

Thurston County Veterans Advisory Board  
Lacey Veterans Services Hub  
21 October 2019

**Members present:** Sean “Smitty” Smith, Bill Powell, Matt Huot, Cesar Morales, Bob Clark, and Gary Walker

**Members absent:** Bill Adamson, Lisa Narciso.

**Others Present:** Keith Looker

Meeting opened at 6:10 pm by Chair “Smitty” Smith.

**Introductions:** N/A

**Public Comment:** N/A

**Minutes:** 15 July minutes were reviewed were approved.

**Casey Wegner Resignation:** Casey had to resign due to unexpected health issues.

**VA Disability Benefits Update:** Bill Powell gave an update on VA changes.

- 20-0996 & 20-0995
  - Need new evidence and/or continuation of care for consideration
  - NEXUS letter is helpful but VA won’t provide one
  - Fleet Marine no longer serving vets
- Blue Water Veterans and Agent Orange
  - Denials will be reviewed separately
  - Reviews to start in January 2020
- SBP – DIC Double Dip
  - No movement yet on resolving issue but still a problem

**Listening Session Proposal:** Gary offered proposal on the TCVAB conducting a new listening session in the near future. The rationale is that the goals and needs in the 2013 listening session have pretty much been met and where does the TCVAB go in the future? Are there services and needs not currently being met that need to be addressed? Members agreed to proposal and Gary offered to start setting it up.

**Veterans Stand Down:** Keith gave an update on the up-coming stand down (see flyer). Hub staff will be there in the morning and back in the Hub in the afternoon.

Question of flu shots came up and Keith offered to find out.

**Lacey Veterans Services Hub Update:** Keith gave an update on the Hub.

- Increase of 50% usage over last year
- 64 service providers are now on site

- Chemical dependency counseling will start next month
- Cohen Clinic counseling (mental) will be starting
- Westcare teleservices on site
  - Training next week and then start VSO and followed by Work Source.
- Work Source resume and marketing class to be conducted at the Hub
- Video conference on site approved
- SOAR – SSI and SSVI
- Veteran oil painting group on 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays
- JBLM spouse hiring event
- AUSA chapter is meeting there
- DAV planning on moving VSO to Hub
- TESC intern here with marketing
- Outreach
  - Pierce County visited to start Hub there
  - Approached by Clark County for Hub set-up info
- South Sound Behavioral Hospital – helping them
- Obtained three grants
- Hawk Prairie Safeway donated \$5K
- VA signed lease
- Building remodel timeline for construction being finalized

#### **Veterans Day Events**

- Capital Rotunda
- Auburn Parade
- Centralia Memorial Ceremony
- St. Martins

#### **Around the Room**

It was announced that Jennifer Popchockhakim has resigned her position at Thurston County Health Department for a position with the State of Washington.

Meeting closed at 7:30 pm.