

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)
March 20, 2025**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (the BVS) was held on March 20, 2025 at 9 a.m. at the Virginia War Memorial.

Members Present

1. Victor Angry
2. David Ashe (virtual)
3. Carl Bedell
4. Joe Campa
5. Jennifer Carroll-Foy
6. Scott Davidson
7. Tara Durant
8. Robert Eisiminger
9. Michael Feggans (virtual)
10. Malcolm Frost (virtual)
11. Jackie Glass
12. Joyce Henderson
13. Kevin Hoffman
14. Carlton Kent
15. Terrence McKnight
16. Matthew Miller (virtual)
17. Russet Perry (virtual)
18. Wendell Warner
19. Chuck Zingler, Department of Veterans Services
20. Katherine Martinez, Joint Leadership Council
21. Craig Colucci, Veterans Services Foundation
22. Pamela Seay, Virginia War Memorial Foundation

Members Absent

1. Jason Ballard
2. Joshua Thomas
3. Vincent Griffith

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

1. Jordan Stewart, Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
2. Joyce Reed, Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
3. Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
4. Kendra Ellison, DVS
5. Chris Garvin, DVS
6. Dara Hechter, DVS
7. Brandi Jancaitis, DVS

8. Ravi Padma, DVS
9. Jamie Staten, DVS
10. Tiffany Woody-Wiggins, DVS
11. Darius McKenney, Veterans Services Foundation

Guests

1. Brent Reiffer
2. Kayla Owen
3. Jay Putnam
4. Terry Durkin (virtual)
5. Maya Mahdi (virtual)

Items included in the Agenda Packet

- Draft Agenda
- DVS Update for the Board of Veterans Services
- Benefits Service Line Presentation
- JLC Update to the BVS
- VSF Update to the BVS
- VWMF Update to the BVS

Item I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance

Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Chair Carl Bedell called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and led the BVS in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item II. Roll Call, Quorum Determination, and Introduction of Guests

The roll was called, and 13 members were represented in person and a physical quorum was determined. There were no objections to five members joining virtually. Four members (Senator Durant, Ms. Henderson, Delegate Glass, and Mr. Angry) arrived in person shortly after the meeting started, bringing the total number of members physical assembled to 17 of 25 members present, with five members virtually present, for a total of 22 of 25 members present.

The names of the state officials and guests who were present are listed above.

Item III. Approve Agenda

Mr. Kevin Hoffman made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Robert Eisiminger, to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried by unanimous assent. The approved agenda is attached.

Item IV. Approve September 26, 2024 and December 6, 2024 meeting minutes

Mr. Kevin Hoffman made a **motion, seconded** by Senator Carroll-Foy, to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2024 meeting. The motion carried by unanimous assent

Senator Carroll Foy made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Kevin Hoffman to approve the minutes of

the December 6, 2024 meeting. The motion carried by unanimous assent

V. Introduction of DVS staff and guests

Chairman Bedell called on Commissioner Zingler to introduce DVS staff and asked other guests to introduce themselves.

Item VI. DVS Operational Update

DVS Commissioner Chuck Zingler delivered the Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) Operational Update. He discussed his experience meeting the United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs at a conference. He welcomed questions from BVS members on the impact of federal changes on veterans and their families.

Chairman Bedell paused the meeting at 9:50 a.m. so that the members could attend the 2025 Women Veterans Ceremony.

The meeting reconvened at 11 a.m.

DVS Benefits Director Guy Dinkins presented an update on the DVS Benefits Services section.

Item VII. Reports

- a. Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) Vice Chair Katherine Martinez delivered the JLC report.
- b. Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Vice Chair Craig Colucci delivered the VSF report.
- c. Virginia War Memorial Foundation (VWMF) President Pamela Seay delivered the VWMF report.

