

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2017**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on Thursday, March 16, 2017 at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, 10300 Pridesville Rd., Amelia.

Members Present

- Richard Anderson
- Max Beyer
- Paige Cherry
- Michael Dick
- James Icenhour
- Johnny Johnson
- Thad Jones
- Nick Kesler
- Kathleen Murphy
- Belinda Pinckney
- Jennifer Wexton
- Al Pianalto, 1st Vice Chairman, representing the Veterans Services Foundation
- Bart Barton, Chairman, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
- Steven Combs, Deputy Commissioner, representing the Department of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Chris Chon
- Joana Garcia
- Susan Hippen
- William Haneke
- Sandra Love
- Laurie Neff
- Bryce Reeves
- Christopher Stolle

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Carrie Ann Alford, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Dan Kemano, DVS
- Scott Miller, DVS
- Tom Herthel, DVS
- Lana Jagadish, DVS
- Betty Ann Liddell, DVS
- Leslie Frazier, Policy Director to the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
- Cassy Horn, Legislative Aide to Senator Reeves
- Rick Oertel, Office of Delegate Kirk Cox

Materials Distributed as part of the Agenda Packet

- Agenda
- Minutes from the November 17th meeting (Agenda Item IV)
- Reports (Agenda Item VI)
 - Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
 - Veterans Services Foundation
- New Membership Handbook (Agenda Item VIIIa)
- New Acts of Assembly regarding the Board of Veterans Services [SB1182] (Agenda Item VIIIb)
- Proposed By-Laws amendments (Agenda Item VIIIb)
- Handout on the Strategic Plan (Agenda Item VIIIc)
- Update from the Veterans Entrepreneurship work group (Agenda Item VIId)
- Update from the Women Veterans work group (Agenda Item VIIE)

Call to Order

Chairman Jim Icenhour opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. He then welcomed the BVS members and called the meeting to order. He asked Ms. Carrie Ann Alford to call the roll. The roll was called and a quorum was determined with 13 members present. One member arrived shortly after the roll was called, for a total of 14 members present.

Chairman Icenhour asked Ms. Alford to introduce the guests. Their names are recorded above. He thanked them all for attending.

Chairman Icenhour then introduced the new BVS member Mr. Paige Cherry and asked everyone to go around the table and introduce themselves. Mr. Cherry thanked everyone and said he looks forward to being a member of the board.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Jim Icenhour made a **motion, seconded** by Del. Kathleen Murphy, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried **unanimously**. (*Attachment 1*)

Approval of November 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Bart Barton made a **motion, seconded** by Delegate Kathleen Murphy, to approve the November 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion carried, with Senator Jennifer Wexton and Mr. Paige Cherry abstaining.

Welcome from DVS Cemeteries

Mr. Dan Kemano, Cemeteries Director, welcomed the Board to the Virginia Veterans Cemetery at Amelia and gave a short presentation on the three state veterans cemeteries. A folder with a presentation and cemeteries information was distributed to each board member. He offered to give a tour of the cemetery to board members after the meeting.

Reports

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) Chairman Bart Barton gave a short report on the JLC and their meetings since the BVS last met. A copy of the JLC policy initiatives matrix was included with his report. (*Attachment 2*)

Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) 1st Vice Chair Al Pinalto gave a short report on the VSF and their most recent meeting and stated that their next meeting would be next week, March 22. (*Attachment 3*)

Presentations

DVS Update

Deputy Commissioner Steven Combs gave a brief update on DVS, noting that he would not cover Cemeteries, VVFS, or Benefits because the directors of those service lines were present and would provide more in-depth information.

Mr. Combs gave an update on the Virginia War Memorial expansion project – DVS is checking off all the boxes and is getting close to a ground breaking. He said he should have information later this year, probably in the fall. He briefly discussed K-9 Veterans Day, held the previous weekend, noting that it was just one example of the many education and community events held at the Memorial. He invited the members to attend the upcoming Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies at the Memorial. He also noted that BVS Member Rich Anderson is now the Chairman of the Virginia War Memorial Board.

He noted that the Military Medics and Corpsman (MMAC) Program, launched last year as a result of legislation patroned by BVS member Chris Stolle and Senator George Barker, celebrated its first hire last month. He stated that the goal of MMAC is to provide a pathway to employment for recently discharged veterans and transitioning service members, enabling them to apply their military medical skills and training in the civilian health care sector, while working under physician supervision and while obtaining civilian medical credentials.

He also gave an update on the new Veteran Care Centers and groundbreaking for both will hopefully be fall of 2017 with grand opening in 2019. He told the group that he was part of a public forum on Monday, March 13 at Kellam High School in Virginia Beach which had around 100 people attend, and he answered many questions about the project. He stated that most of the questions and comments were very positive. He also stated that board members Susan Hippen and Johnny Johnson were at the meeting which was great to have them there and Delegates Villanueva and Knight were also in attendance.

