

ODVS Advisory Committee
Thursday, September 15th, 2016

Chairman Leroy Clendenen convened the meeting at 10:30 AM at the American Legion Post 171, 393 E. College Avenue, Westerville, Ohio. The meeting was opened with a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. The pledge was followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call;
Approval of agenda;
Approval of minutes from 4/21, 4/27, 8/18
Guest introductions;

Guests Introductions

Don Jones-VVA
Eileen Corson- ODVS
Jim Beck-Concerned Veterans for America
Doug Beckley-Paralyzed Veterans of America-Buckeye Chapter
Steve Ewing-Legislative Liaison-ODVS
Danny Eakins-ODVS
Joe Eden-ODVS
Brian Mead- County Commissioners Association of Ohio
Ron Chapman- American Legion Dept. of Ohio
George Monroe- American Legion Dept. of Ohio
Bernard Puntunes- Ohio Veterans, Inc
Gary Cogley- Ohio Veterans, Inc

Committee Members

Director Chip Tansill- ODVS
Joe Eden, Secretary- ODVS
Sean McCarthy- Chief Legal Counsel-ODVS
Suzette Price-American
Merle Pratt-AMVETS
Tammy Puff-Attorney General
Mary Ann Janning- Catholic War Veterans
Kenneth Marcum- DAV
Saul Laub- Jewish War Veterans
Ed Zoretic- Korean War Veterans
Kelvin Jones- Labor
John McCoy- MOAA
Victor Wilson- ONGA
Leroy Clendenen- VFW
Cliff Riley- VVA
Ted Bruner- OSACVSC
David Ridenour- OSACVSC
Jon Warmeling- OSACVSO
Jane Roland- OSACVSO

Excused-

Ed Zackery- OSACVSO

Paul Haller- CCAO

Carl Price- MOPH

Old Business: None

New Business:

Danny Eakins provided an update on veteran homelessness in Ohio. Danny explained the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has divided Ohio into nine continuums of care to address veteran homelessness. The goal of the continuums of care is to achieve a “Functional Zero” for veteran homelessness. The VA has established five criteria that must be met for each continuum of care to obtain functional zero status which includes:

1. Identification of veterans by name in each continuum of care experiencing homelessness;
2. Communities must be able to provide immediate care to the veteran and their family;
3. Limit the amount of time in transitional housing;
4. Move swiftly from transitional to permanent housing;
5. Possess financial resources for future instances of veteran homelessness;

Mr. Eakins distributed literature that provided statistics on Ohio’s homeless veterans and a map of Ohio denoting the boundaries for each continuum of care.

Chairman Clendenen raised to the committee’s attention the construction of 60 apartments at the Chillicothe VA Medical Center. Homeless and low-income veterans will be given priority.

Chairman Clendenen then asked if a veteran is homeless, can the VA force him/her into housing.

Mr. Eakins responded the VA cannot force a veteran into housing but they do refer the veteran to alternative sources of care.

Eileen Corson presented two public service announcements that DVS recently published highlighting veteran suicide and the Veterans Crisis Line. The PSAs were video clips and can be viewed at the websites below. Ms. Corson encouraged members of the Advisory Committee to share the PSAs throughout the veteran community. Ms. Corson also provided metrics from the ohiovets.gov website, and statistics from DVS social media accounts.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=run6UYrbExM&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VwwAZnONXk&feature=youtu.be>

Chairman Clendenen stressed to the Advisory Committee the importance of taking all of the information from today’s meeting and disseminating it throughout Ohio’s veteran community.

Director Tansill commented this is just the beginning of DVS’s efforts to address veteran suicide. Director Tansill stated there will be more to come. He also mentioned the idea of using traditional and social media, not necessarily directing it to veterans but to the person closest to the veteran. This includes the spouse, child, or partner of the veteran.

Jane Roland commented that her county veterans service office has a good relationship with their police and sheriff departments. Ms. Roland stated they can call civil authorities to check on veterans when suicidal ideations are suspected.

Suzette Price remarked the American Legion Department of Ohio encourages suicide awareness at the post level.

Chairman Clendenen noted veterans organizations should connect with the families of deployed service members in inform them of what they should expect post-deployment and what to look for in terms of warning signs of suicide.

Merle Pratt reminded the Advisory Committee that the majority of veterans committing suicide are over the age of sixty. Merle noted suicide prevention efforts should not be strictly concentrated on younger veterans and that we should not forget about our aged veterans.

Robert Breeckner provided a briefing on the use of G.I. Bill benefits for apprenticeships and on-the-job training (OJT). The state of Ohio has over 1,000 approved apprenticeship locations. Currently, only about 80 apprenticeships have veterans enrolled who are utilizing G.I. Bill benefits. Apprenticeships must be two to five years in duration to qualify for approval. OJT may qualify so long as the program runs for at least six months but no more than two years.

Mr. Breeckner also briefed the Advisory Committee on the closure of ITT Technical Institute. There are approximately 230 Ohio veterans affected by the shutdown. DVS will be sending out an information letter to the students informing them of their available options.

Ms. Price asked where student veterans should be referred for questions about the ITT Technical Institute closure and what the state of Ohio is doing in response to the shutdown.

Mr. Breeckner replied students can visit ohiovets.gov for more information. He also recommended students call the GI Bill hotline at 1-888-442-4551 for additional assistance. Another option is to contact the college to which they plan to transfer, as not every college may recognize transfer credits earned at ITT Technical Institute.

Chairman Clendenen asked if any of the audience members would like to present anything to the Advisory Committee.

Gary Cogley responded he would like to brief the Advisory Committee on the Primus Veterans and Community Center. The Primus Project is a proposal established by Ohio Veterans, Inc. which seeks to create a Veterans and Community Center in central Ohio. The veteran and community center will serve as a comprehensive resource center with a broad range of service agencies within one facility addressing the crucial and long-term needs of the veteran community. The proposal seeks to acquire Indianola Middle School from the Columbus City Schools Board of Education and convert it into the veteran and community center. The cost of the renovation is expected to be between \$12 million and \$15 million.

Director Tansill provided closing comments.
The Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:58 am.