



Kent County Veterans Services

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Kent County Veterans Services Committee
April 11th, 2018 – 10:00a.m.
DRAFT Minutes

Meeting Called to order by Harold Mast at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Harold Mast, Mary Johnson, Mel Bauman, Randy Tharp via conference call, Matthew Van Zetten, Ryan Grams, Rachel Wustman

Guests: Jerry Dennis, Theresa Robinson

Absent: Carrie Anderson, Fred Chambers, Shane Scherer

Open Introduction / Pledge

Harold Mast led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

Approval of Agenda / Minutes

Mary Johnson made a motion to approve the Minutes from the February 2018 meeting, Mel Bauman seconded. All so moved, minutes approved

Introductions

Commissioner Mast asked everyone to introduce themselves. Ryan Grams introduced himself as a senior staff member of Kent County Veterans Services. Matthew VanZetten introduced himself and noted to answer any questions the committee might have. Moving forward each staff member will take a turn attending the Kent County Veteran Services Committee Meeting.

Managers, Monthly Operational Update Report

- Harold Mast wanted to add to the agenda to have a discussion the vacancy on the Veterans Services Committee due to Paul Potters untimely passing.
- Matthew shared that the Veteran Services staff have been working hard and very diligent in light of being a few staff members down in recent months.
- Customer satisfaction surveys were initiated in February. Currently we have thirty-nine surveys filled out. Three Veterans were extremely dissatisfied, but the rest of the surveys

were overall extremely satisfied. Randy Tharp mentioned that he wants to move forward with getting more surveys filled out, and perhaps a bigger market penetration, maybe using social media and possibly adding a kiosk at the door. Matthew agreed and wants to start a dialog with the staff about outreach and surveys at the next staff meeting. Ryan reminded the Veteran Services Committee that, especially with his Service Connected clients, they are not talking about happy times, and can be in a rush to get out of the building. Ryan thought maybe we could have something for the veteran to take home with them to fill out at a later time.

- Matthew reviewed the first quarter budget report
- Randy Tharp wanted break down contributions for the next meeting.
- Matthew will investigate becoming more discrete about contributions.
- Matthew is reviewing and updating the reports to make them more reader friendly. Also, the Board of Commissioners has requested an annual update on how the millage funds are utilized and spent. Many other departments with a millage provide one. The current report is a very powerful report, and the goal is to make it easier for the public to read.

Old Business

- Matthew is going to be meeting with Veterans Treatment Court for an update to see how things are going and to help move forward with billing and reporting moving forward. For clarification we have not paid the \$100,000.00 that was agreed upon in 2017. It was agreed upon that we will not approve anything further funds for the Veterans Treatment Court until we've received an update and reports.

New Business

- The spring conference for the MACVC (Michigan Association of County Veterans Counselors) is the first week in May. Generally, the office would close down for the duration of the conference. Matthew pointed out that if Veterans Services is closed, we cannot serve the public. Matthew wants the staff at Veterans Services to go further and learn more than just at the state level. Three staff members will attend the spring conference, and the other two will attend the NACVSO (National Association of County Veterans Service Officers) in June.
- One Soldier and Sailor Relief Grant Application was reviewed:
 - Veteran asking for financial assistance for his mortgage in the amount of \$394. Mary Johnson moved to deny, Mel Bauman Seconded, all committee members are in favor of denial. Application denied.
- With the untimely passing of the Chair of the Veterans Services Committee, Paul Potter, the committee needs a new chair. Per the discussion, there needs to be a new structure put in place for the committee with a chair, vice chair, and secretary. The Board of Commissioners does their recruitment in the fall, because we are in April we can engage in soliciting early to complete Paul's Term. Mel Bauman would like to solicit now and finish out Paul's remaining term, Mary Johnson agreed. Matthew will work with the Board of

Commissioners to start the process. Matthew will also work with Rachel to look for the Committees bylaws and send out an email

- Harold wants to add a discussion of the bylaws to our agenda for next month's meeting.

Around the Table

- Mel wanted to spread the word that Veterans Thanksgiving is coming up on May 18th. Rachel will work on getting more information on the event.
- Theresa Robinson wanted to let the committee know that the Veterans Parade is on May 30th and wanted to invite the committee and the staff of Veterans Services to attend. Mel inquired if we could get magnets to put on the side of a car to help advertise Veterans Services. Matthew said that was possible and Rachel will look into ordering them.
- Jerry Dennis informed the committee that the Veterans' Memorial Golf Outing is on May 31st at Scott Lake and funds support the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans Life Enrichment Programs, so the money goes directly to the veterans. Jerry would love to see a team from the County attend.
- Rachel wanted to confirm that the first Thursday of the month at 8:30 was still the best option for committee members, all committee members present agreed that it is still the best time to keep the meetings.
- In regard to all of the events and outreach opportunities coming up, Matthew will discuss attendance at the next staff meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Harold mast at 10:52, and the next meeting will be on Thursday, May 3rd at 8:30 AM