Mr. Combs and Ms. Alford noted that DVS was working with Delegate Anderson and Senator Jeremy McPike to plan and host a similar public forum on the planned Puller Veterans Care Center, and that they hoped Board members would be able to attend and participate.

Overview of the 2017 General Assembly Session

Ms. Alford thanked the BVS members for all they had done for the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) and for their support during the 2017 General Assembly session.

She gave a power point presentation, which included an overview of the main policy initiative for DVS this year, which was HB2206 (Cox) to reorganize and fully fund VVFS in converting contract employees over to state employees. She gave a brief update and stated that VVFS

Director Betty Ann Liddell would go over it more fully in her presentation momentarily. She also covered other veteran and military-related bills that passed in the 2017 General Assembly session, and gave a full report on the final outcome of the DVS budget amendments and where the DVS budget stands half way through the biennial budget. She stated that overall DVS is doing well and has the resources it needs, even with the budget cuts due to the economic forecast.

The presentation was distributed to the members via email after the meeting.

Update on the VVFS Section

Ms. Betty Ann, VVFS Director, gave an update to the board and thanked the BVS members for all their support over the past year. She stated that now that HB2206 has been signed by the Governor, she is working in earnest to put everything in place ahead of July 1. She stated that she has a plan to do hiring in waves, starting with 5 open positions right now which will help with figuring out the best system for hiring the new staff over the coming months. The \$383,949 funds that have been released will be used to get starting in opening offices, purchasing furniture, IT needs and hiring staff. She is looking to hire more veterans as peer specialists – 1-2 in each region to do more intensive work with veteran clients.

She will create SOPs for peer specialists, operations and administration. The CSB contracts will all end at the end of June. She explained the hiring waves will begin in April with the 5 open positions, then Regions 3 and 4 hiring as 2nd wave, Region 5 will be 3rd wave, and then Regions 1 and 2 will be fourth wave to be completed hopefully by the end of June.

Mr. Combs added that it is a very exciting opportunity to have VVFS and Benefits co-located in 15-16 locations to create synergy for DVS and making it easier for the veterans to receive everything they need in one stop. Some VVFS staff will stay in the CSB offices where they are currently located.

Mr. Barton asked for an update on 2-1-1 Virginia and how exactly it works. Ms. Liddell explained that Matt Leslie, Housing Director, has been working with 2-1-1 Virginia and is collecting data on how many veterans call in each month and what they are calling in for and the system is working well.

Mr. Al Pianalto asked about 2-1-1 Virginia on the website and DVS app – stating it was not on the app, just the VA Hotline number which is not helpful. Ms. Alford and Mr. Combs said they would look into getting 2-1-1 Virginia added to the DVS app. It is already listed on the DVS website.

Mr. Johnson asked about resources and response times in rural areas and how effective 2-1-1 Virginia is at reaching veterans in rural areas. Ms. Liddell explained that 2-1-1 Virginia works with DVS and it is DVS staff that still work with the veterans. Transportation and other services is an issue in rural areas but they do work hard to be responsive. Ms. Alford gave a recent example of a case in Southwest Virginia where VVFS staff in Roanoke, Matt Leslie, the Legislative Aide to a state senator and Ms. Alford all worked together to get a veteran the resources he needed once the call came in through 2-1-1 Virginia and directly to DVS. She reminded the board members that they do not need to call 2-1-1 – they can contact her, Mr. Combs, or any of the DVS service areas directly for assistance with a veteran.

Ms. Alford added that 2-1-1 Virginia there is good data being recorded and offered to have Mr. Leslie brief the JLC in May, and the BVS in June, at their next meetings.

Update on the BVS Section

Mr. Tom Herthel, Benefits Director, gave an update on the Benefits Section and thanked the BVS members for all their support over the past several years. Benefits now has the money needed, and staff turnover is due to normal reasons for staff to leave. Attrition of trained staff has ended thanks to training and competitive salaries.

He gave an update on the new offices and all current offices have all been updated or relocated. 4 new offices will be opening in 2017 – Manassas, Loudoun County, Williamsburg and the Pentagon. He gave an update on their partnership with VVFS and staff relocating to some of their offices in the next year and ran through which offices were new and which would be co-located with VVFS and two with VVFS and VETE. He gave an update on the claims process and adjudication process.

Mr. Herthel said that as the result of a visit by Secretary Harvey to one of the Benefits offices and talking to the VSRs who mentioned that they could not track education benefits in BeneVets and there are many veterans asking for help with that specifically, that there is now some, but not a lot, of training, and some of his VSRs can help veterans with that. Help with learning more about their education benefits is one of the main things veterans ask the VSRs for help with.

Mr. Herthel pointed out that accurate claims processing results in faster delivery of benefits to veterans and while VA disability compensation and pension payments are not taxable, many of the things that veterans spend that money on are taxable. They are buying homes, cars, daily goods, sending kids to school, etc. with their \$2.77 Billion in benefits to Virginia veterans. He noted that the award of a VA disability rating also enables access to the VA health care system, which results in a health care savings to the state with veterans receiving care at VA facilities instead of through Medicaid or going without insurance.

