

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)
June 5, 2025**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (the BVS) was held on June 5, 2025 at 10 a.m. at the Virginia War Memorial.

Members Present

1. Victor Angry
2. Jason Ballard (virtual)
3. Carl Bedell
4. Joe Campa
5. Jennifer Carroll-Foy (virtual)
6. Scott Davidson
7. Tara Durant
8. Robert Eisiminger
9. Malcolm Frost
10. Jackie Glass (virtual)
11. Vincent Griffith (virtual)
12. Joyce Henderson
13. Kevin Hoffman (virtual)
14. Carlton Kent
15. Matthew Miller
16. Russet Perry (virtual)
17. Jeri Prophet
18. Joshua Thomas
19. Wendell Warner
20. Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services
21. Bill Aramony, Joint Leadership Council
22. Brad Williamson, Veterans Services Foundation
23. Pamela Seay, Virginia War Memorial Foundation

Members Absent

1. Michael Feggans
2. David Ashe
3. Terrence McKnight

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

1. Jordan Stewart, Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
2. Kendra Ellison, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
3. Dara Hechter, DVS (virtual)
4. Griffin Ramsey, DVS
5. Brandi Jancaitis, Director, Virginia Veteran and Family Support, DVS
6. Scott Miller, Superintendent, Amelia Veterans Cemetery, DVS

7. Darius McKenney, Veterans Services Foundation
8. Anne Wilson, Virginia War Memorial Foundation

Guests

1. Caitlin Goodale-Porter
2. Brent Reiffer
3. Kayla Owen

Items included in the Agenda Packet

- Draft Agenda
- DVS Update for the Board of Veterans Services
- Cemeteries 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 10:05 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 14 members were represented in person and a physical quorum was determined. There were no objections to six members joining virtually. Three members (Senator Durant, Ms. Henderson, and Mr. Davidson) arrived in person shortly after the meeting started, bringing the total number of members physical assembled to 17 of 25 members present, with six members virtually present, for a total of 23 of 26 members present.

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

Item III. Approve Agenda Delegate Thomas made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Angry, to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried by unanimous assent. The approved agenda is attached.

Item IV. Approve March 20, 2025 and April 25, 2025 meeting minutes

Delegate Thomas made a **motion, seconded** by Robert Eisiminger, to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2025 and April 25, 2025 meetings. The motion carried by unanimous assent

V. Introduction of DVS staff and guests

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

Item VI. DVS Operational Update

DVS Deputy Commissioner Steven Combs delivered the Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) Operational Update. He highlighted the four Memorial Day services hosted by DVS across the Commonwealth. Deputy Commissioner Combs also discussed the work of the DVS Virginia Veteran and Family Support Team, specifically the work of the Suicide Prevention and Opioid Addiction Services (SOS) division. SOS recently hosted a meeting of all their grantees in Richmond and announced a new Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). He thanked the JLC for all the work they do to support veterans across the Commonwealth

Item VII. Reports

- a. Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) Chair Bill Aramony delivered the JLC report.
- b. Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Vice Chair Brad Williamson delivered the VSF report.
- c. Virginia War Memorial Foundation (VWMF) President Pamela Seay delivered the VWMF report.

Item VIII. New Business

- a. BVS Elections: The Board of Veterans Services held elections for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair. Joyce Henderson made a **motion, seconded** by Senator Durant to nominate the slate of Mr. Matthew Miller for BVS Chair and Mr. Scott Davidson for Vice Chair. The board unanimously elected this slate.
- b. Good of the Order Reports:
 - a. Carl Bedell: Thanked Victor Angry as his term is ending as well. He thanked him for stepping up and his long service
 - b. Deputy Secretary Stewart discussed that the Governor is working to cement his legacy and that the final BVS appointees are being chosen and should be at the next meeting.
 - c. Matthew Miller discussed that taking care of veterans is a national security issue and that he looks forward to working with everyone to develop new ideas.
 - d. Scott Davidson discussed that there are many great ideas, and everyone will be included. More of peoples time may be requested and the board will carry on Carl's vision
 - e. 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.
 - f. 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.
 - g. 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.

- h. 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
- i. Katherine Martinez thanked the BVS for their collaboration with the JLC on behalf of JLC Chairman Aramony
- j. 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.
- k. 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.
- l. 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.
- m. 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.
- n. Wendell Warner thanked Benefits Director Dinkins, he met with him one-on-one and is now able to help others.
- o. 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 11:57 a.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

