

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

Pueblo County Social Services

320 10th Street

Pueblo, CO 81003

Opening

Ms. Scanlon called the meeting to order at 0900. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was held for POWs, MIAs, those deployed, their families, and those killed in the line of duty.

Members Present

Sheila Scanlon, Chair

Sean Maday, Vice-Chair

Lacey Golonka, Secretary

Jasmine Motupalli, Member

Raymond Taylor, Member

Staff Present

Michael Bruno, DMVA Deputy Executive Director

Parker White, DMVA Legislative Liaison and Public Information Officer

David Callahan, CDVA Director

Darin Collazo, WROS Property Administrator

Angela Ingalls, VMC Director

Eric Winterrowd, CDVA Veterans Services Supervisor

Lisa Stamm, CDVA Grants Administrator

Amy Demenge, State Women's Veterans Service Officer

James Poteet, CDVA Appeals and Hearings Specialist

Eric Moncibais, State Veterans Service Officer-Southeast, Interim VSO Lead

Ralph Charlip, CDVA Research Assistant

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Program Assistant

Beth Maxwell, CDVA Administrative Assistant

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Guests Present

Stephen Dill, Pueblo County Veterans Service Officer
Travis Gale, Kit Carson County Veterans Service Officer
Tim Hutchinson, Broomfield County Veterans Service Officer
Josh Medina, Arapahoe County Veterans Service Officer
Richard Nagley, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley
Sheldon Smith, Montrose/Ouray County Veterans Service Officer
Kent Stucki, Partner Alliance Manager, Transunion
Curtis Swanson, Logan County Veterans Service Officer
Rick Ward, Bent/Otero County Veterans Service Officer

Approval of Minutes

Corrections to the draft of the July 2023 minutes were provided
Ms. Golonka moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. Ms. Motupalli
seconded. The motion carried.

Public Comments

Mr. Nagley asked if the Division's Policies and Procedures document would be
made available for public comment. Ms. Scanlon said that would be
addressed in Mr. Callahan's report.

Speaker

Ralph Charlip spoke on behalf of the Aurora Veterans Affairs Commission.
The commission is comprised of 12 members and meets monthly. Its mission
is to advise the city council on providing accessible programs and integrated
resources to significantly improve the quality of life for all military, veterans,
and their families within the community. This year's focus is outreach. He
invited Board members to attend their upcoming meeting on August 8. Ms.
Golonka asked if the commission works with the city defense council or the
chamber. Mr. Charlip said they do have a representative attend those
meetings. Mr. Charlip said the commission is preparing a report of the city on

homeless veterans. Ms. Scanlon asked if it would be possible to see a copy and Mr. Charlip said he would check.

Veterans Services Reports

Regional VSOs: Mr. Moncibais presented a consolidated report regarding the regional veterans service officers. July outreach included PACT Act events in Alamosa, Aurora, Durango, and Trinidad and a Transition Assistance Program Brief at Buckley SFB. Opportunities are the annual VSO training in September, a new connection with the Sterling Correctional Facility, and the closure of position announcements for the training officers and two VSOs for the contrail region. Accomplishments include the appointment of Dominic Edginton as the VSO for Custer County, the publication of the Division's Policies and Procedures, and the initiation of the process for the veterans information clearinghouse. A remaining issue is the staffing difficulty at vet centers, particularly in the southwest.

Women's VSO: Ms. Demenge said that July outreach included the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) Claims and Appeals conference, a PACT Act/Women Veterans Empowerment training held by VA, and assisting with the women veterans study. Opportunities include designing a Colorado Women Veterans logo and attending the upcoming conference for the National Association of State Women Veterans Coordinators.

Accomplishments include scheduling Colorado's first Women Veterans Conference in February and creating a new Women Veterans newsletter, which will begin publication in October.

Old Business

Albuquerque VAMC: Mr. Taylor said he had the opportunity to meet and speak with the director of the New Mexican VAMC. He will be invited to participate on their quarterly VSO calls, as well as Ms. Cunningham from the southwest region. Ms. Motupalli asked if virtual appointments are available with the Albuquerque facility, and Mr. Taylor said it has been difficult. They

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are trying to encourage use of Community Care. Mr. Callahan said VISN 19 has had success with Community Care liaisons and VHA hopes to replicate that in VISN 22.

