

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes
Monday, March 6, 2017
Macomb Community Action Training Room
21885 Dunham Rd, Clinton Township, MI

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios, at 9:08 A.M.

Attendees:

Gary Purcell, *VVA 154*
Susan Casadei, *Harbor Health Homecare*
John Chirken, *State Representative District 22*
Monica Alderman, *Macomb Community College*
Stephen Boegehold, *Department of Health and Human Services*
Bill Browning, *Detroit VA Medical Center*
Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards, *Macomb Veteran Serves*
Basil Forrest, *Army Community Service Survivor Outreach*
Chris Franklin, *American Indians Vets of MI*
Charlene Myers, *NCOA/DAV*
Laura Rios (Co-Chair), *Macomb Veteran Services*
Mary Beth Ryan, *Vets Constructing Communities Foundation*
Mark Kilgore, *CARE of Southeastern Michigan*
Diana Ursu, *State of MI Veterans Employment Services*
Madeline Habib, *MCCMH/HSCB*

Ellen Palmer, *Macomb Homeless Coalition*
Josh Rendaitis, *Padre's Cleaning*
Jonathan Drake, *Simply Blessed Catering*
Gabriella Barthlow, *AFSC/CFPB*
Jeremy Bonka, *Training and Treatment Innovations*
Kara Fields, *Macomb Community College*
Gerald Fisher-Curly, *John D. Dingell VA Medical Center*
Kyle Pollet, *Office of Congressman Sander Levin*
Jennifer Georgievski, *VA Work Study MDHHS*
Dean Shunk, *Macomb Veteran Services*
Chris Reilly, *Macomb/St. Clair Michigan Works*
David Thomas, *Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency*
Althea Kyles, *Volunteers of America-Warren*
Joe McClellan, *Buddy to Buddy*
Sama Harp, *Macomb Community Action*
Brian Webb, *SOM DHHS*

II. INTRODUCTIONS

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

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members of the group proposed the following corrections to the minutes from February's MVAC meeting:

1. Email address on page 5 should be basil.a.forrest.civ@mail.mil.
2. Mark Kilgore reported 260 sober bowl participants, the minutes state 60 participants.
3. Stephen Boegehold's last name has a type and should be corrected.
4. Page 4 was missing Bill Browning's last name and should be corrected.

A motion was made to approve the minutes with the corrections, Laura Rios 1st, Madeline Habib 2nd, AIF.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

There was no discussion of old business.

V. SPECIAL SPEAKER

1. Jill Ruehlen-A Place for Mom: The special speaker was not able to attend due to illness.
2. Bill Browning-Town Hall Veteran Access Day: The VA Medical Center is working to plan a one day VA access stop for each county. The VA plans to partner with county agencies and other Veteran programs to help participants gather information or apply for benefits. The event is expected to last six hours and the town hall portion will take approximately one hour. The VA has successfully hosted this event in Wayne and Saint Clair counties. Bill advised that he is expecting 100-200 participants to turn out for a Macomb event. The group decided that a date in August would be best but will make sure it does not conflict with Selfridge Air Force Base's 100th Anniversary Celebration on August 19, 2017. Laura Rios and Kara Fields will work together to find out if the event can be held at Macomb Community College.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Benefits/Communication Committee: Laura Rios/Mary Beth Ryan

Laura Rios reported that the Vietnam Veterans Magazine published an article about a dormant parasite that has been linked to certain cancers called Liver Flutes. This affliction is not on the presumptive list but benefits may be awarded to Veterans who contracted the parasite and battled cancer as a result. Laura also informed the group that there is a test available to find out if the parasite is present in the body and a cure is available.

