

Clark County Veteran's Resource Committee
40 et 8 Chateau
7607 NE 26th Avenue
Vancouver, Washington
February 10, 2010

Chair: Morris Giesler
Secretary: Robert Nichols

Vice Chair: Michael Gibson
Contract Service Officer: CRMHS

Meeting Called to order by Morris Giesler @ 1401

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

American Legion 5th District
DSHS Veteran's Project
WorkSource Vancouver

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
Bill Allman
Sally Garcia

SECONDARY

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

CLARK COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES

Samantha Whitley, Rebecca Royce

GUESTS

Jerry Keesee – 5th District; Gib Ridout – AL 14; John Russell – AL 176; Mike Willbur – VFW 7824; Kevin Lawson – Creekside Mortgage; Pam Brokaw, Roxeanne Boose, and Temika Beasley – PIC Veteran Women Program; David Hodges – Senator Murray's Office; Alan Edwards and Susan Kost – Social Security Administration; Judge Darvin Zimmerman – Clark County; Linda Maddy – DVA; Shauna McCloskey – Clark County District Court; Rich Axtell – VFW 1927; William Liphold – Clark College Veterans Club

Meeting Minutes: Steve Stetson motioned to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2010 meeting. Motion seconded by Richard Langenbach and passed.

Community Presentation: William Liphold with the Clark College Veterans Club discussed the opportunity of creating a stone monument on the Clark College campus to honor veterans. He mentioned that a boulder was donated to the club to use for the monument and Clark College has agreed to pay for a plaque to place on the boulder. William also noted that the monument will likely be placed next to the flag pole on campus. The proposal is in the planning stage and William asked the committee for any recommendations they may have concerning the design, laws or implications that might need to be considered and what should be included in the dedication ceremony. It was recommended that William include all branches of service including the Merchant Marines. It was also suggested that he collaborate with Jerry Keese on the project as Jerry worked on the Korean War Memorial on the VA campus. For any other recommendations or suggestions, please email William at clarkvets@gmail.com.

Shauna McCloskey with Clark County District Court is working to get funding for a new veteran program. She briefly explained the program at January's meeting and asked for a letter of support from the committee. She received the letter and will be including it with their grant application. The Veterans Therapeutic Court (VeTCO) is an alternative court for veterans that have been charged with a misdemeanor that will reduce or eliminate time spent in jail. To qualify for the program, the veteran must have an honorable discharge, be charged with an eligible misdemeanor and accept the rules of the program. The program has four phases including treatment groups, support meetings, random drug/alcohol testing, payment of fines and a school/work program. To graduate from the program, the veteran must have 30 days sanction free, four months continuous sobriety and a minimum of one year in the program. Shauna explained that they will work with Mike Willbur with the Veterans Incarcerated Project for referrals and help the veteran get connected with VA programs. Please see the attached brochure for more information.

Pam Brokaw, Roxeanne Boose and Temika Beasley from Partners In Careers presented their new program, Veteran Women Program (VWP). This program is designed to help women veterans gain employment. The program is currently partnering with the American Legion, DAV, VFW, Riverview Bank, Dress for Success, a CAN school for certified training and other organizations. Roxeanne explained that the program helps women veterans with resume building, job searches and interview support. They also provide referral services to other resources. The program started on December 1, 2009 and to date they have enrolled 17 clients in the program with one obtaining employment.

Committee Reports

Strategic Planning: Bob Nichols explained that the first meeting will be held after the VRC meeting. The committee will be looking at ways to continue and expand the goals from last year.

Appeals: Ray Saranto stated there were no appeals to discuss.

Budget: Morris explained that there is currently over \$1 million in the fund as of the end of 2009. After reviewing the budget, he projects there will be a \$64,000 more in expenses than in new revenue for 2010 due to low property taxes being received. Morris also mentioned that a copy of the budget would be distributed at the March meeting.

Nominations: There are no offices to be filled at this time.

Policies & Procedures: Richard Langenbach explained that he met with Mike Jajan and they are working on some suggested changes to the Policies & Procedures. He will have more information at the March meeting. Morris also mentioned that he would like this committee to review the current by-laws.

