

**Board of Veterans Services  
Cemeteries Sub-Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 17, 2008**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Cemeteries Sub-Committee was held on Thursday, April 17, 2008 at the American Legion Department of Virginia building in Richmond.

**Members Present**

- Paris Davis
- Paul Galanti
- Pat Green

**Members Absent**

- Mark Cole
- John Edwards

**Department of Veterans Services Officials Present**

- Steven Combs, Director of Policy and Planning
- Dan Kemano, Cemeteries Director

**Others Present**

None

**Materials Distributed**

- Agenda
- Monthly Progress Report – Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Dublin
- FY09/10 Budget – Item C-149 – language related to construction of new veterans cemetery in Southwest Virginia
- Information and newspaper articles on the Missing in America Project
- Department of Veterans Services Point Paper on Lawn Crypts
- FY09/10 Budget – Item C-153 – language authorizing the Governor to request federal funds to purchase and install vault lines at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia and the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery
- Budget amendment request by Delegate Algie Howell – Item 426 #1h – related to funding for the installation of vault liners at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia and the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery
- Article from the Kentucky Post related to the construction of a new state veterans cemetery
- Letter from Commissioner Vince Burgess to the Veterans Services Foundation requesting funds for the construction of an Avenue of Flags at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery

**Call to Order and Quorum Determination**

Chairman Pat Green called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. With three of five members present, a quorum was determined.

**Monthly Progress Report – Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Dublin**

DVS Cemeteries Director Dan Kemano summarized the progress to date on the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Dublin. He focused on these topics:

- Master Plan review – DVS is working with Wiley & Wilson and the LA Group on the Master Plan concept for the cemetery. At a March 19 meeting, four concepts were reviewed and critiqued. Based on the outcome of the meeting, the architects will prepare a fifth design for final review and approval
- Ceremonies
  - Three ceremonies are planned in conjunction with the cemetery:
    - Land Transfer Ceremony
    - Groundbreaking Ceremony
    - Dedication Ceremony
  - DVS is working with government officials at the local, state, and federal level, as well as with veterans groups and others, to plan the ceremonies
  - Land Transfer Ceremony – because of delays in the land transfer process, this ceremony is now planned for late summer/early fall of 2008
  - Dedication Ceremony and cemetery opening – this is planned for late summer of 2010. A goal of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is to open the cemetery in Federal FY10 (between October 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010)

### **Veterans Cemetery Study Recommendations**

The sub-committee members reviewed and discussed the six primary recommendations of the cemetery study, completed in November by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service:

- 50-mile service boundary: The Commonwealth should adopt a 50-mile service boundary for current and future state veterans cemeteries. This is opposed to the 75-mile service standard used by the National Cemetery Administration
- At least 90% of Virginia veterans should be served: The Commonwealth should adopt the goal that at least 90% of Virginia's veterans should live within 50 miles of a national or state veterans cemetery
- Future veterans cemetery in Nelson County: To meet the goal that at least 90% of Virginia's veterans should live within 50 miles of a national or state veterans cemetery, the Commonwealth should plan for a future veterans cemetery in Nelson County
- Residency requirements: The Commonwealth should lift residency requirements, such that veterans from out of state would be eligible for burial in a Virginia state veterans cemetery, provided they met all other requirements
- Outreach and marketing opportunities: The Commonwealth should look for new and expanded ways to promote Virginia state veterans cemeteries as a dignified final resting place for veterans
- Satisfaction surveys: The Commonwealth should use satisfaction surveys mailed to the families of the departed to measure current performance and to plan for continuous improvement

The sub-committee members voted unanimously to recommend to the full Board of Veterans Services that the six recommendations be accepted and adopted.

### **Adjournment**

Discussion of the other agenda items were reserved for a later date. The meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.