

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes
Macomb Community Action Training Room
21885 Dunham Clinton Township, MI 48038
Monday, August 05, 2019

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:10 am.

Attendees:

Dawn Revyn, VOM	Sharon Urban, Veteran Services
Mark Meadows, VAMC	Gerald Fisher – Curley, VAMC
Madeline Habib, MCCMH/HSCB	Joyce Moultrie, Vet Services
Chris Franklin, AIVofMI	Joshua Puranen, FreeStar Financial
Mike Dexter, My Care	Mark Kilgore, CARE
Darryle Johnson, Veteran Services	Mark Diaz, VCCF
Josh Mathis, Vet Center	Laura Rios (Co-Chair), Veteran Services
Keila Williams, MDHHS	Brian Webb, SOM
Shelly Rood, Missilia	Emily Angus, Mission Continues
Paul Salcepvedes, Work Force Devl	Wil Cochran, Con Andy Levin
Sandra Wilkins, Mission Continues	Lisa Bowling, Veteran Services
Sarah Moore, Veteran Services	Nicole Gauthier (Co-Chair), Veteran Navigator
Liz Sergent, MCA	

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 June 03, 2019 minutes were approved with a change in the spelling of Josh Mathis name.

IV. **NEW/OLD BUSINESS/VCAT update**

Nothing to report.

V. **SPECIAL SPEAKER:** Nannette Colling, Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)

The Veterans Justice Outreach program began in 2007. There are currently 26 Veteran Courts in Michigan. Their Mission is to “Avoid unnecessary criminalization of high risk veterans.” Their Goal is to “Prevent reincarceration by assuring veterans access to VA services and benefits as appropriate. To end veteran homelessness and help veterans access services and benefits.” The (VJO) receives referrals from: Veterans and families, jail outreach programs, hearing and referrals from other courts and judges. A “Good Veterans Court” should have communication, exchange of information; teamwork collaboration and every team player should perform their role. Veterans Court helps the veteran with their struggles. Helps connect Veterans with treatment, jobs, and resources. There are mentors who help with transportation, education and support. Veterans going through the Veterans Treatment Court can receive rewards as they complete program objectives such as gas cards, Uber, rent assistance and car repair.

There are over 1M veterans arrested each year and over 200,000 that are currently incarcerated. Thirty percent of their veterans served in Iraq or Afghanistan and sixty percent of all jail inmates have/had a mental health problem. Only 1 in 6 such inmates received mental health treatment since incarceration. Almost 70% of veterans are in custody for non-violent crimes. Nearly 82% of veterans in jail are eligible for VA services.

Historically: “Association of Vietnam and Post Vietnam era veterans with histories of civilian and/or military trauma suggest an association between the trauma and subsequent contact with the legal system. Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) veterans are following this same pattern.”

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Benefits/Communication: Laura Rios – Laura Rios and Gerald Fisher – Curley will be speaking about the Mission Act and Health Care during the October Collaborative meeting.

B. Employment: Mark Meadows states the Federal Contracting Agency (FCA) is going into communities holding hiring fairs. These Fairs are where the veteran will be signing up for the new plant that is opening in Detroit. Ford is hiring sessions and training sessions for many of the plants in the area. Beaumont hospital is hiring for patient transfer services, food service, CNA's and support staff. Tier 1 suppliers are hiring and are also providing on the job training. Mark strongly suggest to have your veterans go through the Michigan Works! Boot Camp as well as contact him for more information on jobs. He would also like service providers to sign up for his Employment Newsletter which gives up to the minute job information and hiring events. The VCRRC is having a Women's Event on August 15th. This event is hosted by Piquette Square. This event will include a luncheon as well as career advice. There is another Women's Career Event on September 7th at the American Legion in Clinton Township. Right now around 10 employers have signed up for this event. Other vendors will include DHHS, MCA, SS, child care, hair/nail and clothing.

C. Services: Laura reminded the collaborative of a great resource Freedom Road Transportation. This is a volunteer driver program that helps “fill a transportation gap giving individuals the freedom to avoid social isolation, attain employment, access medical services, shopping and other activities.” This program provides reimbursement to volunteer drivers. For more information please contact: freedomroadtransportation.org.

