy Executive Director, Resource and Legislative Director

David Callahan, CDVA Director

Joanne Iglesias, Western Region One Source (WROS) Administrator

Angela Ingalls, Veteran Memorial Cemetery Administrator

James Poteet, CDVA State Veterans Service Officer Supervisor

Eric Moncibais, Southeast Colorado State Veterans Service Officer

Brian Oney, Northwest Colorado State Veterans Service Officer

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Office Manager

Beth Maxwell, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Jessica Quackenbush, CDVA Administrative Assistant

Guests Present

Dana Berry, State Controller's Office

Marshall Bosworth, El Paso County Veteran Service Officer

Destry DeWolf, Huerfano County Veterans Service Officer

Johnathan Greenlee, Marine Corps Veteran

John Haynie, Logan County Veterans Service Officer

Jules Hoschouer, Sedgewick County Veterans Service Officer

Jim Leist, Navy Veteran

Joshua Medina, Arapahoe County Veteran Service Officer

Cindy Meyer, Teller County Veteran Service Officer

Richard Nagley, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley

Steve Otero, Gunnison County Veteran Service Officer

Robby Robinson, CBVA Representative for Veteran Monument Preservation Trust Committee and Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners of the Veteran Living Centers

Adam Sutton, Boulder County Veteran Service Officer

Raymond Taylor, Archuleta County Veterans Service Officer

Karen Townsend, Boulder County Veteran Service Officer

Introductions

Ms. Hammon introduced Mr. Raymond Taylor as the newly appointed Board member. Mr. Taylor is a Navy veteran. He served in the Navy from 1979 to 1999, ending his career as a Nuclear Power Plant Operator aboard the U.S. Enterprise after several deployments to the Persian Gulf. He lives on his family farm outside of Pagosa Springs and serves as the Archuleta County Veteran Service Officer, a position he has held for more than 10 years. Ms. Hammon stated Mr. Taylor exemplifies how Veterans Service Officers use community outreach partnerships and community meetings to create a strong veteran community. He works closely with the New Mexico VA (Albuquerque) Hospital as most his veterans retain services at this facility as it is the closest VA hospital to the San Luis Valley and will be a voice from the southern region of Colorado.

Ms. Hammon requested Eric Moncibais, the new Southeast Regional Service Officer, to introduce himself to the Board. Mr. Moncibais is a 22-year Marine Corps veteran. He retired in 2013. Mr. Moncibais worked at Ft. Carson with Army Community Services which provides resources and information to the soldiers and their families. He has lived in Pueblo for about five years. Mr. Moncibais stated the team has been welcoming, sharing information and connecting him with community partners to set him up for success. Ms. Hammon welcomed and thanked Mr. Moncibais for attending the meeting today.

Ms. Hammon requested Mr. Robby Robinson to introduce himself. Mr. Robinson is a former Board member and is its appointed representative by for the Veterans' Monument Preservation Trust Committee and Board of Commissioners of the Veteran Living Centers. Mr. Robinson has served as the Board's representative to the VCLC Commissioners for six years and is currently serving as the chairperson for that Board.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Scanlon requested a correction to the minutes in her Board report, the keynote speaker is Sargent Major Fortner. With the correction, Ms. Scanlon motioned to approve the November Minutes. Mr. Gonzalez seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comments

Ms. Hammon requested all comments to be no more than three minutes due to the length of the agenda.

Ms. Hammon called on Mr. Nagley. Mr. Nagley stated the October minutes are dated September 10th not October's date, please revise. Ms. Hammon thanked Mr. Nagley and will have the Board or staff review the October minutes.

Mr. Marshall Bosworth took the floor to report El Paso County held a Veteran's Day ceremony on Wednesday with Home Front Military Network hosted a Hero's breakfast. Mr. Bosworth was able to meet with Mr. Callahan the same day. Mr. Bosworth was happy to meet with and show Mr. Callahan around his office. Mr. Bosworth also met with Mr. Moncibias and Ms. Iglesias at the CCI Conference.

