

Board Minutes
3 April 2015
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
6848 S. Revere Pkwy, Centennial, CO 80112

Robby Robinson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 0930 hours. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed for our POW, MIA, troops in battle or harm's way and all family members.

Roll Call of Members and Introduction of Staff

Board Members Present:

William "Robby" Robinson, Chairman
Dana Niemela, Vice-Chairman
Rene Simard, Secretary
Kathleen Dunemn, Member –Not Present
Christopher Holden, Member
Duane Dailey, Member
Jack Rudder, Member

DMVA Staff Present:

Mickey Hunt, DMVA, Deputy Director
Greg Dorman, DMVA Legislative Liaison
Reuben Mestas, CDVA Director
Claire Dean, CDVA Admin. Assistant
Gail Hoagland, DMVA VAG Administrator

Guests Present:

Richard Sandrock, Governor's Office

Guest Presentations

None.

Approval of Minutes from March

Accepted.

Board Member Comments

Dana Niemela: Visited Lockheed Martin with Richard Sandrock. Black Fox, located in Longmont, provides electronics manufacturing training and is considered a pipeline to Lockheed Martin. The Workforce Investment Act Fund or the GI Bill will cover training costs. These opportunities are through area Workforce Centers. Veterans who complete the training will have the opportunity for a lucrative career at Lockheed Martin, including on the job training leading to a NASA certification, and will be provided livable wages. We are looking at ways to provide housing and transportation for those who are either homeless or do not live in the Longmont area. Both Dana and Richard will be meeting with Richard Toya and the HR Director of Lockheed to discuss setting up similar training programs in El Paso County.

Robby Robinson: Since there are no guest presentations, Mr. Robinson would like to use the time to discuss the grants. Twenty-eight requests have been submitted.

Richard Sandrock: Next Tuesday Mr. Sandrock will be speaking to the Board of the Western Dairy Association in Phoenix, Arizona. Later that week, he will be at the Space Symposium in Colorado Springs to introduce the idea of hiring veterans. Veteran-owned Red Lake Brewery in Colorado Springs has had great success in uniting veterans from many different eras and walks of life. They will be teaming up with other veteran-owned microbreweries nationwide to increase distribution.

Mr. Robinson was intrigued by the diversity that Mr. Sandrock mentioned. It is something that many organizations like the American Legion and VFW have been having difficulty in bringing in a diverse group of veterans. Team Red, White and Blue holds many socials there, but most of the customers are word of mouth. Colorado Department of Labor and Employment is working on a pilot program with Marriot Hotels to give veterans extra points through a workforce center, allowing veterans to stay at the hotel for free while attending job interviews. The Governor's office will try to work out a similar program with Southwest Airlines. The annual Pedal the Plains, an agricultural bike tour through the eastern plains and Colorado farming communities, is expecting nearly 1,500 riders this year. A State-wide multi-day Clergy Counsel to address mental health and suicide will be held in Denver this summer.

A brief discussion ensued about the VA hospital.

Mickey Hunt: TAG is currently visiting Jordan and Romania and will be in South Korea next week. General Edwards, Mickey and Greg Dorman will travel to Washington, D.C. to speak with CODEL. Colorado Serves has been invited to the San Luis Valley Veterans Coalition on May 6. On May 12, Mickey will be attending a week-long Welcome Home Montrose event, which will host a white water rafting trip with several patients from Walter Reed. Last week Mickey toured the Pikes Peak Workforce Center in Colorado Springs and was impressed with the program. A Veterans Breakfast will be held at the Wings over the Rockies on April 18. May 23 is the 2nd anniversary of the Freedom Memorial in Aurora. On the second of May, Mickey will be in Walsenburg for the unveiling of a new temporary housing facility for family members of veterans staying at either the hospital or the Walsenburg Nursing Home. The facility was constructed by disadvantaged youth.

A brief discussion followed with regards to the Board meetings being open to the public and guest presenters lobbying for grant money.

The F-16s are currently in South Korea and Chinook Helicopters going to Kuwait. This summer the State-owned vacant armory in Grand Junction will be proposed for a future Veteran One-Stop. If approved, a State Service Officer and building maintenance person will need to be hired for the location. The State-owned Las Animas Armory could eventually be turned into a Veteran One-Stop.

Greg Dorman: The Grand Junction Armory was appraised at \$750,000. House Bill 1315 was recently introduced to raise the State reimbursement funds to Counties and meet minimum wage. If passed, Counties will not have to match those funds dollar for dollar. The General Assembly currently sets the rate, but if the bill is passed, the Division will set the rate. Ben Mestas, UVC and CCI testified before the house last week. The long bill has moved from the Senate and will be presented to the House in the coming weeks. Military Family Relief Fund Bill 1052 has been signed by the Governor. House Bill 15-1114, which talks about the indefinite detention of US citizens, did not pass.

A brief discussion followed about the GI Bill and in-state tuition.

Ben Mestas: Cemetery construction is ahead of schedule. There are concerns about the upper pond liner being able to hold up. Two new Service Officers have started work on their caseloads. Ben recommended Duane Dailey as the Board Representative and Reviewer for the annual training conference. Mr. Dailey graciously accepted.

Gail Hoagland: Due to staffing issues in the accounting department, many of the grantees have been slow to get paid. Some will not fully expend their award this fiscal year. The money will roll over to next year's trust fund. Veterans Assistance Grant Committee members Ben, Gail, Dana and Duane met to plan for next year's expenditures. Gail visited the Crawford House in Colorado Springs. The nonprofit provides transitional housing and offers rehabilitation. Most importantly, it trains veterans to become peers. We did a budget adjustment to their contract to allow the training program and hope to use them as a model elsewhere.

Robby Robinson, on behalf of Kathleen Dunemn: Everything is running smoothly at the State Veterans Community Living Centers.

Robby Robinson, Dana Niemela, Ben Mestas, Duane Dailey and Gail Hoagland: This year Board members will grade each trust fund applicant with an objective scoring tool prior to discussion and consensus. The applications will be sent electronically to Board members to grade next week. Focus should be on both the narrative and the budget. Any great variances will be discussed at the May Board meeting. Partial funding can and will be awarded. Board members should contact Gail with their grades and recommendations in the next couple of weeks.

Discussion followed as to veteran population served by county. Gail will include that information along with the applications.

After conducting a couple of webinars about the grant application process, more realistic requests and budgets have been turned in. Grading consistency was stressed. Understanding geographical areas and hospital migration routes are also important. Dana added that it would be wise to review all the applications and then score them. Gail would be willing to bring hard

copies of the applications to the next Board meeting if needed. The process will need to be modified throughout the years.

Public Comments

None.

Future Meetings

May 1st, American Legion Headquarters

June 5th, Grand County, Board Elections

Duane Dailey: The Board meeting in June will be at Mountain Parks Electric in Granby. A light luncheon will follow with a meet and greet of the newly appointed Hospital Commander and Colorado State Veterans Community Living Center Representative Debby Blanc. For those attending the June Board meeting, the Granby Chamber of Commerce is offering reduced hotel rates.

The Board was instructed to turn in their travel vouchers to either Ben or Claire.

No meeting in July

Old Business

Veterans License Plate issues were discussed. No changes have been made as to what the Department of Motor Vehicles requires.

New Business

Rene mentioned that his wife is ill and that he will do his best to make future board meetings but may not be able to attend all of them.

Meeting adjourned 11:03am