

Thurston County Veterans Advisory Board
Lacey Veterans Services Hub
14 January 2019

Members present: Sean “Smitty” Smith, Casey Wagner, Bob Clark, and Gary Walker

Members absent: Bill Adamson, Lisa Narciso, Cesar Morales, Bill Powell, and Matt Huot.

Others Present: Mark Moffett, Keith Looker, Jen Popchockhakim, Tye Menser

Meeting opened at 6:05 PM BY Chair “Smitty” Smith.

There was not a quorum of board members at the meeting.

Chair’s Opening Remarks: Smitty provided information to the attendees regarding the Incarcerated Veterans Program.

- The veteran puts together release plan for review.
- Should be a positive event
- Recidivism rate of participants is very low
- WDVA can assist with program if county falls short of resources
- Challenge to the program is getting these veterans their medical exams

Introductions: All attendees introduced themselves and gave a little background about themselves

Minutes: 15 October 2018 minutes review and approval was deferred.

Emergency Shelter Contracts

- Contracts were approved by BoCC in October 2018
- Interfaith Works still needs to be confirmed
- Contracts for Salvation Army and Drexel House are in place and operational

Veterans Assistance Fund Policy Revisions

- See Enclosure 1 for a list of the proposed revisions
- Revision will raise the indigenouness from 150% to 200% of federal poverty level.
- Court ordered deductions will be removed from calculation and wage garnishment will be added to it.

TCVAB Future Priorities

- Have WDVA Director attend future meeting for her input.
- Cultivate new board members
- Determine next strategic issue(s)

IT Bus Passes: topic deferred

Lacey Veterans Services Hub Update for 4th Quarter CY2018

- 1413 volunteer hours
- 1424 appointments
- 233 new veterans served
- 5000 appointments for CY2018
- DSHS mobile community services office will be coming on site
- Legal assistance – Matt Huot coming twice a month and 2nd attorney will be coming on board
- Financial management assistance will be moving to full time
- City of Lacey recently recognized the volunteers and presented them with a plaque.
- 3rd quarter CY2018 saw \$95k per month and \$250k in backpay for VA benefits from VSO efforts
- Caregivers group starting this month
- Women veterans group is restarting this month
- American Warriors Fund – 4 veterans to receive \$750 for a total of \$3k
- Chemical dependency counselor coming soon
- Seeing an increasing need for caregivers and assisted living assistance for Korea and Vietnam War era veterans
- WDVA Director gave a talk on mental health care for family dependents
- Manager recently gave BoCC an update on current programs

Around the Room

Commissioner Menser gave an update on his priorities

Mark Moffett informed group that MOU for \$30k per year for next biennium to support Hub was approved and signed by BoCC and it is with the City of Lacey.

Bob Clark announced that he may have to resign from board in near future.

Meeting closed at 7:32 pm.

Enclosure 1 – Proposed Revision to Veterans Assistance Fund

3.1.3 Indigence

Receiving an annual income, after taxes, of up to two hundred percent or less of the current federally established poverty level. Income received during the 31 day period prior to the date of application shall be annualized used to determine an annual income.

Income includes all funds received by the applicant and their spouse or domestic partner, and all other individuals who will benefit from the assistance. Consideration may be made to deduct court ordered payments and garnishments from final income calculation.

3.3.1 Maximum Allocation

Eligible veterans or family members with no other family members in the household may receive up to \$1000 in financial assistance in a twelve month period of time. If there are two or more family members in the household, up to \$2000 in financial assistance may be provided in a twelve month period of time.

3.3.3 Types of Financial Assistance

Past due rent shall be paid only for the applicant's primary residence. Veterans or eligible family members who share a residence with the property owner may receive a maximum of \$500 for their share of the rent in a twelve month period of time.

B. Temporary Lodging Assistance

Motel and hotel stays shall only be paid if one of the two conditions apply:

-A physician or discharging hospital provides a written statement as to why providing housing at a local shelter is not medically recommended. The facility must be located in Thurston County.

-There are no shelter beds available and the homeless Veteran (or qualifying family member) requesting services is too ill to stay in the elements.

-Consideration will also be made for those that have experienced Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

Motel/hotel stays are limited to 5 consecutive days and restricted to a one time approval. Recipient must also participate in the Veterans Housing Group in order to find permanent housing.

C. Utilities

Eligible veterans or family members may receive assistance with utilities, which includes: power, water, refuse, propane, septic and wood.

-Assistance can also be applied to costs for reasonable repairs to existing utilities. Assistance will not exceed total amount allowed in 3.3.1 above.

-Other utility services such as phone, cable or internet services shall not be paid.

F. Transportation

Financial assistance may be provided for primary vehicle repair, not to exceed the maximum allocation located in 3.3.1 above. Approved repair services are limited to basic operation of the vehicle or ADA modifications. The Veteran must prove ownership of the vehicle and provide proof of valid insurance for the previous 30 days.

G. Occupational Assistance

-Funds may be used to pay for occupational certification test fees and licensing for qualified applicants.

-Assistance can also be applied to required work attire, safety and mandatory occupational equipment.