

## **THURSTON COUNTY VETERANS' ADVISORY BOARD**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

May 19, 2014

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mimi Fields, Sean Smith, Thom Stoddert, Casey Wegner

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Robert Nakamura, Robert Thompson, and Gary Walker

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Samantha Adams, Joe Avalos, Bob Jones, Phil Schulte, Lou McElroy, Joseph Worsley, Bill Powell and Linda Loyle

### **INTRODUCTIONS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

Sunday, May 25<sup>th</sup> there will be a ceremony at 1:00 p.m. at Percival Landing.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Being no quorum, the minutes of April 21, 2014 were approved by Casey and Thom.

### **Budget Recommendations – Presented by Joe Avalos**

1. Local Sales Tax – Treatment Sales Tax (TST) funding for Chemical Dependency and Mental Health services. The GAIN-SS screening tool will be offered to veterans. TST funds are competitive and there are other programs in the county that fall under the funding guidelines. Veterans are a priority for the BoCC. It is reasonable to screen for needed services such as through the GAIN-SS. It may show that a majority of veterans are in need of these services. Once have that information may see how to align possible TST funding with the VAF to support services for veterans. The Incarcerated Veterans program is funded by TST.
2. Medicaid – roughly 25% of our clients are eligible for Medicaid. Through the Affordable Care Act both disabilities and income level can help qualify individuals for Medicaid.
3. Public Health & Social Services (PHSS) staff met with Community Action Council staff. Due to grant funding for energy needs, the VAF may refer veterans to Community Action Council to pay for utility bills. Some referrals can be made this year.
4. No new funds can be requested for the 2015 County budget.
5. Perhaps Don Sloma, Director, PHSS attend the next VAB meeting.

### **Non-Profit**

Bob Jones and Phil Schulte presented information regarding 501C3, charity, tax exempt status. They discussed how establishing a 501C3 could augment what we are currently doing and help fill in the gaps for county veterans. It is important to establish partners who will help find revenue. One example given was the Madigan Army Medical Center Foundation which supports troops and their families.

It takes \$425 to \$800 to apply through the IRS for tax exempt status. It is a 6-9 month process. If we meet the criteria and get approval then donations are tax-exempt. A track record needs to be

established with funders to make sure donations are properly expended on veterans. A 501C3 allows individuals to donate.

It is a good idea to look at funders, for example the Milgard Foundation has given 1 million for post-discharge services for veterans. Put together a fundraising plan. It was suggested going to corporate funders and ask for large donations. An example is \$5,000 to pay for a grant writer. Look at the need and use the phone to call potential donors. Consider corporate sponsors with levels of giving.

Kitsap County Advisory Board is applying for 501C3 status. Veteran service organizations may help. Let them know we have fund shortfall. It is possible to partner with someone for a 501C3. Thom suggested that the Alliance may be able to partner.

It was suggested to research, place phone calls to find out who is out there to provide funds and look at what already exists. Look at gaps. Consider how best to service veterans. Consider whether include VAF and VAB or consider a broader base.

#### **Presentation to the BoCC**

1. Housing a priority
2. Providing services to veterans who have not used the fund before
3. By next meeting will know if PSE funded by Community Action Council
4. Referral services, veterans are welcome to come utilize referral services, including this year
5. Refer to classes, for example financial services
6. Emphasis rent
7. Shelter contracts as is
8. Criteria is to provide assistance to 1<sup>st</sup> time users with shelter contracts providing short term housing and rental assistance and PSE assistance from Community Action Council providing longer term housing.

The presentation will include the VAB proposes to meet the \$140,000 shortfall by recommending the following. Then present the proposals.

**Move, for purposes of prioritization, shelter of acute and long term are our priorities, with short term less than 90 days for shelter services; and longer term rental assistance for 1<sup>st</sup> time recipients only; with utilities covered by Community Action Council. Moved and seconded by Mimi and Casey. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Referrals are important to this proposal. If utilities through Community Action Council are not working out contact the advisory board. The advisory board will make recommendations for additional cuts if needed at a later date. A letter will be sent out to veterans letting them know of any changes approved by the BoCC.

Casey, Thom and Gary will meet with Don Sloma. A briefing date with the BoCC needs to be established. The presentation will focus on major accomplishments and recommendations. A work group of Casey, Thom and Gary will work on the slide presentation.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

June 26<sup>th</sup> is the Veterans' Provider Event hosted by the VAF and WDVA. The county meeting will be August 2013 in Yakima. Lou McElroy suggested data for the presentation include the source of the data.

Submitted by,  
Linda Loyle, Community Program Manager