He gave an update on the Benefits office at McGuire and stated there are currently 6 veterans impacted for a total of about \$10,000 in lost disability compensation and the state has a system in place to assist those veterans.

Mr. Herthel highlighted the partnerships that the Benefits section has, including with the VA, the College of William & Mary, George Mason University, the NVLSP (National Veterans Legal Service Program), and veterans service organizations.

Gen. Pinckney offered comments and compliments on how well things are now going with Benefits and how the training and new offices are helping morale and improving service.

Mr. Jones asked about NVLSP and if they would take a case all the way to the Supreme Court. Mr. Herthel responded that they would, but that the claims courts never let it get that far – they always kick it back to lower courts or to the VA.

Mr. Pianalto asked about retention issues and staff leaving for the VA. Mr. Herthel responded that that is no longer an issue.

Mr. Johnson gave a compliment to the Benefits staff on their outstanding work and then referenced a VA IG report where it seemed the VA was denying disability benefits at the end of the year to “clear the deck” of outstanding claims to affect the reportable data on days it takes to process a claim and days veterans wait for care. Mr. Herthel said he was aware of the report and stated that is why Virginia works so hard to get claim applications correct and complete at the beginning so veterans do not have to wait, or have their claims adjudicated which can take 6-10 years with current VA staff levels.

The presentation was distributed to the members after the meeting.

New Business

BVS Member Handbook

Ms. Alford directed everyone’s attention to the binder in front of them. She stated that this was their new member handbook and asked them to read through it after the meeting. An electronic file copy was distributed to the members after the meeting.

BVS By-laws proposed amendments

Ms. Alford mentioned the new code language was in front of them as signed by the Governor and due to that, the BVS by-laws will need to be amended. Due to the overrun of the meeting she asked everyone to review the by-laws proposed amendments on their own and come prepared to discuss at the next meeting. Also board members have asked about call-in possibilities, especially with the recent bad weather. There are FOIA regulations for members calling in via conference call but the board has to vote to accept the policy and members still have to have a physical quorum at the main location of each meeting. Call in locations must be publicized and accessible to the public and members cannot hop on and off the call. She said they would vote at the next meeting and asked the members to keep in mind most or all of the state boards and commissions comply with the FOIA regulations and if they vote to not allow conference call-in they will need a valid reason. (*Attachment 3*)

DVS Strategic Plan

Mr. Combs gave a short presentation to the board members on Virginia Performs and the DVS Strategic Plan. He noted that all state agencies use a common strategic plan template with core elements, and that there are service area plans (in effect, mini strategic plans) for each of the Department’s six service lines.

He explained that one of the things the BVS is tasked with in Code is to review the DVS strategic plan and make recommendations to the Commissioner. He explained that the Department of Planning & Budget (DPB) had recently “unlocked” the website for agencies to update their strategic plans with current information on programs, services, customers, resources, etc. He stated that Ms. Alford and the service line directors had been working on updates for some time, and that the edited versions were ready for review by the Board.

Ms. Alford showed an example of one service line's section and edits that have already been made by the Director. She stated that she would send each Board POC a copy of their service line document and asked them to review it and add any comments or edits in track changes and return to her by April 3. Any ideas for big picture strategic planning or for the next biennium should be recorded in a separate word document and sent to Ms. Alford.

Mr. Combs asked each POC to take a detailed look at their service line programs and budget with their Directors and be prepared to give a report to the board at the next meeting. These reports will be used to help DVS with the budget and strategic plan for the next biennium, which will go to the Secretary and Governor in August. These reports are also used by DPB with the transition to the new Governor after the November election.

The presentation hand out is attached. (*Attachment 4*)

Work Group Reports

Veteran Entrepreneurship Work Group

Chairman Nick Kesler gave a short report on the Veteran Entrepreneurship Work Group and their work since the BVS last met. Mr. Kesler mentioned the competitor states they have been researching and the information they have been gathering. The next step is doing public forums at universities around the state this spring from April to June. An update on the forums will be made at the June meeting.

Ms. Alford mentioned that the board members will be given the details of each forum any anyone in that locality who is able to take part should contact Mr. Kesler and everyone is welcome to participate, not just the work group members.

A copy of the report is attached. (*Attachment 5*)

Women Veterans Work Group

Chairman Kathleen Murphy gave a short report on the Women Veterans Work Group and their work since the BVS last met. Delegate Murphy mentioned the budget amendment she patroned during the 2017 Session to fund a women veterans coordinator position at DVS and thanked Del. Anderson for his support. She said in the coming months they will be examining what other states are doing and what can be done to move the issue forward in Virginia.

