

Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

An advisory board to the Clark County Council

August 10, 2023

Chair: Michael Harding

Vice Chair: Shannon Roberts

Secretary: Bruce Maas

Meeting called to order.

Roll Call: [Bold script indicates presence at meeting]

POST

40 et 8

American Legion #14

American Legion #44

American Legion #168

American Legion #176

American Veterans #6

Camas Post 27

DAV Chapter #4

Korean War Assoc. #321

Marine Corps League #826

VFW #4278

VFW #7824

Vietnam Vets #512

Members at Large

PRIMARY

Gene Couture

Darren Wertz

Bob Nichols

Thomas Phillips

John Lovejoy

Wes Forgey

Bruce Maas

Earl Edwards

Steve Slegers

Shannon Roberts

Michael Harding

Greg Whitson

Kelly Jones

Bryan McGillis

Tonya Wark

Tamara Elam

Megan Anderson

ALTERNATE

Steve Slegers

Charles Ingalls

Michael Gibson

Vanise Pratt

Shawn O'Neil

Tom Cousino

Dixie Hotaling

John Stofiel

Dana Difford

Nick Herber

Clark County Representative: Emily Langston

Guests: CVTV23, Janet Snook (Clark County); **Judy Russel** (Clark County Veterans Assistance Center); **Dale Whitley** (Council for the Homeless); **Kara Siebert** (Lifeline Connections); **Melanie Smith** (VA VASH), **Judith Johnson**

Approval of June 8, 2023, meeting minutes

The minutes were approved following a motion by Bob Nichols that was seconded by Thomas Phillips.

Homelessness in Clark County

Dale Whitley with Council for the Homeless provided an overview of the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, a single night snapshot, usually the last Thursday of January. In 2023, the count took place on January 26. The PIT Count collects data on people experiencing literal homelessness: living in shelters, living in unsheltered environments, and living in transitional housing. Sheltered and transitional housing counts are based on HMIS data; unsheltered count involves outreach workers and volunteers canvassing the streets and known encampments, attendees at Project Homeless Connect, and non-HMIS locations. Compared to 2022, the unsheltered count was up eight percent; emergency shelter count was up ten percent due to additional shelter capacity created in the community; transitional housing was up nine percent due to increased capacity; and veteran count was up 28 percent. Those experiencing chronic homelessness was up 54 percent primarily due to increased outreach services; and domestic survivors was up 122 percent. More families counted in sheltered locations than unsheltered locations for the first time. Additional information available on the Council for the Homeless website dashboard.

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Committee Reports

Appeals: None. Ron Fryer resigned from the board, so Gene Couture, vice chair, will now serve as chair. Bob Nichols will join the committee.

Policies and Procedures: Discussion centered on establishing priorities before meetings.

May and June 2023, Contractor & Fund reports

The fund assisted 48 Veteran households in both May and June. The Veterans Assistance Center received 467 veteran visits in May and 483 visits in June. The Free Clinic billed \$789 in May and \$3,736 in June. WDVA filed 822 claims with a 90 percent acceptance. The Fund balance at the end of June was \$821,029.

Veterans Assistance Center (VAC) Update

- CCVAC has been meeting with one County Councilor regarding veterans' fund levy.
- Assistance fund serving over 200 meals/week.
- Three staff going to WDVA conference next week.
- WDVA administration team coming to CCVAC 2pm., August 21, to find ways to help SW Washington veterans.
- There have been no appeals.
- Stand Down at Armed Forces Reserve Center, September 29. Donations appreciated. Dental van not confirmed.
- Only 70 VSO claims outstanding now.

Old Business

- Central Park Place and Freedom's Path security still concerning. Melanie Smith addressing.

New Business

No discussion.

Open Forum

- POW/MIA display at ilani.
- Election of officers coming up soon. Members at Large must submit Letters of Intent annually, but Organizations can renew in alternate years, so will not be required to file this year.
- Delta Park PowWow recognized veterans.
- Chinook Winds awards medals for anyone who served Labor Day weekend.
- Post 4278 is representing all posts at Clark County Fair.
- Windhaven fundraiser ride at ilani, August 26, 7am. Entry fee of \$30 per vehicle and \$10 per passenger requested. Online registration available. Lifeline Connections provides equine services free for veterans through donations. Equine therapy has proven success rate for PTSD, anxiety, and other stressors. Services provided as group or individual. Veteran band playing music.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting September 14, 2023