



Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 6pm  
*The meeting was held remotely using Zoom*

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

Commission Members Absent: Nate Atkins, Leah Ballard, Gregory Clements, Brock McMunn, Brooks Tucker,

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Welcome Guests and Guest Speakers

### **Chairman's Report**

Approve Minutes from March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Approval completed by email, April 18th-19th

County Guidance for Recruiting and Appointments, issued March 21<sup>st</sup>. See below.

### **Executive Committee**

Status of VSCC. When the contract with iCCS ended on March 31<sup>st</sup>, the County Dept of Aging and Disabilities (DoAD) began to manage all calls received at the Veterans Services Coordination Center. For twelve months, beginning in Nov 2021, the VSCC received some 253 referrals, of which 34% pertained to unique veterans benefits; all were passed to iCCS. In addition, the VSCC received 261 calls managed by the DoAD staff. For the first three months in 2023, the VSCC received some 182 calls from veterans. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, the County Council will vote on the FY 24 Supplemental Budget which includes a permanent position (on the DoAD staff) to address veteran's issues. If approved, advertising for the position could begin o/a July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Panel Discussion - Purple Star School Program in AA County. Overview by Dan Tootle. Summary of current status by guests Dawn Gile, Maryland State Senator (District 33), Meredith A. McCandless, School Liaison Officer, Ft Meade, and Dana Schallheim, AACPS Board of Education Member (District 5). The legislation is done and applies to an estimated 1,000 military – dependent students in AA County (but not to children of veterans). However, the state application has not been finalized (expected by Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023). Ryan Voegtlin, Director of Student Services (AACPS) provided the following in advance of our meeting. There are about 3-4 schools ready to apply. We are waiting for the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to provide the application process for schools to become Purple Star Schools. From a county perspective, we are doing everything we can to support this process and can't move forward to become Purple Star schools until we get the application process. Commissioner Gunny Jones asked: where and how is Federal money

used to support military-dependent students in local schools? Good question. First, learn about **The Defense Department Impact Aid Program** is a supplement to the Federal Impact Aid Program and provides assistance to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with specific concentrations of military-dependent children. Use the link (below) to learn about The DOD Impact Aid Supplemental Program which includes the dependent children of active-duty military members and civilian employees of the DOD.

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-children-youth/financial-assistance-for-schools-with-military-children/>

## Outreach Activities

April 19<sup>th</sup>, Our Community Salutes, honors new enlistees out of high school. Chesapeake Arts Center, Brooklyn Par, 5:30pm. Sixty enlistees and over 150 family members and guests are expected at the ceremony.

April 22d, American legion Post #141, Annapolis. Each 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month, Gunny hosts a chess class / tournament, 0900-1500, meant especially to attract young minds.

May9<sup>th</sup>, the Vet Center, 100 Annapolis St, Open House and Resource Fair, 1000-1400.

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

May 29<sup>th</sup>, Memorial Day, Crownsville Veterans Cemetery. John Dove to read the Gov's Proclamation. POC for planning is MAJ Rick Barnes ([rpbarnes51@gmail.com](mailto:rpbarnes51@gmail.com)), MD Defense Force; expect to meet at American Legion Post 276, Severn, Md, end of April.

July 26, CVEB Claims Clinic, AA Community College. During discussion, we agreed this should be an **"All Hands on Deck"** effort by VAC commissioners. Anne Arundel County has forwarded insurance confirmation to AACC. Notification / announcement information will be made available by the Baltimore VA o/a June 26<sup>th</sup>, to be distributed with help from VAC commissioners.

Sep 30<sup>th</sup>, Welcome Week, Blue Star Families and this commission. Yolanda Rayford explained that in 2022, Howard County supported the Stronger Together program to welcome military families PCS-ing to this area. In 2023, Anne Arundel County will host the program. The venue is Downs Park, Pasadena, AA County. This will be another **"All Hands on Deck"** event.

## Nominating Committee

Waiting for final County review of membership, possibly adjust our internal process.

## Membership Committee

Guidance for application has arrived! Kaley Schultze is the AA County Boards and Commissions Coordinator. Her email is [exschu22@aacounty.org](mailto: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-](https://aacounty.org/boards-and-commissions-)

[application](#). Please direct anyone who is interested in serving on a county board or commission to **complete this application**.

Instructions and contact information were emailed on March 26<sup>th</sup> to vets interested in this commission.

## **Quality of Life Committee**

On Feb 27<sup>th</sup>, Gunny was one of six people recognized by Governor Moore for changing Maryland “for the better through service.” The Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism partnered with the Banneker-Douglass Museum to honor the contributions and accomplishments of Black individuals and groups who have changed Maryland for the better through service. All six recipients have demonstrated exceptional contributions to Maryland’s rich history of service, volunteerism and heritage. See the article: <https://gosv.maryland.gov/2023-black-history-month-leadership-service-awards/>

## **Educational and Employment Committee**

## **Legal and Legislative Committee**

## **Old Business**

## **New Business**

Plan ahead and help ensure the success of the Claims Clinic, July 26 at AACC and the Welcome Week, September 30<sup>th</sup>, Downs Park, Pasadena.

## **Guests in Attendance**

Asha Smith, representing Pete Hill, Liaison to the VAC, on leave

Dan Tootle, former VAC commissioner

Dawn Gile, Maryland State Senator (District 33)

Meredith A. McCandless, School Liaison Officer, Ft Meade

Yolanda Rayford, Blue Star Families, Chapter Director, Baltimore/Chesapeake Region

Dana Schallheim, AACPS Board of Education Member

Gloria Dent, Director iCCS, and AACPS Board of Education Member

Including Veterans interested in this commission: Ron Borro, Kevin Peyatt, Springer Blankenship, Paul Lunsway, Wayne Allen, Gerardo Martinez. Who did I miss?

## **Good of the Order**

The next meeting will be May, 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023.