

Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

An advisory board to the Clark County Board of Councilors

November 12, 2015

1300 Franklin Street, Room #680

Vancouver, Washington

Chair: Bruce Maas

Vice Chair: Thomas Kula

Secretary: Mike Gibson

Meeting called to order by Bruce Maas

Roll Call: [Bold script indicates presence at meeting]

POST

40 et 8

American Legion #14

American Legion #27

American Legion #168

American Legion #176

American Veterans #6

DAV Chapter #4

Korean War Assoc. #321

Marine Corps League #826

VFW #4278

VFW #7824

VFW # 12028

Vietnam Vets #512

Members at Large

PRIMARY

Steve Slegers

Dixie Hotaling

Elisa Cotton

Robert Nichols

Michael Gibson

John Lovejoy

Thomas Kula

George Raynor

Lou Basté

John Raynor

Bruce Maas

Skip Bengé

Greg Whitson

Kevin Lawson

Candis Oliver

ALTERNATE

Sam Grooms

Dean Collins

Shawn O'Neil

Richard Langenbach

Jonathan Frederick

Bubba Conway

Frank Hyatt

Randy Warneke

Gary Dowler

Dale Rex

Dave Barton

Joseph Fettig

Clark County Representative: Samantha Whitley

Guests: Judy Russel, (Veterans Assistance Center); Joe Levesque, (Camas); Yvette Brown-Wahler (ESGR); Jerry Keesee (KWVA and PointMan Ministries); Jeanne Stewart (Clark County Councilor)

Presentations

Employment Support for Guard and Reserve (ESGR)

ESGR provides advocacy and mediation for Washington and Oregon military returning to employment or reinstatement after active duty and have concerns about back pay, promotions, job restoration or benefits. ESGR also supports the Boss Lift program, in which military can honor bosses with flights on military aircraft. The next Boss Lift is March 30, 2016.

Partners in Careers (PIC)

The PIC Homeward Bound program assists veterans with housing, resume building, job skills, job placement, and the veterans' garden at Heritage Farm. Food from the garden is donated to the food bank, Share House, the farmer's market, and given free to veterans who volunteer.

Korean War Veterans Association

Jerry Keesee mentioned that KWVA is looking to find and hear from other Korean War era veterans, including anyone serving anywhere in the world from 1950-1955.

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Jeanne Stewart

Councilor Stewart expressed appreciation to the Veterans Advisory Board for focusing on veterans' issues respectfully.

October 8, 2015, Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved following a motion by **Bob Nichols** and a second by **Steve Slegers**.

Committee Reports

Appeals

Two denials were appealed: one gas voucher appeal was approved; the other appeal was denied as the appellant did not meet income guidelines.

Policies and Procedures

The VAB approved a change to Policy 2.6 requiring applicants provide documentation of savings accounts. The change does not specify how much savings disqualifies a veteran from receiving emergency assistance, and it places a heavier demand on the time of the service officers. **John Lovejoy made a motion to strike this addition from the policy. The motion was seconded by Frank Hyatt and passed.** The approved changes in policies will be sent to the Board of County Councilors.

Nominations

Bruce Maas and Bob Nichols are nominated for chair; Tom Kula is nominated for vice chair. No nominations have been received for secretary. A third call will be conducted in December for secretary. With quorum, the board will vote on the officers in December.

September Contractor Reports & County Fund Report

The Veterans Assistance Center received 542 veterans' visits and 540 volunteer hours; 86 veterans received emergency assistance. The Free Clinic treated seven veteran dental patients, for which the fund was billed \$757. The Veterans Assistance Fund balance was \$307,837 at the end of September.

Veterans Assistance Center Update

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of veterans requesting rent assistance. The 2016 Veterans Assistance Fund contract shows both an approved and a requested budget. This is due to being mid-budget cycle. The footnote reads that the requested amount may be approved after the assessor's office determines expected yield from property taxes and the budget office approves the increased spending authority. This should automatically be adjusted in March with no action required by the Advisory Board.

Old Business

No discussion at this time.

New Business

Friends of the Carpenter is opening a homeless day center with showers and lockers. Veteran volunteers are requested to support the veterans at the facility.

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Open Forum

- Joe Levesque again requested review of the American Association for a Better America.
- The WDVA Veterans Townhall is November 19, at the Armed Forces Reserve Center, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The meeting is open to the public.
- The Veterans Day ceremony at the Armed Forces Reserve Center was a success with a purple heart awarded to a Clark County veteran.
- Battle Ground dedicated a veterans' memorial at the Kiwanis Park on November 11.
- Women veterans meet at 11:00 a.m. November 21 at the 40et8. Women veterans were featured in the Senior Messenger.
- The WDVA conference in Olympia reported an incorrect number of homeless veterans in Clark County. The Veterans Assistance Center will attempt to collect a better number.

Adjournment

Bob Nichols moved to adjourn the meeting; Dixie Hotaling seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting

December 10, 2015, at 1400 hours, in the Councilors' Hearing Room.