Ms. Alford mentioned that the board members should be keeping this in the back of their minds as they do their review of the strategic plan and the deep dive with their directors, as the work group will be doing an analysis of DVS programs and how DVS can better serve women veterans and their specific needs. All ideas should go in the word document to be sent to Ms. Alford and also relayed to Del. Murphy.

A copy of the report is attached. (*Attachment 6*)

“Good of the Order” Reports

Mr. Barton handed out copies of HJR840 which is a Commending Resolution by Del. Cox, on the retirement of Mr. Jack Hilgers. He noted that the Joint Resolution had been approved by both Houses of the General Assembly and will be presented to Mr. Hilgers at the upcoming meeting of the VSF on March 22. Mr. Barton made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Johnson, for BVS to endorse the Resolution. The motion passed **unanimously**. (*Attachment 7*)

Chairman Icenhour made one announcement that DVS was going to order new business cards for members and to please let Ms. Alford know if you do not want cards, otherwise cards will be ordered for all members.

Ms. Alford stated that the legislative members would not receive cards and any citizen members should let her know if they do not want cards.

Public Comment

There were no individuals seeking to make public comment.

Closing Remarks

Chairman Icenhour reminded the members that the next meeting will be held June 22 at the Virginia War Memorial. Meeting will start at 10 a.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 1
BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
Virginia Veterans Cemetery, 10300 Pridesville Rd., Amelia, VA
March 16, 2017
10:00 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

AGENDA

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:00 – 10:02)
- II. Roll Call and Quorum Determination – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman*, (10:02 – 10:05)
- III. Approval of Agenda, introduction of new board member, DVS staff and guests – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:05 – 10:10)
- IV. Approval of November 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:10 – 10:12)
- V. Welcome to Virginia Veterans Cemetery and brief overview – *Dan Kemano, Cemeteries Director* (10:12-10:20)
- VI. Reports (10:20 – 10:25)
 - a. Joint Leadership Council – *Bart Barton, JLC Chairman*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Rich Schollmann, VSF Chairman*
- VII. DVS Update (10:25 – 11:25)
 - a. Overview, *John Newby, Commissioner*
 - b. Review of 2017 Legislative Session – *Carrie Ann Alford, Policy Director*
 - c. VVFS Update – *Betty Ann Liddell, VVFS Director*
 - d. Benefits Update – *Tom Herthel, Benefits Director*
- VIII. New Business: (11:25-12:00)
 - a. BVS Member handbook, *Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Policy Director*
 - b. BVS By-laws proposed amendments, *Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Policy Director*
 - c. Strategic Planning, *Jim Icenhour, Chairman*
 - d. Report from Veteran Entrepreneurship Work Group, *Nick Kesler*
 - e. Report from Women Veterans Work Group, *Del. Kathleen Murphy & Laurie Neff*
 - f. “Good of the Order” Reports, *All Members*
- IX. Public comment (12:00 – 12:10)
- X. Wrap Up & Adjourn – *Jim Icenhour, Chairman* (12:10-12:15)
- XI. Lunch and Tour of Virginia Veterans Cemetery for BVS Members (12:15 -1:15)

ATTACHMENT 2
JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT
to
THE BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
March 16, 2017

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) has met twice since the last meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) on November 17, 2016.

At the JLC meeting on December 21, 2016, seven legislative initiatives were approved by the JLC for inclusion in the 2017 Legislative Agenda. At the most recent meeting on March 8, 2017, the JLC reviewed the results of the recently completed session of the General Assembly. The overall results for Virginia's veterans were very favorable especially in a tight fiscal environment. The result was an overall increase in appropriated budget for the Department of Veteran Services. A final status of the JLC objectives is attached.

The JLC held its annual Conference at the General Assembly on January 12, 2017. Members of the General Assembly addressed the Conference during the morning session along with Governor Terry McAuliffe. Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam and the First Lady, Dorothy McAuliffe, addressed the Conference during the afternoon session. Members of the JLC also attended and were recognized at the morning sessions of the House of Delegates and Senate.

The JLC looks forward to continuing our partnership with the BVS in support of Virginia's veterans in 2017. Our next meeting is Wednesday May 31, 2017, to be held at the D-Day Memorial in Bedford.