Ms. Iglesias requested Mr. Bosworth to share his award with the Board. Mr. Bosworth thanked Ms. Iglesias as he was attempting to be humble. Mr. Gonzalez mentioned this award was a bullet point for Mr. Gonzalez' report to the Board. Mr. Bosworth announced his office received the Bob Carlone Community Service Award issued by the Home Front Military Network for the contributions from the whole office in El Paso County. This award is for the El Paso Team and it will be shared weekly through the office. Mr. Bosworth insisted this was an honor that was only accomplished through the hard work of his team.

Old Business

Restoration of Honor Act

Mr. Callahan stated the Division is prepared to accept the request for veterans to receive state benefits with proof of a DD-214 and an affidavit with other elements surrounding their discharge. Ms. Snyder and the administrative team will collect the documents from the Veteran and assemble a packet to be given to the Board to review. Once the review has been processed the Board will render their decision to the Division and the Division will notify the veteran if there has been a change to the veteran's status to receive certain state benefits.

Ms. Hammon asked Mr. Callahan to explain Restoration of Honor standard for those who do not know what the standard is. Mr. Callahan stated this is veterans who were discharged due to their

LGBTQ status.

Mr. Callahan stated if the veteran was discharged with a bad conduct they would not be eligible to receive these benefits from the state. Mr. Callahan said this will not change the DD-214. As the Board does not have the authority to make that change. Ms. Hammon reminded the Board this change would help the veterans become eligible for Colorado state benefits.

Mr. Nagley asked “if we have a veteran who would like to apply who they would contact for the first step in the process?” Ms. Hammon replied the first step is for the veteran to contact our office in Lakewood and Carissa would collect their information to prepare a packet. Mr. Callahan responded the information to apply for the restoration of honor was distributed through Veteran channels. Mr. Callahan and Ms. Hammon will put this out through UVC and in the paper and through the County and State Veteran Service officers. Ms. Snyder stated it was distributed and stated she will have a copy go to the Veteran Coalition of the San Luis Valley.

Annual Training or Board Retreat

Historically the retreat would be in the afternoon before the Board meeting to have an informal gather with dinner before the Board meeting. Ms. Hammon stated with the current social climate it would be beneficial to have the training virtually, the afternoon of 3 February from 1pm-4pm. Annual Training will focus on the Colorado statues, the Board’s mission and the Board’s strategic plans, with the assistance of Mr. Callahan and his staff.

New Business

Welcome to our new member Mr. Raymond Taylor and our State Veteran Service Officer

Introductions.

Mr. Poteet introduced Mr. Eric Moncibais the State Veteran Service Officer for the Southeast Region, he is located in Pueblo. Ms. Kristy Cunningham, the State Veteran Service Officer for the Southwest Region, she is located in Durango. Mr. Brian Oney, the State Veteran Service Officer for the Northwest Region, he is located in Grand Junction. The Division has completed interviews for the Appeals Specialist position and we will be bring on the Veteran Service Officer for the Northeast region, on 20 December. Mr. Drew Stem, the State Veteran Service Officer for Metro Denver Region, he is located in Aurora.

Ms. Hammon asked why is there going to be an opening the Northwest region? Mr. Poteet stated that the sections were made for the Appeals specialist but he would like to wait until after the official start date to announce the candidates for the appeals and the Northeast region. Mr. Poteet notified the Board he will announce the new staff at the January meeting. Ms. Hammon stated the

Board is excited see the positions being filled and meeting the new staff at future Board meetings. Ms. Hammon notified Mr. Poteet of this expectation and asked Ms. Snyder to include the State Veteran Services officers on the future Board agendas.

Reports

The Department of Military and Veteran Affairs.

Mr. Dorman asked the Board for assistance and advice as the charter per statute. Mr. Dorman shared his screen with the statute 28-5-711 which pertains to the Veteran resource information clearinghouse. Mr. Dorman reminded the Board of this long-standing mandate that has never been funded. The Department has used a variety of resources to meet the guidelines of the statute. Currently the department is using NRD.gov, the National Resource Directory. Mr. Dorman shared his screen to show the website as he read off the subtitle on the website “the NRD is a database of validated resources that supports recovery rehabilitation and reintegration for service members, veterans, family members and caregivers.” He stated this is a free federal government website with a search by location, zip code for providers that have been vetted by this website.

Mr. Dorman, stated that in 2019 there was a bill put together by a group called Trilogy IR, which runs the network of care websites. Mr. Dorman shared his screen to show an example of one of Trilogy IR’s websites developed for their customer, the Home Front Military Network located in Colorado Springs.

