

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes
MCC Center Campus 44575 Garfield Road Building P Rm 129
Clinton Township, MI 48038
Monday, November 05, 2018

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:30 am.

Attendees:

Gerald Fisher-Curley, VA
Madeline Habib, MCCMH/HSCB
Bill Browning, VAMC
Michael Flaker, Crickett Ins

Darryle Johnson, Vet Services
Stephen Boegehold, DHHS
Katie Page, Vet Center
Gary Purcell, VVA Chapter 154
Shaun Taft, Macomb Fam Services
Alexandra Zacks, DHHS
Colton Darrow, TTI
Adrienne Gasperoni, CARE
Doug Cann, Vet Services
Elizabeth Sergeant, MAC
Shelly Rood, Mission: Ambition
Greg Cronce, Vet Services

Kara Fields, MCC
Dan Bowman, MDL
Mike Dexter, MyCare Health Ctr
Mark Kilgore, CARE
Marie Goral, Vet Services
Laura Rios (Co-Chair), Macomb Veteran Services
Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards, Macomb Veteran Services
Frankin Newman, AFSA
Charlene Myers, NCOA/DAV
Chris Reilly, Michigan Works!
Jennifer Georgievski, MI Vet Employment
Gabriella Barthlow, AFSC/CFPB
Katie Bonham, Vet Services
Broderick Johnson, US Coast Guard
David Hannum, Vet Services
Nicole Gauthier, MCCMH
Emily Angus, The Mission Continues

II. **INTRODUCTIONS**

The committee members went around the table and introduced themselves and the service organization to which they worked.

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The October 01 minutes were approved with the changes: adding Franklin Newman and Susan Casadeli to the list of attendees, change Round Robin verbiage from Chris at Mi Works! and Madeline as only updating utilities flowchart.

IV. **OLD BUSINESS**

No old business was addressed.

V. **SPECIAL SPEAKER**: Shelly Rood, Missilia, owner/veteran

From the missilia.us website: "The Mission of Missilia is to celebrate and share the experiences of women who kick butt. We do this by providing an online, in-home & in-person community of support and encouragement."

Work Life Balance: There are four areas to work life balance: family, spirituality, wellness/health/fitness and careers/finance. All of these areas have an internal voice and they call on me throughout the day and/or life. Their voices could speak at the same time and it is hard to not only differentiate between them but to balance them as well. She asked the committee members to personally rank each area on a scale of 1 – 10 in order of importance in their lives. She also briefly talked about the Subscription Boxes (“A monthly reminder of how awesome you really are!”). These boxes contain new items every month and features the story of a one of the members.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Benefits/Communication: there are new eligibility requirements and forms to the Nonservice connected pension program. Starting October 18, 2018, the asset limitation increased to \$123,600 and there is now a 3 year look back. The VA wants to know about any trusts and partials of land the veteran owns.

B. Employment: The Detroit MiWorks! office is almost fully staffed with veteran career advisers. Jennifer Georgievski is now on staff for the Clinton Township area. Greg Cronce from Macomb County Veteran Services is the VSO for the bootcamp and the treatment court. There could be a new data tracking procedure coming soon because right now, there is no formal tracking.

C. Services: the committee is doing a major revamp on the utilities flowcharts due to the DHS changes. Madeline will share them with the collaborative as soon as they are updated.

D. Membership: Shaun reminded everyone to initial the roster if you are a member or to sign in on the sign in sheet if you are new or have not joined the MVAC. Please go to the MVAC website (pick up one of the business cards) for information regarding the minutes, the flow charts and the application letter.

E. Faith Based: Rodney was not in attendance.

F. Higher Education: Kara Fields mentioned August 1, 2018, the Forever GI Bill changed the Post 9-11 GI Bill. The changes directly affect the way housing is calculated; it will now be calculated by the school zip code and not the residence zip code. VA has received from Congress how to calculate these changes but they are still trying to work out the technical piece so as to allow schools to give the information. These changes also affect Voc Rehab, if there is housing involved. Those who were under paid will get their money back as soon as all the technical pieces have been worked out. Those who were over paid, for right now, will get to keep the additional money. Because the process has not yet been figured out, there is a large back log in the payout.

VII. ROUND ROBIN

Emily Angus, The Mission Continues: They have their annual Veterans Day service project going on this weekend. They will be at the Boys and Girls Club downtown Detroit this Saturday November 10th. The name of the event is called Hometown Huddle. There are 100 volunteers right now to help out. She also gave out flyers regarding the event.

