

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs (CBVA) Meeting: 13 December 2024

Time: 9:00 AM

Location: Virtual

Break: 10:20-10:30

Members Present

Shelia Scanlon, Chair

Sean Maday, Vice Chair

Lacey Golonka, Secretary

Longinos Gonzalez, Member

Howard Richards, Member

Raymond Taylor, Member

Jasmine Motupalli, Member

Staff Present

Angela Ingalls, Veterans Memorial

Cemetery of Western Colorado

Administrator

Darrin Collazo, Western Region One

Source Administrator

Carissa Snyder, CDVA Operations

Coordinator

Lisa Stamm, CDVA Grants

Administrator

Eric Winterrowd, CDVA Veteran

Services Supervisor

James Poteet, Appeals Specialist

Beth Maxwell, Program Assistant

Guest

Dr. Tina Garcia, Paralyzed Veterans

of America (PVA), Disable Veterans

of America (DAV), United Veterans

Coalition (UVC) Legislative Chair

Braydon Gear, VHA Outreach

Coordinator

Richard Nagley, American Legion,

San Luis Veteran Coalition

Chris Maes, Douglas County Veteran

CBVA - November Minutes - Approved

Service Officer

Destry DeWolfe, Huerfano County

Veteran Service Officer

Pat Hammon, Eagle County Veterans

Service Officer, VCLC Board of

Commissioners, UVC Representative

Craig Rauwolf, Valley Veterans

Recreation, Valley Wide, American

Legion Veteran Service Office

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the December meeting were approved by all with the changes discussed. Mr. Taylor made the motion and Mr. Maday seconded.

Public Comments

Mr. Nagley requested the status of the annual report when the AAR from the VCLVs would be published and questioned the meeting time on the website.

VCLC Board of Commissioners -Pat Hammon

Admissions is increasing and Pat is getting information to the VSO on the census. Staffing is still an issue admin staff is being creative to generate more staff. Spouses can help census and working to create room for the staff and residence loved the show and tell with DMVA and the helicopter.

UVC Updates - Ms. Hammon

- Sue Raylin is new chair of the UVC first meeting was a success.
- Goals Claim Shark Bill to prevent unethical charging of fees to submit claims. Retirement pay exemption tax. Restore the interest on the 3 million owed to the Veterans Trust fund. Increase funding for Veteran Treatment courts, enhance support to military spouses for professional license to be accepted in Colorado, Support delays and burdens to special education needs, legislative changes in the CRS to include Commission Corps of NOAA and National Health No fee camping limited to 5 nights camping in state parks.

Standing Reports

Veteran Services - Eric Winterrowd

- "Look, Listen, and Learn" Tour: Director Cowan has been touring the Southeast and Northwest regions of Colorado as part of his "Look,

Listen, and Learn" tour. Together with Mr. Winterrowd, he has gained firsthand insight into the needs of veterans across the state. During the tour, they also promoted the grants program and discussed funding opportunities available to rural areas.

- **Alamosa Grant Writing Needs:** In Alamosa, the county is seeking a grant writer to assist in securing funds for veterans' VA healthcare travel. However, there is a shortage of qualified grant writers in the region who are familiar with the federal grant process. Director Cowan and Mr. Winterrowd discussed how the CBVA offers a grant program that could support veteran-focused initiatives in areas like Alamosa.
- **Expanding Veterans Trust Fund (VTF):** Director Cowan expressed interest in expanding the VTF appropriation to include 501(c)(3) organizations, which would allow a wider range of organizations to apply for these grants and support veteran-related projects.
- **Legislative Update – Mental Health Care Bill:** The Mental Health Care Bill (KK) passed on November 5, which increases funding for veterans' mental health services. However, since KK is not specifically tied to the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), the department is currently identifying gaps in services in order to help implement the new bill effectively.
- **VCLCs Tour:** Director Cowan, along with the TAG, Board members, and DMVA leadership, toured three of the five VCLCs. Unfortunately, they were unable to visit two of the centers due to a COVID-19 outbreak.
- **Mobile DEERS Unit in Grand Junction:** Director Cowan is working to establish a mobile Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System

(DEERS) unit in Grand Junction to assist veterans with renewing their DEERS cards, improving access to critical services.

- Incarcerated Veterans at Englewood Penitentiary: Director Cowan and Ms. Hannah Eddings visited incarcerated veterans at the Federal Penitentiary in Englewood. The program that previously supported these veterans through a dedicated 1-800 number has been discontinued, resulting in a service gap for incarcerated veterans.

