MEETING MINUTES / 15 OCTOBER 2019

ATTENDANCE:
Present: Stewart, Bradley, Farley, Johnson, Lardizzone, Lopez (phone), Magner, McMullen, Newman (phone), Newstadt, Sarg, Seppala 85.7%

Excused: Showell, Baldwin

Unexcused:

Guests: Vince Kane (Wilmington VAMC), Liz Byers-Jiron (Veteran Stand Down), Pat Cerchio (First State Women Warriors), Kim McMullen, Bill Peterson

CHAIR’S OPENING REMARKS (Meeting Chaired by Commissioner Stewart):
Presented Commissioner Johnson with a plaque and card acknowledging his time with the commission and his move to Florida
- Commissioner Johnson thanked the agency and commissioners for their efforts

MEETING MINUTES:
September minutes were motioned by Lardizzone and McMullen
Johnson reminded everyone that chapter 1 (KVWA) donated monies toward the stand down
Bradley noted he was present during the August meeting

ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:
Wilmington VAMC – Vince Kane, Director
Extremely busy September with multiple events geared toward veterans
Has final drawings and approvals for Dover CBOC, projected late 2020 opening
Mission Act implementation challenges with community care
- Specifically Sussex County having limited services in the community with new third party vendor
- Seeking specialty care, in Sussex County, as requested by veterans
Public Affairs Officer position is still vacant, recruiting for a fill
1 Oct: The campus began being smoke-free following a national mandate
(McMullen) Voiced a complaint that a consult for a civilian practitioner wasn’t answered
Will follow up offline
(Newstadt) Complimented flu shot operations
(Sarg) Is it a shortage of providers or a shortage of provider who want to participate in the Mission Act program?
Both issues apply
17:30
Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Vacant, Director:
Updates read by Director Kirby
73 residents
Dining room glass partitions were shipped on 14 October with one week expected delivery and another week installation
- Still anticipate 25 November grand opening
Blue Suite renovations and addition of the spa are on going
Two proposals are being considered for the dental suite
- Both would authorize access for veterans, in the community, without entering the residential area
Job fair was successful leading to more hirings, primarily certified nursing assistants

Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:
Not present

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Liz Byers-Jiron, Veterans Stand Down
Thanked stand down volunteers, agencies and is processing the final report
- Approximately over 1000 attendees and over 140 agencies present
- Focused on suicide prevention
Stand down kickoff meeting scheduled for 23 January
Recognized T.J. Healy for Voices of War, oral history work through Veterans Story Project

COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Magner:
Interments – 79 (+9)

Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:
Interments – 21 (-3)

Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:
Brain Injury Council has monies available for home modification
Mentioned a Dover Post article for a Delaware Veterans Home veteran with Frontal Temporal Degeneration
- Emphasized that the home is a skilled nursing facility designed to take care of veterans

Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:
Have not received legislative inputs
(Sarg) Asked to receive inputs by 30 October
(Sarg) Lobbied with U.S. Delegation to eliminate widow’s tax

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS:
DVTF Previous Month: Applications 8; Granted 2 (25%); Awarded $2,411.17; Balance - $81,797.55
Urged commissioners to speak to their district legislators about sponsoring or supporting veteran related legislation
(Farley) Made recommendation for commission to host an icebreaker for state legislators
- Benefits are meeting commission personnel and discuss veteran issues
(Sarg) Should invite state legislators to veteran service organization meetings

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:
Commissioner McMullen (Air Force Sergeants Association - AFSA)
Chapter led successful POW/MIA week
AFSA’s legislative platform was made available to base personnel
Chapter continues Veterans Home participation
16 October: Boscov’s fundraiser, 25% off shopping, pass can be purchased for $5.00
20 September: Attended POW/MIA retreat service
11 October: Participated in DCVA Executive meeting
26 October: Attended Dover AFB Retiree Day

Vacant (American Legion - AL)
Nothing to report
Commissioner Bradley (American Veterans - AmVets)
11 September: Post 2 held 9/11 service
20 September: Attended Veterans Stand Down
23 October: Post 2 is hosting DAV van to provide benefits information
25 October: Ladies Auxiliary is hosting Truck or Treat in Post 2 parking lot, beginning at 1730
24 September: Post 2 is hosting a member’s pig roast
Thanks for Valerie Camarillo, VA Outreach for attending post’s August meeting
Post 2 is hosting a Veterans Day service

Commissioner Lardizzone (Disabled American Veterans - DAV)
1 October: Attended DVH admission meeting
October: Held DAV departmental meeting
3 October: Attended Friends of Veterans Home meeting
10 October: Held DAV Chapter 1 meeting
18 September – 10 October: Service Officers assisted 100 veterans seeking benefits
21 October: Wreaths Across America meeting
22 – 24 October: Mobile Service Officers will be at Del Tech (Dover), AMVETS Post 2, and DAV Headquarters

