

VAB Agenda – March 13, 2025

- I. Call to Order, Pledge, Invocation, Roll Call (action)**
- II. Executive Session (discussion)**
- III. Vote on Ron Brandon reinstatement (action)**
- IV. Approval of February 13, 2025 minutes (action)**
- V. Committee Reports (info)**
- VI. Member Roles and Responsibilities Presentation (info)**
- VII. January 2025 Contractor and Fund Reports & 2024 Year-End Report (info)**
- VIII. Veterans Assistance Center Updates (info)**
- IX. Veterans Assistance Center Budget Modification Request (Action)**
- X. Old Business (info)**
- XI. New Business (info)**
- XII. Open Forum (info)**
- XIII. Adjourn**



Agenda Item II. Call to Order/Pledge/Invocation/Roll Call



Executive Session



Vote on Ron Brandon reinstatement



Agenda Item IV. Approval of February 13th minutes

Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes An advisory board to the Clark County Council February 13, 2025

Chair: Bob Nichols

Vice Chair: Kelly Jones

Secretary: Bruce Maas

Meeting called to order.

Roll Call: [Bold script indicates presence at meeting; *italics indicates excused*]

POST

40 et 8
American Legion #14
American Legion #44
American Legion #168
American Legion #176
American Veterans #6
DAV Chapter #4
Korean War Assoc. #321
Marine Corps League #826
VFW #4278
VFW #7824
Vietnam Vets #512
Members at Large

PRIMARY

Bob Brennan
Gene Couture
Darren Wertz
Bob Nichols
Michael Gibson
John Lovejoy
Bruce Maas
Patrick Locke
Steve Slegers
Shannon Roberts
Greg Gilbertson
Greg Whitson
Kelly Jones
Bryan McGillis
Tonya Wark
Tamara Elam
Megan Anderson
Eli Gonzalez
Michael Langsdorf
Lloyd Bowman
Buck Marr
Joe Fettig

ALTERNATE

Charles Ingalls
Jonathan Frederick
Vanise Pratt
Roy Day
Earl Edwards
Ron Brandon
Thomas Brandt
Stewart Bauer
Nick Herber

Clark County Representative: Abby Molloy, Nooreen Ebrahim

Guests: Judy Russel (Clark County Veterans Assistance Center); Lori Pugh (CCVAC?); Mike Burton (Veteran); Tony Sprague (Office of Marie Gluesenkamp-Perez)

2025 Member at Large Appointments

A motion to approve the Letters of Intent for Member at Large Appointments of Bryan McGillis was made by Buck Marr and seconded by Tonya Wark. Approved unanimously.

Approval of January 9, 2025 meeting minutes

The minutes were approved following a motion by Greg Gilbertson that was seconded by Tonya Wark. Approved unanimously.

Committee Reports

Appeals: None

Policies and Procedures: The committee met with members of the Veteran's Assistance Center, and proposed changes were sent to the board by County staff. The board discussed Section 2.2 of the board's Policies and Procedures. A motion to approve changes was made by Shannon Roberts and seconded by Greg Gilbertson. The motion was approved by all active board members.

Nominations: None

Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes An advisory board to the Clark County Council February 13, 2025

Marie Gluesenkamp Perez Office's Presentation- Tony Sprague

- Mr. Sprague introduced himself as a caseworker from Congresswoman Gluesenkamp-Perez's office that deals directly with VA cases.
- Would like to discuss the board's view of the VA claims process as the Congresswoman values the veteran population and is on the Appropriations Committee which gives her an opportunity to fight for VA funding.
- Number of executive orders that are incoming, and the policy team needs to come to terms with the scope of these implications.

Questions and Comments:

Q: Can the Congresswoman's office dive into the veteran's fund in Clark County due to the RCW? Perhaps she could work on getting funds separated from the county's general fund.

A: Happy to take this concern to the congresswoman and to D.C.

Q: With the updates and changes due to executive orders, there is concern it will affect the claims process.

A: While they have not learned the full rational behind the current executive orders, Tony will share contact information with colleagues in D.C. to share more information with the board.

Q: There is a freeze on sending new glasses out, and it may be so for 3 months. Why is this the case?

A: The office has heard this complaint, and casework is being completed.

Q: Anything that the congresswoman is working on or needs assistance with?

A: Cannot speak on the policy side.

The board shared comments about the positive experiences they have had with the service providers in Clark County. A suggestion was made to allow more diversity in the types of medications that can be prescribed, as the VA tends to offer the cheapest available options.

December 2024 Contractor & Fund Reports

- CCVAC: 62 Veterans served in December, services totaling \$35,336. 53 male veterans, 6 female veterans, 3 widows, 0 other veterans. 14 denials, 0 subject to appeals. 694 visits to the center for essentials and food, 984 sack breakfasts/lunches provided and 116 food boxes provided. 5,750 total pounds of food. 816.5 volunteer hours, totaling \$33,476.50 in value.
- Free Clinic: 2 Veterans served in December. Services totaled \$3,900 in value; billed \$5,479.48.
- WDVA: Fourth quarter- 665 claims, 85% "batting average", \$779,314 VA payments
- VAF Fund: October revenue: \$4,679.50; expenditures: \$77,770.07 fund balance: \$609,862.92.

Clark County Veterans Assistance Center Update

- Bingo fundraiser had a great turnout
- Gala in June at Ilani. Would like to see a large turnout from the board
- Thank you to the board for approving policy increases
- With food costs increasing, last January's costs were \$2,347 on top of the food bank's contribution, an increase to the budget is anticipated. Average age of those that need food boxes are 65 and older.
- Women's veterans listening session registration is almost closed.

Old Business

None presented.

New Business

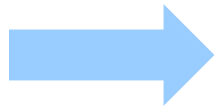
- Buck Marr shared that HBI 102 would increase services throughout the state and increase VSOs and their funding.

Open Forum and Public Comment

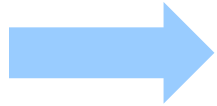
- Reminder to request parking passes from Abby Molloy.



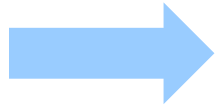
Agenda Item V. Committee Reports



Appeals – Gene Couture



Policies and Procedures – Kelly Jones



Nominations – Bruce Maas



Member Roles and Responsibilities & OPMA Training

Abby Molloy



Roles and Responsibilities

Veterans Advisory Board Role

A VAB is required for every county in Washington State and was created by RCW 73.08.070. VAB members serve as advisers on policy matters to Clark County Community Services, which is responsible for administering policy. The VAB may study policy and make recommendations for changes or implementation. The VAB does not have authority to enforce policy or create rules, but their analysis and recommendations can play an important role in furthering the effective implementation of Veteran assistance. When presenting recommendations, it is essential that board members keep the following in mind:

- Ideas should be expressed in clear and concise language.
- Proposed solutions should be viable and cost-effective.
- Recommendations should identify reasons for the changes suggested.
- Advice should reflect the views of a consensus or a majority of board members.



Expectations

Members of the Veterans Advisory Board are expected to:

- Interpret and communicate community opinions, attitudes, and needs to Clark County Community Services and the Clark County Council.
- Study programs and services and analyze issues and needs.
- Offer proposals and recommend changes in programs, policies, and standards.
- Provide the public with information on county policies, programs, and budgets.
- Remain knowledgeable about board policies and changes.
- Stay up-to-date on issues, legislative activity, and statutes affecting the board



Effective Board Members...

- Attend all board meetings.
- Are well prepared for meetings.
- Recognize that serving the public interest is the top priority.
- Recognize that the board must operate in an open and public manner.
- Are knowledgeable about the issues affecting the board.
- Examine all available evidence before making a judgment.
- Communicate well and participate in group discussions.
- Are aware that authority to act is granted to the board as a whole, not to individual members.
- Exhibit a willingness to work with the group in making decisions.
- Recognize that compromise may be necessary to reach consensus.
- Do not let personal feelings toward other board members or staff interfere with their judgment.



Laws Affecting Board Activities

Restrictions and Requirements:

- Board members must be familiar with and operate within their board's governing statutes and bylaws, as well as state and federal laws.
- To ensure accountability, all applicable policies and procedures adopted by the board should be in written form.
- No board member may make unilateral decisions or take action without the consent of the board as a whole.
- Individual board members must use discretion to avoid the appearance of speaking for the board.
- Board members must keep in mind that their mission is to serve the public, and that it is inappropriate to use board membership to create a personal platform.



Laws Affecting Board Activities, cont.

- Members are restricted by RCW 42.52.130, 140, 150 and 42.18.230 from accepting or soliciting anything of economic value as a gift, gratuity or favor if it is given only because the member holds a responsible position with the county.
- Questions about board issues should be directed to the board chair or county staff, who will see that all board members receive needed information by the next regular meeting.
- Details of board investigations, personnel files or business discussed at closed executive sessions should not be disclosed unless they are part of the public record.
- If you are unable to complete your term, it is important to inform Community Services staff. A letter of resignation should be sent indicating the date your resignation is effective and whether you are able to serve until a replacement is named.



Ethics and the Appearance of Fairness

Examples of conflicts of interest:

- Directing contracts to a business in which you have a financial interest.
- Using confidential information for private investments.
- Accepting gifts or favors in exchange for certain regulatory rulings.
- Accepting gifts or favors in exchange for making certain purchases.
- Obtaining personal favors from employees.
- Accepting favors for disclosure of confidential information.
- Engaging in outside employment which assists non-governmental entities in their quests for business.

For additional information on provisions of the state ethics law, visit the Washington State Executive Ethics Board website at www.ethics.wa.gov/.



Board Transactions

- Board members are expected to adhere to bylaws and all relevant statutes.
- A quorum of a minimum of one elected officer and five Primary and/or Alternate members of the CCVAB, including members at large, must be present to conduct official business.
- County agencies and boards are required to have copies of public records pertaining to board business available for public inspection. Records relating to the conduct of official business are subject to disclosure even if they are on a personal computer. Records regarding advisory board business must be retained for six years. (RCW 42.56)



Communications

“The county has received some questions from members of our boards and commissions regarding communications. First, the county sincerely appreciates your participation on our boards and commissions, and we value your passion and expertise. We hope this information is helpful and addresses the questions.

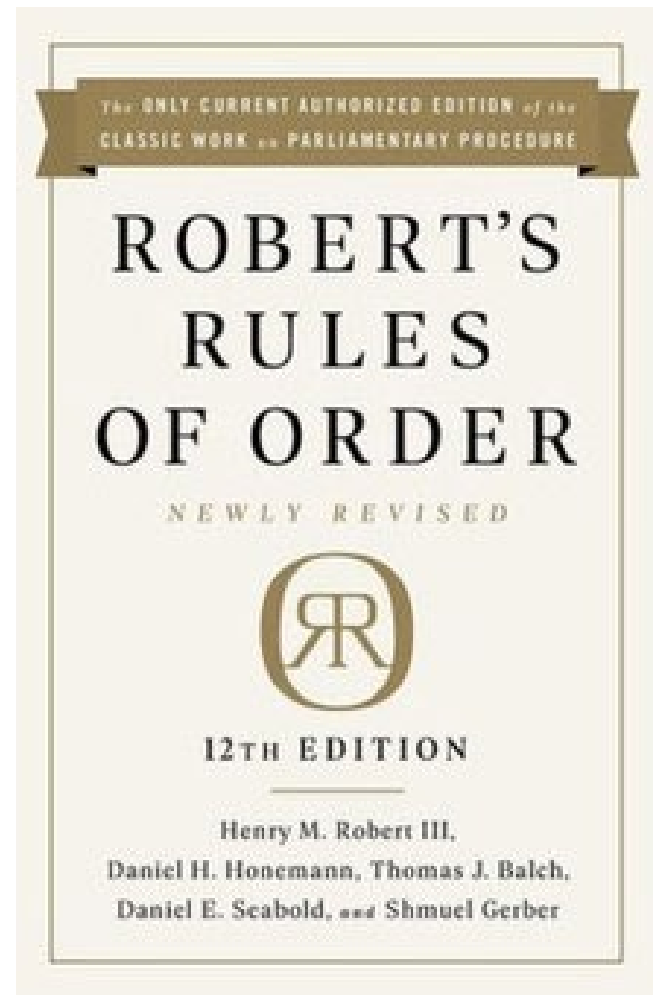
The county employs highly skilled communications staff. While there is no county policy that prohibits a board or commission from communicating with the public, media outlets, etc., it is highly recommended, and best practice, to engage with our communications staff (this is actually an expectation for county staff as well). They are here to support your communication efforts; helping to ensure accurate information is being shared, the communication is within the scope and responsibility of the board and commission, and the communication is done in a method that reaches the intended audience. Please work with your staff contact if you wish to communicate externally from your board or commission, and they will coordinate with the county’s communications staff.”

