

Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

An advisory board to the Clark County Council

April 11, 2024

Chair: Michael Harding

Vice Chair: Bob Nichols

Secretary: Bruce Maas

Meeting called to order.

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

POST

40 et 8

American Legion #14

American Legion #44

American Legion #168

American Legion #176

American Veterans #6

DAV Chapter #4

Korean War Assoc. #321

Marine Corps League #826

VFW #4278

VFW #7824

Vietnam Vets #512

Members at Large

PRIMARY

Bob Brennan

Gene Couture

Darren Wertz

Bob Nichols

Thomas Phillips

John Lovejoy

Bruce Maas

Earl Edwards

Steve Slegers

Shannon Roberts

Michael Harding

Greg Whitson

Kelly Jones

Bryan McGillis

Tonya Wark

Tamara Elam

Megan Anderson

Eli Gonzalez

Michael Langsdorf

Lloyd Bowman

ALTERNATE

Steve Slegers

Charles Ingalls

Michael Gibson

Vanise Pratt

Tom Cousino

Dixie Hotaling

Ron Brandon

Dana Difford

Nick Herber

Clark County Representative: Abby Molloy

Guests: CVTV23, Dawn Lee (Clark County); Sharon Tyree (Clark County Veterans Assistance Center); Lori Pugh (Clark County Veterans Assistance Center); John Frederick

Approval of March 14, 2024, meeting minutes

The minutes were approved following a motion by Steve Slegers that was seconded by Lloyd Bowman.

Committee Reports

Appeals: None

Policies and Procedures: Ron is submitting a revision to the policy and procedures; Kelly is working to finalize it will bring her revisions to the next meeting, in May.

Nominations: Michael Harding to resign following the meeting in April; Bob Nichols will become the Chair. Vice Chair nominations being accepted; Members-at-Large are eligible to serve. Two nominations: (1) Megan Anderson, representing Clark College; and (2) Michael Langsdorf, long-time Clark County resident. Bob Brennan expressed interest, then withdrew his nomination. Nominations will be revisited next board meeting.

All interested parties encouraged to apply for the Vice Chair position, contact Abby Molloy or Bruce Mass with your nomination. Michael Harding has agreed to stay one more month as Chair.

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Veterans Assistance Center (VAC) Presentation (Lori Pugh)

Lori Pugh provided presentation on the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center (CCVAC). VAC is a volunteer-only, non-profit organization that operates from grants and donations. .97 cents of every \$1 dollar taken in goes directly to Veteran services. 4,543 Veterans assisted in 2023. \$204,683 cash awards granted to Veterans in 2023. 5,341 meals served in 2023 for breakfast & lunch. VAC operates clothing center and offers hygiene products for any Veteran (not just homeless). Offers food box program for singles and families, regardless of Veteran-statuses. VAC now partners with CCFB, so Veterans and their families now have access to more food items. In March 2024, VAC gave 2,000 pounds of food to Veterans. In 2023, 21 Veterans received burial assistance at a cost of \$36,775. Food assistance: back-pack program for Veteran school-age children, 35 Thanksgiving meal boxes distributed, 24 Christmas meal boxes distributed. Operates a Christmas store where 53 kids were served by parents shopping for gifts. A few Toys for Tots gifts donated by Portland VA; bulk of gifts from community-based non-profit organizations. Twice a year, VAC holds hiring event for underemployed or unemployed Veterans. On 4/17/24, from 9 to 1 pm, 24 companies will attend next hiring event. 73 VAC volunteers participated in 2023 Stand Down event (1,160-volunteer hours / \$28,640 value). VAC has two VVA-certified service officers with 90% approval rating. All claims get submitted directly to VA, as these officers are 'certified'. Ilani Gala to be held 7/16/24 from 3:00- 8:00 pm with appetizers & no host bar. All proceeds directly benefit VAC. Guest speaker from Washington, D.C.

February 2024, Contractor & Fund reports

- CCVAC: 65 Veterans served in February, services totaling \$18,649. 53 men, 7 women, 5 other Veterans served. 11 denials, 0 subject to appeals. 608 visits to the center for essentials and food, 799 meals served. 760 volunteer hours, totaling \$18,752 in value.
- Free Clinic: 0 Veterans served in February. Services totaled \$0 in value; billed \$717. Clinic is increasing engagement.
- VAC Fund: February 2024 revenue \$44,096; expenditures \$59,965, fund balance \$555,727. Assessor's office will be presenting during August meeting. \$555,727 will change when property taxes are collected (April 30th & October 31st) and distributed to agencies.

Old Business

- Camp Bonneville: Michael Langsdorf and Bob Nichols attended one meeting of the Camp Bonneville study group. Second meeting on April 24th. David Puentes will be coming to VFW Post 7824 to speak about finding other potential property burial sites. Conversation about additional challenges and potential opportunities for burial sites.

New Business

- Gene Couture motioned to skip July meeting; Bruce Maas seconded; motion carried. There will be no July meeting.
- David Puentes will be attending in October 2024.

Open Forum

- Gene Couture raised concerns about the American Legion in Olympia. A meeting is scheduled to re-write their Constitution. It could be the end of the year before anything is done.
- Michael Langsdorf requested additional information in preparation for Assessor's office visit.
- May 8th at 6:30 pm, CMAC Committee will be holding "Community Salutes" at Skyview High School at 6:30 pm. This is to recognize those high school seniors transitioning into military service. Please come and show your support.
- On May 27th CMAC will be holding a Memorial Day event at 11:00 am at Fort Vancouver. Both of these events will be televised on CCTV (delayed).
- Michael Harding requested the 988 number be added to agenda and webpage. Abby will make the site changes.
- Lori Pugh informed everyone that for \$13.00, on the Dept. of Licensing website, you can request a 988-license plate banner for your vehicle.
- Discussion with community member regarding CCVAC appeals process.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting May 9th, 2024.