Case Management Report: Samantha Whitley distributed the case management report and requested any suggestions the committee might have on the format. The report included how many veterans were denied services and for what reason. Sam also provided what types of outreach Mike has completed. She also explained that no funds for food were distributed in January because CRMHS is working with Fred Meyer on the voucher program, which started February 1st. Sam also mentioned that Mike will be at the VRC meetings quarterly to discuss this report with the committee and she will present it in-between. There was a request that CRMHS and the new part-time person be present at the next meeting.

There was much discussion about the new contract with CRMHS including the part-time person and the case management office not being open eight hours per day as requested in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Sam explained that the part-time person has been hired and is going through CRMHS new hire orientation. She also explained that Mike has been out of the office in training for his position. Ray Saranto asked when the volunteer person would start as mentioned in CRMHS' proposal. Sam was not sure, but will find out. Ray expressed concern that the RFP requested a qualified case manager then asked how much training Mike will be receiving. Sam believes the training is ongoing. Bob Nichols mentioned that the VRC is an advisory committee to the County Commissioners.

Ron Brandon asked if veterans are notified of their right to appeal if they are denied benefits. Morris explained that the appeal process is explained to applicants when they apply.

Old Business: Karla Bean updated the committee on the 2010 Stand Down, which will take place Monday, September 20th at the Elks Lodge on McGillivray and Chkalov. She also mentioned that NW Health and Safety has graciously provided storage and meeting facilities for the Stand Down Committee. They are located at 6300 St James Blvd. The next meeting is Monday, February 15th at 1800.

Sally Garcia gave an update on the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center. She mentioned that their nonprofit status is still pending, but they are working under Point Man Ministries until it is approved. She also explained that they are still looking for a location for the Assistance Center. Sally handed out a proposal she would like the committee to review (see attached). The proposal requests the committee to approve a grant to the Veterans Assistance Center for \$47,500 as seed money to pay for utilities, office supplies, furniture and equipment, outreach, and support items. They are also including the cost of the Stand Down in their proposal. Sally explained that they do not anticipate needing funds after the first year. Richard Langenbach motioned to approve the proposal, seconded by Steve Stetson. Morris explained that this proposal was not included in his projected budget shortfall for 2010. When asked how soon funds were needed, Sally stressed they need them as soon as possible. She also mentioned that funds would not be used for staff; the Assistance Center will be run by volunteers. Sam explained that, if approved, the proposal would need to go before the County Prosecutor and the County Commissioners for approval.

There was some discussion concerning what type of contract there would be with the Assistance Center. Committee members would like a report on the use of the funds and would like this as part of the grant. Richard made a motion to amend his original motion to include monthly expenditure reports from the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center. Steve Stetson seconded the motion and it passed.

The original motion, to accept the proposal from the Assistance Center, was brought back to the table by Richard Langenbach and seconded by Steve Stetson. After roll call vote, the amended motion was approved.

New Business: Morris Giesler mentioned that there will be a Stand Down & Job Fair on March 8th at the Ambridge Event Center located at 1333 NE MLK Jr. Blvd in Portland.

Morris also mentioned that there will be a Stand Down at Delta Park August 7th through August 9th.

Steve Stetson requested the VRC continue paying the rent for VFW post 4278 Camas/Washougal meeting facility in the amount of \$247.50 for the year. Steve Stetson motioned to approve the proposal, seconded by Richard Langenbach and approved.

Open Forum: Rich Axtell discussed a proposal he is working on for a facility in Kalama. He is trying to raise \$3 million dollars to develop a five acre plot into a baseball park, office building, restaurant and memorial for veterans. He expects the development to generate revenue to pay for itself. The project is to benefit veterans by providing jobs and facilities. This would be a combined effort between Clark County and Cowlitz County. When asked why it would be in Kalama, Rich explained that there is some property that would work for the development, there are possible tax breaks for the project and it is close to I-5. Rich is working with Creekside Mortgage on the project and is looking for input on the design of the project and a strategic plan. Rich also mentioned that they are hoping to launch a public campaign for the project on Memorial Day.

Kevin Lawson requested the committee approve him as a Member at Large. He discovered the VRC while doing some research online. Kevin is a veteran and served in the Navy. Richard Langenbach motioned to approve Kevin as a Member at Large. Thomas Dombek seconded the motion and it was approved.

Bruce Maas mentioned that La Center is looking to have the Traveling Vietnam Wall Memorial. There will be more information at future meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 1617.

Next meeting: March 10, 2010 at 1400.