



## Kent County Veterans Services

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DRAFT minutes 5-2-19

Present: Mel Bauman, Harold Mast, Trisha Sexton, John Baxter, Randy Tharp  
Absent: Mary Johnson, Shane Scherer  
Guests: Theresa Robinson, Dan Ophoff, Paul Ryan, Jerry Dennis, Anthony Torres

1. Meeting called to Order – The meeting was called to order by Veterans Services Committee Chair Mel Bauman at 8:30am
  - a. Committee Chair Bauman also introduced a new format to the Veterans Services Committee Meeting Agenda because of some redundancy.
    - i. The Public comment will now only appear once and will be opened after New Business, due to the privacy of action items and soldier & sailor relief applications, the meeting will then go into a closed session.
2. Pledge of Allegiance – Committee Chair Mel Bauman led those in attendance to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Approval of Minutes –
  - a. Committee Member Harold Mast made a motion to approve the minutes. Committee Member Trish Sexton seconded. UNANIMOUS
4. Introductions-  
None.
5. Managers, Monthly Operational Update Reports – Veterans Services Supervisor Ryan Grams went over the Monthly Activity Report
  - a. Committee Chair Bauman asked for the reports in a different format, Veterans Services Manager Martha Burkett said that she would have that available for next meeting.
6. Old Business –
  - a. Veterans Services Manager Burkett gave an update on the MVAA Grant. It became fully executed on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Monies are available currently. The third VSO position has been posted. Martha has been going through resumes to start the interview process.
    - i. Another portion of money is going to go to outreach and update our technology to help service veterans much more efficiently. Committee Member Randy Tharp recapped the meeting with the County IT director, came through with a few options.

One being ask VETRA to come up with better options, or possibly build out an app through the county. Or possibly look for other software companies.

- b. The training for the committee has been approved, just waiting on legal to sign off, Veterans Services Manager Martha Burkett will give information once more is available.

7. New Business-

- a. Committee Chair Bauman asked that Veterans Services Manager Burkett go over the meeting that happened recently with the Census. Burkett gave a brief overview of a meeting that was held with Jim Fishbach of the Census Bureau and other employment specialists in the area. Lots of job opportunities for veterans and their dependents will be coming to West Michigan, those in attendance are working now on getting a marketing plan put together so Veterans Services can be a hub of links between all of the organizations.
- b. Committee Member Trish Sexton brought some contacts that are interested in helping with veterans employment.
- c. Veterans Services Committee Member Harold Mast wanted to bring up the Missions Act that will be implemented in June and talk about how it was going to go; it's meant to offer a comprehensive community to veterans in more rural areas who have a hard time getting transportation.
- d. Veterans Services Manager Martha Burkett will be meeting with Kent County Purchasing and Kent County Community Action to see what options the Health Department has worked out and how Veterans Services can help veterans with transportation needs.

8. Survey Responses – 13 for May

9. Around the Table

None.

10. Public Comment –

- a. United Veterans Council Commander Paul Ryan wanted to remind the committee of the Memorial Day Parade on May 30<sup>th</sup>, also share the news that Veterans Services Manager, Martha Burkett will be a guest speaker.
- b. Anthony Torres from the Veterans Treatment Court shared that there was another graduation last week and there will be a major graduation in July. There is also a Treatment Court website now through the 62<sup>nd</sup> District Courts site.
- c. Theresa Robinson from the United Veterans Council was wondering about phone counts from April, Supervisor Ryan Grams advised he doesn't get phone reports until the first Sunday of the month. Theresa was also curious about getting a more in depth report on the budget, Committee Member Trish Sexton also asked if there was a yearly budget
- d. Dan Ophoff from the Veterans Treatment Court reminded us that there will be the annual Golf Outing for the Friends of the Treatment Court on June 4<sup>th</sup> this year.
- e. Paul Ryan wanted to extend his thanks to the Chair and Manager for having such an open Public Comment.

11. Adjournment –Veterans Services Committee Chair Mel Bauman moved to a closed session at 9:28am

12. The next Veterans Services Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, July 18th, at 8:30am in the Veterans Services front conference room.