



## MEETING MINUTES / 19 NOVEMBER 2019

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Present: Showell, Stewart, Baldwin, Bradley, Lardizzone, Lopez, Magner, McMullen, Newman (call-in), Sarg, Seppala **76.9%**

Excused: Farley, Newman, Newstadt

Unexcused:

Guests: Vince Kane (Wilmington VAMC), Archie Poling (Delaware Veterans Home), Pat Cerchio (First State Women Warriors), Kim McMullen

### **CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS:**

Moment of silence for Commissioner Newstadt taking his spouse to the hospital

Acknowledged other commissioners and their spouses with wellness concerns

Acknowledged all who served and those dealing with their personal issues

Received positive comments about the commission's Veterans Day service

Thanked commissioners for their participation and for other activities that they have been a part of

Noted that during the holiday season veterans may have a difficult time in dealing with issues so we'll need to be attentive to their needs

### **MEETING MINUTES:**

October minutes were motioned by Lardizzone and McMullen and approved

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:**

#### **Wilmington VAMC – Virginia Yelland, Assistant to the Director**

Provided a compliment on the commission's Veterans Day service and expressed that their agency looks forward to participating

Discussed a partnership with Lewes Meineke Auto Repair, on Veterans Day

- Free oil changes were provided for veterans

- Took mobile clinic to the site and provided flu shots and information

- Approximately 200 veterans stopped by

Looking forward to using the mobile clinic for other community activities

100% design, for the Dover clinic, is complete and waiting for the approval for construction

- Expect approval before the beginning of 2020

Still working the Wilmington VA parking garage expected completion by the spring

(Baldwin) During the Veteran Service Officer's meeting, it was mentioned to seek different servers for the TeleHealth program. Do you know if that has been pursued?

Is aware of the issue but has not discussed with the person in charge, will follow up

#### **Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Archie Poling, Interim Director:**

Updates read by Director Kirby

72 residents and 2 admissions are scheduled for this week

During last admissions meeting, 11 were presented and 8 will be accepted (with the possibility of 9 being accepted)

Finishing up the dining room project and did a soft opening

- Grand opening scheduled for 25 November
  - - This is not the formal opening, just an opening for the residents, families, and staff
- Will provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- Staff and residents are excited about the project

Continuing to assess staffing needs and will have another job fair on 10 December

The administrator's last day was last week

(Baldwin) Why are there only 72 residents?

Because of a suite's closing for renovation

(Sarg) Have you received feedback from the state survey?

No, the final report has not been forwarded, but there were no major violations

Overall, looking forward to increasing the census and staffing deficiencies

(Sarg) Can you discuss bariatric needs?

We have a need for bariatric equipment like wheelchairs and beds

- For specific residents' needs (e.g. height and weight)
- Will discuss these needs in the future after determining the numbers and the costs

(Baldwin) Mentioned surplus items may be available through the General Services Administration

(Showell and Lardizzone) Discussed if the equipment costs can be handled by the Friends of Delaware Veterans Home board. Should be presented during their next meeting

### **Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:**

Not present

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Pat Cercio, First State Military Women Warriors

Next organization meeting is 14 December / 1100, DCVA Conference Room

- Free lunch for attendees
- Reviewing 2020 plans, recruitment, and officer positions
- Additional members are needed to avoid turning in the organization's charter

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Magner:**

Interments – 60 (-19)

Plan on visiting the cemetery to check on the condition of the veterans services organizational flags

#### **Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:**

Interments – 30 (+9)

Carlos Bishop was hired as new Conservation Tech III

#### **Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:**

Brain Injury Council is working to determine how many citizens have severe brain injuries

- They can receive state-based intermediate short-term care
- Seeking brain injury data base
- Seeking insurance figures from Delaware Health Insurance Information Network
- Helmet (motorcycle) safety bill was defeated during last General Assembly
  - Representative Lynn will reintroduce during the next session

#### **Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:**

Commissioner Sarg put out a draft of legislative recommendations

- Awaiting comments

(Sarg) would like comments and suggestions by 30 November so it can be presented during January