Shelly Rood, Missilia: she is a professional motivational speaker, she stated she would love to come and speak at any upcoming events. Please keep her in mind when planning these events.

Nicole Gauthier, MCCMH: introduced herself and said she was still learning about the collaborative.

Shaun Taft: sits on the coalition to Keep Michigan Warm and mentioned the changes to the DHHS utilities help is not getting out to the people who are on the front lines. There is a One and Done policy that is confusing. She wants to make sure the veterans use full amount authorized instead of only a small amount that make would make them ineligible again for another year. Stephen Boegehold said the process has gone

from leader to leader but has yet to get to the people who are dealing with the client/veteran in crisis. Stephen said he and Julie Hines will be walking the collaborative through the process at the December MVAC meeting. Best practice right now is to just have the person in crisis apply for help by scanning the application and the backup documentation or walking it into the office.

Broderick Johnson, US Coast Guard: introduced himself and said the meeting contained a lot of good information that he will be taking back with him.

Madeline Habib: The 2019 Information Exchange will be held Wednesday and Thursday May 22 and 23 2019. Please mark your calendars. CMH has a Christmas party for the families. They are going to have the children sign Christmas Cards for the veterans at the VA Hospital.

Dan Bowman: The Michigan Works and veteran hiring for Social Security does their hiring in Southeast Michigan for their 23 offices. They give veteran preference. They are having issues getting good candidates. The Elks club is also very interested in helping veterans. If you have a club in your area, please contact them to see what help they offer.

Katie Page: There are five more free trauma sensitive yoga classes available in this semester, please take a flyer and either come to try it out, or pass it along to a veteran who might need the help. The Army/Navy football game is coming up in December. There will be a family friendly alcohol free party at the Vet Center. Please take a flyer and come out for a good time.

Bill Browning: The Adopt a Veteran holiday help is coming up soon. This is where the social work section at the hospital works with various corporations who would like to help a veteran and family during the holiday season. They provide everything the veteran and family might need, i.e. food, clothing, Christmas gifts. They are hosting this event December 17th at the VA Medical Center. If you know a corporation or a group that would like to help out a veteran please have them contact the medical center. They will put them in touch with a veteran in need. Tonight is the Fisher House Voices of Service which will be held in Ann Arbor. This is an informational session, not so much a fund raiser.

Gabriella Barthlow, Financial Coach: the Federal funding for her program ends March 29th of 2019. She states she wants to be very busy "using every Federal dollar" so please send her any veteran or veteran family member who needs financial coaching before her funding runs out.

Greg Cronce: asked if the hiring groups from Social Security could come to the next boot camp. Chris Reilly agreed that could be a productive meeting.

Mark Kilgore, CARE: They are planning their Sober Bowl party on Super Bowl Sunday. Last year they had around 300 people attend. They are in need of food. This is a free event. Please contact him if you would like to donate. He mentioned the DIA Veteran Community Outreach program. The DIA will come out to pick you up, take you to the DIA where you can work on an art project. At the end of the program, they will display it for one month. He has an electronic flyer for the DIA that he will send to Laura, she will send out to the collaborative.

Gary Purcell, VVA Chapter 154: OIF/OEF War on Terror Medal for veterans who served in country. He passed around one of these medals. They are in the process of making another medal for all veterans that will say, Thank you for your service to America from the VVA Chapter 154. There is a star in a package that the VVA hospital committee gives out every month to the patients at the hospital. December 1 will be the Operation Christmas fund raiser. The cost is \$35 a person and a new unwrapped toy, he brought a flyer for the event. If you know of a family that needs help this Christmas, please contact Gary. The VVA has a food pantry for veterans of Macomb County. If a veteran from another county comes to the chapter, they will give a onetime food help and then give them information about food pantries in their county. This is just

“for your information” please don’t let it out that the VVA Chapter 154 will help a veteran from another county. If you know of a family who needs help, please contact Gary. On Nov 11th the VVA will have an open house with hot dogs. Wreaths around America will be at Resurrection Cemetery on Dec 15 starts at 12 noon. The chapter has a semi large conference room that could be used free of charge for veteran programs. Please contact Gary if you would like to use the conference room after hours.

Alexander Zacks: they have a program that came out around 2 weeks ago that has a large grant to start a woman’s veteran’s group.

VIII. NEXT MEETING

Monday, December 03, 2018 starting at 9:00 A.M. at:

Macomb Community Action Training Room, 21885 Dunham Road, Clinton Township

Special Speaker: Stephen Boegehold and Julie Hines

Please bring a new unwrapped toy to the next MVAC meeting on December 03.

IX. ADJOURMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 A.M.