Mr. Dorman stated this bill will be in the upcoming legislative session. He stated there will be a request to purchase the Trilogy IR website system. He requested the Board to review the website for feedback, and share their perspective as per their charter to advise the Department. Mr. Dorman clarified historically the Department has not taken a position on bills of this nature. He reiterated that he would like the Board’s perspectives, pros/cons, review of the website and/or services being offered (not offered, gaps, etc.) from the framework of how the law relates to helping Colorado Veterans

Ms. Hammon would like to clarify, NRD.gov is free because it is a federal network, which is where the link for the Division of Veteran Affairs resources connects to? Mr. Dorman confirmed this is accurate. He reiterated that Trilogy IR or network of care has been around for several years, the Department has not purchased the software as it a more expensive software system. This system has been used in other states as this offers a variety of resources. This is a baseline system for an organization to build upon and manage the content biased on the organizations capacity, which could add potential staff input, with adding an FTE with this system there would be a person who could manage the content, update the Colorado content and answer questions for the

system.

Ms. Hammon asked who is presenting the bill. Mr. Dorman replied, Representative Ortiz and Representative Duran. Ms. Hammon asked if the bill would specify where the funds would be used for this program or will the department decide. Mr. Dorman replied it would be money directed to the department to buy a service with set perimeters. Ms. Scanlon asked if the bill will cover both the website and the salary for the FTE. Mr. Dorman requested a fiscal note, with the sponsor. Mr. Dorman reiterated that he is looking for feedback, from the Board.

Mr. Nagley stated the “Governors challenge” also has a website being funded at both the federal and state level. He suggested the Board should look at this alternative as well. Mr. Dorman agreed that citing government websites is constructive with in resources. This will be a different model than what the Department has used in the past.

Mr. Medina asked to clarify if this is a government website. Mr. Dorman answered NRD.gov is a government website, he isn’t sure if Governors challenge is a government website, Trilogy IR is a software as a service.

Mr. Medina has stated this platform has changed instead of using a list for customers to view there are now platforms for organization to create a profile and update the content of their organization through a host platform like Unit Us hosts the Home Front Military Network. This system is helpful as a customer with a profile on the site you can view other organizations, your referrals and if they have connected with other organizations.

Ms. Hammon request Mr. Dorman to send the links for review at the next Board meeting. Mr. Dorman agreed he will send the links and reiterated he is looking for feedback that can be sent to him, Ms. Snyder or reviewed at the next Board meeting. This is to just advise the Board of a bill and to receive feedback from the Board, for another perspective. Ms. Hammon asked Mr. Dorman for a timeframe for the feedback. Mr. Dorman stated session will be 12 January, due to the session it is possible to submit feedback until early February.

Ms. Hammon recommend to add a discussion about this website to the next Board meetings agenda. She also recommend the Board to review the new UVC resource website. Ms. Hammon reminded the Board this is not to be redundant with resources. Ms. Motupalli seconds reviewing the Unite Us website as it is an amazing resource to our veterans. Ms. Motupalli also happens to have a personal connection to one of the co-founders. Ms. Scanlon asked if the Unit Us was free or if there was a cost to it. Ms. Motupalli replied it does cost, with a goal to create social and

community services tailored for individual areas, it serves. Mr. Medina stated Kaiser has offered to pay for smaller organizations in Colorado ensure access to the platform. He is unsure if there is assistance available at the state level.

Mr. Nagley stated the cost for the Governor's Challenge is being underwritten by the VA. He requests this website to have a look and feel of one Colorado website throughout the counties. Mr. Dorman has requested the Board to review if there is a cost or no cost and if there is a staff requirement or no staff requirement.

Ms. Hammon asked for an update with Joint Budget Committee. Mr. Dorman stated the staff briefing can be found at leg.colorado.gov, the upper right corner is watch or listen, 2 December. The department was briefed at 1:30pm the session started at 9:00am so you will need to cue it about four and a half hours. Staffing brief was standard until the Women's Veteran Service Officer Position was presented. The Joint Budget Committee asked our staff analyst a lot of questions. Mr. Dorman reminded the background of this Joint Budget Committee session which only the staff analyst is able to speak and return to leadership with questions to be answered at the follow Joint Budget Committee meeting, which will be 14 December.