Jobs Committee: Crystal Kinsman/Mark Meadows

Mark Meadows reports that employment programs continue to go well. 52 Veterans from our region received brand new suits and accessories from the Suit Up event. Kelly Services conducted resume reviews and discussed job readiness with Suit Up participants. This event was a prelude to the March 18th Hire Our Heroes Job Fair at the VA. Another Suit Up event will take place in a few weeks but a venue is needed. Veterans participating in the Job Fair should preregister online to ensure that their resume and information is online and available to the employers participating in the event. 112 job offers were made at last year's Hire Our Heroes Job Fair. Mark will distribute the flyer. Mark also informed the group that a Logistics Expo Veteran Hiring event will take place on May 19th. Mark states that Chrysler is hiring hourly employees but GM has not been doing a lot of hiring. He advised that anyone interested in applying at Ford can apply online first but should send their resume to Mark so he can forward it to the hiring contact. Pensk is hiring warehouse employees; McKesson is filling positions for the midnight shift. Waste Management has been working with Mark and MI Works! to conduct knowledge based recruiting efforts at local offices. The company will present their information, answer any questions and then come back a week later to interview applicants. This is a model that is working well for hiring. Joe McClellan made a comment saying that Mark's employment newsletters have helped four people get hired.

Services Committee: Madeline Habib

Madeline Habib reports that the flow charts continue to be updated with current information. The “What to do When a Veteran Dies” and fingerprinting was presented at the Macomb CoC Membership Meeting on February 8th. Madeline is following up with the shelters individually to find out if they are interested in fingerprinting their clients. The transportation flow chart draft is complete and copies were distributed to the group for members to review. Madeline met with Steven Vickhold from DHHS and Julie Kavanagh from Macomb Community Action to draft a flow chart for utility assistance. Madeline also reports another county has contacted her to help them replicate the flow charts for services available in their region. Madeline provided an MVAC Services Committee Report to be attached to the minutes.

Membership Committee: Shaun Taft

Shaun Taft was not present. Laura Rios advised the group that the membership committee is in the process of putting together a welcome package for new members. The package will include a brief history, mission and vision statement and also a current membership roster. One-on-one training is also available to teach new members how to network with existing resources.

Faith Based Committee: Paulus Obey

Paulus Obey was not present. Laura Rios advised the group that this committee was created to recruit the faith based ministries to help Veterans in the congregations. A new chair is needed to help facilitate the committee, create an action plan and put it in motion. Brian Webb advised that he knows of a group of about 40 pastors that meet regularly and may be a good start to gain participation for this committee. Mary Beth Ryan suggested working with retired Military Chaplains; John Drake advised he will head up that effort. Brian Webb stated he can help with information the different groups of what MVAC is and does. Mark Kilgore mentioned there is a group of pastors called Citygate in Eastpointe and another pastor group in Warren.

VII. NEW BUSINESS/IDEAS FOR FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

APRIL SPECIAL SPEAKER: Marianne Frazho - UBHC

MAY SPECIAL SPEAKER: Randy Whitmire, Veterans in Business

VIII. ROUND ROBIN

John Churkin, Michigan State House of Representatives District 22: Coffee hours held once per month at various locations (go to <http://housedems.com/state-rep-john-chirkun> for locations of upcoming coffee hours). John Churkin mentioned that a Veteran came to a coffee hour and asked what the burial process is for deceased veterans, specifically asked about head stones if the Veterans is not being buried at a national cemetery. The Group advised that the Veteran can refer to the flow chart for information on benefits. John Churkin is also interested in the One-on-one Networking training for his staff members.

Sama Harp: Macomb Community Action has ESG funding for Rapid Rehousing. The agency can serve any population, those who are literally homeless and in need of housing should be referred. Prevention funding will also become available within the next few months.

Susan Casadi: Harbor Health Home Care provides skilled services for Veterans, they also provide home care to Veterans and it is covered through the VA. Susan advised that they can contact the Veterans primary care provider and start the process rather than leaving it up to the Veteran to initiate the process. Veterans can call 810-650-1525.

Gabriella Barthlow: Financial coaching is available to Veterans no matter what their financial situation is. She provides all necessary information and resources to Veterans as they need it, Gabriella can be contacted at 586-414-7678.

Laura Rios: Veterans still in need of getting their taxes done can contact 586-463-2537 and schedule an appointment, walk ins are only able to be assisted on Saturday. Laura will send out fliers again.

Joe McClellan: VSO in Muskegan is helping people from the Blue Water Navy get access agent orange benefits. The ship list is available on the VA website.

Mark Kilgore: Mark can provide training on how to administer Narcan and will also provide a dose to keep on hand. He advised that all staff working with the homeless population should be trained. Call Mark at 586-218-5274.