Item VIII. New Business

- a. Procedures for June Board Elections and Transition Work Group: Chairman Bedell let the board know that a working group is being formed by Vice Chair Davidson to facilitate leadership transition. Vice Chair Davidson stated that meetings will be held on zoom as needed. He noted that he would send out another email communication with more information. Chairman Bedell encouraged members to take on leadership roles.
- b. Good of the Order Reports:
 - a. Craig Colucci expressed concern about the decline in veteran entrepreneurship and suggested a peer mentoring program. Commissioner Zingler suggested that Mr. Colucci collaborate with the Virginia War Memorial and John Maxwell to work on this issue.
 - b. Senator Carroll Foy stated that she is happy to be involved in policy initiatives and Women Veterans Day. She emphasized the value of the current bipartisanship, especially in passing the verification veterans' status legislation in partnership with Senator Durant.
 - c. Joe Campa said he was excited to be at the BVS meeting and thanked Benefits Director Dinkins for his brief. He stated that he learns something new at each

BVS meeting. He mentioned that a lot of veterans don't know how many offices of DVS exist.

- d. Senator Durant emphasized the value of the legislative bill matrix. She noted that local tax exemptions will be a continued conversation. She thanked members for giving her advocacy ideas.
- e. Robert Eisiminger noted that there are many organizations that work on suicide prevention efforts for veterans. He highlighted the organization "Face the Fight" and suggested they speak to the board. He emphasized the importance of collaborating with organizations who are already active in the community
- f. Katherine Martinez thanked the BVS for their collaboration with the JLC on behalf of JLC Chairman Aramony
- g. Kevin Hoffman explained that the Suffolk cemetery expansion was originally brought to JLC a few years ago. He discussed that organizations very impactful to cultivate meaningful change. He was glad to be a part of that.
- h. Victor Angry told everyone that June 5th will be his last BVS meeting. He thanked everyone for the great opportunity to serve under 3 governors for 12 years. One of his greatest passions is the veteran court docket in Prince William County.
- i. Terrence McKnight expressed concern that not many veterans know what DVS and the BVS do. He said that he did not know about Virginia War Memorial until he came for a board meeting, and he was born and raised in Virginia.
- j. Joyce Henderson stated that she thinks that each person on the board should reach out to veterans individually. She was able to help a veteran herself in collaboration with Commissioner Zingler and Chairman Bedell.
- k. Wendell Warner thanked Benefits Director Dinkins, he met with him one-on-one and is now able to help others.
- l. Scott Davidson: Agreed with Mr. Warner's remarks and emphasized the important of outreach. He also was unaware of the services that DVS provides for a long time.

Item X. Public Comment

Brent Reiffer shared some comments on behalf of Kayla Owen. He relayed her thanks to everyone for their work to restore VMSDEP and that she looks forward to sustaining the program. Mr. Reiffer also discussed the impact of personal property and real estate tax exemptions for veterans. He asked that all individuals with a stake to review the data and dive into the topic before drawing conclusions.

Item XI. Adjourn

Chair Bedell adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

**BOARD OF VETERANS
SERVICES (BVS)
AGENDA**

**March 20, 2025
09:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.**

**Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere St
Richmond VA 23220**

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – *Carl Bedell, BVS Chairman* (09:00-09:02)
- II. Roll Call, Introduction of Members, and Quorum Determination – *Carl Bedell, BVS Chairman* (09:02-09:05)
- III. Approval of Agenda – *Carl Bedell, BVS Chairman* (09:05-09:06)
- IV. Approval of Minutes of the September 26, 2024 & December 6, 2024 meetings– *Carl Bedell, BVS Chairman* (09:06-09:08)
- V. Introduction of DVS staff and guests – *Carl Bedell, BVS Chairman* (09:07-09:08)
- VI. DVS Operations Updates (09:09-09:45)
 - a. DVS Operations, Priorities, and Updates – *Chuck Zingler, DVS Commissioner*
 - b. Department of Veterans Services Benefits – *Guy Dinkins, DVS Benefits Director*
- Transition to Women Veterans Week Ceremony - Shrine of Memory (09:45-10:45)
- VII. Reports (11:00-11:15)
 - a. Joint Leadership Council – *Bill Aramony, JLC Chair*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Brad Williamson, VSF Chair*
 - c. Virginia War Memorial Foundation Update – *Steven Combs, DVS Deputy Commissioner*
- VIII. New Business (11:15-11:40)
 - a. Procedures for June Board Elections & Transition Work Group– *Carl*

- Bedell, BVS Chairman & Scott Davidson, BVS Vice Chairman*
- b. “Good of the Order” reports from BVS members and open discussion

IX. Public Comment – *Carl Bedell, BVS Chairman* (11:40-11:50)

Wrap Up & Adjourn