The staffer briefed statistics from a report by the United Women's Service Collision, which gave the Joint Budget Committee a perception of the department using this data. This created push back with the staff analysts as the Department has not seen this report, and could not defend or hold a position with this report. The Division has been given the Joint Budgets Committee's questions and will be preparing an accurate response to the questions the Joint Budget Committee requested. Mr. Dorman invited the Board to virtually watch the meeting on Tuesday 14 December at 9:00am.

The Division of Veteran Affairs.

Mr. Callahan reported the events for the Division in November; Veteran's day there was a parade in both Grand Junction and Vietnam Veterans Service in Fruita. Mr. Callahan thanked Ms. Ingalls and her team for the hard work and Ms. Iglesias and her team for the support from the Western Region One Source. The Division also attended the Colorado Counties Incorporated (CCI) conference which happens twice a year with all the county commissioners. We had Ms. Iglesias, Mr. Moncibais and Ms. Maxwell in attendance for a combination team from the West, a VSO and admin staff. This was a way to spread the Veterans support services to the counties and the monies we can help bring in. The Division also had a Listening Tour with Mr. Kilmer at the VA, this was the first of many to be held on a quarterly basis. This will be a priority event to be a

united team between the Federal and the State.

Senate Bill 21-0-1-5 Honor Guard Stipend we are prepared to execute on 15 January. Expect by 15 December to send out information to Honor Guard originations with a charter and auxiliaries with information about the Senate Bill and information on how the organization will become a vendor with the State to receive payment. The origination will have a 30-day period to go through the process to become a vendor in the state vending system.

The way the payments are written in the Bill is the first honor guard stipend will be seventy five dollars, any subsequent stipend will be twenty five dollars not to exceed one hundred and fifty dollars a day. The second will be twenty five dollars and the third will be twenty five dollars and the fourth will be twenty five dollars a day. As some locations like Fort Logan might have three or four ceremonies a day. This is to divide the twenty thousand dollars through as many payouts as possible. If the organization was to receive seventy five dollars a ceremony we would only be able to payout two hundred and sixty six ceremonies. With the cap of one hundred and fifty dollars a day we can extend the fund to cover between one hundred and thirty three to two hundred and sixty six ceremonies across the state. We expect to begin payments on 15 January. Ms. Hammon asked, if the organization needs to apply before 15 January or can they apply anytime? Mr. Callahan replied organizations can apply at any time throughout the year, the approval process to become a vendor for the state. The state will begin payments to the vendors starting 15 January and are subject to the funds that are available. The funds are anticipated to deplete within the first three quarters, and if that is the case that information be used seek additional funds in upcoming years.

Ms. Hammon asked, is the process to become a state vendor only online or is there a paper application posts can use? Mr. Callahan has agreed to take this into consideration as this would create an unintended barrier to participate in the programs. Ms. Hammon asked for the information to request a paper applications to be included in the information given to the charters, organizations and auxiliaries on 15 December.

The Western Region One Source

Ms. Iglesias reported she has been transitioning into the Western Region One Source as the Administrator. The position was vacated on 1 June then the Division had a temporary employee in place until 1 October, Mr. Dominic Eddington. Mr. Eddington is now at the Veteran Memorial Cemetery working the .3 FTE position with the Honor guard reimbursement.

Ms. Iglesias focus is to increase tenants and remaining office spaces, increase sponsorships and donations. Some of the new tenants are Shield Security and Spectrum Sound Design. For the past year they have been in a shared office space. They have found more value while working at the One Source and have renewed for another year in a full office space. Liberty Mutual Insurance is a new tenant who moved into a small office for a six-month lease to be renewed in June. There is currently, one large office and four small offices to be leased, we may fill one of the offices for an additional state employee.

The Western Region One Source has been receiving donations for sponsorships for veteran programs. There has been one donation from The Colorado Elks Association and The Military Officers Association to support weekly veteran programs. There is Tai Chi for Women, Peer Support, Veterans with Brain Injuries Peer Support group, Guitars for Vets, and the weekly Veterans Coffee Club. These events can bring up to one hundred veterans every week for service related connections.

The Sunset Review has begun with requests for information. The Advisory Committee has met and is assisting with gathering data scheduled for September of 2022.

