

## ADVISORY BOARD ON VETERANS AFFAIRS



**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, 7 February 2017**  
**11th floor, Room 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 Chairman Wingo at 1800

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Advisory Board Members Roll Call**

A) Roll was called and a quorum was present. By-name attendance to be provided later.

**IV. Old business**

A) Mr Wingo introduced the by-law amendment proposed by Mr. Dalzell at the December meeting, regarding the election of interim officers when needed. A motion to approve the amendment as written was made, seconded, and carried by voice vote.

**V. Approval of Minutes**

A) Minutes from December 2016 and January 2017 were approved

**VI. Director's Report**

A) Director Ross reported on MOVA's activities over the last month and to follow-up on some of the issues/questions raised by the Board at previous meetings. These included the following:

1. The Mayor and other dignitaries opened the new Conway House on North Capitol Street. This is an innovative affordable housing model for vets and non-vets.
2. He is working to provide onsite legal services.
3. He met with three community partners, one veterans' transitional house, three Federal partners, and five District agencies.
4. He continued work with the No Wrong Door Initiative – and is very excited about this project.
5. He joined The Mission Continues for a community service project in Ward 8 on MLK day.
6. His office helped the Washington D.C. VAMC set up for Winterhaven. Winterhaven was a huge success, with more than 700 vets in the building, of whom 200+ visited the OVA table.

7. Programs at the DC VA Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC) are coming together. A big step is that the CRRC will now screen interested veterans for eligibility to live at the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

- B) In answer to a question about homeless veterans, the Director informed the board that the city just completed the “Point in Time” (PIT) count of all homeless people in the city; he expects new numbers this summer.
- C) Progress was also made on communications. The OVA’s first newsletter is out, and the website is being updated. The latter includes new data breakdown of veterans in all eight wards, which he expects will challenge perceptions.
- D) There was a discussion of ways to support veteran-owned businesses. These include an event at the Veterans Business Opportunity Center on February 24 (Secretary’s note: this seems to be the event listed at <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/event/washington-dc-hiring-fair-and-networking-reception-american-legion>), and a VFW hiring fair in Kenilworth.
- E) February 24 is also the Director’s oversight hearing before the Committee on Government Operations. While tentatively scheduled for 10 am in Room 412 of the Wilson Building, this could be an all-day event.
- F) A planned suicide prevention and awareness event has been postponed.

## **VII. New business**

- A) One member raised the issue of the board getting involved in welcome home events for units returning from deployments.
- B) The director suggested the board consider creating a veterans’ caregivers subcommittee, in response to a call from the Elizabeth Dole Foundation’s National Movement for Military and Veteran Caregivers (<http://www.elizabethdolefoundation.org/hiddenheroescoalition/>)

## **VIII. Committees**

- A) Government Affairs
  - 1. The committee is still pushing for a reply to its prior proposals. The Director noted that the proposal to create a DC Veterans Hall of Fame might not need action by the city council, but could be done by the OVA or the board themselves.
- B) Social Media
  - 1. There was discussion about the need for a permanent social media committee. Reasons both pro and con were offered, with no decision taken.
- C) Incarcerated vets
  - 1. Interest continues in promoting the creation of a Veterans’ Court. This has been raised to the District’s Attorney General, and supporters are seeking backers on the City Council.

**IX. Special Guests:** Mr. Ross introduced Sequoyah Adebayo, Director of UDC’s Veterans Service Office (<http://www.udc.edu/military/>) and Brenda Campbell, from Give an Hour (<https://www.giveanhour.org>).

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

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

- A) See above

B) Next meeting will be March 7<sup>th</sup>.

**XII. Adjournment** was at 1940.