

Veterans' Committee Minutes  
June 3, 2013 – 3:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman M. Johnson; Supervisors Collyer, Kinowski, Lucia, Richardson, and Southworth; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Felipe Moon, Veterans' Director; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Courtney Slade, Justice Outreach Coordinator from the VA in Albany; Press.

Chairman M. Johnson called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**On a motion made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Lucia the minutes of the May 6, 2013 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mrs. Johnson said last year the committee touched on doing a Justice Outreach Program which never materialized. Since then, Mr. Moon has done a lot of outreach working with Courtney Slade, Outreach Coordinator for the VA in Albany. Mrs. Johnson introduced Ms. Slade to the committee.

Ms. Slade said the Outreach program is federally funded through the VA and covers 18 counties. She said her role is to help assist Veterans who are eligible for VA care to get them linked with treatment, benefits, and resources. One of the main missions of the program is to have a no wrong door approach, and providing a strong network of support through organizations that could potentially work with Veterans.

Ms. Slade said most of her referrals come from the county jail and she is looking for an endorsement from the Board of Supervisors to be able to work with the Sheriff's Department a little more. Ms. Slade said after meeting with the DA there was an idea that they might be able to participate in training for District Attorney's and law enforcement to provide them with the resources that she has. Ms. Slade said she developed a contact card that contains information for benefits, resources, treatment resources, mental health, substance abuse, and the combat veteran treatment program located in Albany.

Mrs. Johnson said she will speak to the Sheriff to see if he would be interested in participating in the Justice Outreach Program.

Mr. Kinowski suggested that Ms. Slade reach out to the Association of Towns.

Mrs. Johnson said the subcommittee met to discuss the upcoming ceremony at the National Cemetery that will take place on June 29<sup>th</sup>. It is anticipated that the invitations will be sent out by the end of the week. The programs are completed and 90% of the work is done she said. She encouraged all committee members to attend.

Mr. Moon distributed his executive summary to all committee members for their review.

The following initiatives were outlined:

**Veterans Self Sufficiency** – The Veterans Employment Task Force developed a survey targeting 770 unemployed veterans who are collecting unemployment insurance or have exhausted their unemployment insurance. A portion of the surveys were snail mailed and others were emailed. Fifty survey responses were received within 48 hours.

On June 12, 2013 Dan Perkins and Kimberly Haviland from the NYS Dept. of Labor and Lisa Scaccia, Director of Saratoga County Employment and Training will join Mr. Moon in a meeting with the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce HR Council as representatives of the Veterans Employment Task Force. The meeting will be facilitated by Ms. Romeo (VP, Saratoga Chamber of Commerce) to discuss the benefits of hiring a Veteran and the idea of conducting a Veterans Hiring Conference.

**Veterans Justice Outreach** – On May 13, 2013, Mrs. Slade met with District Attorney, James Murphy, and Probation Director, Steven Bayle. Mr. Murphy embraced the mission and agreed to reach out to the local judges that would be amenable to establishing a ‘Veterans’ Court. He also agreed to allot some time for Ms. Slade to give a class regarding the VJO mission and intent. Mr. Murphy is going to set up a follow up meeting to discuss protocols on how to identify a person as a Veteran as soon as possible.

Mr. Moon said the next step would be to contact the Saratoga County Sheriff for support.

**Peer to Peer Program** – The program has been operating at a measured pace since January 18<sup>th</sup> and a kickoff event will be held on June 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the NYS Military Museum/Research Center. All three programs will be attending as panel guests for the United Way on June 18<sup>th</sup>. The event will give the program more exposure and set the program up for financial support when the State funds are no longer available. An area of focus will be to work with the other programs in the Capital District to exchange ideas and resources.

**Veterans Trust Fund Initiative** – Mr. Moon will begin soon to plan the Veterans Day 5k run in coordination with members of the YMCA and other fitness clubs. He is waiting for the County Attorney for his opinion regarding the liability decision regarding the idea of a Motorcycle “Poker Run” event.

The United Way has pledged their support to assist in Marketing and possibly fund raising for the program.

Mr. Moon will coordinate a meeting with a Crowd Funding Manager and Mr. Moore to verify if this is a viable method to support our trust fund.

**Saratoga County Veterans’ Alliance** - Mr. Moon has been meeting with individuals to build a core group to include business members of the Chamber and recommendations from Mr. McDonald.

Mr. Moon distributed a copy of the claims status report to all committee members for their review.

Mrs. Johnson said, moving forward, she would like Mrs. Hughes to give a monthly report to the committee with regard to the Peer to Peer Program.

Mrs. Johnson highlighted the following upcoming events for June:

- Patriot Guards ceremony at the National Cemetery – June 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.
- Peer to Peer Kick Off at the Military Museum on June 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.
- Memorial Ceremony at National Cemetery for Marine Anthony J. Denier at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Moore said the Memorial Highway bill passed unanimously in the State Senate on Wednesday, May 29th and is now in the Assembly Transportation Committee.

Mr. Moon said there is an honorably discharged service member that is in school. He requested help for this Veteran through the Veterans Trust fund to help him complete his school and training. Mrs. Johnson said the individual owes two month's rent on his property and if it is not paid he will be homeless.

**A motion was made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to approve a withdrawal from the Veterans Trust Fund of \$500. Unanimous.**

**On a motion made by Mrs. Southworth, seconded by Mr. Lucia the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Sansom