Ms. Iglesias attended the County Commissioner Conference in Colorado Springs and was able to connect with Mr. Moncibais, Ms. Maxwell and with the counties. Mr. Oney, Ms. Hammon and Ms. Iglesias participated in the Academy interviews. Mr. Oney sat on Senator Boebert's panel and Ms. Iglesias sat on Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper's panels at the Western Region One Source. Finally the Western Region One Source is concluding the interview process for the DEERS office and expects to begin processing cards in January.

Ms. Hammon would like to clarify if Denver is the current location for a DEERS office. Ms. Iglesias stated Service members and their families currently need to travel from Grand Junction to Salt Lake City, UT or Denver, CO to receive their cards. The Western Region One Source is currently compiling a list of service members and family member to receive their card once the position is filled.

The Veteran Memorial Cemetery

Ms. Ingalls reported the increased numbers for internments to four Hundred which is up seventy internments from last year and has doubled from the two hundred in previous years. This has become a challenge as the staff has remained with two administrators. Ms. Ingalls is starting to present the need for a 1 FTE Program Assistant I, to assist with the increase of interments. This is a request that is being presented to leadership and might be added to the legislation requests in the

future.

Ms. Ingalls reported the Veterans Memorial Cemetery continues to participate with Veterans Day and will hold the annual Wreath Laying Ceremony in December with laying three thousand wreaths. The Cemetery is excited to state the Honor Guard Stipend to assist those participating in the services for veterans. In November there was a partnership with the VA Deceased Affairs with a new staff member to help provide assistance with veterans and their families.

Ms. Golonka asked if there is a need for volunteers to lay wreaths. Ms. Ingalls stated there is always a need for volunteers to lay wreaths. It is believed that when a Deceased's name is no longer spoken it is forgotten. Twice a year the Veterans Memorial Cemetery will place flags on Memorial Day and will place the wreaths. The person who places the flag or lays the wreath will state the veteran's name, branch of service and war period, with a salute or hand over the heart for civilians. This Ceremony is a powerful reminder for the service these member have done. The Wreath Laying Ceremony will be held on 17 December at 3:00 pm. Volunteers please arrive by 2:30pm, Family Member may arrive at 2:30 to gather the wreaths to be placed on their families grave sites.

Grants

New grants administrator, Lisa Stamm, will start on 6 December. Ms. Stamm has experience with both private and federal grants. Ms. Stamm has worked with both large and small grantees for 15 years.

Ms. Snyder reported this grant cycle has been presented with slow payments. This has effected services for our grantors with these delayed payments. Ms. Snyder, Ms. DeBor and the accounting team have worked to streamline the grant payment process to allow the grants administrator or team members to access to the financial software to reduce the time delays for payments.

Ms. Scanlon requested a copy of the grant application form. Ms. Snyder will send a copy out for Ms. Scanlon to view the updates to the application. The applications are currently published on 01 December and will be open until 1 March. Applicants are able to submit a hard copy as the Division would not like to create a barrier to application, this will be addressed in the webinars. Mr. Taylor stated has witnessed the technical problems and is happy to see these changes. Mr. Taylor asked for clarification regarding the role of the Board in regard to the grants Ms. Snyder replied the Board is the decision maker for the VTF Grant and has an advisory role with the Veterans Assistance Grant.

Veteran Monument Preservation Trust Committee

Mr. Robinson reported the Veteran's monument was damaged in the riots of 2020. The damage has been restored and the State insurance was able to cover the cost. The statue is now in the Veterans Lincoln Park. The Park has been renovated and the fences have been removed. The Park is open to public and is monitored by the State Patrol.

Veteran Living Centers

Mr. Robinson reported there was a performance audit which did not have any findings. The audit concerned the COVID protocols utilized at the state VCLCs. The CLCs have been following the CDC guidelines and have reported very few deaths. The living centers are based on a commercial system which means the veterans are clients who will pay a portion of the overhead in their rent. There are six hundred beds available in the five housing units however there are only four hundred beds in use. This is creating loss income generation from the living center specifically with staff retention, such as Certified Nursing Assistants, Nutritionists, and housekeeping. Another challenge the Veteran Living Centers are facing is the state salary maximums. This is creating staffing problem with nutritionist and housekeepers as they can be paid at a high rate in the private sector. The Commissioners of Stat Veteran Living Centers has lobbied to add a line item on the Governor's budget to increase the salaries for the nutritionist and housekeepers to be able to offer a more competitive salary.