Respectfully submitted,

Harold H. Barton, Jr.
Chairman

Enclosures a/s

Status of JLC 2017 Initiatives – as of March 8, 2017

Initiative	Recommendation	Status –
JLC 2016-01 <i>Virginia Veteran and Family Support Services</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly change the Code of Virginia to revise the charter of the VVFS; release \$393,494 to DVS in FY17; authorize 21 new positions in FY17 and FY18; and appropriate an additional \$700,000 (GF) in FY18 to convert VVFS to an all-state employee service delivery structure.	Introduced budget: \$610,128 plus the \$393,494 in the “lock box”. Additional Budget Amendment – N/A Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB2206 (Delegate Cox) 2/3: Passed House (95-0) 2/16: Passed Senate (40-0) 2/21: Sent to Governor
JLC 2016-02 <i>Virginia War Memorial</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly appropriate an additional \$100,000 (GF) FY18 to ensure the Virginia War Memorial has the resources necessary to accomplish its dual mission of honor and education.	Introduced budget: None Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
JLC 2016-03 <i>Guard Income Tax Subtraction</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly increase the state income tax subtraction level for members of the Virginia National Guard from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per year.	Introduced budget: None Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB1397 (Delegate Fowler) 1/18: Laid on the Table
JLC 2016-04 <i>In-state tuition for all members of the Reserve Components</i>	That the Governor and the General Assembly change the eligibility for in-state tuition to include all members of the Virginia National Guard and the Reserve components, thus recognizing their service to the Commonwealth and treating them equally to the active components and veterans	Introduced budget: \$900,000 for VMI Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB1724 (Delegate Anderson) 2/1: Laid on the Table
JLC 2016-05 <i>Virginia Veteran Entrepreneurship Grant Pilot Program</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly approve legislation creating the <i>Virginia Veteran Entrepreneurship Grant Pilot Program</i> under the Department of Veterans Services and appropriate \$900,000 (GF) per year in FY18 and FY19 to award grants to companies that provide entrepreneurship training to veterans. Also, that the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) continue its work on veteran entrepreneurship and develop additional recommendations for consideration.	Introduced budget: \$900,000 for FY17 and FY18 Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB1841 (Delegate Stolle) 1/24: Reported out of General Laws and re-referred to Appropriations 2/7: Left in Appropriations • SB1114 (Senator McPike) 2/2: Passed By Indefinitely (16-0)
JLC 2016-06 <i>VMSDEP</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly remove the requirement that a veteran’s disability rating be combat related. Instead, a permanent service-connected disability rating of at least 90%, plus satisfaction of the other requirements currently in the Code, would qualify a veteran’s spouse or child for VMSDEP benefits.	Introduced budget: None Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB2357 (Delegate Torian) 2/1: Reported out of Education w/Amendment (21-0) 2/2: House rereferred to Appropriations 2/7: Left in Appropriations Budget Amendment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 144 #2h - \$900,000 in FY18
JLC 2016-07 <i>Electronic Ballot Return</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation and provide budget support of a pilot program for the electronic return of absentee ballots by Virginia’s deployed military service members to enfranchise their voting privileges.	Introduced budget: None Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SB1490 (Senator DeSteph) 2/2: Reported from Finance with Amendment (16-0) 2/7: Passed Senate (36-4) Assigned to House P&E, Elections SubCom 2/25: Left in committee

ATTACHMENT 3

VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT TO Board of Veterans Services March 16, 2017

The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees has held one Development Committee work group meeting since the last BVS meeting on November 17, 2016. This work group met on February 15, 2017 at the Virginia War Memorial. The next VSF Board meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2017 at the American Legion office. The development work group discussed the many aspects of fundraising and how these ideas can be applied to VSF. Donor retention, outreach and a proposed FY18 budget was also discussed. No action was taken during the development work group; however, a comprehensive fundraising strategy will be discussed at the March 22nd VSF Board meeting.

On January 14, Pat Webb, the Foundation Chair, resigned from the Board due to family health issues. Under the Foundation bylaws, First Vice-Chair Richard Schollmann assumed the duties as the Foundation Chair. Also, on February 8, Senator Walter Stosch was appointed by the Senate Rules Committee to fill the remainder of Pat Webb's term.

As of January 31, 2017 VSF has received donations during FY17 of almost \$ 335,000, of which \$285,000 are for VVFS. Not reflected on the January 31, 2017 report is an \$185,000 donation from the Dominion Charity Classic for V3 which will be included in the February report. Overall individual donations are down. These concerns and possible solutions were put forward during the work group and will be a significant part of the development committee's discussion with the full Board in March.

On behalf of the Foundation Board of Trustees, I would like to recognize the outstanding outreach of all DVS activities and their fundraising event success. It could not have been accomplished without the work and dedication of the DVS staff.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2017 at the American Legion HQ. Items for the next meeting may include: (1) review VSF income, expenses, and fundraising events conducted during FY16; (2) discuss work group comprehensive strategy; (3) approve the 2nd Quarter FY17 VSF Financial Reports; (4) approve budget adjustments, if any; (5) Approve review of VSF-DVS Policies, if needed; (6) confirm dates and locations of FY18 Board meetings; (7) appoint a Nominating Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Rich Schollmann
VSF Chairman

ATTACHMENT 4
**Background Paper on the State Agency Strategic Planning and
Virginia Performs**

