



# **HARFORD COUNTY COMMISSION ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**From  
May 6, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Brown at 6:30PM via MS Teams.

**Attending:** Bob Brown, Hayden Anthony, Lisa Brown, Art Kaff, Jennifer Button, Bill Montgomery, Robert Appleby, Denise Perry, Colonel Druell, Janice Cassady, Pam Silcox, Scott Kearby, Deacon Vic Petrosino, and Ryan Koch, Legislative Aide for Councilman Andre Johnson (liaison)

**Excused:** Mike Ray, Dennis Miller,

**Guests:** Simon Ballard, CSM Drewitt, and Katie Kilby.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Lisa Brown. Open Prayer was given by Deacon Vic Petrosino

### **Welcome & Opening Comments:**

Chairman Brown – presented the HCCOVA Mission and Vision statements and welcomed members and guests.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes from the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting were approved. Hayden Anthony making the motion to approve and Scott Kearby second.

### **GUEST SPEAKERS:**

Katie Kilby, Program Manager, Central Maryland “ServingTogether.” Ms. Kilby gave a presentation and answered questions about ServingTogether and how they can help veterans, service members and their families in Harford County. She described it as a one-stop-shop for resources. ServingTogether, whose parent organization is Every Mind, is new to Central Maryland, but has been around in the DC area for a few years. ServingTogether utilizes a secure software tool to help connect veterans to over 300 organizations for assistance. The software tool is free and with training can be utilized by members of the Veterans Commission. Contact is [KKilby@every-mind.org](mailto:KKilby@every-mind.org), web site: [servingtogetherproject.org](http://servingtogetherproject.org).

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- MOAA Community Project Update. Jennifer Button and Lisa Brown reported on their first planning meeting. There will be a poster contest for younger students and an essay content for the older students. There will be electronic submissions. The team is working on items for recognition of the winners. The start date is targeted for September, with winners announced at the Resource Fair in November. Students in public, private and home schooling are eligible.

- Jennifer Button has been working on the Veterans Discount Book. She is working with the Chamber of Commerce to send a survey to reach out to businesses to see who offer discounts. Hayden will check to see if any county agencies have a list of businesses in the county. Jenn asked that if anyone has a list, or knows how to get a list, to send it to her.
- Chairman Brown reminded members to submit their number of hours worked on veteran support projects and any veteran events they participated in so they can be captured in the Veterans Commission Annual Report, which is due in June.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Legislative Issues. None.
- Legal Issues. None.
- Programs and Outreach
  - Chairman Brown said that the Crisis Intervention Mapping project for SMVF Suicide Prevention is continuing, with the first meeting scheduled for May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1-4pm. Meetings will be held once a month. The Harford County Community Services office is developing the list of participants and leading the project.
  - The 2021 Veterans Resource Fair is scheduled for November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Bel Air Armory. A “Save the Date” flyer was shown. Pam Silcox will be sending out the invitations to vendors. Hayden added that the Armory contacted him and let him know they are planning on events. Hayden will be monitoring situation with the Armory to see what changes may be necessary this year due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- Information for the County Executive and/or County Council. The Veterans Commission Annual Report will be presented in June. Ryan Koch, Legislative Aide to Councilman Johnson, gave some background on himself and said he will be assisting with forwarding the veteran calls received by Councilman Johnson and the County.
- Assistance Requests.
  - Hayden Anthony discussed the referrals he received, and the action taken. There seem to be more requests coming in now. Simon added that there is a program available through Community Action Agency for rental assistance for those who had COVID and could not work.
  - Ryan Koch provided his background information. He will be working with the Veterans Commission receiving calls for assistance and passing them on to the Commission.
- Public Events and Recognition.
  - The Bel Air Memorial Day ceremony will be held May 31<sup>st</sup>, but at a limited scale. The Veterans Commission will set up a pop-up tent and serve refreshments that meet Covid-19 protocols. Hayden Anthony coordinated with the County Executive’s office to secure a wreath for posting during the event. The Veterans Commission will be handing out water and cookies. If anyone knows of other Memorial Day ceremonies, please send the information to members and Art Kaff for posting on Facebook. Colonel Druell stated that there will be a parade in Cecil County.
  - The Bel Air 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade is a “go.” The Veterans Commission will march in the parade, and family members can march as well.
  - The 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Military Appreciation event will be virtually conducted on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Cost is \$20. The guest speakers are Major General (Retired) Singh and Major General Kilgo. A flyer was sent to members. See Mike Ray for more information.

- Hayden Anthony reported that May 7<sup>th</sup> is Military Spouse's Appreciation day.
- Chairman Brown noted the passing of James V. "Capt'n Jim" McMahon and the proposal to rename the Harford County Commission on Veterans Affairs as the Capt'n James V. McMahon Veterans Commission. Members who attended Capt'n Jim's service were thanked for assisting at the service.

### **MEMBER UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Hayden Anthony discussed the VA's Pen Pal project. Currently the VA does not need anyone to volunteer as a Pen Pal.
- Jennifer Button reported that on June 19<sup>th</sup> the library is hosting a rodeo. They are currently looking for vendors. Veterans and Active Duty can get in free. See <http://onceuponarodeo.org/>.
- Art Kaff posted information about Capt'n Jim's passing, about the Covid-19 vaccinations, training programs and jobs on the Commission's Facebook site. Memorial Day celebration information will be posted.
- Bill Montgomery has not heard back from Senator Cassilly's office to have someone come to a meeting and provide Maryland State updates. Bill suggested we use the County's LinkedIn page to put out information. He asked if the transition assistance events will continue. Colonel Druell said they would, either virtual or in person.
- Denise Perry reported that there is a survey going out from Blue Star families to capture issues military spouses have in obtaining jobs and promotions due to frequent moves. Denise will send the information for the Facebook page. She reported on the enactment of the Deborah Sampson Act that will increase women veteran's access to VA healthcare for newborns (see <https://www.veterans.senate.gov/newsroom/minority-news/testers-historic-deborah-sampson-act-signed-into-law>). Denise added that the VA will now provide the Disability Benefits Questionnaires to veterans before they go for their compensation exams.
- Colonel Druell gave updates for Aberdeen Proving Ground. For the 3 June meeting he will be travelling. He asked that we get the required membership appointment paperwork into the County Council so there is no lapse in APG Garrison Commander representation between Colonel Druell's departure and Colonel Casiano's arrival.
- Deacon Vic Petrosino is continuing to do hospital visits. He hopes for in person visits soon. He added there will be four new seminarians at Upper Chesapeake Hospital beginning in September and one of the responsibilities is to work with veterans.
- Simon Ballard asked Jennifer about participating in the Rodeo mentioned earlier.
- CSM Drewitt will be the continuity during the transition between Colonel Druell and Colonel Casiano.

### **FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Next meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2021 and will be held via MS Teams.
- Meetings are scheduled for the first Thursday of the month unless otherwise announced.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Full link to Teams Meeting:

[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_MWY2Y2VhY2QtMzFmNi00MmQ5LThhMjktMjQ2MWQ3OWVjY2Yx%40thread.v2/0](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MWY2Y2VhY2QtMzFmNi00MmQ5LThhMjktMjQ2MWQ3OWVjY2Yx%40thread.v2/0)

[?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22756eb95a-68e1-4b7a-9607-685e1277368e%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22c088a1ce-0105-43a7-bfc1-824daeffaf53%22%7d](#)