Veterans ID Program: Mr. Callahan introduced Mr. Stucki. Ms. Scanlon said the Board has been concerned about privacy concerns regarding contacting veterans using information they did not directly provide. Mr. Stucki said his company derives a list that is compared with a list from DoD to verify veteran status. They can provide name and contact information. How the information is utilized is up to the purchasing agency. In his experience working with other states, veterans have welcomed the contact since it is offering a service rather than selling a product. Ms. Motupalli asked about the proprietary algorithm reference in the slide deck and if it indicates an individual's propensity to be a veteran. Mr. Stucki said the proprietary algorithm is how his company links data within data sets. Ms. Motupalli asked if there is an opt out for the information sharing, since people can't opt out of credit reporting. Mr. Stucki said most of the information is from public records and no credit reporting is involved. The information shared is derived from header data only. Ms. Motupalli addresses the Board saying the remaining question would be how the data would be stored once received. Mr. Maday said that would be for the department to determine. Ms. Motupalli said data storage would incur a cost both the Board and Division would need to be aware. Ms. Scanlon asked Mr. Callahan if he could return to the Board with more information on data storage and any additional information available on costs.

The Board recessed from 10:40 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

Strategic Plan: Ms. Scanlon asked Board members to look through the prior strategic plan and to bring notes on what they would like to change to the next meeting. Mr. Maday said he found a copy of the Board's strategic plan from 2010 and the Division will share the link.

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Annual Report: Ms. Snyder said reports have been received from the contributing state departments with the exception of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. The report from the Department of Revenue addressed the Board's interest in issues faced by their veteran audience; the other two did not. She suggested providing a copy of the completed report to those agencies after publication to provide context. She asked what the Board's deadline would be for internal reports. Ms. Scanlon suggested scheduling a meeting with the participating departments as a working group during October. Mr. Callahan said that the Division can help to schedule. After discussion the Board selected October as the deadline for internal reports.

New Business

CBVA Annual Training: Ms. Scanlon asked if everything the Board needs for training and reference can be provided in binders. Mr. Callahan said the Division would execute.

Standing Reports

DVA/DMVA/Legislative: Mr. Callahan said prospective decision items have been submitted to the governor's office for consideration. Under DVA personnel and in addition to the positions mentioned in the VSO report, the position descriptions for the Claims and Benefits Manager and the Veterans Liaison have been approved and will probably be announced in August. Ms. Scanlon asked about the program assistant position for Grants. Mr. Callahan said the position description is still waiting for a response from Human Resources. Ms. Scanlon asked what the timeline is for that response and Mr. Callahan said that timeline wasn't available. Mr. Callahan said that the Division's strategic plan is based on the DMVA WIG to improve veterans' satisfaction levels with DMVA services through a five percent increase in net promoter scores

given on a post-service survey by June 30, 2024. A copy of the plan is attached to these minutes. He said the Policies and Procedure document was published in July. He invited everyone in attendance to provide feedback as the document will be updated annually. Mr. Callahan said the Division will assist with a PACT Act Stand Down in Colorado Springs August 7-9. The NVLSP appeals training was held at the Denver VARO in July.

WROS: Mr. Collazo said that current tenants include VA and HUD-VASH, Volunteers of America, Rocky Mountain Human Services, Medicare Mentors, and Spectrum Sound. Warriors of Faith may soon share offices with Medicare Mentors. Ongoing events are the coffee club, VA RANGE, Vets for Vets, Tai Chi for Woman Veterans, Guitars for Vets Groups, Women Veterans Coffee Hour, Veterans Yoga, Women Veterans Tai Chi, VA smartphone training, and the VA Caregiver Support group. The state DEERS operator has started and a federally funded DEERS operation is now located at the WROS also.