- In Virginia, state government agencies use a common strategic planning template that identifies:
 - Mission
 - Vision
 - Values
 - Funding sources
 - Customers
 - Partners
 - Agency Goals, Objectives, and Measures
 - Products and Services
 - Staffing
 - Key Risk Factors; and
 - Management discussion.
- In addition, each service line has a Service Area Plan (SAP) that covers:
 - Description of the program/service;
 - Mission alignment (to the agency);
 - Products and services;
 - Anticipated changes;
 - Factors impacting the service area; and
 - Financial overview.
- Agency strategic plans are hosted on the Virginia Performs platform (<http://vaperforms.virginia.gov/>), a publicly-accessible website.
 - The system must be “unlocked” before agencies can make edits or updates. This is usually done on an annual basis;
 - Agency changes/updates are reviewed/approved by the Department of Planning & Budget (DPB) before they go “live” on Virginia Performs;
 - DPB issues instructions to agencies on the “scope” of edits/updates that are to be made in a given year.
- The system is currently “unlocked” for agency edits/updates
 - Per DPB instruction, edits/updates are be limited to “bringing the plans up to date” rather than laying out new products, services, or funding requirements;
 - Agency updates are due to DPB by April 14;
 - DVS directors have completed draft updated to the DVS plan. It is ready for BVS review/input.
- The Board of Veterans Services has the power and duty to “*Review and advise the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services on the Department's strategic plan.*”
- The BVS Chairman has assigned a BVS member (or members) to be the lead Point of Contact (POC) for each of the department’s service areas, as well as a POC for the overall strategic planning process.
- DVS will send each POC (or POCs) the Service Area Plan (SAP) for their area. We request that the BVS POCs review the SAPs for their area and return with recommended changes NLT April 3 so that DVS may incorporate all updates before the April 14 DPB deadline.
- DVS POCs are Carrie Ann Alford and Steven Combs, plus the service line directors.

• **ATTACHMENT 5**

To: Chairman Jim Icenhour, Board of Veterans Services
From: Veteran Entrepreneurship Working Group, Board of Veterans Services
Date: March 10, 2017

Subj: PHASE I AND II RESEARCH FINDINGS ICO VETERAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE STUDY

The Veteran Entrepreneurship Working Group conducted its initial analysis related to Phase I and II of the “Veteran Entrepreneurship Initiative Support Study” from January 20, 2017 to March 3, 2017. Phase I identified best practices and benchmarks related to efforts other states have used to support veteran entrepreneurs and partners within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Phase II explored unique aspects of veteran entrepreneurship by examining veteran-based incubators/accelerators, university/college programming, and other supporting mechanisms across the country, particularly in California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and North Carolina. Below is a summary of the Working Group’s initial findings and is broken into three main areas: 1) federal and state government policies, legislation, and related programs; 2) higher education related programs; and 3) non-profit and other supporting programs, followed by an outline of Phase III and IV of the study.

1) Federal and state government policies, legislation, and related programs:

We found that multiple agencies operate programs supporting veteran entrepreneurship, however, we could not identify whether the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or the Small Business Administration (SBA) is the lead for veteran entrepreneurship. We also could not identify federal legislation outlining a lead agency supporting veteran entrepreneurship, and while the VA and SBA both reference working with “other federal agencies,” they do not directly reference one another’s programs or provide program links on their websites. We believe this demonstrates a lack of strategic guidance and cohesion within the interagency supporting veterans’ entrepreneurial endeavors.

The VA operates various entrepreneurial programs tied together through the Veteran Entrepreneurship Portal (VEP) - <https://www.va.gov/osdbu/entrepreneur/>.

One federal program supporting veteran entrepreneurship maintained by the SBA is the Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) - <https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/vboc>. There are 20 VBOCs across the country, with eight located in the six states researched. The VBOCs are designed to provide entrepreneurial development services such as business training, counseling and mentoring, and referrals for eligible veterans owning or considering starting a small business. Virginia has two VBOCs, one located in Springfield and the other in Norfolk.

All of the states in the study have passed legislation supporting veteran entrepreneurial programs; however, we found that only Illinois and Texas have direct funding provisions in the form of grants, loans, or tax deferment programs for veteran-owned small businesses. Each state also has a percentage of business procurement contracts reserved for veteran-owned small businesses, however, we could not find particular programs targeting specific industries to take advantage of “tipping point industries.”¹

¹ A “tipping point industry” as defined in the Veteran Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Model from the College of William and Mary is one where a cohort of businesses operating within a specific industry dominate a regional economy. Ex: cyber security and defense contracting in Northern Virginia or maritime industries in Hampton Roads.

Texas has the most robust programming supporting veteran entrepreneurs through the Veteran Entrepreneurship Program (VEP) created out of Senate Bill 1476 in 2013 - <https://legiscan.com/TX/bill/SB1476/2013>. The VEP funds a team of business consultants to support veteran entrepreneurs.

2) Higher education related programs:

All of the states researched have public universities with programs, mainly within their Schools of Business, supporting veteran entrepreneurship.

Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) provides program development and delivery, services and research, policy and evaluation supporting military members, veterans, and their families. The Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV) has operated since 2007 with 72% of its graduates launching businesses and 92% still operating - <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/veteran-and-family-resources/starting-growing-a-business/ebv/>. IVMF is partnered with a network of ten universities across the country, including five in the states within the study.