Commissioner Johnson (Korean War Veterans)
Both chapters are experiencing membership and attendance issues
Chapter 1 has begun a new membership program and has selected organization to receive assistance
Visited Chapter 2 to request a commissioner replacement
- Trying membership program and continuing to raise money
Attended Stand Down and received a plaque for the chapter’s donation

Commissioner Farley (Marine Corps League - MCL)
20 September: Attended Veterans Stand Down
23 October / 1300: Next Mayor’s Veterans Crisis Awareness Challenge meeting
- Emphasis is on multiple agencies working together to address veteran suicide
- Promoted Operation Save cards with phone numbers and tips for assisting veterans in need
Participated in various events promoting Toys for Tots

Commissioner Sarg (Military Officers Association of America - MOAA)
17 September: Attended Economic Development Conf.
20 September: Attended Veterans Stand Down
23 September: Attended DE Veterans Coalition meeting
25 September: Attended Mayor’s Veterans Crisis meeting
1 October: Attended DVH Admissions meeting
3 October: Attended Friends of DVH meeting
7 October: Attended Brain Injury Fund and Committee meetings
11 October: Attended DCVA Executive meeting

Commissioner Magner (Military Order of the Purple Heart - MOPH)
26 September: Chapter 9377 meeting, approved $500.00 donation for Wilmington VAMC Holiday Food Drive
12 October: Chapter 9377 held fall fundraiser at Hockessin Acme store
- Raised $1,128.00 for Wilmington VAMC
Commissioner Newman (Veterans of Foreign Wars - VFW)
Nothing to report

Commissioner Baldwin (Vietnam Veterans of America – VVA)
Attended Stand Down and Vet Fest
- Sold books to raise trust fund monies
Attended Veterans Mental Health Summit
28 October: Attending Norfolk Mental Health Summit
Secured funding for Laurel Military Academy
- Requesting Army JROTC support
Conducting trust fund, fundraising events at Charter School of Wilmington and DMA

Commissioner Showell (At Large, affiliated with Delaware National Guard)
MaryAnne Doughy, Biden Center is seeking ways to support veterans’ initiatives
- Asked commissioners to share ideas

Commissioner Newstadt (At Large, affiliated with Jewish War Veterans)
Presented an award to Farley

Commissioner Seppala (At Large, affiliated with Military Order of World Wars)
20 September: Attended Delaware National Guard POW/MIA chair dedication ceremony
14 October: Worked at Military Museum
Planning Veterans Day service at personal retirement community, 92 veterans live there

Commissioner Lopez (At Large, affiliated with Delaware Veterans)
19 September: Attended Stand Down meeting and set up at Schutte Park
20 September: Served as Veterans Stand Down registration lead
25 September: Attended Mayor’s Veterans Crisis meeting
26 September: Attended Other Than Honorable Discharge Consortium
- 15 lawyers assisted in 23 cases
- Represented a soldier and presented ABCMR
2 October: Started By-Laws approval process at DelVets Post 2 Executive Board meeting
10 October: Attended Stand Down AAR
- Provided information on future improvements
- Various organizations presented a signed flag
19 October: Monster Mile Walk for breast cancer awareness, Dover Racetrack
3 November / 0900: DelVets Post 1 Toys for Tots 5K
9 November: DelVets Post 2 will sponsor a table at the trust fund dinner
10 November: Veterans Day Ceremony, Elk Lodge Post 1903
- Serving as guest speaker
12 November: Veterans Response Team Briefing
- Briefing with TCM Post Deployment Team

Commissioner Stewart (At Large, affiliated with student veterans associations)
Nothing to report

TERM COMPLETION:

EVENTS:
17 October / 0830: DJF Meeting, Adams Service Center, Georgetown
21 October / 1000: Wreaths Across America Planning Meeting, Tatnall Building
26 October / 0800: Dover AFB Retiree Day
5 November / 1000: Veterans Health and Career Fair, Tower at STAR, University of Delaware
9 November / 1800: Trust Fund Dinner, Dover Downs
11 November / 1030: Bridge Ceremony (Stewart)
11 November / 1400: VVA Veterans Service, Kent County Park

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
Submission of Legislative Concerns

NEW BUSINESS:
(Lardizzone) Mentioned the Delaware Veterans Home Administrator is leaving at the end of October and the position has been posted

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:
Bill Peterson mentioned the state treasurer is seeking veteran names for her recognition program
- Requested the commissioners forward the names of veterans for consideration

CLOSED SESSION:
None

SPECIAL SESSION:

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 19 November 2019 at 1000
LOCATION: Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs