MEETING MINUTES / 16 JUNE 2020

**MEETING WAS CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS**

ATTENDANCE:
Present: Showell, Stewart, Baldwin, Bradley, Farley, Lardizzone, Lopez, Magner, McMullen, Sarg, Seppala

Excused:
Guests: Courtney Stewart (Deputy Secretary of State), Vince Kane (Wilmington VAMC), Ginny Yelland (Wilmington VAMC), Jacob Dillon (Wilmington VAMC), Tina Foskey (Delaware Veterans Home), Pat Cerchio (First State Women Warriors), Dave Skocik (Veterans Coalition)

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS:
Acknowledged U.S. Army’s birthday
Acknowledged Jason Stewarts hiring as Camden Town Manager
Moment of silence for:
Passing of notable retired Delaware National Guard member
Normally the election month for the chair position
Postponing the vote until July
Stewart will work with nomination committee to secure chair candidates
Submit nominations via his email address
Showell will not seek re-nomination

MEETING MINUTES:
Prior minutes were motioned to approve by Lardizzone, seconded by Sarg

ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:
Wilmington VAMC – Vince Kane, Director
Reviewing safety plan to increase clinical activities
As of 15 June, the network has approved the plan for additional foot traffic in all facilities
The clinic has experienced a decline in communal spread during the last 14 days
The clinic has appropriate protective equipment (staff and veterans) and the ability to test for COVID
The clinic is moving forward with surgeries
Continue to get information out to veterans
Virtual platforms are highly used
Surged beds during pandemic, but they were not needed
Garage construction has begun
- Using shuttle services and prioritized parking space on campus
Dover clinic to open fall 2020 but there are issues with construction supplies
Masks are mandatory at facilities, checking temperatures, restricting visitors meaning family members who are not a part of the visit are asked to remain outside
No positive COVID readings in the facilities, staff or veterans
(McMullen) Will the Dover clinic have radiology?
No, the plan is to use local radiologists
(Sarg) Was the Delaware Veterans Home tested by the Wilmington VAMC staff?
No, they handled their own in-house testing
The DAV van is limited to transporting one veteran, will this change? Will have to research safe social distancing and transportation guidelines for safety. Maintains 30 days of protective equipment, plus an additional 30 days for contingency. Introduced the new public affairs officer, Jacob Dillon.

**Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Tina Foskey, Director:**
71 Residents
Have been COVID negative for 96 days, staff is following CDC guidelines
Continuing to order protective equipment
Three employees tested positive and they were not at work
Continuing mandatory testing for employees and vendors, 85 tested so far
Everyone is screened upon entering
Only visitors are emergency vendors
The visiting terminally ill and actively dying residents has been allowed
New admissions are still on suspension

**Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:**
Not present

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**
Dave Skocik, Veterans Coalition
Continuing to think about virtual event to recognize and fundraise for veterans

Pat Cerchio, First State Women Warriors
Has organizational flags for the Bear veterans cemetery

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
**Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Magner:**
Interments – 65 (+8)

**Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:**
Interments – 29 (+7)

**Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:**
Sat on brain injury and equal opportunity councils, via Zoom, during restrictions
Legislation, unless COVID related, will not be reviewed

**Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:**
(McMullen) Will not be able to have committee presentation and a Zoom meeting was requested
(Baldwin) spoke with Representative Ramone concerning HB 265, 100% service-connected property tax exemption, and it will be reviewed for approval
(Sarg) We need to prepare for 2021 legislative recommendation by August 2020

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS:**
DVTF Previous Month: Applications 1; Granted 1 (100%); Awarded $1,668.00; Balance - $13,000.00

**ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**
Commissioner McMullen (Air Force Sergeants Association - AFSA)
No chapter meetings since March
Vice president is attempting to recreate the council
No international conference
Vacant (American Legion - AL)
Nothing to report

Commissioner Bradley (American Veterans - AMVETS)
Post 2 has provided free lunches
Auxiliary is distributing food through the food bank and has worked with the American Legion post 28 to provide lunches
National convention was cancelled
Post 2 have been renovated

Commissioner Lardizzone (Disabled American Veterans - DAV)
National convention was cancelled
Service officers processed 33 claims
Department meetings will begin in September

Vacant (Korean War Veterans)
Nothing to report

Commissioner Farley (Marine Corps League - MCL)
National convention has been cancelled
Will attempt a departmental meeting at the end of the month

Commissioner Sarg (Military Officers Association of America - MOAA)
Chapters have been active
Dover chapter provided $7,500.00 in scholarships to county students
Participated in virtual storming of the hill (Washington, DC)
- Focused on burn pits and health care

Commissioner Magner (Military Order of the Purple Heart - MOPH)
National convention has been cancelled
Held a virtual meeting on 23 May, recommended $2000.00 for Friends of Fallen (Dover AFB)
New Castle JROTC scholarship checks have been mailed to recipients
Used to attend Vet Center group each Friday, has now done it virtually

Commissioner Newman (Veterans of Foreign Wars - VFW)
Nothing to report

Commissioner Baldwin (Vietnam Veterans of America – VVA)
Former board member, Delaware Military Academy, Admiral Kenneth Braithwaite was confirmed as Secretary of the Navy
Military school in Sussex County is on hold
Delaware Military Academy will hold the high school graduation at the stadium

Commissioner Showell (At Large, affiliated with Delaware National Guard)
Delaware National Guard community engagements have been limited but they are providing COVID assistance within the community
National Guard Association of the United States conference will be held virtually on 28 – 29 August

Commissioner Seppala (At Large, affiliated with Military Order of World Wars)
MOWW will not meet until October
18 JROTC and ROTC awards have been mailed to the recipients
National convention has been cancelled
Delaware Military Museum events have been cancelled

Commissioner Lopez (At Large, affiliated with Delaware Veterans)
Military Womens Tea cancelled until March
Stand Down has been post phoned until June 2021
DELVETS post reopened
Mayor Crisis Awareness team is on hold
Wilmington VA Zoom outreach meeting was informative

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

TERM COMPLETION:
Baldwin – 9 September 2020
McMullen – 9 September 2020
Showell – 9 September 2020
Showell will not seek reappointment and has spoken to the Secretary of State, Deputy Secretary of State, Director, State Commissions on future appointments and the direction of the commissioners

- Worked to fill vacancies: AMVETS will be reappointed, American Legion has submitted a replacement, Veterans of Foreign Wars has submitted a replacement, Korean War Veterans has submitted a replacement, General Berry will recommend a replacement for Showell
Baldwin and McMullen will seek reappointment

EVENTS:
To be determined

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:

CLOSED SESSION:
SPECIAL SESSION:

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 21 July 2020 at 1000
LOCATION: Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs