



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

Minutes of
Regular Meeting of Kalamazoo County Veterans Affairs Committee
November 28, 2018

- I. **Call to Order by Chair, Bob Hencken at 9:02am.**
- II. **Roll call**
Members/Liaisons Present: Bob Hencken, Bruce Binns, Arthur Harris, David Brewer, Michael Quinn
Members/Liaisons Absent: Maury Kaercher, Ronald Kendall
Others Present: Lauren King, Celia Bañuelos, Paula Jones, Beth Ridge, Denise Ulrich, Mark Fletcher
- III. **Approval of Agenda**
Agenda was reviewed and unanimously approved.
- IV. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
The minutes of the October 31, 2018 and the amended minutes of the September 26, 2018 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved as written.
- V. **Citizens' Time**
Nothing at this time.
- VI. **Appointment of VSS**
Chair B. Hencken stated the County posted the Veterans Service Specialist position internally and since Celia Bañuelos was the only applicant, no formal process was necessary. D. Brewer presented motion, "appoint full time VSS without conducting formal interviews but in accordance to human resources procedures, appointing Celia Bañuelos". Seconded by A. Harris. Motion carried. Celia Bañuelos was congratulated.
- VII. **Financial Review**
Financial Analyst, Beth Ridge
Financial report ending October 31, 2018 reviewed. B. Ridge stated budget was not under a line item mandate therefore little concern if a line item is over budget. It does matter if a section is over budget. Slight concern with burial since 90% spent. Submitted budget adjustment to move \$1,500.00 from Stand Down, in Operations, to Burial. Request will go to the BOC on December 5, 2018. New rent assistance in-process for this month. No concerns with budget.

VIII. Veterans Service Office Report

VSO Coordinator, Lauren King

L. King and C. Banuelos attended MVTF (Michigan Veterans Trust Fund) training on November 8, 2018 and are now both agents. The hope is that all VSO staff will become agents. An agent may approve up to \$500. Agent will present applications to the committee for requests up to \$2,000. Requests over \$2,000 are sent to the State to be decided by the MVTF Board of Trustees.

L. King has completed all the trainings to obtain a PIV card. A PIV card grants access to VBMS (Veterans Benefit Management System).

Hazard & Friends (anonymous group) provided twelve Thanksgiving meals. SSR list was used to contact families and ask if they were interested. And if so, granted permission to forward their contact information. On November 18, 2018, L. King attended a breakfast with Hazard & Friends and passed out certificates to the group.

1) Veterans Homelessness

First Kalamazoo County Action Collaborative for Ending Veteran Homelessness meeting was held on November 14, 2018 and the second meeting will be held on December 12, 2018. Issues were narrowed down during first meeting and next meeting will concentrate on addressing one issue.

Office data reviewed. Numbers are increasing since L. King and C. Bañuelos are now taking their own appointments.

IX. Chairman's Report

Committee Chair, Robert Hencken

M. Fletcher will be late to meeting. Chair B. Hencken has asked him to talk about the different grants through KCMHSAS.

Chair B. Hencken attended homelessness meeting and stated it was a complex issue.

Has sent J. Patton an email regarding proposal addressing organizational structure upon transfer. J. Patton responded that he would be in touch with Chair B. Hencken this week.

M. Quinn was congratulated on his re-election.

X. Committee Member's Time

A. Harris stated he attended a meeting where Mark Sutton, rep with American Legion, announced \$50,000,000 available to veterans but only \$3,000,000 was being used. A. Harris asked about the remainder of the funds. Chair B. Hencken explained that Mr. Sutton may have been referring to the MVTF funds where the interest of the funds are used.

B. Binns interested in being reappointed and is currently working on committee appointment application. Deadline for applications is November 30, 2018.

XI. New Business

1) Policies and Procedures

L. King reviewed and made changes. Will bring revised documents to next meeting. Chair B. Hencken requested revised documents be distributed, along with meeting packet, to allow for

review prior to the meeting. Requiring proofs is already written in SSR policy but just hasn't been enforced.

2) Admin Assistant PD Change/Revision

Chair B. Hencken was contacted by J. Rutherford requesting the committee request to make the Administrative Assistant position full-time. J. Rutherford would then forward the request to the County Board. The position is currently part-time for VSO since shared with CAA. B. Ridge stated the budget, upon transfer, includes full-time administrative assistant but no funding for a full-time administrative assistant prior to the transfer. Chair B. Hencken invited a motion. D. Brewer asked if impact statement available to justify the need for a full-time assistant. Chair B. Hencken stated he didn't think J. Rutherford needed additional justification. Discussion ensued. D. Brewer presented motion, "to request funds from Kalamazoo County to have a full-time Veterans Service Administrative Assistant, through the transition, for administrative support to the Kalamazoo County Veterans Service Office". Seconded by B. Binns. Motion carried. B. Ridge explained that funding for a temporary full-time position was possible since the position was empty for about six months. Chair B. Hencken requested D. Brewer to amend his motion to delete mention of the transition. D. Brewer agreed and presented motion, "request funds from Kalamazoo County to have a full-time Veterans Service Administrative Assistant for administrative support to the Kalamazoo County Veterans Service Office". Seconded by B. Binns. Motion carried.