Western Region One Source - Darrin Collazo

New Programs and Events: The WROS team has been working on launching new programs and hosting events aimed at supporting veterans and their families.

Marketing and Support Groups: WROS is actively working on enhancing its marketing efforts and developing new support groups. These groups are designed to offer veterans more tailored services and foster a stronger sense of community.

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

- There is a need for the Cemetery to upgrade their software as it is 20 years old.
- Cemetery Historian is doing a great job and will be leaving the Cemetery today. Wreath placement day is today for Wreaths across America.
- \$27,400 paid in FY 25 with \$42,660 remaining and 3 new units would like to increase the payouts to the units as there are remaining funds in the stipend account.
- National Cemetery Directors from Ft. Lyons and Ft Logan have visited with VMC and discussed a scatter garden and green burial and would like to see how to create these programs at the VMC.

Grants - Lisa Stamm

- 24 grants processed for FY 2025.
- All materials are ADA compliant and updated on the website by 12/13/2024.
- Training is progressing well.
- New requirement: A 10–15-minute meeting to discuss applications and programs to assist with improving grant execution rates.
- VLC Mental Health payments are progressing smoothly.
- Currently working on the VCLC Mental Health report and plans to share once complete.
- Plans to work with underproducing grantees to either spend or return excess funds.
- WROS is planning to use excess funds to create Handicap parking for disabled veterans visiting the location. This will cost approximately \$55,000. Motion to update the WROS parking lot to include paved staff parking and handicap parking. Motion made by Mr. Maday. Seconded by Ms. Motupalli. Motion approved.
- For a surviving spouse to qualify for VAG grants, they must submit:
 - Death Certificate
 - Marriage Certificate (or documentation proving common law marriage)
 - DD214 of the veteran spouse.
- Motion to approve these documents for eligibility. Motion made by Mr.

Taylor. Seconded by Mr. Gonzalez. Motion carried.

VTF and VAG Funds:

Veterans who are unable to use their DD214 to prove status can now use their VA ID card as proof. Motion to approve VA ID card as valid proof. Motion made by Mr. Richards. Seconded by Mr. Gonzalez. Motion carried.

Old Business

By Laws Mr. Taylor motioned to approved Mr. Richards second motion carried Bylaws are approved

Veteran's Clearinghouse

Quarterly update was completed and there are not any issues at this time. Please submit updates to eric.winterrowd@dmva.state.co.us.

Mr. Maday has updated the flyer for Mr. Winterrowd review.

Albuquerque VHA Support to Rural Veterans

Meeting next Wednesday at 11 am with the director.

Veteran "protected class" for number hires for FY AG's office response

No update

Women Veterans Subcommittee

No update

IBM

Communicated with VA and has an email to be shared with the board.

Legislation for next Legislative Session

Dr. Garcia would like to ask for support for the support of the Veteran contacts in the CRS. Dr. Garcia was notified this is not an appropriate time for this discussion and should be addressed in public comments was given a onetime exception. This will be

on the agenda in February.

Annual Reports from Departments

No updates

New Business

Reallocation of VTF funds for the Veteran Memorial Cemetery

Some funds could be used better elsewhere and would like to use the funds, \$25,177.96 for the Cemetery foundation for the bronze Saluting Soldiers. Is it possible to reallocate the funds. Mr. Maday made a motion and Mr. Richards seconded was carried.

Board Remarks

Mr. Taylor, no remarks Mr. Maday, no remarks

Mr. Richards reported on the projects and events with veteran organizations in La Plata County.

Mr. Gonzalez, updated on events he attended in El Paso County.

Ms. Golonka updated the board with advancements in her military career.

Ms. Motupalli, updated the board with recent events and successes in her private and professional life.

Ms. Scanlon, no update

Statewide Veterans Issues:

Access to Prescriptions; Veterans on Fringes: Homelessness; Mental Health Service; Transportation

Homelessness:

There is not too much in the CRS or on research for what Colorado Offers. Mr. Taylor recommends working to determine the direction the board would like to go to

determine what the goal of the project would be.

Upcoming Meetings

Mrs. Scanlon stated that she would like the Board to review the bylaws once Mrs. Snyder has made the necessary adjustments, with the goal of having them approved in December.

Meeting Date	Location
03 January 2025	No Meeting
07 February 2025	Aurora, CO
07 March 2025	Eagle County
04 April 2025	Ignacio, Colorado
April	VTF Sub Committee Meeting
02 May 2025	Denver - VTF Grants
06 June 2025	Virtual
11 July 2025	Craig, Colorado

Adjournment:

Mr. Maday made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Richards seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:04 pm.