

**Clark County Veteran's Resource Committee
Clark County Public Service Center
1300 Franklin St, 6th Floor, Ste #679
Vancouver, Washington
December 13, 2010**

**Chair: Morris Giesler
Secretary: Robert Nichols**

**Vice Chair: Michael Gibson
Contract Service Officer: CRMHS**

Meeting Called to order by Morris Giesler @ 1400

Roll Call: [Bold script indicates presence at meeting]

POST

40 et 8
American Legion #14
American Legion #122
American Legion #168
American Legion #176
American Legion #189
American Legion #208
DAV Chapter #4
Marine Corps League #826
VFW #1927
VFW #4278
VFW #12028
Vietnam Vets #512

PRIMARY

Morris Giesler
Karla Bean
Richard Puttkamer
Robert Nichols
Michael Gibson
Clinton Nelson
Brad Hunt
Bruce Maas
Lou Baste
Jim Chisholm
Stephen Stetson
Ray Saranto
Greg Whitson
Members at Large
Thomas Dombeck
Kevin Lawson
Bill Allman
Sally Garcia

SECONDARY

Jan Wojciechowski
Peggy Sheehan
Michael Edwards
Mark Woods
Philip Yasson
Charlotte Elznic
Robert Blevens
Michael Riley
Ron Brandon
Eino Suomi
Robert Hitchcock
Bill Romine
Jerry Keen

CLARK COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES

Samantha Whitley, Rebecca Royce, Kate Budd

GUESTS

Pat Stryker & Mike Jajan – CRMHS; John Russell – Veterans Assistance Center; Ken Lee, Dale Movius & Bob Ford – American Legion; Dan Pietras – Civil Air Patrol; Carla Jo Whitson – WATBIRCS; Craig Lyons & David Moore – CFTH; Paul Gerlack - EGIV

Meeting Minutes: Lou Baste motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting on October 27, 2010. Motion seconded by Bruce Maas and passed.

Community Presentations

Carla Jo Whitson presented the Washington Traumatic Brain Injury Resource Coordinator (WATBIRC) Program. The program is currently in King, Pierce, Spokane and Clark Counties to provide resources for people who have suffered traumatic brain injuries or strokes in the last five years. Carla Jo distributed information about the program and asked that the committee members pass on the information to anyone who may be in need of the service.

Paul Gerlack with Embrace Groups Involving Veterans (EGIV) discussed a new program he is working on in cooperation with the Vancouver Police Department. The program will be designed to train police officers on how to respond to calls regarding veterans who may be suffering from PTSD or TBI. Paul has an outline for the program, which he hopes to take national. He is asking any interested committee members to attend a meeting in mid January to plan and develop the program.

Bob Ford asked the committee to work on a way for the post service officers to find out if a veteran who is looking for assistance through the post has received assistance through the Veterans Assistance Fund. Pat Stryker said she would look into possible solutions.

Ken Lee, Department Commander of the American Legion, gave his thanks to the committee for all the good work they have been doing to help veterans. He recommended advertising with the local newspapers to inform the community of the different projects that are scheduled.

Dan Pietras with the Civil Air Patrol described the missions of his program. He is looking for additional resources to help pay for the office space they are utilizing at the Vancouver Barracks. Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation will be acquiring the site and the Civil Air Patrol will need to raise additional funds to stay at their current location. If you have any ideas, please contact Morris Giesler and he can put you in contact with Dan.

Committee Reports

Nominations: Bob Nichols informed the committee that the current nominations for 2011 are: Morris Giesler for Chair, Robert Nichols for Vice Chair and Michael Gibson for Secretary. No other nominations were made. Phil Yasson motioned to approve the nominations, seconded by Tom Dombeck and approved.

Policies & Procedures: Jerry Keen mentioned that he is still looking for volunteers to serve on the committee that have had experience with policies and procedures. If you are interested, please let him know.

Peggy gave an update on the subcommittee's discussion on VRF eligibility requirements. The subcommittee recommended keeping the eligibility requirements in the Policies and Procedures the same. This decision was supported by Samantha's research, where she found that most other counties managing the VAF use the 150% of poverty income limit.

Appeals: Ray Saranto mentioned that there were five appeals. Four out of five were denied as they were over income.

Case Management Report: Samantha Whitley distributed the November report. There were 117 veterans served for a total of \$40,989.28. Also attached are the case management notes for review. Mike mentioned that veterans are referring other veterans for the assistance causing a steep increase in demand.

Sam also distributed the Revenue and Expense report through November. She mentioned that December services will bring the fund to just under \$1 million. Sam will bring a year-end report with all services provided in 2010 to the January meeting.