Overall, we found that twelve of the Top-25 MBA Entrepreneurship Programs (UVA-Darden ranked #11) and seven of the Top-25 Undergraduate Entrepreneurship Programs are located in the states researched, demonstrating there is considerable access to top university sponsored entrepreneurial education in states with high veterans populations.

3) Non-profits and other supporting programs:

Bunker Labs is the most prominent veterans-based non-profit incubator/accelerator in the country - <https://bunkerlabs.org>. They have affiliate programs in fifteen cities (with eight in our researched states) providing educational programming, mentors, events, and local networks to support veteran entrepreneurs. Bunker Labs' Entrepreneurial Program for Innovation & Collaboration (EPIC) provides a 12-week course on start-up business essentials.

Patriot Boot Camp (PBC) is a non-profit on a mission to equip active duty military members, veterans, and their spouses with the education, resources, and community needed to be successful technology entrepreneurs - <http://patriotbootcamp.org/>.

The SCORE Association provides business counselors, mentors, and workshops to support entrepreneurs and their startups - <https://www.score.org/>. SCORE operates in partnership with the SBA and VBOCs.

Next Steps:

Phase III of the research will provide a "deep dive" of veteran entrepreneurship within Virginia, outlining current and proposed programs, and their related successes and pain points. As part of this phase the Working Group, in coordination with the Department of Veterans Services, will host a series of public forums to better identify the unique needs of veteran entrepreneurs across the state. The forums will be held from April to June at public universities or prominent regional organizations supporting the Virginia veteran entrepreneurial ecosystem. Feedback from these forums coupled with ongoing research will provide the necessary information for the Working Group to substantiate recommendations made in Phase IV.

Phase IV will provide recommendations for consideration no later than September 29th to the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs and the Department of Veterans Services in support of Governor McAuliffe's "Veterans Entrepreneurship Initiative."

ATTACHMENT 6
“Examining Programs for Women Veterans” Support Study

Board of Veterans Services, Women Veterans Working Group

Team:

Delegate Kathleen Murphy, Chair

Ms. Susan Hippen

Ms. Sandra Love

Ms. Laurie Neff

Ms. Belinda Pinckney

Chairman Jim Icenhour

According to a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor, “Women veterans are highly qualified and bring strong attributes to the civilian labor force.” At the other end of the spectrum women veterans are the fastest growing population of homeless veterans.

Background:

Virginia is tied for 4th in number of women veterans, with 111,034 veterans who are women.² For many years women have been serving and sacrificing for our country both at home and abroad. As they transition from military service back into civilian life, it is not uncommon to find them in need of services. Like men, women veterans often struggle with readjustment to civilian life. Like men, they experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and disabilities related to their military service. And in alarming numbers women experience problems related to sexual trauma experienced during their service (MST). They have problems with self-esteem, which can lead to difficulties in their private lives and in transitioning their skills and ultimately in finding a job. When women have the additional responsibility of children, their transition is further complicated. Additionally, it is important to recognize that women are more likely than men to be put into low wage jobs, earn the minimum wage, and as a result end up in poverty. In some cases they end up homeless.

The Mission of the Work Group:

The mission of the Work Group is to gain expertise, locate critical resources and examine best practices and report on the special needs of women veterans and the resources available to help women veterans to be better prepared for a successful transition back into civilian life. Additionally, we need to ensure women veterans get the help they may need to deal with issues that are more specific to women veterans including sexual assault and/or intimidation.

Course of Study:

Many states and independent organizations across the United States have conducted research into the needs of our women veterans and have instituted programs to support them. Our goal is to examine existing government and private programs in order to utilize lessons learned to expand resources available and to ensure we have the appropriate programs and support available to our women veterans.

² Department of Veterans Affairs, Table 6L: VetPop2014, at <http://www.va.gov/vetdata/>

What is clear is that a woman veteran's ability to find meaningful employment is essential to their ability to move forward in a positive and productive life outside the military.

Points of Focus for Our Study:

- Identify key elements of, and correlation between the various elements of service networks for women veterans and potential for DVS service lines. Analysis will include studying variables, including: women veterans, disabled women veterans, enlisted/NCOs v. officers, education levels, and other factors the committee deems important.
- Examine DVS programs and assess efforts to meet the challenges for women veterans, including:
 - Information on available employment workshops on or close to our military bases or virtually on line, focused on transition planning, skills assessments, exploration of educational and career opportunities and the possible need for additional job training.
 - Assistance translating women veteran's skills into the civilian market; or help them understand the civilian job search process including locating free employment services, provide guidance on the mechanics of getting a job including developing interviewing skills, and effective resume writing.
 - Help locating living accommodations and when children are included, locating schools, child care and other needs of families with children.
 - Programs providing the critical help to deal with PTS, MST and other combat related injuries.
- In the 2017 session of the General Assembly funding was requested for a Woman Veterans Coordinator at the Department of Veterans Services. The work group will study what other states are doing in this area and what the job duties of a Women Veterans Coordinator at DVS would be. This Coordinator could be committed specifically to serving and supporting women veterans and their unique needs, including support for transition, readjustment, continuing education or vocational training, as well as support services to assist them in overcoming emotional trauma.
- Data collection would be done through public hearing forums and a survey, as deemed appropriate.

