

## VETERANS' COMMITTEE MEETING

**November 15, 2006 – 1:30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Chairman Lucia; Supervisors Hunter, Raymond, Richardson, Trottier; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Bob Mitchell, Veterans' Service Agency; Kate Jeanson, Publications Specialist; Harry Candee, NYS Dept. of Veterans' Affairs; Gene Corsale, Veterans' Volunteer; Christopher Sgambati, Co-Chair, Deceased Veterans' Honors

Chairman Lucia called the meeting to order.

Mr. Trottier moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 12<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Hunter seconded. Unanimous.

Mr. Mitchell said a few weeks ago, he attended a veterans' V.A. health care seminar for two days. He said one big concern is how can we out reach the guys in Operation Iraq Freedom when they get discharged. The people we are not reaching are the ones coming back from the war, going back to their unit and going home, he said. Only 30% have been outreached into the V.A. system, he added. We are talking about the younger members who for some reason are not touching base with the V.A. to help with benefits, he stated. He said for a couple of weeks, Dutchess County had radio spots getting the word out, and it did draw a few people. We also have to out reach to the parents and spouses. We need more ideas how we can get these people in to be serviced, he said. He said he does have a monthly newspaper column and he writes letters to different organizations. Ms. Raymond asked if there was anything on the County website. Mr. Mitchell said no. Ms. Raymond said we should arrange to have Mr. Mitchell's monthly column uploaded to the website as well. Mr. Trottier said it would be beneficial for Mr. Mitchell to make a visit to some of the bases. Mr. Mitchell said he is trying to do that. Ms. Raymond suggested developing a brochure that can be sent to the units.

Mr. Candee requested Mr. Mitchell to contact the units to get his name on their lists. He said they cue family members in on what they might expect. He said they do the family first before the soldier comes back. Chairman Lucia said being on the web site is an easy fix, and a brochure should be in line to pass out. Mrs. Jeanson suggested putting a public service announcement in some of the local papers and on cable t.v. Ms. Raymond said a copy of the information should be sent to all of the Supervisors to post

in their town halls. Chairman Lucia said he makes copies of things that he receives from Mr. Mitchell's office and gives the copies to his town board. Ms. Raymond said the web is where young people go for everything. Maybe the ad that is put out could be put on the towns' web sites also, she said.

Mr. Candee said in Clifton Park, a female soldier came back from Iraq, and she recently committed suicide. He said she could have received counseling. The point is, we are hitting all the guys, and we also need to address the female population coming back, he said. Mr. Trottier said wouldn't that be done with the ads that will be put out. Mr. Candee said yes, but we have to specifically state "males and females."

Mr. Corsale requested the Committee to consider videotaping the Honor A Deceased Veteran programs, as we are losing a lot of good oral history, and this program is well received by the public. We are in our 7<sup>th</sup> year with this program, and it would be a good idea, he said. He stated he talked with some video people, and he distributed a flier from Pillar Video who is agreeing to videotape this program at a cost of \$125/month. This includes 4 DVD copies – two for the family, one for the County Veterans' Committee, and one for the Military Museum. Mr. Corsale said he believes it is necessary to capture these moments for historical purposes. This will add to the luster we have in this program, he stated. He said over the years, a lot of the next of kin of the deceased veterans asked if the programs were video taped, he said. Ms. Raymond suggested negotiating the fee so that more copies could be obtained for the family. Possibly two or three copies for the family, she said. Mr. Hellwig stated this would be covered with a minor contract along with an insurance certificate. **It was the consensus of the Committee to negotiate a fee with Pillar Video for the video taping of the Honor A Deceased Veteran program.** Mr. Corsale said we have good programs coming up in November and December – husband and wife teams, he said.

Chairman Lucia said next year's probable Chairman of the Board would like to have another concert. Mrs. Jeanson said she contacted Mike McGee of the Army Field Band who wondered when they could be here again. They are really well received, she said. Ms. Raymond asked if the concert could be tied in with the Veterans' Assistance Night. Maybe that could be held during the daytime and then move that right into the evening concert, she said. Chairman Lucia said he didn't believe so, because a lot of the time, we

do presentations at the Veterans' Assistance Night. He asked if a contract would be needed for the concert. Mr. Hellwig said not until later on when you will want approvals for fireworks, etc.

Ms. Raymond said we should poll veterans' groups to see what kinds of events they feel would be appropriate. Mr. Mitchell said he will get letters out to all post commanders in Saratoga County. He said we still have Military Day at the Race Track. Ms. Jeanson said we will be looking at doing something at the Fair. Ms. Raymond suggested seeing if NYRA would donate a box during the length of the meet and then do a lottery with the veterans' groups. Maybe the bunting could be put on it as their special box, she said.

Chairman Lucia said he received an e-mail from Supervisor Keyrouze who was advised by one of her constituents that one of the names on the Veterans' Monument was spelled wrong. Mrs. Jeanson said it is the name of the fellow who wrote the poem that is inscribed on the Monument. She said she called the company about it. The letters are a pretty good size, and they said it can be fixed for \$125. Ms. Raymond said a mistake on the Monument should immediately be brought forward and taken care of immediately.

Chairman Lucia said in case this is the last meeting of the year, he wished everyone a safe and happy holiday.

Mr. Trottier thanked Chairman Lucia for letting him work on the Moving Wall.

On a motion by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Hunter, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann