

THIRD QUARTERLY MEETING: February 15, 2013

The third meeting of fiscal year 2013 was held on February 15, 2013, at the West Virginia State Capitol. Following are the minutes from that meeting:

- Governor Tomblin delivered brief remarks, stating that he was present to hear any concerns the council and other attendees wanted to share with him.

Nursing Facility in Beckley:

- Chairman Bare told the Governor the most pressing issue was establishing a new nursing facility in the southern region of the state.

Cuts to Van Driver Per Diem Payments:

- Volunteer drivers were concerned that per diem payments were going to be cut from \$75 to \$50 per day and many drivers would quit as a result.

Veteran Lottery Tickets:

- The Governor encouraged attendees to purchase veteran scratch-off lottery tickets and to raise awareness that proceeds benefit veteran programs. Comments were made that these tickets are not available at all retailers.

Military Training Credits in Higher Ed:

- Concerns were expressed about the lack of transferrable credits associated with military training at universities and community colleges. Higher education institutions often do not recognize the classes that veterans received during service, so they are forced to take unnecessary classes when they enroll.

Chairman Bare officially called meeting to order:

- Council members present: Randall Bare, James DeCarlo, Miles Epling, Patrick Farrell, Harrison Gilliam, Cedric Greene, Bill Harris, Debra Tompkins. Woody Williams was unable to attend this meeting.
- Welcomed Harrison Gilliam (newly appointed Council Member): Secretary Gwinn: Minutes from the last meeting.
- Bill Harris moved that we dispense with the reading of the minutes. Seconded. Motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

SECRETARY'S REPORT

- Please remember Ralph Stump, former Council member who recently passed away.
- Department developed a social services questionnaire for distribution at our field offices and other facilities so veterans in need of assistance can be contacted by our social workers.
- We requested Senator Manchin and Senator Rockefeller to assist in our efforts to establish a new nursing facility in southern West Virginia.
- Telehealth clinic in Princeton should be operational by June.
- The Department of Administration is currently seeking bids for repairs to the Veterans Memorial on the capitol grounds. Recommendations from the engineers are expected to be made by May. Renovations are expected to take about one year.
- Veterans Nursing Facility is seeking a rate of change for their residents. This will increase their monthly contributions from a maximum of \$2,400 to \$3,000. This increase will take three years to reach the \$3,000 cap.
- Gold Star Families Memorial for the cemetery has been proposed. Woody Williams is working on that project.
- A bill requesting changes to federal regulations regarding eligibility at the cemetery and other federally funded facilities has been submitted to Senator Manchin. It should be presented to Congress this week. Bill seeks to allow all National Guard members and reservists access to veteran benefits.

VETERANS HOME REPORT (report made by Stacy Brown, Administrator)

- There are 88 residents at this time and the population is aging.
- We've had issues with delayed admissions because VA medical centers outside of West Virginia are slow getting them to us. We are working on improving that relationship to expedite admissions.
- We are working with local community organizations to increase awareness about our facility and who we can admit due to decrease in resident population.

Hunting And Fishing License Update by Deputy Secretary Bailey:

- DNR is concerned about financial loss associated with providing free hunting and fishing licenses to veterans, but we are trying to compromise and develop a discounted rate.

DHHR Partnership Update by Deputy Secretary Bailey:

- We are still working with DHHR to cross-train social workers so veterans with mental health issues and who are in need of social services have better access to the information they need.

CLARKSBURG NURSING FACILITY REPORT (delivered by Kevin Crickard, Administrator)

- Introduction of Sherri Reed, new Assistant Administrator.
- Recently hired a new Director of Nursing to focus on quality assurance.
- Gaps in security were identified, so new cameras and swipe card system was installed.

DONEL C. KINNARD MEMORIAL STATE VETERANS CEMETERY REPORT
(delivered by Larissa Wines, Administrator)

- Since the opening, 82 individuals have been interred.
- Approximately 410 informational packets have been sent to funeral homes, hospices and other organizations within the state.
- It would cost approximately \$1,500 annually to support the DCKMSVC honor guard.
- Recent vandalism cost the cemetery approximately \$25,000.
- Flags are being taken down and examined weekly to ensure they are appropriate for use.

Veterans Legacy Project Update by Bob Henry Baber:

- Project has been underway for about a year and a half, conducted by Glenville State College.
- Approximately 220 veterans have been interviewed.

Transition Assistance From The WV National Guard

- Our office provides information to troops recently returned from overseas. Information addresses benefits, mental health treatment, etc. This is for all returning veterans, not just National Guard members.

Department Of Transportation (report by Cindy Cramer)

- Cindy attended the meeting to answer questions regarding road signage for WVDVA facilities and veteran memorial road signs.
- Governor Tomblin issued an executive order to add a veteran's branch and rank to memorial road signs. These updates are currently underway.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS:

- No motions made as result of visitor comments.
- Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

A full transcript of the meeting is available at www.veterans.wv.gov.

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