United Veteran Coalition

Ms. Hammon reported the United Veteran Coalition will host two separate events: a fundraising banquet and an award ceremony, this will increase the importance on the awards. The legislative session is starting with the help of Shelly Kalkowski and Mr. Robinson. There is a new United Veteran Coalition website has been updated.

Board Reports

Ms. Scanlon the Women's Marine Association is having their annual breakfast at Buckley, Wednesday, 8 December for the Marines and sailors on base. The Association will serve breakfast and hand out presents while following the current COVID protocols. The Colorado Women Marines have ran out of grant monies for this year.

Mr. Gonzalez reported on Veterans Day he attended a flag raising Ceremony on 11 November at a Fountain American Legion. Then at 11:00 am in Colorado Spring he attended a wreath laying ceremony with a 96 year old World War II Veteran who was taken as a Prison of War from Battle of the Bulge rendered salute and laid a wreath at the Prisoner of War Missing in Action memorial. Mr. Gonzalez attended the Military Service Academy interviews panel for Senator Hickenlooper

and Bennett on 20 November. Mr. Gonzalez also attended the Colorado Thirty Group and saw Lt. General Loh and Brigadier General Clellan and Ms. Iglesias and Mr. Callahan at the County Commissions Conference. The Home Front Military Network hosted an Honoring the Brave breakfast and presented its annual organizational award to Mr. Bosworth and the El Paso County Veterans Service Office.

Mr. Maday attended the Xcel Energy singing ceremony for Youth Success and where he was able to meet Mr. Dorman and Brigadier General Clellan. Mr. Maday was able to present to the Chief of Staff to the Air Force, General Charles Brown Jr with his civilian company. Mr. Maday was able to pass through the USO at Denver International Airport.

Ms. Motupalli reported Gusto People Platform for small business as the head of Customer Experience data team and the Co-chair for the Veterans Venue group for veteran's infinity. In November she hosted an event for visible and invisible disabilities, mental health with a focus on Post Dramatic Stress. This event lead to conversation with the resources and services available for our Veterans. She also created awareness with Veterans and Veteran Spotlights. Ms. Motupalli hosted volunteering event for international rescue and refugee rescue, focusing on the Afghanistan refugees. This allows the refugees to receive assistance after the federal assistance expires.

Mr. Taylor reported he attended a Veterans Day ceremony with the San Juan Flyers who volunteer time with Fly overs. The Flyers preformed two fly overs one was at 11:11 with smoke and missing man. There was a Native American part of the ceremony with a community member. There is a community tree ceremony fundraiser that includes veterans service organizations among its recipients. The monies received for these trees will be given to the hosting organizations. The area will be placing wreath on 18 December. The eighth graders will have breakfast with participating veterans.

Ms. Hammon read the report from Ms. Golonka in the chat. She did not have updates aside from thanking Mr. Dorman and Mr. Maday for attending the Xcel Energy Partnership for Youth Success Signing Ceremony. She had the opportunity to attend the Longmont Stand Down last month. Approximately 20-30 veterans attended the table set up for the Red Cross Service to Armed Forces.

Ms. Hammon reported her assistant VSO has retired and she is looking for an assistant Veterans Service Officer. She is helping with Sunset Review and Facility Manager at the Western Region

One Source. She has met with people at the VA hospital in Grand Junction and learned more about the Patient Experience Program. She has been on the panel for the Regional Veteran Service Officer Interviews and Appeal Specialist interview. Eagle County held its Veterans Day ceremony both in person and virtual. The videos that were created in the virtual ceremonies will go to the Library of Congress. Wreath Across America will be on 18 December.

Mr. Callahan announced the Recognition Ceremony for Duane Dailey will be on 20 December at 1:00 pm at Joint Forces Headquarters. Brigadier General Clellan will present a plaque and a TAG coin for his years of service to the Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs and his tenure as Chairman. The ceremony will be both in person and virtual.

Upcoming Meetings

07 January, Remote Via WebEx

04 February, Remote via WebEx

Adjournment

Ms. Hammon adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.