Some commissioners have spoke to state legislators about veterans' recommendations

(Sarg) The recommendations should be emailed to all legislators

(Sarg) Many veterans agencies are advocating for elimination of widow's tax (national)

- Elimination was approved in authorization act but funding for the bill has not been approved
- Has reached out to Delaware's U.S. Delegates for their view

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

Briefed by Chairperson Showell (Kirby was at Veterans Education Task Force Meeting)

DVTF Previous Month: Applications 9; Granted 4 (44.4%); Awarded \$5,388,32; Balance - \$75,975.00

Trust fund dinner was very successful, and feedback was positive

- Profit was \$35,799.00

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**

Commissioner McMullen (Air Force Sergeants Association - AFSA)

16 October: Boscov's fundraiser was successful

9 November: Sponsored Miles for Military 5K event

26 October: Attended Dover AFB Retiree Day

26 October: Attended 100th birthday celebration for John DeLouch veterans home resident

9 November: Attended trust fund dinner

10 October: Attended Veterans Luncheon sponsored by Lady's Sodality on Dover AFB

11 November: Attended and participated in bridge ceremony

11 November: Attended and place wreath during VVA ceremony

14 November: Attended chapter meeting

25 November: State of Base briefing at Dover AFB

Vacant (American Legion - AL)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Bradley (American Veterans - AmVets)

9 November: Attended trust fund dinner

11 November: Attended bridge ceremony

11 November: Attended and laid wreath during VVA ceremony

11 November: Post 2 had Veterans Day service, Senator Pettyjohn was the guest speaker

14 December: Department chaplain, Charles Cramer (World War II veteran) will lay a wreath at the Millsboro Cemetery during Wreaths Across America

Commissioner Lardizzone (Disabled American Veterans - DAV)

21 October: Wreaths across America meeting at Tatnall building.

9 November: Attended the Delaware Trust Dinner at Dover Downs.

11 November: Attended Veterans Day at the Delaware Memorial Bridge.

11 November: Attended Veterans Day at Kent County Memorial VVA.

11 November: Attended the VSO meeting at VAMC Wilmington, DE

11 November: Wreaths across America meeting at Tatnall building.

14 November: Attended the Admission meeting at the Veterans Home.

15 November: Will be attending the Friends of the Veterans Home at the Veterans Commission.

21 November: Will be attending the National Guard Breakfast

Vacant (Korean War Veterans)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Farley (Marine Corps League - MCL)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Sarg (Military Officers Association of America - MOAA)

16 October: Met with Representative Blunt-Rochester

- Discussed Nat'l Defense Authorization Act, funding via continuing resolution versus an appropriations bill

- Elimination of widow's tax

21 October: Attended State Council for Persons with Disabilities luncheon

- Discussed jobs and tax exemptions with Department of Labor Secretary

22 October: Attended Friends of DE Veterans meeting

26 October: Attended DAFB Retiree Day

29 October: Attended Delaware Healthcare Forum

9 November: Sponsored table at trust fund dinner

11 November: Attended VVA Veterans Day Service

12 November: Attended First State Employment Oversight meeting

14 November: Attended veterans home admissions meeting

16 November: MOAA meeting raised \$600+ for Canine Assisting Services for Heroes and collected groceries/donations for Delaware Food Bank

18 November: Met with Representative Lynn concerning 2020 legislative session

Commissioner Magner (Military Order of the Purple Heart - MOPH)

23 October: Visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington DC

- 32 Combat veterans are from Delaware

24 October: Chapter 9377 donated \$500.00, in food cards, to Wilmington VA Volunteer Services

26 October: Guest veteran for "Suites for Harry's Heroes" during Philadelphia Flyers hockey game

30 October: Department donated \$500.00 to the Georgetown outpatient clinic for needy family's groceries

30 October: Department donated \$500.00 to the Dover outpatient clinic for needy family's groceries

11 November: Attended the bridge ceremony

16 November: Departmental executive committee meeting led to \$500.00 donation to K-9 assistant services

Commissioner Newman (Veterans of Foreign Wars - VFW)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Baldwin (Vietnam Veterans of America – VVA)

