

Minutes

Wednesday, January 11, 2023



PRESENT: **Matthew Blackwelder**, District 1; **Patricia McCoy**, American Legion Post 206; **Michael Richardson**, American Legion Post 274; **Robert Sprecher**, American Legion Post 85; **Michael Sweeney**, District 2; **Dr. Brandon Temple**, Educator/Educational Admin Rep; **Melanie Woodson**, BOCC; **Christian Zimmermann**, College of Southern Maryland (CSM).

VIA TEAMS: **Nicole DeRamus**, University of Maryland Global Campus.

ABSENT/EXCUSED: **Meg Faller**, Calvert Library; **Jeff King**, Local Business Owner/Operator; **Michael Wood**, District 3.

GUESTS:. **John Gray**, American Legion Post 220, **Mike Zeruto**, Retired Coast Guard.

CCG STAFF: **Lorraine Joyner**, CCG Liaison; **Lisa Tolomei**, Community Resources Specialist.

Dr. Brandon Temple called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

1. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Determination of a Quorum: We have a quorum.

B. Approval of Agenda: **McCoy** motioned, **Blackwelder** seconded to approve the January 2023 agenda, with Old Business moved up and adding opportunity for Public Comment, all in favor.

C. Approval of December meeting minutes: **Sweeney** motioned, **McCoy** seconded to approve December 2022 meeting minutes as submitted, all in favor.

2. PRESENTATIONS

A. January 2023 Presentation - None

a. University of Maryland Global Campus will present at the February 8 meeting.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING/TACTICAL ACTIVITIES

A. Membership

a. **Subcommittee Workgroup - Sweeney** provided a draft recruitment letter. Chair asked CCG Liaison to email the letter to the members for review and comment. Distribution will be discussed at the February meeting.

b. **John Gray**, American Legion Post 220, a prospective replacement for **Wilson Parran**, was present. Community Resource Specialist will email him the board application.

B. Regional Collaborations:

a. Four County Initiative (**Temple**) – Email group to solicit participation.

- Next meeting, Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

b. **Joint County Veterans Commission (Temple)**

- Next meeting Thursday, January 26, 2023. Brandon will be attending.

c. **Veterans Regional Advisory Committee (Blackwelder)**

- Next virtual meeting, Monday, March 6th, from 9:00 to 10:30
(Sharon Meyer has not yet sent out the meeting invite)

C. **Veterans Resource Guide (CCG Staff Liaison)** - Email document to members and strike from future agendas.

D. **Veterans/Military Events/Observances**

- a. Explore possibility of Proclamation for Month of the Military Child and Gold Star Wives Day. VAC members use Social Media to recruit family members. Brandon's children will participate. What is the definition of a "Military Child?"
- b. CCG Liaison will reserve time on the April 4 BOCC agenda. (The BOCC does not meet on April 11th.)

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. **Veterans Tax Credit (Temple)**

- a. Huge win at January 10 BOCC meeting. They agreed to move all 4 levels Public Hearing in the March-April timeframe. Need to "pack the house."
- b. Brandon will provide an application from one of the county's that has implemented the tax credits. He suspects that the staff currently tasked with reviewing the Tax Credit applications for 100% disabled veterans could complete this review as well.
- c. CMR will assist with social campaign to get help get the word out.

B. **Veteran Court Initiatives (Temple)**

- a. SA Harvey is moving forward on this. Met with Crea Johnson and Joy Ashcroft to compile information on services available to veterans.

C. **Calvert Library Meet & Greet (Temple/Faller)**

- a. Brandon explained the need to avoid a quorum at this type of event to stay in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Send OMA training link to entire committee.
- b. There were 10-15 attendees. All seemed engaged and VAC members were able to provide immediate answers to their questions.
- c. Should we use sign-in sheets and give attendees an opportunity to be added to our email list.

D. **Social Media Activity (CCG Liaison)**

- a. CCG Liaison provided printed update. Members agreed that it would be good to increase the number of "shares."

