

Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
An advisory board to the Clark County Council

October 10, 2024

Chair: Bob Nichols

Vice Chair: Megan Anderson

Secretary: Bruce Maas

Meeting called to order.

Roll Call: [Bold script indicates presence at meeting; *italics indicates excused*]

POST

40 et 8
American Legion #14
American Legion #44
American Legion #168
American Legion #176
American Veterans #6
DAV Chapter #4
Korean War Assoc. #321
Marine Corps League #826
VFW #4278
VFW #7824
Vietnam Vets #512
Members at Large

PRIMARY

Bob Brennan
Gene Couture
Darren Wertz
Bob Nichols
Michael Gibson
John Lovejoy
Bruce Maas

Steve Slegers
Shannon Roberts
Greg Gilbertson
Greg Whitson
Kelly Jones
Bryan McGillis
Tonya Wark
Tamara Elam
Megan Anderson
Eli Gonzalez
Michael Langsdorf
Lloyd Bowman
Buck Marr

ALTERNATE

Steve Slegers

Charles Ingalls

Jonathan Frederick
Vanise Pratt
Tom Cousino

Ron Brandon
Dana Difford
Stewart Bauer
Nick Herber

Clark County Representative: Abby Molloy

Guests: **Lori Pugh** (Clark County Veterans Assistance Center), **Sharon Tyre** (Clark County Veterans Assistance Center), **David Puente** (WDVA)

Approval of September 12, 2024, meeting minutes

The minutes were approved following a motion by Lloyd Bowman that was seconded by Gene Couture.

Committee Reports

Appeals: None

Policies and Procedures: None

Nominations: Opening round of nominations for 2025 positions of chair, vice chair, and secretary. Bob Nichols was nominated for chair, Megan Anderson was nominated for vice chair, Bruce Maas was nominated for secretary.

WDVA Presentation and Discussion, David Puente

- State VSO coverage data from federal VA shared as a handout
 - National average of veterans receiving VA benefits increased to 32%. At 31% in Washinton State, increased from 29% last year. Goal is 33%. \$1,900 average benefit received by Veterans
- WDVA operating budget request for governor's office
 - \$4 million for homes revenue and expenditure adjustment, \$950,000 for contract agency staffing, \$9 million for operating of state veteran's homes, \$4 million for nursing assistance certified programs, \$1.9 million for facilities, \$1.4 million for major project resources, \$3 million to reduce footprint of office space, \$764,000 for mental health provision, \$970,000 for support service staffing, \$750,000 for tribal and women's veterans coordinator

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- positions, \$4 million for timekeeping system, \$2.1 million for IT production team, \$3.6 million for county VSOs
- Capital construction funding request – over \$190 million
 - \$159 million to replace Spokane Veteran home, \$500,000 for SE WA Veterans Cemetery pre-design study, replacement design for Washington Soldiers Home (already have 160 acres), \$1.5 million for transitional housing, \$1.9 million for Washington Veteran Home above ground tank, \$40,000 for pollution mediation at Washington Soldiers Home. \$1.6 million for Walla Walla veteran home storage building, \$6 million for HVAC at Roosevelt Barracks, \$429,000 for roofs at Walla Walla Veterans home, \$4.7 million for HVAC at Betsy Rose building, 2 million for air handling system at Walla Walla home, \$7.3 million for Medical Lake cemetery expansion.
- Capital request: \$250,000 for SW WA state veterans home visibility study
- SW WA veterans cemetery is not a federal priority due to proximity to Willamette National Cemetery. Federal government is looking into other options for when cemetery reaches capacity.

August 2024, Contractor & Fund reports

- CCVAC: 52 Veterans served in August, services totaling \$31,134.28. 42 male veterans, 9 female veterans, 1 widows, 0 other veterans. 10 denials, 0 subject to appeals. 682 visits to the center for essentials and food, 1,077 sack breakfasts/lunches provided and 40 food boxes provided. 3,632 total pounds of food. 868.5 volunteer hours, totaling \$34,983.18 in value.
- Free Clinic: 3 Veterans served in August. Services totaled \$1,105 in value; billed \$693.35
- VAF Fund: August revenue: \$37,758.06; expenditures: \$56,095.97 fund balance: \$592,605.72.
- CCVAC Stand Down: **Veterans served:** 232 total Veterans, 190 male Veterans, 42 female Veterans, 81 renters. 89 homeowners, 47 homeless, 15 unknown. **Providers:** 64 agencies, 143 total providers **Volunteers:** 106 total volunteers, 519 volunteer hours, \$20,905.32 in value. **Services:** 481 meals served, 3 tons clothing provided, 128 boots provided, 40 haircuts, 42 massages

Clark County Veterans Assistance Center Update

- Additional information about stand down: podiatrist saw 32 veterans, 16 people received mental health services, CFTH saw 21, humane society saw 19 animals, worksorce saw 20 people, VSOs saw 28, VetFund saw 53, dental clinic saw 49.
- CCVAC is gearing up for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Donate to toy drive and help with Thanksgiving meals.

Preliminary 2025 Budget Discussion

- CCVAC is requesting \$883,000 (10% increase). See handout for details. Free Clinic is requesting \$24,700 (same amount). WDVA is requesting \$134,520 (2.5% decrease).

Old Business

- Proposed handbook revisions relate to county policy and cannot be changed.

New Business

- Suggestion to CCVAC to renovate current building.

Open Forum and Public Comment

- Request from community member Tysson Dykes to advocate against budget cuts to Clark County Veterans Center. Board of Trustee meeting on October 16th at 5 pm in Geiser Hall at Clark College. Can send comment via email to dfeider@clark.edu with Public Comment in subject line (limited to 2 minutes).
- Veterans Day parade on Monday, November 11th at 11:00 am.
- Clark County Prayer Breakfast on November 7th at 7 am at Hilton Hotel. Ron Brandon has free tickets.
- Post 168 is having free meal for Veterans.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting November 14th, 2024.