End State:

We believe this study will support efforts to secure the funding for this Coordinator and help ensure our women veterans receive the attention and assistance they deserve.

ATTACHMENT 7

INTRODUCED

2017 SESSION

17104610D

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 840

2 Offered January 27, 2017

3 *Commending Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret.*

4

Patrons—Cox, Stolle, Anderson, Bloxom, Boysko, Byron, Carr, Cole, Davis, Dudenhefer, Fariss, Fowler, Freitas, Habeeb, Heretick, Hope, Howell, Hugo, Ingram, Jones, Knight, Krizek, Landes, Leftwich, Lingamfelter, Massie, Minchew, Morefield, Mullin, O'Bannon, Peace, Pillion, Plum, Rasoul, Simon, Villanueva and Ware; Senators: Cosgrove, Deeds, DeSteph, Ebbin, Edwards, Hanger, Howell, Lewis, Peake, Reeves, Ruff, Stuart and Wagner

5

6 WHEREAS, Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret., served with distinction in the United
7 States Marine Corps for 31 years, demonstrating extraordinary leadership, professional skill, and
8 unwavering courage and commitment to the defense of the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers, as a captain in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War, was awarded
10 the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism as battalion operations officer of the Second Battalion, Fourth
11 Marines, Third Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in connection with operations against
12 the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam on August 23 - 24, 1966; and

13 WHEREAS, as a colonel in the Marine Corps, Jack Hilgers was noted for cost effectiveness and
14 comprehensive resources management by the United States General Accounting Office and the House of
15 Representatives Appropriations Committee in 1987; and

16 WHEREAS, after retiring from the Marine Corps, Jack Hilgers continued a lifetime of public service
17 by earning a Ph.D. in public administration and research with a minor in international relations from Old
18 Dominion University (ODU) where he served for 10 years, established the ODU Maritime, Ports, and
19 Logistics Management program, which is one of the few such initiatives in the world and is thriving
20 after 25 years, and he later served on the ODU Board of Visitors; and

21 WHEREAS, from 1999 to 2007, Jack Hilgers served as legislative assistant to the Honorable Leo C.
22 Wardrup, Jr., before joining the Department of Veterans Services (DVS); he played a key role in the
23 2002 study and 2003 legislation that established DVS and the Veteran Services Foundation (VSF) as
24 separate agencies, as well as the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and the Joint Leadership Council of
25 Veterans Service Organizations (JLC); and

26 WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers prompted the initiation of the bipartisan and highly popular Military and
27 Veterans Caucus in the Virginia General Assembly and assisted with organizing and conducting its fully
28 attended weekly meetings; and

29 WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers has been a legislative and organizational development advisor, involved
30 every step of the way, as DVS, VSF, BVS, and JLC have evolved and grown, and he has contributed
31 significantly to the success of the two agencies, the board, and the council; he continued to serve the
32 Commonwealth's veterans with Leo Wardrup, who served as a VSF trustee after his retirement from
33 public office; and

34 WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers demonstrated proven effectiveness in influencing public policy as a highly
35 respected member of a team that successfully advocated for more than five dozen pieces of veterans and
36 military-related legislation that was introduced, amended, and passed from 2006 until his retirement; and

37 WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers worked diligently to expand the services that DVS and VSF provide to
38 Virginia's veterans and developed extensive joint policies and procedures that are still used by the
39 department and the foundation today; and

40 WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers personally educated all the members of the VSF Board of Trustees in the
41 unique aspects of the foundation's philanthropic duties, even traveling from his home in Hampton Roads

42 to the Marine Corps Heritage Center in Quantico and points in western Virginia to orient new members;
43 and
44 WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers worked tirelessly to coordinate fundraising activities throughout the
45 Commonwealth and helped VSF secure more than \$3 million in donations to assist veterans and their
46 families; and
47 WHEREAS, as executive director of VSF, Jack Hilgers served with distinction as an "extraordinary
48 contributor" to both VSF and DVS, ensuring the integrity of the Commonwealth's trust and donors'
49 wishes since 2007; now, therefore, be it
50 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby
51 commend Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret., for his lifetime of service to the
52 Commonwealth and Virginia's veterans on the occasion of his retirement; and, be it
53 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
54 for presentation to Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret., as an expression of the General
55 Assembly's admiration for his 31 years of service with the United States Marine Corps and 28 years of
56 service to the Commonwealth, demonstrating extraordinary leadership, professional skill, and an
57 unwavering commitment to the men and women of every branch of the United States Armed Forces and
58 Virginia.