



Veterans' and Military Affairs Advisory Board

New Mexico Veterans' Memorial

April 16, 2014

Minutes

- I. Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Roger Newall at 9:15 am
 - a. Present: Chairman Roger Newall, Vice Chairman Archie Garcia, Ken O'Keefe, Steve Overman
 - b. Absent: Louis Tafoya, Stephen Asher, Pat Gaston, Brian Leen, Elise Wheeler
 - c. Pending Members: Gary Zura, Diallo Dphrepaulezz, Mandy Dykman
 - d. Secretary: Mirella Chacon

- II. Approval of Minutes from 3/19, 2014
 - a. The March minutes were accepted.

- III. Public Comments – No Public Participation

- IV. Old Business
 - a. Albuquerque Employee Coins
 - i. Nothing to be reported due to current APD situation: D.O.J.

 - b. Hiring Preference – Nothing reported

 - c. Membership
 - i. People need to report more often.

There was questions regarding Kristen Barden – no contact has been made.

 - d. Projects
 - i. City Transit Veterans Ride Program-
Bus Pass Program will be announced by the afternoon - ID for Bus Pass will be out soon.
Should be up and running by end of June 2014. Original cards are still good for use.

 - e. Legislation
 - i. Commanders meeting was held in Clovis, NM – State is working with a number of groups to provide Health Services on a Pro Bono basis. Website will be provided at next meeting.
 - ii. Trying to get groups to work together; i.e., VA, VFW, Mental Health each groups is worried about moving forward rather than networking or collaborating.
 - iii. News Conference with Governor was held April 15th where locations for Veteran Cemeteries were announced chosen: Gallup, Angel Fire, Carlsbad and Fort Stanton. Once these are in place and the need arises the state will look into other locations.
 - iv. Stock Holder Meeting – A question was asked about suggestions that had been offered and the response at this meeting was that a report was submitted to the facilities. A brief summary of recommendations would suffice to share response with different organizations.

Some concerns shared were:

1. Dealing with numbers in VA – people available to offer care. If 250 employees were added to Care Providers we might get one out of that – if it is divided with the nation.

Suggestion was to purchase Mobile Medical Unit to circulate in the Northern and Southern parts in the state with internet satellite capabilities for conferencing. Staff it with different fields. The gist being that in the 60 day period you can hit 90% of the communities even if it is done in one day. We would be able to get services out to the community. Their response was that they were doing a lot with the communication via computers but when serving reservations internet capabilities are not always available. The concern is that if the service is done in the home not all veterans have the facility of a computer. This kind of system is already in place with the VA but it is not necessarily meeting the needs.

2. Create a Cluster Team – A central group of VA personnel that would go into an area to provide one on one service and bring the information back to the VA. This would offer the opportunity to get out in the field to screen individuals. Most of the issues addressed was to get them to get off the campus and see what is really happening.

A Presbyterian Psychologist was present and a question was addressed: With the idea of coming together, what would Presbyterian Hospital be willing to do at a limited cost to them and a great service to us? Do you have services that you can provide a veteran to get something initiated? In a Crisis Management – the first three hours of that Veteran are very critical. If and when a Veteran were to call and ask for help, one of the questions they would be asked would be Are you a VA member? The Psychologist's reply to this question was some nodding but it was felt they were not in a position to answer or make any promises. These services are not just to serve Veterans but everyone as a whole. They were encouraged to answer what Pres could offer as a private sector. It was mentioned that the paperwork / eligibility could be dealt with later when confronted with a Crisis Situation as long as the individual was properly cared for and given treatment immediately.

Discussion ensued related to Mental Health Crisis services.

Roger requested for a list of different Veteran organizations that meet so that Roger could possibly attend and find out what the needs may be.

Other: The Telling Project

The Telling Project began in 2008 where Veterans would be invited to attend and be a part of a theatric telling of their Veteran Stories. It was asked if anyone had suggestions about who could be approached for funding – to help promote and assist in this project. September 11, 2014 is the ideal date they are looking into to present this theatrical approach. The idea is to obtain information from an interviewed Veteran (or family member) about his or her story, then that is taken by Technical personnel and it is formulated into a scripted presentation. They then work with the Veteran or family member whose story it is and train them to perform it in front of people. It is a great opportunity for Veterans interested in acting/coaching experience. The commitment / expectation is that Veterans present themselves to be interviewed, attend all rehearsals (one week) but we will go over this on Friday for those that have full time jobs. There will be six performances that people will have to commit to.

Questions and Answers:

How are candidates selected? It is on a volunteer basis. They story will be based on whatever the veteran wishes to place emphasis on.

How will the community be approached? (those attending) Promotional Plan is in place; also looking out for the community and its participation.

Only six performances will be presented. What kind of a Time Span is that? 6 performances within 2 consecutive weekends. This might have to be spread out to fit different participant's schedule and availability.

Locations being considered: South Broadway and Kimo. Hispanic Cultural Center was mentioned but they require a fee.

Discussion ensued related to topic.

V. New Business:

Controversy Statute Memorial with the two men. City was not involved at all. Families wanted the statue at the Veterans' Memorial and they were informed that it could not happen because it was an individual/personal representation. Tuskegee was an example that was mentioned as a representation of a group that is at the Memorial and not an individual person representation.

Roger mentioned that he is working close with Jorja Brasher at the Barelax Center – trying to do something for Senior Veterans at the Centers. They are considering rearranging the center so that it does not resemble a Bus Depot. A corner will be dedicated to Veterans – to sit and visit to create a Companionship Program. They are considering having Home Bound Veterans visit with others. Possibly having a Veterans' Hall where stories or individuals can be displayed. Another consideration is to have seniors be part of the creation of the décor.

Graffiti at the Memorial: Artists have a tag but no one is doing anything about it. We have the cameras but unfortunately the contract did not include the installation. We are looking for a Veterans' Business that can do some semi pro bono or minimal charge to install the cameras. It has become a challenge to hold individuals accountable when this takes place. Roger has been told by the Southeast Area Commander that it is still not certain if those that are believed to be the culprits really are the ones doing the graffiti. When vandalism occurs it costs the memorial \$300 - \$400 to replace or correct. This is an area that continues to need more attention.

Value House Motel– there is 76 unit low income housing with almost little parking. Questions rose about the facility and who benefits from it? At one time it was supposed to be for Veterans. Who decides who the low income individuals will be? What happened to the Veteran aspect?

VI. Setting of Future Meetings – May 21, 2014 at 9:00 am at the NM Veterans' Memorial

VII. Adjourn – 10:17 am.