

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes
Virtual Meeting
Monday, December 05, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:03 A.M.

II. ATTENDEES:

Laura Rios	Sharon Urban	Maxine Butler
Paul Salcepuedes	Gabriella Barthlaw	Pazz Colston
Kara Fields	Mark Kilgore	Gary Purcell
Kayla Dadswell	Darryle Johnson	Keri Sutton
Kathy Koths	Elizabeth Sergeant	Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards
John Babcock	David Hannum	Teena Sawicli
Stephen Boegehold	Elda Cara	Holly Galan
Michael Smith	Joy Innis-Johnson	Tammy Littlefield
Jennifer Georginevski	April Winkelman	Chris Franklin

III. INTRODUCTIONS/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:02 AM

The October 03, 2022 meeting minutes were approved and recorded as written.

IV. SPECIAL SPEAKER:

Joy Innis Johnson – Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E)

The Veteran Readiness and Employment program, formerly called Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment; VocRehab) may be able to assist a VA service-connected Veteran whose disability limits their ability to work. The program offers 5 support and/or services to help Veterans get education or training: Reemployment track; Rapid Access to Employment track; Self Employment track; Employment through long-term services and Independent living track. For more information and eligibility please view their website at [Veteran Readiness And Employment \(Chapter 31\) | Veterans Affairs.](#)

April Winkelman – Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)

MRS is a “Federally funded, State Agency that assists individuals with impediments or disabilities that are barrier to preparing for, finding or keeping a job.” Excerpt from MRS presentation to MVAC. Any individual who has a disability that keeps a person from finding or keeping a job may submit an application for MRS services. MRS provides additional resources and support services such as: disability testing, psychological evaluations and a Functional Capacity exam. A Veteran does not have to have a service connected disability to seek services from MRS. MRS partners with Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) to help their clients find jobs and/or training in 13 different fields and programs. MRS also provides retention services for their clients that includes but is not limited to:

hearing aids, vehicle modifications, assistive technology and accommodation assistance. Please contact April for additional information on these and other MRS services and programs.

V. AGENCY UPDATES/ROUND ROBIN:

Elda Cara introduced herself. She is a case manager with MCA and works with the SSVF program.

Liz Sergent introduced Holly Galan as a new member to the collaborative.

Gabrielle Barthlow attended the U of M women's Stand Down in Dearborn. There were over 100 women Veterans that came to the event. She stated the resources were fantastic and there were lots of "goodie's" for attendees. She networked with many new contacts around the state that will help her assist the Veteran population.

Gary Purcell stated the VVA Operation Christmas is humming right along. They will be delivering on December 17.

Jennifer Georginevski stated that the Vietnam era Veterans have been their primary focus due to the fact that technology can typically be a barrier to this population.

John Babcock stated they will be hosting a hiring event for the Niagara bottling company, which is a new Michigan company. He stated he would post the flyer in the chat box before the end of the meeting.

Joy Inniss-Johnson stated VocRehab was moving to 345 Jefferson. They will be located in the old Michigan basic life insurance building. It is next to Fifth Third Bank and across the street from the Breadbasket and Chase Bank. They will be having an open house soon and will give the details regarding that event as it gets closer.

Kara Fields stated that MCVCAT has an upcoming meeting on 12/9 with Director Adams presenting. She also stated that if a Veteran has a SCD rating, they are eligible for VR&E benefits. The VRE benefits do not take away from his/her Post 911 eligibility. Macomb Community College has started a dental program. They will be offering community dental appointments soon. They have discounted rates for Veterans. Call 586-445-7161 for more information.

Mark Kilgore states they are still trying to grow their Veterans Peer Recovery program for Veterans that may be struggling with or recovering from substance abuse disorders. They have a relapse prevention program. These programs are supported by a peer recovery group that is led by Veterans. Their new Smart recovery program is an alternative to the 12 step program. They also have a job readiness program for Veterans. Veterans will learn what they need to enter the workforce, they will get help with resume and job searches.

Maxine Butler is the donation and volunteer coordinator the Michigan Veterans home in Chesterfield Township. The home is located at 47901 Sugar bush road. They house Veterans with disabilities. They need volunteers to help with various activities and outings. They have a need for volunteers for their No Veteran Dies Alone program. This person will sit with a Veteran from transition until they pass away. They have other upstart programs that are in need of money and volunteers. Please contact Maxine for more information.

Pazz Colston stated the apartment that they were renovating is pretty much done. The carpeting is going in this week. They have one Veteran that is in and she is showing the apartment to another Veteran today.

They have 4 units that will be available. As of right now, they will not be furnishing the apartments. If you have any donations toward the furnishing of the apartments, please let her know. Right now they are in need of apartment size stoves.

VI. VCAT UPDATE/MVAA UPDATES:

Kara stated the VCAT will be Friday December 9 at 10:00 A.M. The main speaker for this event will be Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency Director Adams.

VII. NEXT MEETING: February 06, 2023

TBD

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 AM