Old Business:

LOAs: Rebecca mentioned that she has only received about half of the 2011 Letter of Appointment forms. A reminder went out to posts that have not completed the form earlier this month. Any posts that do not complete the 2011 LOA will not have voting rights starting in January. The committee will vote in the Member At Large members at the January meeting.

Dental: Samantha gave an update on the dental assistance program. The Staff Report was approved by the Commissioners on November 30th and a contract has been drafted and services will be available starting January 1st. The policies and procedures will be updated with “Dental Care: Assistance to address the veteran’s urgent dental needs as recommended by the Free Clinic of SW Washington dentist. Assistance is limited to urgent care provided by the Free Clinic only, and excludes restorative and/or cosmetic dental procedures.”

VAC: John Russell discussed that the VAC is working with the WDVA to research possible federal funding. They will be having their monthly meeting tonight starting at 1715 hours.

Indigency Code Change: Samantha asked the committee to approve the wording for the change to the Clark County Code. Chris Horne, Senior Deputy in the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, drafted the ordinance which will add “For the limited purpose of utilizing a “wellness center,” indigency shall include those who are unable to pay reasonable costs for shelter, food, utilities and transportation because their available funds are insufficient.” This section will be added to Clark County Code 2.29.050. There was some discussion on the wording “wellness center” and it was recommended to change the verbiage to “veterans assistance center.” Greg motioned to accept the code amendment with the wording change, seconded by Tom Dombeck and approved. Sam will give the recommended changes to Chris Horne. There will be a work session with the commissioners on January 18th with a Consent Agenda two weeks later where the commissioners will vote on the change. Both proceedings are open to the public and committee members are encouraged to attend.

CRMHS Contract: Pay Stryker discussed the need for an increase to their 2010 contract to be able to keep assisting veterans through December. They have seen approximately double the number of veterans than anticipated in the last several months and do not have enough funds in the original contract to cover the expense. Pat also requested an increase to the 2011 contract in anticipation of the additional need. Because the CRMHS contract is based on cost reimbursement, any funds not needed would not be used from the VAF. Mike Gibson motioned to approve the increases in both contracts, seconded by Peggy and approved. Morris mentioned that he might call a special meeting in January to

discuss these changes once he has reviewed the request and the budget.

New Business: Kate Budd, Homeless Programs Coordinator with Clark County, provided information on addressing homelessness in Clark County. First, she shared information from a presentation given by HUD regarding two surveys the VA had distributed; one to consumers, one to providers. The surveys requested information regarding the unmet needs of veterans who are homeless, in transitional housing or in permanent supportive housing.

Kate also explained that Clark County is currently updating their 10-year Homeless Plan. As part of the 10-year Plan, the County has identified and prioritized nine strategies with action steps for each strategy. Kate distributed the action steps that will be included in the updated 10-year Plan that pertain to veterans. She specified there are two ways to provide feedback on the plan; read through the plan online and comment or attend a Community Forum on January 12th starting at 1800 hours at the Center for Community Health.

Craig Lyons with the Council for the Homeless spoke about the annual Point in Time (PIT) count where volunteers go into the community on one specific day to find and count persons who are homeless. This year's PIT count will occur on Thursday, January 27th. Craig explained the volunteers hand out hygiene kits to those in need in appreciation for participating with the count. He also mentioned that this year they will be putting an extra emphasis on veteran status.

Craig also mentioned that Project Homeless Connect will occur on Thursday, January 27th also. He explained that they are hoping to spread the word when they conduct the PIT count. Project Homeless Connect is a one day event similar to the Veteran Stand Down where persons who are homeless can connect with services and providers. The event will take place at the Red Lion at the Quay from 1000 to 1400 hours. Committee members are encouraged to refer veterans to the event.

Bruce Maas mentioned that C-Tran will be increasing their rates to supplement the costs of C-Van (para-transit). He asked if the committee was aware if veterans were using this service. Bruce said that the Portland VA offers this type of service, but it is not offered to the Vancouver campus.

Tom Dombeck asked if the VRC had a resource booklet or if one was being put together. He mentioned that persons seeking veterans services who call the Chamber of Commerce get directed to the VA's main phone number. Mike Jajan mentioned that he put together a list of resources and it is posted on the County's website. The Council for the Homeless also has a complete list of resources on their website. Another resource is 211 *info*, a community services directory. They are available by dialing 211 or on their website www.211info.org.

Open Forum: Tom Dombeck informed the committee that one of Jerry Keessee's sons has been diagnosed with cancer. Bruce asked the committee to keep Jerry and his family in their thoughts and prayers.

Bruce mentioned that the Veterans Day ceremony at the cemetery and at the Elks Lodge were both very successful.

John Russell mentioned that Sally Garcia's position is in danger due to budget cuts. He asked that the committee keep her in their thoughts.

Meeting adjourned at 1544 hours.

Next meeting: January 26, 2011 at 1400 hours.