– Kathleen Otto



Parliamentary Procedures

- VAB follows Robert's Rules of Order
- Detailed rules can be found at
<http://www.rulesonline.com/rror-05.htm>
- Here is a short YouTube video that about the Basics of Making Motions
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96Damodm-ec>



Open Public Meetings Act

- The Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) applies to the Veterans Advisory Board.
 - The OPMA requires that all meetings of the governing body of a public agency, as well as some other meetings on policies affecting the public, be open to the public. In addition, the public must be notified of such meetings in a timely manner.
 - If a quorum of the board members meets (or even emails) about board business without prior public notification, they are violating the OPMA. Board members also need to be aware of the perception of them meeting as well. This could cause issues, even if it's not a violation of the law.
 - The minutes of all regular meetings must be recorded and made available for public inspection.



OPMA, cont.

- If attendees are being disruptive, the governing board can remove the individuals or adjourn the meeting.
- No actions may be taken at a meeting that is not properly advertised nor can an action be voted on by secret ballot.
- Meeting dates and locations may be moved in the case of an emergency. Remote meetings can also be held during an emergency.
- If the OPMA is knowingly violated, each board member can be subject to personal liability by civil penalty of \$500 as assessed by a judge for the first offense. Additional offenses increase the penalty charged.
- Any person may commence an action for the purpose of stopping violations of the OPMA.
- Public comment time is required at all meetings.



Learning Opportunity: Open Government Training

- Washington State Office of the Attorney General
- Self-guided online training
- <https://www.atg.wa.gov/open-government-training>
 - **Lesson 1:**
 - Open Government Overviews and General Principles
 - **Lesson 2:**
 - Public Records Act Basics - RCW 42.56
 - **Lesson 3:**
 - Open Public Meetings Act - RCW 42.30
 - **Lesson 4:**
 - Records Management and Retention Basics - RCW 40.14
 - **Lesson 5:**
 - Supplemental Public Records Act Training - RCW 42.56



Code of Conduct

- Standard board practice – VAB does not currently have one
- Recommended by legal counsel
- Reflects the organization's core values, ethical principles and expectations of the board members' responsibility
- Defines board response to conduct violation
- Will work with Policies and Procedures committee to create draft for board approval



Agenda Item VII. 2024 Year-End Fund Report

- 2024 revenue = \$946,546.16
- 2024 expenditures = \$992,466.99
- Net decrease = \$45,920.83
- Fund balance = \$523,508.16



Agenda Item VII. January 2025 Contractor Reports

- **CCVAC**

- 45 Veterans served in January, services totaling \$17,919.91
- 38 male Veterans, 6 female Veterans, 1 widow, and 0 others served
- 18 denials, 0 subject to appeal
- 630 visits to the center for essentials and food. 1,035 sack breakfasts and lunches and 54 food boxes provided. 4,503 total pounds of food provided.
- 716.5 volunteer hours, totaling \$29,376.50 in value

- **Free Clinic**

- 1 veteran served in January. Services totaled \$655 in value. Billed \$727.54.

- **Fund**

- January revenue: \$5,119.34; expenditures: \$39,662.93; fund balance: \$488,552.39



Agenda Item VIII. CCVAC updates

**Honorably
serving those
who served
honorably**



Agenda Item IX. CCVAC Budget Modification Request

	Existing 2025 budget	2025 budget modification request
Services to Veterans	\$400,000	\$400,000
Operating Expenses	\$90,000	\$117,804 (rent increase July – Dec 2025)
Stand Down	\$30,000	\$23,796 (move storage costs to operations)
Personnel Costs	\$207,000	\$207,000
Administration	\$156,000	\$156,000
TOTAL	\$883,000	\$904,600



Agenda Items X. – XII.

- Old Business
- New Business
- Open Forum
- Adjourn

Next meeting: April 10, 2025

