



Harford County Commission on Veterans Affairs Meeting Notes

March 7, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Brown at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room, 220 S. Main Street, Bel Air, Maryland.

Attending: Bob Brown, Lisa Brown, Art Kaff, Scott Kearby, Dennis Miller, Bill Montgomery, Mike Ray, Pam Silcox, Deacon Vic Petrosino, Councilman Andre Johnson (liaison)

Excused: Hayden Anthony, Robert Appleby, Janice Cassady, Rick Scavetta

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Brown. Prayer was led by Deacon Vic.

Welcome & Opening Comments:

Chairman Brown – presented the HCCOVA Mission and Vision statements. He also introduced new members (note: county confirmation scheduled for March 12, 2019) & welcomed all members to the meeting.

Opening Comments from Appointed Members:

All members introduced themselves, providing some background information & their role on the HCCOVA.

OLD BUSINESS

Frequency of Meetings – Bob Brown, commission members

- IAW the by-laws, the HCCOVA must meet at least 9 times per year.
- Currently, the commission meets 10 times per year, with no meeting scheduled for the months of January and July.
- Commission members discussed the need to meet frequently throughout the year to keep information flowing to the public as well as each other.
- Members also mentioned the consistency of meetings was important, especially as we look towards more members of the public attending the monthly meeting.

Outreach Events – Bob Brown, commission members

- Part of the HCCOVA mission is to provide outreach to veterans and their families
- Although the Veterans Resource Fair is our capstone event each year, we should plan other events throughout the year. Previously mentioned Ideas include Habitat for Humanity veterans build, USO support, and attendance/support at other veterans fairs & outreach activities.
- Chairman Brown asked members for ideas, as well as people willing to serve as lead/coordinator for an event.
- Scott Kearby suggested a rotational clean-up of veteran monuments/memorials in the Harford County area (in front of BOE bldg., Havre de Grace, etc)

- Bill Montgomery invited members to join him at the Soldiers for Life TAP (Transition Assistance Program) held the 1st Wednesday of each month from 12-1:30 PM in Building 3147 on APG. He also suggested commission members attend the AUSA days in Washington DC (usually 2nd week of October).
- Dennis Miller suggested that the HCCOVA work with Young Marines Foundation, and/or support the Toys for Tots program.
- Pam Silcox recommended hosting a benefits open house at various locations throughout the county, & requesting support from different VSO's, VA Benefits offices, etc.
- Art Kaff suggested the HCCOVA continue to advocate for the establishment of a Veterans Court in Harford County.

NEW BUSINESS

Veterans Attendance at Meetings

- The public is welcome at all HCCOVA meetings; however to date, there has generally been very few people outside of commission members who attend meetings.
- Question: Do we need to do more to promote higher attendance &/or restructure the meetings to include a public comment time period?
- Overall consensus is most people reach out to the HCCOVA through e-mail that is posted on the county's website. Additional promotion of the meetings, guest speakers, and outreach events will be posted on the website, Facebook, coordination with VSO's and flyers as appropriate.

Subcommittees

- Chairman Brown gave an overview of each HCCOVA sub-committee and the responsibilities of members who serve on it.
- Current & newly appointed members need to think about which area of the HCCOVA they would like to focus their efforts.

"Year of the Veteran"

- On February 9th, Governor Hogan signed a proclamation declaring 2019 as the Year of the Veteran, and stated that his goal was for "every veteran to be recognized".
- Need to find out more information/details on what plans are in place to accomplish this goal & what part we can play in this effort. Councilman Johnson will try to obtain additional information & work with the County Executive and County Council on this project.

Final Announcements

- March 30th: Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Ceremony – Upper Chesapeake Hospital
- May 18th: Retiree Day at APG 9 AM – 1 PM
- The next HCCOVA meeting will be Thursday, April 4th at 6:30 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Prepared by Lisa Brown