



Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 10th, 6-8pm

The meeting was held remotely using Zoom

Commission Members in Attendance: John Church, John Dove, Gunny Jones, George Matthews, Cathy McKinney, Dave Myers, Debra Luzietti-Myers, Krista Roberts, Kat Schorr, Brooks Tucker

Commission Members Absent: Nate Akins, Leah Ballard, Gregory Clements, Philip May, Brock McMunn,

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Introduce Visitors

Karissa Kelly, Director, Department of Aging and Disabilities, VSCC Update

Joelle Ridgeway, Deputy Director, Dept of Aging and Disabilities. VSCC Update

Yolanda Rayford, Regional Director, Blue Star Families, Welcome Week

Denise Robinson, Legacy of Honor Project, Gold Star Families, Memorial Day

Chairman's Report

Farewell to Pete Hill, Liaison to this Commission, who resigned Apr 21st

Good news – John Dove appointed new Chairman, May 5th, by County Executive Pittman. Congratulations.

Executive Committee (some positions to be filled)

Chairman, John Dove

Vice Chair, Vacant

Secretary, Vacant

Two elected (voting) members, Vacant

Outreach Activities

POC is Gunny Jones (to apply for reappointment)

May 13th, Severn Senior Center, 1100-1400. Gunny has volunteered.

May 18th, expect a reply from the Library Board of Trustees about a policy to commemorate Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

Denise Robinson discussed her research of Gold Star Families in Annapolis area and described plans to commemorate them on Memorial Day.

May 29th, Memorial Day, Crownsville Veterans Cemetery. Chairman John Dove to read the Gov's Proclamation. American Legion Post #141, will host Memorial Day Ceremonies at the WWII Memorial, overlooking the Severn River. Guest speaker will be Mr. Anthony Woods, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Maryland. Reception afterward at Post #141, Forest Drive.

July 26, CVEB Claims Clinic, AA Community College. **"All Hands-on Deck"** effort by VAC commissioners. We need every commissioner to dedicate some time if possible that day. Likely time period to be from 9am to 3pm. Anne Arundel County has forwarded insurance confirmation to AACC. Announcement information will be made by the Baltimore VA o/a June 26th, to be distributed with help from VAC commissioners. Mark your calendars. POC – Gunny and Kat.

Sep 30th, Welcome Week, Blue Star Families and this commission. In 2022, Howard County supported the Stronger Together program. In 2023, Anne Arundel County will host the program. The venue is Downs Park, Pasadena. Chesapeake HS is the alternate. Another **"All Hands-on Deck"** event. Please look to volunteer once time details are disseminated. Blue Star Families POC is Yolanda Rayford. VAC POC, TBD.

Nominating Committee

Chair, Debra Luzietti-Myers (reappointed May 10th)
Brooks Tucker
George Matthews (to apply for reappointment)

Membership Committee

John Dove, Chairman
Kat Schorr (reappointed May 10th)
Elected member

Veterans have begun to use the County application. Kaley Schultze is the AA County Boards and Commissions Coordinator. Her email is exschu22@aacounty.org or call her at 410-222-4931. The new boards and commissions application can be found online at aacounty.org/boards-and-commissions

Membership Committee will begin contacting for interviews.

Quality of Life Committee –

Chair is Gunny Jones (to apply for reappointment)

In the Annapolis City Council, Gunny is fighting for affordable housing for veterans. For example, The Willows at Forest Drive, a proposed 58-unit Affordable Family Rental Community. The Annapolis Planning Commission held a virtual hearing on this proposal, May

4th, 2023.

The Baltimore VA Hospital has asked Gunny to be its representative in AA County to fight Veteran Suicide; the VA is identifying a Veteran in each county to focus on this issue.

Educational and Employment Committee –

Chair is Kat Schorr (reappointed, May 10th)

Legislative Affairs –

Chair is Debra Luzietti-Myers (reappointed, May 10th)

Opportunity on May 11th and May 18th for public hearings to support CE's FY 24 Budget which includes funding for a position to administer veterans issues w/in the Dept of Aging and Disabilities.

During summer break, July and August, Commissioner Debra Luzietti-Myers will continue to send legislative updates. Commissioners are requested to advise her of anything they want to bring to the attention of the County Executive, County Council or our legislators.

HR 984 (118th Congress) Commitment to Veterans Support and Outreach Act has the potential to provide grant money to counties for service officers. Given the significance of this legislation, commissioners are encouraged to as individual citizens to **contact their elected legislators in support of this Act**. The Commission will seek permission from the County Executive to contact legislators as a Commission

Dave Dragics, MD Military Coalition, has been asked to join us on September 13th to advise how to prepare for the MD General Assembly, 2024.

New Business

Maryland Military Installation Council. In place of June MMIC meeting, hosting the Maryland Defense Forum on June 5-6 in Annapolis; Brooks Tucker to attend. MMIC will meet at Crownsville on September 25th

Maryland Health Care System will meet on May 17th, 1100.

Old Business VA

April 19th, Our Community Salutes, honored new enlistees, graduates of Anne Arundel High Schools, Class of 2023. Chesapeake Arts Center, Brooklyn Park. An estimated 80 enlistees

and 200 family members and guests at the ceremony. Thanks to Brooks Tucker for his part in organizing this very special evening.

April 30th, 3d Annual Shoot to support American Legion Post 18, Centreville, MD.

Guests in Attendance:

Karrisa Kelly

Joelle Ridgeway

Yolanda Rayford

Denise Robinson

Asha Smith, liaison to the County Executive

Jessica Cook, Representing Senator Cardin.

Veterans interested in this commission: Wayne Allen, Ron Borro, James Mastrodomenico, Adam McDermott, Kevin Peyatt, and Kevin Sutton.

Good of the Order. Next meeting, June 14th, Army Birthday and Flag Day.