

**Clark County Veterans Advisory Board**  
*An advisory board to the Clark County Board of Commissioners*

**Clark County Public Service Center**  
**1300 Franklin Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room #679**  
**Vancouver, Washington**  
**August 13, 2014**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Chair: Morris Giesler**

**Vice Chair: Greg Whitson**

**Secretary: Mike Gibson**

**Meeting Called to order by Morris Giesler @ 14:00 hours**

**Roll Call: [Bold script indicates presence at meeting]**

**POST**

40 et 8  
American Legion #14  
American Legion #168  
American Legion #176  
American Veterans #6  
DAV Chapter #4  
Korean War Vet Assoc. #321  
Marine Corps League #826  
VFW #4278  
VFW #7824  
VFW #12028  
Vietnam Vets #512

**PRIMARY**

**Morris Giesler**  
**Dixie Hotaling**  
**Robert Nichols**  
**Michael Gibson**  
**Richard Alvarez**  
**Frank Hyatt**  
**Thomas Dombeck**  
**Lou Basté**  
**John Raynor**  
**Roy Billings**  
**Skip Benge**  
**Greg Whitson**

**ALTERNATE**

**Jerry Keen**  
James Resleff  
**Richard Langenbach**  
**Jonathan Frederick**  
Benjamin Long  
Thomas Kula  
Robert Sumrill  
**Ron Brandon**  
Steve Stetson  
**Bruce Maas**  
  
Joseph Fettig

**Members at Large**

Kevin Lawson

**CLARK COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES**

**Samantha Whitley**

**GUESTS**

Judy Russell and Barb Archer and Roxanne Clark and Ty Hadley-CCVAC; Karen Brown-Dignity Memorial; Odis Warren-guest; Michael Stacey-CMAC; Tim McPharlin and Kurt Kolch-Clark College VRC

**July 9, 2014, Meeting Minutes**

**Bob Nichols moved to approve the minutes as written, Lou Baste seconded and passed.**

**Strategic Plan update**

The Strategic Plan for 2015 is important for the future of the Veterans program. Veterans are in need of help with housing, benefits, employment, credit counseling, family counseling and the utilization of Veterans' funds. A suggestion at the first meeting was to create a resource card for Veterans: small enough to be carried in the pocket but large enough to include organizations most helpful to a Veteran. The Veterans Assistance Center has completed this task. Between 2000 and 2014 the number of Veterans in Washington grew from 6% to 10.9%. As of September 30, 2013, there were 600,000

veterans in Washington, with 38,000 of those in Clark County. Due to future cuts in the Armed Services there is expected to be an increase. Input is needed from other organizations in Clark County to help the board work on the plan.

### **CCVAB Meetings**

Sam Whitley spoke about the request to have the meetings televised on CVTV beginning in September. In order to do this, the meetings would need to be held in the Hearing Room, which is next door to the Training Room in the Public Service Center. The Hearing Room is not available on Wednesday afternoons; it is available on the second Thursday of the month until the end of year. County Commissioners have agreed to cover the costs.

The new meetings will be on the second Thursday of each month from 2pm to 4pm. **Skip Bengel called for a motion for the change of meeting day and Tom Dombeck seconded the motion.** Motion was passed and the meetings will be held in the Hearing Room on the sixth floor.

### **County Code update**

The Clark County Attorney had some questions regarding the update; Sam answered those questions and now we are waiting for the Attorney to respond to those. A request was made that the revised bylaws approved in July be sent to all of the Advisory Board members.

### **Committee Reports**

**Appeals:** There were three appeals last month: two approved and one denied. The denied appeal will be handled on a different platform. There was a request that more information be given on the appeal form in order to paint a better picture of the situation. There is a place on the form for the Veteran to write a short synopsis and a place for the Service Officers to write their explanation as well. Veterans will be urged to print legibly; but it's important that the Veteran write their reason for the appeal themselves.

