

## **Virginia Joint Leadership Council**

**October 15, 2003  
Virginia War Memorial  
1:00 P.M – 3:30 P.M.**

### **Board Members Attending:**

Jim Aucoin, John C. Bonnell, Jr., Mason S. Botts, Johnnie Collins, Jr., John D. Edgerton, Paul R. Fink, Robert O. Gray, Michael C. Husley, John T. Jackson, Norman J. Jasper, Jr., James F. Jones, Jr., Daniel T. Miller, Cornelius T (Connie) O'Neill, R. Goodwin Sacra, Richard C. Schneider, Thomas J. Snee, Peter M. Snelling, Frank G. Wickersham III

### **Board Members Absent:**

Ronald E. Shamblin

### **Additional Persons Present:**

Jon Mangis, Commissioner of Veterans Services  
Richard Zorn, Deputy Secretary of Administration  
Bernie Henderson, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Don Ferguson, Assistant Attorney General  
Bert Boyd, Chief Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Services  
Melville A. Drisko, Vice Chairman, Board of Veterans Services  
Duane C. Sergent, Associate Director, Virginia State Approving Agency

Commissioner Jon Mangis welcomed Council members and guests. He announced that members of the board would vote on who would be Chairman and Vice Chairman of the board.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Joint Leadership Council:**

Don Ferguson, Assistant Attorney General, discussed briefly with the committee members the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and the Virginia Conflict of Interest Act. Mr. Ferguson will draw up a synopsis of each act and send a copy to committee members for their notebooks.

### **Call to Order:**

Commissioner Jon Mangis officially called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Election of Officers:**

Connie O'Neill announced that the Nomination Committee, composed of Daniel Miller, John Edgerton, John Jackson, and himself submitted the following recommendations: Chairman Daniel T. Miller, Disabled American Veterans and Vice Chairman James Aucoin, American Veterans. There were no objections and Chairman Daniel T. Miller took the chair.

**Briefing on the Department of Veterans Services:**

Colbert Boyd, Chief Deputy Commissioner announced that a copy of his presentation would be posted on the web. He stated that e-mails/links of every board associated with the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) would be disseminated to publicize what is going with the new department. Minutes from all board meeting will also be posted on the Commonwealth Calendar. Mr. Boyd reviewed the merger of the DVS. He explained that the department was a result of legislation, and that there are 16-field service offices throughout the state. Mr. Boyd reviewed the operations of the benefits services, cemeteries, care center, and administrative services divisions. He reviewed and discussed budget cuts, revenue, funding sources and staffing.

Mr. Boyd expressed his commitment to working with the service agencies to keep veterans informed of facilities where they can be assisted. Veterans will also be informed through the web news. He identified the under served areas as: Southwest Virginia, Quantico, Staunton, and Harrisonburg.

**Remarks: Commissioner Mangis:**

Commissioner Mangis spoke of his background and experience with the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs. He expressed his priorities of working together on issues that are veterans related and staffing. Commissioner Mangis stated that he feels strongly that veterans are important people.

Mr. Mangis introduced Duane Sergent, Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA) and discussed their functions. He also encouraged service organizations to participate in the Veterans Supermarket to be held November 6, 2003 at John Tyler Community College.

### **Roundtable Discussion:**

Discussion centered around staffing and budget shortfalls since the 1980's. Mr. Mangis responded that the odds of going back to 1989 operating budget are basically lost.

Daniel Miller, Chairman, Disabled American Veterans asked if minutes and handouts from the last meeting could be distributed to all members who were not present at the last meeting. Mr. Ferguson, Assistant Attorney General stated that he had copies of the minutes and attachments, and he would give them to Mr. Boyd to have his assistant make copies and distribute to all members.

Robert Gray, American Ex-POW's stated that a few weeks ago in Durham, NC the federal government had a veterans hearing and that not one qualified person from Virginia was there to represent the state of Virginia. He also stated, that when there is an opportunity to have a board listen to grievances, needs and desires, the opportunity should not be missed to voice one's opinion. Mr. Gray requested that board members be contacted and informed of such meetings so that someone from Virginia could attend.

In response to Mr. Gray's statement, Mr. John Jackson, Paralyzed Veterans of America stated that Virginia "lucked out" because the McGuire Hospital and the Care Commission did not recommend that Virginia lose any hospitals.

Daniel Miller, Chairman, suggested that they form a Constitution Committee so that they could review the constitution and by-laws and make any necessary changes. He asked Connie O'Neill to head up a subcommittee, along with Richard Schneider, John Edgerton to review the constitution and by-laws.

### **Public Comment Period:**

Mr. Hatfield thanked everyone for having the meeting at the Virginia War Memorial. He wanted to let everyone know that the meeting room would not be available for the next meeting due to renovation of the room. However, Mr. Hatfield wanted to take this time to ask for help in writing (See Attachment) to the Governor so that he could include the funding in his budget so that the VWM could get an additional wing built on to it. The new Educational Wing will house the foundation's educational programs, battlefield memorabilia displays, and provide meeting space and administrative offices for the foundation. If any organization wishes to have their flag hung in the meeting room please provide Mr. Hatfield with a 3x5 flag that has a sleeve on it.

**Council Meet Schedule:**

Next meeting will be held Tuesday, December 16, 2003 at 1:00 P.M.

**Adjournment:**