E. VAC Challenge Coin (CCG Liaison)

- a. Received 500 coins (less 10 that were sent to the BOCC/CA) at a total cost of \$2,210.00—paid out of the County Administrator’s (or possibly CMR’s) budget.
- b. Each member present was given a coin. Plan is to give to future presenters, NJROTC speakers at Memorial Day, individuals who attend BOCC meetings for special proclamations, etc.
- c. CCG Liaison will maintain custody of the coins.

F. 2024 Veterans Job Fair/Budget Request (CCG Liaison)

- a. CCG Liaison observed that while the organization and offerings at the Prince George’s County Veterans Job & Resource Fair were impressive, attendance seemed low.
- b. Mike Richardson suggested partnering with local military base’s Transition Assistance Programs (TAP). Find out when the various bases are launching their programs.

G. Strategic Planning (Brandon)

- a. Specific initiatives for Calendar Year 2023.
 - Veterans Tax Credits – March/April Timeframe
 - Visiting VSO
 - Longer-term—reach out to Carroll County for details on how they implemented their program.
- b. Open discussion of other initiatives
 - Outreach to female veterans—Pat will take the lead, refine the concept and come back to February meeting with a proposal.
 - ≈ Chesapeake Travel Plaza on I-95 has a monument to Female Veterans, dedicated on November 2014. Possibly recruit the artist to come down and speak.
 - ≈ June 12 is Women’s Veterans Day. **DeRamus** will provide contact information for Roslyn Jones, MDVA Women Veterans Program Manager, along with the flyer for upcoming February focus groups.
 - Entrance fee waiver for veterans to county parks—Melanie checked with P&R Department Head and was advised that Veterans do get a 10% discount. A fee schedule is available.
 - Expanded participation in Operation Green Light. Continue Veteran-Owned Small Business and Operation Greenlight proclamations on an annual basis.
 - Reserved parking for Veterans. Examples cited were at the “On Watch” monument and Mission Bar-B-Que.
 - Support for the annual event at the “On Watch” memorial?

- BOCC publishes a weekly calendar to let people know where they are. Explore options for being informed about their planned appearances and activities.
- Coordinate an information campaign about services available locally (Charlotte Hall and Lexington Park).
- Explore ways to be more involved in volunteer efforts at Charlotte Hall.
- Veterans Day or Memorial Day Parade in Chesapeake Beach or Prince Frederick—plan for 2025. Lisa offered to take the lead. Include Sheriff’s Office, State Police, Fire Departments, American Legions, Veteran-Owned Businesses, NJROTC Units. We have parade precedent. Need to research the process.
- Host a flag retirement/disposal ceremony—Post 206 does one annually on June 14th. Distribute disposal bins at additional locations (Library, Court House). Check to see if county is okay with installing one at the courthouse.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Next meeting February 8, 2023

6. INFORMATION SHARING

- A. Secretary George Owings tendered his resignation, effective Tuesday, January 10, 2023.
- B. Brandon reported that a bill passed the house to allocate Federal funding for local jurisdictions to hire VSOs.
- C. Mike Richardson distributed the “Toxic Exposure Screening Information form.” VA is openly taking a look because military personnel have been exposed to a wide variety of chemicals. Huge list of illnesses—if you were in identified places at prescribed times, it is presumptive that you are eligible for a higher level of medical care. Help spread the information. VA cautions everyone to go thru the VA for support.
- D. Walkthrough of the armory tomorrow, 1:30 to 2:30 pm, to identify any historical artifacts that need to be preserved.
- E. Brandon met with HR Recruitment team. HR’s will partner with the Veterans Local Government Management Fellowship to host a 6-month fellowship. There is no requirement to take this to the BOCC but Melanie has drafted a memo to inform them about the initiative. We can be share this information with the TAPS program at local bases.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

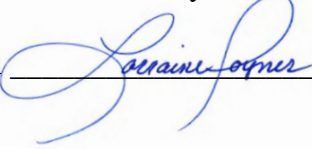
- A. None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

The next meeting is Wednesday, February 8, 2023.

Adopted on the 8th day of February 8, 2023 – minutes transcribed by Lorraine Joyner

Signed  _____

Date: February 8, 2023.