



Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: April 11, 2022 / 10:00 a.m. / Virtual Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present: Andrea Vance, Allan Jensen, Christopher Brown, Joseph Shepherd, Lynne Graham, Paul Pelot, Richard Conoboy, Wes Weston, Robert Wilson (late arrival)

Committee Members Absent:

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Ann Beck, Liz Witowski, Ashley GeleyNSE / Melissa Nyberg

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Call to order	Meeting called to order by Lynne Graham.	Lynne
2. Roll Call	A quorum was present.	All
3. New Business Review/Approval of February 2022 Minutes Open Public Comment	Al moved to approve the February meeting minutes. Wes seconded the motion. The board voted and the motion passed. Robert Wilson was not present for the vote. Melissa Nyberg from Opportunity Council said she would see if someone from the housing department can join the meeting because the case manager position is on the agenda.	Aye: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
4. Reports/Discussion Updates from Health Department Staff: WDVA Contract, Case Manager Position, New Location, Staffing, Tentative New Schedule	The contract with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) passed County Council. After final signature, WDVA will advertise a request for proposals to federally accredited nonprofit veteran service organizations for providing a full-time federally accredited VSO at the Bellingham Vet Center. Al shared that within in the next 5-7 days, Andy will be at American Legion Mondays and Tuesdays from 9:30-3:30 by appointment only. The Health Department office is tentatively opening to the public on May 1. Liz will be seeing folks in the office by appointment only.	Liz, Ann



<p>Good of the Order</p>	<p>Liz shared the Veterans Assistance Funds cash balance as of today is \$807,052.23.</p> <p>The amended Case Management contract with Opportunity Council adds 1 FTE Case Manager position to provide case management specifically to indigent Whatcom County Veterans. The supplemental budget request stating what the money was for was approved by Council and the contract is expected to move through Council with a start date of May 1. The contract includes the following program outcome targets; at least: 40 Veterans will be served, 15 Veterans will obtain housing, 20 Veterans will maintain housing, 20 Veterans will be linked to healthcare, 35 Veterans will be linked to non-healthcare Veteran services (VA benefits, employment, education, transportation, etc.). Health Department staff and the board will look at outcomes prior to renewing the contract and will adjust as needed. Wes requested to see metrics as they come in at future meetings.</p> <p>Skagit County is hiring for a Veteran's Specialist and intend to build their program to be similar to Whatcom County's.</p> <p>A Regional Local Veterans Employment Representative serving the four-county area (Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, Island) has been hired at Work Source. Work Source Whidbey is hiring for a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist.</p> <p>June 11th is the summer kick off for Growing Veterans. The program is still looking for auction items and sponsors.</p> <p>The Marine Corps League is hosting the Memorial Day parade this year. Registration is open online and the theme is Gold Star Mothers. Al shared several other Memorial Day events happening in the community.</p> <p>Paul asked if anyone had an update on the possibility of the Northwest Annex building being repurposed into a Vet Center. Al shared that a meeting and walk through with the County Executive was cancelled, County employees have been moved out of the building due to unsafe working conditions, and the building is scheduled for demolition.</p>	
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	The board discussed preferences for continuing to meet virtually, in person, or hybrid. A decision to move back committee/board meetings back to in person has not been made yet at the County level, although County Council has started to meet in a hybrid format.	
6. Next Meeting	The next meeting will be held Monday, June 13, 2022 on Zoom.	
7. Adjourned	The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.	<i>Lynne</i>