

Veterans Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: December 9th, 2019/10:00 a.m. / Veterans' Conference Room, Whatcom County Health Department

Members Present: Wes Weston, Andrea Vance, Allan Jensen, John Mitchell, Ward Nelson, Lynne Graham, Paul Pelot

Members Absent: Richard Conoboy, Robert Hines

County Staff: Elizabeth Harmon-Craig, WCHD Veterans Specialist; Ann Deacon, WCHD Human Service Manager; Ann Beck, Human Services Supervisor; Hope Sabiston, Human Services Inter; Emily West, WCHD Coordinator

Guests: Jerry Pitz

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Call to order	Meeting called to order by Chair Paul Pelot	Paul Pelot
2. Roll Call/ Introductions	Roll call, quorum present.	All
3. Review/Approval October, 2019 minutes	A. Minutes of October 14, 2019 reviewed. Motion made (Allen) and seconded (Richard) to approve minutes with the correction of changing DAB to DAV in the 5 th bullet under New Business. A vote was held and the motion passed.	Motion: To approve the October 14, 2019 minutes as presented. Aye: 7, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 2
4. New Business Action Item a) Hope Sabiston, Human Services intern, to discuss VA Healthcare in Whatcom County b) Proposed Veterans Program Evolution Presentation to Whatcom County Health Board.	<p>Hope Sabiston, the Whatcom County Health Departments Human Services Intern, gave an overview of the work she has been conducting to help Veterans navigate the healthcare system in Whatcom County. She is taking the list of local providers and compiling a list that takes TriWest. Some information that Hope has found includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VA website's list of providers does not disclose whether they take TriWest or not. • Psychology Today has a list of providers that accept TriWest. • With a secondary authorization Veterans do not have to go to the VBAC clinic. These take 14 days and patients don't always get the provider they want. The authorization is only good for the specific provider. • There is an eligibility window that can be extended within a few days. <p>Hope also did research into the Urgent Care clinics in Whatcom County for Veterans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are three urgent care providers that are eligible for walk-in (Bellingham, SeaMar, and Cornwall). 	<p><i>Hope</i></p> <p><i>Hope/Liz</i></p>

c) Vote for Chair and Co-Chair

- Veterans can go to the Emergency Room at the hospital but billing goes through the VA not TriWest (Liz will send out the paperwork to board members).
- The chances of getting more urgent care providers is highly unlikely; TriWest contracted with the three urgent care providers and it was not a local decision.
 - Liz suggested contacting Representative Larson or Del Benny to let them know if services provided where not ok.

Liz asked the board how this work should be communicated:

- Paul suggested sending the information through the distribution list and sending it to key agencies (WorkSource, Bellingham Public Library, BTC, WCC, Trinity Western, Lighthouse Mission, etc.)
- The board suggested creating a one page FAQ sheet with definitions and links now that Choice no longer exists and is now the Mission Act.
 - Liz stated that this could be a project for Hope to work on. She also pointed out that when Veterans are enrolling she advises them to go to the VA rather than the Mission Act. This is because TriWest has not worked for anyone she has worked with. It is required that Veterans choose one or the other.
 - Jerry indicated that the program and the authorization is a real pain and is not user friendly. He is willing to help create the user friendly list and will share resources. He also said that he is working with the VA to get the website updated with the correct information in regards to providers in Whatcom County that take TriWest.
 - TriWest has a new fax number for prescriptions; (206)764-2380. The provider sends the prescription to the fax number and the prescription is sent to the client via mail.
- The VA will be attending the February meeting. Submit all questions to Liz.

B. The WCHD is going before Council to have a code changed to have the term Veteran defined and it was decided to add a program overview presented to the Board. The goal of the presentation is to show the County Council the evolution of the program from the Veterans Assistance Fund to the Veterans Program. Liz will send out the PowerPoint presentation to the Board and the date that it will be presented to Council.

C. Liz reviewed the board positions for which nominations are sought. The following slate of officers was proposed:

- Chair – Lynne Graham
- Co-Chair – Andrea Vance

Ward motioned for the board to accept the slate as presented. Paul seconded. A vote was held, the motion passed.

Liz

Liz

Motion: To approve the board slate of officers as proposed.
Aye: 7, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 2

5. Reports a) Veterans Specialist Report	The veterans fund balance is \$767,692.12. 61 VSO claims between October 10, 2019 and December 2, 2019. Liz has to schedule walk-ins and she has no Healthcare access as a VSO. She is getting the current stats from WDVA tomorrow on claims.	<i>Ann/Liz</i>
6. Good of the Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comments 	
7. Next Meeting	Next meeting will take place on Monday, February 10, 2020 at the Whatcom County Health Department, Creekside Conference Room	
8. Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a.m. 	<i>Paul</i>