**Policies and Procedures:** There are a few proposed changes to the policies, one of them being to change the length of time for tracking utility assistance from 48 months to 24 months which will allow Veterans to use \$2,000 for utilities every 24 months instead of every 48 months. A question was asked about the impact of that change on finances; it was pointed out that in order to get more money from the fund, they will need to show the need by increased spending on programs. **After Mike Gibson called for a motion for the change and Tom Dombeck seconded that motion, the vote was unanimous approval for the change.** Other policies to be changed when they come up for discussion in the spring are: a change on the gas voucher/bus route requirements. These requirements need to be adjusted for Veteran's transportation needs but the changes will also need to reflect that a number of organizations currently assist with Veterans' transportation needs as well. It is recommended that in January each representative report on proposed changes to their respective posts and discuss them in preparation for the vote on the policies and procedures that will come up in the spring meeting.

### **June Contractor Reports & County Fund Report**

Sam reported that the Human Service Council served **53** Veterans in June for a monthly service total of **\$18,271** while the Veterans Assistance Center helped **119** Veterans in June. Volunteer hours totaled **320** added to **335** Community Outreach hours for a total of **655** which equals **\$14,856**.

The Free Dental Clinic served **7** Veterans for a total value of **\$1,187** for which the Veterans Fund was billed **\$994**.

Sam reviewed the Revenue and Expense report for June: the total in the Fund is **\$513,125**. The income for June was **\$3,197** with the expenses totaling **\$31,919** and a decrease in the total of **\$28,722**.

The breakdown for the HSC contract for the first five months is **\$23,949** in staff costs with **\$69,242**

directly to Veterans. Sam will update this report throughout the year as the monthly invoices come in. Sam mentioned that the report showed only the breakdown of the HSC contract charges but other charges were also made against the Veterans Assistance Fund such as county staff salary, indirect expenses as well as Veteran's Assistance Center charges. When asked how much county charges were, Sam calculated approximately **\$22,000** shown on the Revenue and Expense report.

There was some discussion concerning the Veteran's Assistance Center being too small and cramped. A large, comfortable drop-in Center would be very helpful for Veterans in order to build trust and receive the help they need. There is hope that this can happen within the next six months to a year. A question was asked about renting a space instead of building and whether that would be allowed; there are a number of available rental buildings to be considered.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

With Morris resigning and Greg Whitson ascending to Chair of the Advisory Board, Greg spoke about the need for a good Vice Chair and he requested Bob Nichols act as his Vice Chair; Bob agreed to do so until the end of the year. Morris appointed Bob to Vice Chair since he was still officially the Chair. Morris explained that he resigned not only as Committee Chair but also as the primary representative of 40 et 8 because of his appointment as an instructor at Clark College.

Sam announced that next Thursday, August 21, WA State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) is holding a summit in Yakima at the Red Lion Hotel. This is a County Veteran's Program Summit for both County staff and VAB representatives to talk about subjects such as: demographics, tax levy, WDVA website, fund eligibility and setting up regional workshops. Sam is planning to attend; both Greg and Bob will plan to attend as well.

### **Open Forum**

Today's Veteran Stand Down was a success after a few minor glitches in the beginning. Approximately 120 Veterans attended the Stand Down. Jerry Keen has been working as a Representative for the Veterans Resource Council for 12 years and is now stepping down from that role although he will continue to attend meetings. Sam Grooms and Jan Wojciechowski will be 40 et 8 representatives.

The VAC is hosting a golf tournament at the Cedars Golf Course on Thursday, August 21. The cost is **\$89** per person and includes golf, cart and lunch. There will be door prizes, raffles and games and the proceeds will go to the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center. There are plenty of open spots left. CB Seal/Coldwell Banker have partnered with the VAC to organize the tournament and volunteers are very welcome to come out and help

There will be concert fundraiser featuring the Kate White Band held at Crossroads Community Church on Friday, September 12. This is a benefit concert to raise money for Shared Hope International and the Wounded Warrior Project. More information about the concert can be found at the Veteran's Center.

Tim McPharlin informed everyone that October 29 at Clark College from 4pm to 6:30pm there will be Women's Warriors' Symposium. The key note speaker will be Alfie Alvarado-Ramos and there will be a film shown called When Women Come Marching Home.

**Meeting adjourned at 16:00 hours.**

**Next meeting: September 11, 2014 @ 14:00 hours in the Commissioners Hearing Room**