

**ADVISORY BOARD ON VETERANS AFFAIRS**



**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, 5 September 2017  
11th floor, Suite 1114  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW/One Judiciary Square  
Washington DC 20001  
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

- I.** Called to Order by Interim Vice Chairman Spangenberg at 1840.
- II.** Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Jones.
- III.** Advisory Board Members Roll Call
  - A) Voting Members Present (8): Adebayo, Curry, Dalzell, Finnegan, Jones, Locks, Miller, Spangenberg
  - B) Voting Members Absent (11, plus 2 excused): Dier (military duty), Grant, Khan, Lampkin, Mack, Mate, McClendon, Moore, Pridemore (deployed), Sydnor, White, Williams, Wynn
  - C) Ex-officio members present: Preston
  - D) Ex-officio members absent: Black, Treadwell, Gibson, Honore, Strickland, Tobin
  - E) 8 voting members were present, so there was not a quorum.
- IV.** Approval of Agenda: Lacking a quorum, no vote taken, but meeting proceeded.
  - A) Approval of minutes from July and August was scheduled, but no votes were taken in absence of a quorum.
  - B) Minutes are found as attachments under their respective meeting at <https://www.open-dc.gov/public-bodies/advisory-board-veterans-affairs>
- V.** Special Guests
  - A) Denise Krepp, ANC 6B10 commissioner ([http://www.anc6b.org/?page\\_id=20](http://www.anc6b.org/?page_id=20))
    - 1. Ms. Krepp is a former Coast Guard JAG and the daughter of Army officers.
    - 2. She said she was inspired by events to ask for the board's support in dealing with three concerns.
      - a. She was recently at a public school function where the national anthem without proper respect (no standing or hands over hearts).
        - i. She suggested the board engage with schools about teaching customs and courtesies regarding the national anthem.

- b. She's been working to improve the Eastern High School, the closest to her neighborhood.
  - i. She is trying to get veterans into Eastern to talk to students, especially to help them make good choices now.
  - ii. This isn't necessarily about students going into the military, but that can be an opportunity for them.
- c. Regarding the nomination process for service academies, she is wondering if DC is fully taking advantage of that path for students.
  - i. She wondered if Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton is nominating everyone she can, and if she's getting enough applicants to have good nominees.
  - ii. Students need to start pushing in middle school so they have the grades they need.
- d. Q&A topics included the following.
  - i. Is it true that DC is not using all its academy slots?
    - i. Mr. Preston said his American Legion post is working with JROTC to educate them about what's available
    - ii. Mr. Spangenberg is on the nominating board
      - 1. USCGA is direct application. Other four academies have both school application and nomination steps.
      - 2. Rep. Norton can have up to five nominees at each school at any one time. His opinion is that she seems to do a good job managing the flow, but could be more students.
    - iii. The failure starts with not getting applicants, but they can also fall out of the pipeline at other points.
  - ii. JROTC is all-volunteer (was mandatory at one time); it has lots of students but only a few instructors.
  - iii. Mr. Spangenberg said he would connect Ms. Krepp with a board member interested in working with Eastern.
    - i. Possible events include going over on Veterans Day, Poppy Day in May. The schools seem to be open to such visits. Many kids have relatives who have served, and like to talk about them
    - ii. Veterans' Day the next target – MOVA could connect through Board with these events
  - iv. Ms. Krepp said she is also working with Brent School to expose students to the Navy, by visiting the Navy Museum, for example.
  - v. She and the board discussed Selective Service issues
  - vi. Another possible connection is to the Travis Manning Foundation. TMF has given speeches at Eastern, and their Character Does Matter program seems to fit what she is looking for. This isn't a recruiting tool, but gives connection, mentoring, etc. The target is middle and high school students

- e. All this connects back to importance of connecting with ward meetings
  - i. Mr. Curry recently spoke at an ANC 5E meeting, and noted it would help to have info on the MABVA, in a handout form.
  - ii. What else could the board do with ANCs? Could also help veteran's groups get involved with local neighborhoods. For example, the Capitol Hill American Legion post has a Veterans' Day party at Folger Park and inside building.
- f. Mr. Preston said he is trying to promote holding JROTC events like military ball at the Armory, etc. He suggested the board have contact with COL Compton (JROTC commander). See <http://easternhighschooldc.org/intro/junior-rotc/> for some additional information.

## VI. Director's Report

A) Director Ross was out of town. Mr. Tommingo reported on MOVA's activities.

B) Operations:

1. 1 claims counseling day (7 Vets seen)
2. 2 vocational rehabilitation counseling days from Dept of Disability Services (12 Vets seen)
3. Attended the George Washington Univ VALOR Tailgate (150 Student Vets)
4. MOVA DC Community Resource guide complete and posting to Website
5. Build A Dream Workshop with Department of Small and Local Business Development.
  - a. This is a three-evening (5-8pm) course for entrepreneurial ideas utilizing the lean canvas model, which replaces the elaborate business plan with a single page business model. The focus is on the business content and not presentation. The idea is that it saves money for product testing. 38 of the 40 Spots have been filled. They will repeat the course in Spring 2018.
  - b. DSLB has a new employee who's a Coast Guard veteran.
6. Hosting the One-day, Veteran Small Business Boot Camp with Veterans Business Outreach Center, Sept 25. At last count, 41 Veterans have signed up
  - a. Focus is on the idea of planning, how to get into incubation sites and other practical steps.
  - b. Working a proposal to waive business license fees – this would be a big boost to start-ups. Will include in an update on the website to build a set of "welcome back" resources.
7. VA Mental Health Summit on Sept 12<sup>th</sup>, with MOVA hosting in the Old Council Chambers.
8. "Improving Mental Health Services of Veterans and their Family Members"
9. MOVA Newsletter has 5,200 Veterans on it. Releasing once a month.
10. Nov 7<sup>th</sup>, MOVA will hold a DD-214 upgrade clinic with the Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program. Goal is to review 70-80 cases and identify candidates for the DoD DD-214 Upgrade Boards. Will assign those cases to lawyers working pro bono.