XII. Old Business

None at this time.

XIII. KCMHSAS' Time

Veterans Services System of Care Manager, Mark Fletcher

M. Fletcher stated KCMHSAS currently has two grant funding sources for Veteran Services – Attachment A. The first is a Mental Health Block Grant through MDHHS (Michigan Department of Health and Human Services) that provides funding for all of J. Gonzalez's salary as a Kalamazoo County Veteran Navigator and part of M. Fletcher's salary as the Veteran Services System of Care Manager. The second grant is the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, a one-year grant that may carry over beyond March 31, 2019 if funds are not spent. The Health Endowment Fund covers the remainder of M. Fletcher's position, as the Program Director of the ADAPT (After Deployment, Adaptive Parenting Tools) program for military and veteran families in Kalamazoo County. It also covers the associated costs for running the ADAPT groups, including group materials and two other co-facilitators. M. Fletcher explained his work including ADAPT, as requested by Chair B. Hencken. M. Fletcher is responsible for finding military/veteran families interested in the ADAPT program, doing the initial intake assessments, creating the groups and facilitating the classes. Brian Webb, MDHHS Veteran Liaison, oversees Michigan's regional and county veteran navigator positions and assisted KCMHSAS with being granted an additional \$93,000 for 2019 through the Block Grant to continue the ADAPT program for military/ veteran families and train additional facilitators to expand the ADAPT program to additional counties. M. Fletcher is not aware of any other grants.

Both M. Fletcher and J. Gonzalez provide outreach to veterans experiencing homelessness. They assess a veteran's situation and provide the needed referrals to appropriate contacts. Follow-up support with assistance is provided by J. Gonzalez, veteran navigator, similar to case management. Both M. Fletcher and J. Gonzalez connect with veterans at a weekly veterans meeting every Friday morning at Ministry with Community. M. Fletcher shared a success story regarding a veteran living in a brush pile in Kalamazoo. This veteran attended a meeting at Ministry with Community where

M. Fletcher was present. M. Fletcher was able to get veteran into the Oakland House, KCMHSAS transitional housing, and the veteran is now on Veteran Services radar to pursue mid and long term housing options. Veterans or family members are referred to KCMHSAS Veteran Services through multiple sources, sometimes they call J. Gonzalez, sometimes they call M. Fletcher. They both work seamlessly as a team versus separate caseloads. M. Fletcher is usually involved in the initial assessment (sometimes with J. Gonzalez, sometimes without), then J. Gonzalez does the on-going referrals and follow-up contacts. M. Fletcher was asked if KCMHSAS provides them with administrative staff at this time, he replied no, not at this time.

XIV. Commissioners' Time

M. Quinn states that beginning January 2019, we will have a friendlier County Commission.

Chair B. Hencken thinks committee should be comprised of seven members. M. Quinn suggested to wait until after the new board is seated to make the request.

M. Quinn stated R. Kendall is committee liaison until January 1, 2019 and it's up to the BOC Chair if assigned, as liaison, to the VA Committee after January 1st.

XV. Any Other Items

None at this time.

XVI. Adjournment

D. Brewer made motion, "to change the date of the December 2018 meeting from Wednesday, 26 December to Tuesday, 18 December at 10:00am". Seconded by B. Binns. Motion carried.

Chair B. Hencken adjourned meeting at 10:50am.

Special Grant Awards**Michigan Health Endowment Fund: After Deployment, Adaptive Parenting Tools for Veterans and Family Members (ADAPT)**

Program Description Brief: ADAPT strives to support veterans and their families after reintegration by providing parenting resources and outreach services that link veterans and military families to needed services in Kalamazoo County. It is an evidence-based parenting program modified to meet the unique needs of military families. The program is specifically tailored based on focus groups, interviews with key informants, and research about military families. The ADAPT program takes military culture and context into account, recognizing the need for parents to get back on the same page after deployment, to develop effective communication strategies with children about deployment, and to acknowledge how combat stress might influence their parenting and family life. The Veterans Service Office (VSO) would serve as the central point of access and referrals to the ADAPT program and needed behavioral health specialty supports and services for veterans, military members and their families.

Grant Amount: \$100,000

Grant Duration: April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

SAMHSA Block Grant: Veteran Navigator

Program Description Brief: The purpose of this grant is to provide specialty behavioral health supports and services to veterans experiencing homelessness and/or involved in the criminal justice system. The Veteran Navigator is a veteran that collaborates with the KCMHSAS housing and specialty mental health court and criminal justice staff to identify veterans in need of services. Outreach and engagement services will be provided to veterans who are homeless and/or involved with the criminal justices system.

Duration: (Current Year 6 month period beginning April 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018

Funding Amount for the Period: \$45,000

Duration: First Full Year beginning October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019

Funding Amount for the Period: \$150,000

Duration: Second Full Year beginning October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020

Funding Amount for the Period: \$150,000

Total Multiyear Grant Amount: \$345,000