Stephen Boegehold reports to the group that DHHS is half way through the crisis season for gas or electric past due notices, crisis season ends May 31st. Service providers should encourage clients to apply for an SER, as long as application is in by May 31st they may be able to receive assistance. Please refer clients who are having issues applying for services or other problems to Jennifer Georgivski or himself.

Jennifer Georgivski advised the group that she is starting outreach with other agencies to organize a referral process. Jennifer created a facebook page that she posts information to so Veterans can know what is available and know what MVAC is doing for Veterans in our county, flier was distributed. Althea Kyles asked if a DHHS rep can come out to help Veterans apply for benefits, Jennifer advised to add her information to list she passed out.

Gary Purcell reports that the Veteran Support Center receives an average of 20-50 Vets per day with questions and refers people to Veteran Services. They see a need for younger Vets who need services available in the evening as most agencies close around 4pm or 5pm when these Vets are working. The Veteran Support Center is considering staying open with a Veteran Service officer available. A member asked if the food bank serves residents outside of Macomb, Gary advised he will help the person with their food emergency but would refer them to 211 to find food pantries in their county. The group also advised that foodpantry.net is a good resource. Chris Franklin advised their food bank serves all Veterans, and there are no residential requirements (American Indian Veterans of War).

Dean Shunk, Macomb Veteran Services: Provides career services for Veterans who have service related disabilities.

John Drake, Simply Blessed Catering: Thanks the group for all they do for the county's Veterans and as a Veteran he loves the flow charts. He advised he is a happy to help and can be contacted any time.

Mary Beth Ryan reports that the Vets Constructing Communities Foundation is very busy. VCCS Home Care was organized under the group to provide home health care to Veterans. They

decided they will not partner with any other agencies as they are focusing on their goal of hiring Veterans to help Veterans. She is also working with some marketing agencies to get support for Veteran agencies but with one message through one outlet.

Kara Fields: Macomb Community College's Veteran Space has opened. It is a networking area for Veterans who are students and is also being utilized as a meeting space for Vets to meet with agency reps for assistance. Veteran students expressed they want to get to know each other and learn how to serve other Vets. A couple networking events have been organized and she will be reach out to Veteran service agencies to find out about volunteer opportunities.

Madeline Habib: HSBC Traveling Tours are scheduled for March 17 and 18. Contact Madeline for free one-on-one networking training, it only takes 15-20 minutes.

Mark Meadows: The VA is hosting a Workforce Development Round Table in the beginning of April. Information will be available in the newsletter on topics of discussion and how to sign up. Participants should come prepared to network.

Joe McClellan asked about legal services for Veterans, Mark Meadows advised going to the state of Michigan Bar Association website that has a referral process. The group suggested contacting the Macomb County Bar Association for a referral or contacting Veteran Court officers.

David Thomas: This will be his last meeting as he is retiring from the VAA.

John Babcock reports 9 participants in the boot camp. Please refer unemployed Vets to 586-227-8203 to sign up for April's boot camp. The boot camp has a 75% employment rate and MI Works! follows up with Veterans until they are hired.

Laura Rios: Veteran Services will be hiring for a Veteran Services Officer 1.

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Monday, April 3, 2017 starting at 9:00 A.M. in the Verkuilen Building Training & Conference Center, 21885 Dunham Clinton Township, MI 48036

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 A.M. by Laura Rios

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Palmer, Secretary

MVAC SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT - March 6, 2017

- A. The *Homeless Flow Charts* will be updated with new information and then re-posted on the MVAC website, probably by the end of the week.
- B. On February 08, 2017, Laura, Mike Kolb from Vick Funeral Home, and I presented information on the *Before and After a Veteran Dies* flow charts and the portable fingerprinting device. MVAC will need to follow up with the homeless shelters individually to get their buy in.
- C. The draft *Transportation Flow Charts* have been completed. Copies are available at the door. *TM to Fred BARBRET, Laura Rios, VOA, JULIE KAVANAGH*
- D. Bill Doub from Genesee Health System contacted Madeline and requested editable copies of all of our flow charts. These were provided to him electronically.
- E. Madeline met with Stephen Boegelhold from DHHS and Julie Kavanagh from MCA to start the development of flow charts about Utility Assistance.