Grants: Ms. Stamm said that end of year grant payments are still underway. She has been setting up and processing new FY 2023-2024 VTF and VAG grantees. New grantee trainings were held on July 11, 13, and 19 and on August 1. All of the requested materials have been submitted for the VAG sunset review.

Women Veterans Needs Assessment: Mr. Charlip said 11 interviews have been conducted and the remaining interviews should be completed in August. The assessment should be complete by October.

Ms. Ingalls said July was a busy month at the cemetery with 40 interments. The flagpole has been repaired and the phones have been fixed. There has been some progress with vacant positions and she expects to hire more grounds crew members in August. The honor guard stipend spent \$4,450 in July. Saluting Branches is scheduled for September and they expect to plant 150 trees.

Board Member Remarks

Mr. Taylor said he visited the Homelake CLC en route to the meeting and encouraged Board members to visit CLCs as time permits. He worked with Ms. Ingalls from the Veterans Memorial Cemetery to get a headstone for a local veteran. There are still difficulties fulfilling veteran prescriptions with local vendors. His office has been busy with PACT Act claims leading up to the August 10 deadline for retroactive payments. Availability of mental health care is still an issue.

Ms. Motupalli said that she has a final adoption date of August 16. She and her family recently visited Hawaii and toured Pearl Harbor. She has started a new nonprofit that will leverage AI and machine learning to help predict high risks for veterans at the point of transition.

Ms. Golonka said she has been working with VFW Post 1. They have a leadership program that is nonprofit management education for veterans and she has been assisting with the curriculum.

Mr. Maday said he spoke at a Warriors and Walleyes event in Minnesota. He had the opportunity to meet and speak with a WWII veteran and a POW from Vietnam.

Ms. Scanlon said she has been assisting with the planning for the Women Veterans Conference in February. She taught a seminar at the U.S. Army War College on Operationalizing Women, Peace, and Security. She was also interviewed for VAG sunset review.

Veterans Issues

There were no new issues captured at the meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

Ms. Scanlon asked if the Board would like to consider the meeting schedule in the hope of making opportunities to meet veterans. September 8 may be a problematic meeting date as neither she nor Ms. Golonka can attend. She suggested possibly moving the meeting to the week before Labor Day rather than after. She said it might be easier to not travel to Eagle in September. She said that first Fridays can be difficult because they conflict with drill. The Board discussed and established the following schedule for the immediate future:

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|--|--|
| August 30, Annual Training | Golden (American Legion Post 21) |
| August 31, Stated Meeting for September | Golden (American Legion Post 21) |
| September 29, Stated Meeting for October | Grand Junction (Western Region One Source) |
| November 3, Stated Meeting | Denver (Sobriety House) |
| December 1, Stated Meeting | Arapahoe County |
| January – no meeting | |

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Maday moved to adjourn. Mr. Taylor seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:46 p.m.

Division Veterans Affairs FY24-25 Strategic Plan

The Division of Veterans Affairs has adopted the following mission, vision and values for driving its efforts and resources in delivering the highest levels of service and assistance to our state's Veterans and their eligible dependents:

Mission: Further prompt and efficient services to all veterans across Colorado on a uniform basis.

Vision: Earn and maintain the trust and confidence of those we serve; be recognized for excellence in serving our Veterans; and, become a state of choice for Veterans and their families.

Values: We strive to create a customer engagement experience where all those we serve feel welcomed, valued, respected, and heard.

Improving Veteran's satisfaction was the overarching Wildly Important Goal with five key measures focused on improving Veterans satisfaction:

- Improving VSO proficiency through VA OGC accreditation;
- Access to Veteran Benefit Management System (VBMS) to enhance case management;
- Participating in outreach events that improve Veterans' quality of life;
- Identifying and resolving gaps in service to improve Veterans' services and assistance;
- Improving grant execution rates to maximize utilization of grant funding.

WIG #1: "Improve Veterans' satisfaction levels with DMVA services through a 5% increase in Net Promoter Scores given on a post-service survey by June 30, 2024."