D. Membership: Shaun Taft was absent

E. Faith Based: Rodney Tolbert was absent. Laura mentioned the Gun Safety Class which will be help on September 13th. This class is for veterans only and covers gun safety issues, there will be no shooting during the class. If you know of a veteran who would like to attend this free class, please have them call our office at 586-469-5315.

F. Higher Education: Kara Fields was absent but she sent this information. Housing amounts will change for the Post 9/11 GI Bill (section 501 of Forever GI Bill) on 12/1/19. It changes any people's housing payments from DoD to VA housing rate. Clients underpaid from 2018 will be back paid in spring 2020. All GI Bill users will get a letter from VA about their impact in the winter. Section 107 has to do with how schools report location of classes. Schools have a lot of extra work right now to change this process. It will impact students who take classes at extension campuses that are located far enough away from the main campus to change their housing calculation. MCC students will not be impacted.

VII. ROUND ROBIN

Janet Smith, VA, is a liaison to help "bridge the gap" between the providers in Macomb County working to house veterans and the VA homeless staff who are doing the work out in the community. She is working on the By – Name list. There are currently around 8 service providers who regularly attend the By – Name list meetings. Their goal is to work with each veteran on the list to get them housing and to help them through the homeless system and into permanent housing as quickly as possible. They also make sure veterans have their DD214 and are aware of their benefits. All of the shelters in Macomb County are working with this program.

Liz Sergeant also works with Janet on the By-Name list. They are also working on a Landlord Advisory Board in Macomb County; she hopes to have that up and running in a few months.

Mark Kilgore had flyers for their next DIA Open House for Veterans.

Josh Mathis had flyers for the fall schedule of Trauma Sensitive Yoga. This class is moving to the MCC South Campus. He also had flyers for the Meditation and Mindfulness, Mental Strength Training which will begin on August 29 for 6 sessions.

Chris Franklin stated the Smoking Cessation statistics are now available in a pamphlet, which is brought to the collaborative. He did say that one of the findings was that the best chance for a person to stop smoking was to do it "Cold Turkey." He states, "You can't feed something and expect it to go away." He also stated that over the past 4 years over 2M people died from second hand smoke..they never actually smoked.

Madeline Habib stated the Information Exchange is scheduled for Thursday October 24, 2019.

Dawn Revyn stated they lost the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Grant (HVRP) This covered The Thumb, Capitol and East. The homeless veterans' reintegration program grant worked with Workforce Development Training.

Mark Meadows stated by Presidential order, the American Legion (A.L.) is now open to all veterans. They will be activity soliciting female veterans for their posts.

Mark Diaz stated their program helps homeless veterans one at a time to get them placed into permanent housing. Their foundation also has Home Care which works with VA Aid and Attendance (A& A) the coordinator in charge of this program is Mary Beth Ryan.

Mike Dexter stated the 5th Annual MyCare Health Center Health Fair is scheduled for Saturday, August 10th from 11 – 2. Please see the flyer for more information.

Brian Webb stated the Lapeer County Veteran Navigator will be starting October 1st in a 30 hour a week position. If you know of anyone who would be interested in this opportunity, please let him know.

Shelly Rood stated she was looking to gather more female veterans for her Female Peer Support Group. This group meets monthly in Metro Detroit, St. Clair, Grand Rapids and Traverse City. This is open to every status of female veterans (or active duty). For more information contact susan@hellomissilia.com

Emily Ingus, states their strategy for reintegration is service. Veterans coming together with other community members to continue to volunteer and serve in community. Last weekend they had a kayaking event at Belle Isle which included community service by cleaning up the canals. They have many upcoming events. Please contact Emily for more information.

Paul Salcepedes is a veteran employment advisor that works out of Mount Clemens. He assists veterans on eliminating barriers of employment. His number is 586-783-8703.

Kelia Williams stated Michigan Rehabilitation Services assists disabled people in finding and overcoming the barriers of employment. The most common disability they have assist with is hearing loss.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, September 09, 2019 starting at 9:00 A.M. at:

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

Special Speaker: Harold Vick Funeral Home

October Special Speaker: Gerald Fisher-Curly (Mission Act) Laura Rios (Health Care)

November Special Speaker: Diane Laskey, Grace Counseling

December Special Speaker: Angela Bower, Yoga Medics

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 A.M.