Participated in University of Delaware Veteran Resource Fair

- Poorly attended so recommended having it some place more accessible to veterans

Submitted application to the Laurel School District for the Sussex Military Academy (Army)

- To open in 2021 with 200 students, building to 500 students

- To be housed at former Laurel High School building (built in 1921)

- Commissioner Lopez is a board member

Sold books at Veteran Trust Fund Dinner

Foundation (\$52K) support Veteran Trust Fund endowment

Attended Wilmington VA VSO meeting

- Discussed TeleHealth's problem of not accepting non-Google Chrome browsers

Received recognition from State Treasurer

Commissioner Showell (At Large, affiliated with Delaware National Guard)

Delaware National Guard Prayer Breakfast is approaching

Delaware National Guard is participating in Wreaths Across America Legislative Hall service

Delaware National Guard Holiday Concerts

- 11 December / 1900 Cab Calloway High School

- 12 December / 1900 Delaware State University

Delaware National Guard is seeking volunteers to participate in 14 December Wreaths Across America event at the Millsboro Veterans Cemetery

Commissioner Newstadt (At Large, affiliated with Jewish War Veterans)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Seppala (At Large, affiliated with Military Order of World Wars)

18 October: Attended memorial chair dedication honoring PFC Samuel Crawford, Korean War Missing In Action

9 November: Attended trust fund dinner

11 November: Attended bridge ceremony

11 November: Chaired "Salute to Veterans" dinner for 90 veterans/families at Cokesbury Village  
Will attend Wreath Across America service at Cooch's Bridge

Commissioner Lopez (At Large, affiliated with Delaware Veterans)

3 November: DelVets Post 1 conducted 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Marine Corps Reserve, Toys for Tots 5K Run/Walk

5 November: Was voted in as a Board Meeting for plans to try to establish a Military Academy, Sussex County. Attended several meetings throughout the month and tour of a possible location.

6 November: Chaired the Dover Mayor's Challenge Crisis Awareness Committee meeting.

7 November: Participated in the Campus Community Elementary School Veterans Day Appreciation.

7 November: Attended and distributed information at DelVets Post 2 Executive and General meetings.

9 November: Attended the Annual Delaware Trust Fund Dinner. Assisted with Silent and Live Auctions.

10 November: Served as Guest Speaker for the Elks Lodge 1903 Veterans Day Ceremony and First Responder Recognition.

11 November: Attended the Veterans Day Bridge Ceremony,

11 November: Attended the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Veterans Day Ceremony.

12 November: Briefed the Veterans Response Team with TCM Post Deployment, Wilmington VA.

14 November: Served on Senator Carper's Interview Panel of 22 Student Interviews for potential nomination to a service academy

Chairing Dover Mayor's Veterans Crisis Committee

- Trying to get suicide prevention training out to various organizations

- Need to reach out to family members

22 November: Attending Honoring Our Veterans Program, 1300 – 1500, Lighthouse Christian School.  
Dagsboro Church of God

Veterans are Finding Peace from PTSD through "Float Therapy" [weightlesswarrior.org](http://weightlesswarrior.org)

Urban Float, Rehoboth offering therapy floats to Veterans. Approximately 10 slots are available

Coordinated by Lisa Lincoln, Social Worker, Georgetown VA Clinic

Attending Wreaths Across America Legislative Hall service

Placing Wreaths at Arlington National Cemetery for veterans that were known

Commissioner Stewart (At Large, affiliated with student veterans associations)

Nothing to report

**TERM COMPLETION:**

Bradley – 21 April 2020

Newman – 21 April 2020

**EVENTS:**

21 November / 0900: Medical Group Health Fair, Medical Clinic, Dover AFB

17 December / 1230: DCVA Holiday Party, DelVets Post 2

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Submit Legislative Concerns by 30 November

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:**

(Lardizzone) Bring in toys for Toys for Tots drive

**CLOSED SESSION:**

None

**SPECIAL SESSION:**

**NEXT MEETING:**

**Tuesday, 17 December 2019 at 1000**

**LOCATION:**

**Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs**