

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes  
Monday, January 8, 2018  
Macomb Community Action Training Room  
21885 Dunham Road, Clinton Township, MI

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:06A.M.

**Attendees:**

A.C. Giles, Training and Treatment Innovations	Katie Page, Macomb County Vet Center
Bill Browning, Detroit VA Medical Center	Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards, Macomb Veteran Services
Brian Webb, MDHHS	Laura Rios (Co-Chair), Macomb Veteran Services
Charlene Myers, NCOA/DAV	Madeline Habib, MCCMH/HSBC
Chris Franklin, American Indian Vets of MI, Inc.	Mark Snay, Always Best Care
Chris Reilly, Macomb/St. Clair MI Works	Mike Johnson, AFGE Vets Affairs
Christy Koons, Region 10 PIHP	Paulus Obey, Selfridge Family Support Center
Dain Reven, Volunteers of America	Sharon Thompson, Michigan Rehabilitation Services
Dean Shunk, Macomb Veteran Services	Shaun Taft, What Works LLC
Dr. Rodney Tolbert	Susan Casadei, Harbor Health Home Care
Gerald Fisher-Curley, John D. Dingell VA Medical Center	Tom Isett, Always Best Care
Joanne Stern, Macomb County Crisis Center	Wendy Martindale, St. Clair County CMH
Jonathan Drake, Simply Blessed Catering Veteran Owned	William Schranz, MCCMH

**II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Attendees of the meeting introduced themselves and stated what agency or business they represent.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No proposed changes, the minutes were accepted and approved. Laura Rios made a motion to approved the 2018 meeting dates: Chris Franklin 1<sup>st</sup>, Rodney Tolbert 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

No old business discussed.

**V. SPECIAL SPEAKER**

**JANUARY SPECIAL SPEAKERS:**

Sharon Thompson-Michigan Rehabilitation Services: Michigan Rehabilitation Services is a public agency that provides vocational rehabilitation to people who have a diagnosed disability. They provide training, interview preparation, resume assistance, job search, transportation and professional clothes for interviews. They also work with the Windmill Program to teach employers how to work with people who have disabilities. Anyone interested in signing up for services can call 586-412-1510.

Chris Franklin-South Eastern Michigan Indians: This organization started meeting in October of 2012 with an idea of helping the veteran and native communities. They provide color guard for funerals and spiritual

services in addition to marching in many parades. The group also provides color guard for other native organizations including the pow wow on March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, Chris Franklin will be the head veteran at the event. They sponsor many events throughout the year starting in March with a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans day. Spring karaoke is planned in April, steak dinner and silent auction in September, fall karaoke is in October. They take gifts and care packages to veterans in the VA hospital in December and visit patients who aren't going home for Christmas. The organization was awarded funding to start a survey on veterans and commercial tobacco use that was studied and will be published to share with other groups. They are involved in working to end tobacco use. South Eastern Michigan Indians work closely with other veteran organizations including VVA 154, Michigan Veteran Foundation and Vets Returning Home, this network ensures any family in need is taken care of. A new veteran café has been started and will meet twice a month at their offices in Centerline.

## **VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Benefits/Communication Committee: Laura Rios/Mary Beth Ryan**

Laura informed the group that there are a lot of clothing and furniture donations however there is not a lot of space to store everything. Humble Designs is opening a new location in Dearborn and will be serving veterans by furnishing homes for those who are being housed after experiencing homelessness. The group was asked to please let Laura know if anyone can store donations or accept donations. Laura will check with her contacts to see if she can find space at One Macomb or the Family Resource Center in Mount Clemens. Members suggested checking with John Babcock, the DAV on 16 mile and Gratiot, Trinity Lutheran and the Thompson Center.

### **Jobs Committee: Crystal Bersche/Mark Meadows**

Veteran Employability Bootcamp #46 starting this month.

### **Services Committee: Madeline Habib**

Madeline advised the group that a lot of the flow charts have been updated and are available on the website. She is working on completed a new chart for legal services and other topics as they become known.

### **Membership Committee: Shaun Taft**

All new members should sign in on the sheet, members will initial on the roster. New members who wish to be on the email roster list should complete a membership form.

### **Faith Based Committee: John Drake**

Dr. Rodney Tolbert advised the group that if anyone sees any homeless people sleeping outside, the Macomb County Sheriff will pick them up and shelter them. He also advised the group that his organization is out of food at the moment but he can still help someone in need.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS/IDEAS FOR FUTURE PRESENTATIONS**

FEBRUARY SPEAKER: Gillian Bentley - Disability Network

MARCH SPEAKER: Jill Ruehlen – A Place for Mom

## **VIII. ROUND ROBIN**

Madeline Habib: 2018 HSBC Traveling Tours are taking place on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. These tours provide an opportunity for human service professionals to visit agencies and learn about what services they offer. Registration will be available online at the MISD website.

The application for the Fisher House has been submitted. The Fisher House is a place for veteran families to stay while their loved one is receiving treatment in VA hospitals. They have an approved site at John R and Palmer in Detroit and will be developing a plan after the application is approved. The VA is also working to set up a veteran café and other programs. Haircuts will also be available to homeless veterans at the VA hospital every fourth Monday of each month.

The Vet Center has teamed up with Macomb Community College to provide free trauma sensitive yoga groups to veterans on campus as well as in the community. The classes will be every Tuesday at 9:00A.M. and 10:00A.M at the Sports and Expo Center in the Macomb Room. Veterans interested in attending should contact Kara and Macomb Community College or Katie at the Vet Center.

Shaun Taft is working with the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan to expand the Reggie's Rainbow program. She is working on a project with Macomb Family Services to help them analyze their data so they can raise awareness of consistent challenges experienced by people with mental health and substance abuse issues. She is also working with Arctic Cause to provide a peer-to-peer shop of resources for human service providers in different counties.

Paulus Obey: A yellow ribbon reintegration workshop event is being planned in March for soldiers who have come back from deployments and their families.

Laura Rios: Free tax preparation is available for those who qualify. Services are being provided at the Thompson Center and the Family Resource Center. There will also be a day designated to serve veterans only. Flyers are available to the group.

Harbor Health Home Care provides skilled nursing and private duty care. Veterans who are in need of in-home care can receive services for free through their organization. Veterans can be referred to Susan Casadei.

Mike Johnson: Veterans interested in getting an apprenticeship can contact Mr. Patrick Devlin at the Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council, 313-965-1580. He also informed the group that Focus Hope in Detroit provides many supportive services and do not have residency requirements, those interested can call 313-494-5500.

William Schranz is working to build a facebook group for veterans and allies to provide low barrier peer-to-peer support to veterans in the community. MVAC supports this idea and members are happy to share the group and connect veterans to it.

US Steele is hiring veterans. Those interested can apply online and should follow up with a call to the HR department to identify themselves as veterans.

Chris Franklin: His organization makes quarterly visits to legislatures in Lansing to inform them of the work going on in the community.

Brian Webb: Informed the group that National Guard and Army are changing to mission-oriented deployments, soldiers will be deployed until the mission is completed. Wayne county is working to find a dynamic person to fill a Veteran Navigator position very soon.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next MVAC meeting will be begin at 9:00A.M. on February 5, 2018. The meeting will be in the Macomb Community Action Training Room at 21885 Dunham Road, Clinton Township, MI.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43A.M. by Laura Rios.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Palmer