11. Saturday, Nov 11<sup>th</sup> is the Veterans Day of Service project coordinated by VSOs (Mission Continues is lead VSO), SaferStrongerDC (Community Reps) and MOVA (City Agencies, Mayor presence). MOVA working with DCPD to close the street, etc.
  - a. Teams will revitalize two playgrounds in the Carver and Langston Communities (Ward 5, NE DC). The Mayor will give remarks and all will have a block party BBQ afterward.
  - b. MOVA has met with leadership councils, and will have kids move over to the other neighborhood to work on the projects. They will be pulling from the community and advertising with the board.
  - c. Mr. Curry asked when we'll get some kind of shirt, hat, etc. so we can be identified as board members when we do outside events.
  - d. Mr. Miller volunteered to help pull together POCs at the VSOs.
12. Opportunity for input – looking at developing a D.C. specific transition class.

C) Updates:

1. DCHiresVets followup:
  - a. 15 veterans obtained jobs within DC Govt from DCHR as of Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Tommingo expects 5-10 to get jobs with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) after interviews on Sept 9<sup>th</sup>. They are still following up with private industry, many from PwC, NYLife and HomeDepot.
  - b. The next event, “DCHiresVets 2.0,” is planned for April 4, 2018. DCHR and others excited to participate the next time. Will move interview and resume workshops to a few weeks before the event, so they are ready at the event.
2. MOVA’s Veterans Transportation Plan has been funded and it is currently being planned.
  - a. The MOU has been completed with the Dept of For Hire Vehicles (DFHV). 2,500 discounted taxi rides (\$5 max) for Veterans on a pre-approved list. Fiscal Year (October 1<sup>st</sup>) kickoff.
  - b. Goal is for this to be a recurring program, with full funding and matching funds from WMATA or other organizations.

D) Upcoming Events:

1. September 13 & 27– Veterans Roundtable, in MOVA conference room, 12-2pm, suite 870N
2. September 19 – Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, DDS
3. September 21 – Claims Counseling, American Legion
4. September 12 – VA Mental Health Summit
5. September 12-14 – DSLBD Veteran Build a Dream Workshop
6. September 25 – Small Business Boot Camp
7. October 3- October Advisory Board Meeting

**VII.** Old Business (Chairman/Director)

- A) The interim Vice Chairman is still seeking a Chair for Homeless Veterans Committee. No one stepped forward at this meeting.

- B) Mr. Locks reviewed the effort to revise the policy on attendance, including proxy voting and telephonic attendance. He is waiting for update from Mr. Ross on what the government (Office of Talent and Appointments) will let us do, and waiting for input from board about what we would like to do.
- C) Headshots and one-paragraph bios are still needed from several board members for website (MOVA)

### **VIII.** New Business (Chairman/Director)

- A) Joel working on SSA compliance in DC.
  - 1. Has one of the lowest compliance rates. It's required under law, a felony to not register even if not enforced, to provide fairness if it were ever needed.
  - 2. More immediately important is that people can only register before age 26; after that you can put jobs and training programs at risk and have no way to undo it. He urged committee members to help share that message.
  - 3. Mr. Curry said he went to DMV, city employees there don't understand why people are trying to register there. MOVA or MABVA need to engage with DMV. Mr. Spangenberg said he will follow up with his POC at DMV.
    - a. The board discussed reasons why would people opt out? Reasons included distrust from how the draft was done before, confusing registration with requesting information for enlistment. A minority are actually opposed to military service.
    - b. The board also discussed the generational stigma against military service.
    - c. Mr. Finnegan asked whether focusing on this issues is an appropriate use of board member's time. Others think it's vital for the community and connected to veterans' service.
- B) Mr. Preston spoke about the Soldier's Wish program (<https://www.soldierswish.org>)
  - 1. A terminally ill veteran's last wish was to come to DC to visit the Vietnam Memorial Wall. SW helped him do this, and the American Legion hosted a reception for them.
  - 2. A former Marine corporal was jobless, with two kids and no spouse. SW was able to get him \$1,000, matched by the American Legion, and help him find a job.
  - 3. Mr. Preston suggested the Board and MOVA try to share information about this program with veterans in our area and help them submit requests for help.

### **IX.** Committee Reports (Vice Chairman)

- A) We are still working through hardware issues to allow committee chairs to show their slides on a screen.
- B) Economic resiliency (Finnegan)
  - 1. Talking with Ely about Financial literacy workshop in October, linking American Legion and student veterans.
- C) Education (Dalzell)
  - 1. Focus is on compiling POC information on both university veteran-service offices and student-veteran groups. Ms. Adebayo has compiled the former, and the committee is working with Mr. Ross on the latter.
  - 2. Committee would like to find a student veteran to serve as a community member on the committee.

D) Disabled Veterans (Miller)

1. Mr. Finnegan and Mr. Curry volunteered to join the committee.

**X.** Public Comment (Maximum 2 minute per person)

**XI.** Upcoming (Events/Meetings/Holidays)

A) 3 October: Next board meeting

1. Mr. Dalzell will be traveling and unable to attend. He will post the agenda the week prior.
2. Mr. Locks will take the roll, Ms. Adebayo will record the minutes.

**XII.** The meeting was adjourned at 2010 hours.