Goal: Improve Veteran Satisfaction with Services

Why is this important? Net Promoter Score is the gold standard of customer experience metrics. Understanding the satisfaction levels of our

Veterans is foundational to sustaining successful programs and identifying areas in which to further prompt and efficient services to all Veterans across Colorado on a uniform basis. Customer feedback also provides veterans a voice in which to drive improvements in the way the Division of Veteran Affairs can best provide services and assistance. The division has identified five key measures that will impact Veteran satisfaction levels:

- Veteran Service Officers must be accredited with the VA OGC (Office of General Council) to assist veterans with the preparation, presentation and prosecution of their claims.
- Having access to VBMS (Veteran Benefit Management System) is necessary to effectively and efficiently assist veterans with the submission of their claims.
- Participating in community outreach events meets veterans where they are and assists in gaining and maintaining situational awareness of their needs.
- Identifying and resolving gaps in services is foundational to improving veteran quality of life.
- Improving grant execution rates maximizes the allocation of resources in assisting and serving veterans across a wide spectrum of needs.

How do we measure success? Overall success will be measured by improving Veteran Net Promoter Score satisfaction levels ten percent over a two-year period, as measured by a five percent improvement by June 30, 2024 and an additional five percent improvement by June 30, 2025. The division has selected five key measures that will contribute to improving the overall satisfaction of veterans' services and assistance. Improving the number of accredited VSOs across the state; VBMS access; outreach participation; gaps in service identified and resolved; and improving grant execution rates. Data will be measured on a monthly basis from data submitted by the division's programs.

What actions are we taking? The Division of Veterans Affairs has invested in the Qualtrics XM Customer Satisfaction platform and established a customer satisfaction baseline from which to measure WIG progress via a Net Promoter Score. The Division of Veterans Affairs has also developed a policies and procedures manual to address actions designed to further prompt and efficient services to all Veterans across Colorado on a uniform basis. The Division was also successful in receiving appropriations for 9 additional full-time employees from the General Assembly beginning in FY24. **These positions will assist in addressing issues identified in the Veteran Services Audit of 2022; Division Training Officer, VSO to Veteran ratios, Appeals and Grants assistance, Veteran Memorial Cemetery Administration and Grounds Crew assistance.**

| Key Measure | Program & Key Processes | Outcome Measure | Baseline | FY2024 Target | FY 2025 Target |
|--|--|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Increase percentage of OGC accredited VSOs | Training Certification & OGC accreditation | VSO accreditation | 78% | 88% | 93% |
| Increase VBMS access of accredited VSOs | OGC accreditation; PIV Card issue | VBMS access | 41% | 61% | 71% |
| Participate in community outreach events | DMVA Performance Plan; DVA Strategic Plan | Outreach events conducted | 0 | 20 | 40 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Identify & resolve gaps in service | CBVA Strategic Plan; DVA Strategic | Gaps in service resolved | 0 | 5 | 10 |
| Improve grant program execution rate | VAG & VTF grant programs | VAG & VTF Execution Rate | 88% | 93% | 98% |

Key measure #1: VSO Accreditation

- Increase accredited Veteran Service Officers 15% by June 30, 2025, as measured by a 10% increase by June 30, 2024 and an additional 5% increase by June 30, 2025.
- Baseline is 78%.

Key measure #2: VBMS Access

- Increase VBMS access 30% by June 30, 2025, as measured by a 20% increase by June 30, 2023 and an additional 10% increase by June 30, 2025.
- Baseline is 41%.

Key Measure #3: Outreach Events

- The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) will participate in 40 community outreach events with their federal VA, state, regional, and county partners by June 30, 2025, as measured by completing 20 outreach events by June 30, 2024 and an additional 20 outreach events by June 30, 2025.
- Baseline is zero.

Key Measure #4: Resolving Gaps in Service

- DVA will identify and resolve 10 gaps in service by June 30, 2025, as measured by resolving 5 gaps in service by June 30, 2024 and resolving an additional 5 gaps in service by June 30, 2025.
- Baseline is zero.

Key Measure #5: Grant Execution Rate

- DVA will improve overall grant program execution rate 10% by June 30, 2025, as measured by a 6% increase by June 30, 2024 and an additional 4% increase by June 30, 2025.
- Baseline is 88%.