

Virginia Joint Leadership Council

**September 25, 2003
Virginia War Memorial
1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

Board Members Attending:

Jim Aucoin, John Edgerton, Michael C. Hulsey, John T. Jackson, Cornelius T (Connie) O'Neill, Richard C. Schneider, Ronald E. Shamblin, Commissioner Jon Mangis (ex officio)

Board Members Absent:

John C. Bonnell, Jr., Mason Botts, Robert O. Gray, Norman J. Jasper, Jr., Daniel T. Miller, Thomas J. Snee, Peter M. Snelling

Additional Persons Present:

Sandra Bowen, Secretary of Administration
Dr. Sheryl Bailey, Deputy Secretary of Administration
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
Jeff Martin, Adjutant, Virginia Department of Disabled American Veterans

Commissioner Jon Mangis welcomed Council members and guests. He announced that a committee would be created in order to select candidates for officers and present at the next meeting.

Duties and Responsibilities of Joint Leadership Council:

Don Ferguson, Assistant Attorney General, assigned to the Council, was introduced and spoke briefly and asked Richard Zorn, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth to address the duties and responsibilities of the Council.

Secretary Zorn referred to three handouts, which he made available: Executive Order 40: Report of State Agency Services to Veterans, Bill Tracking – 2003 Session and Chapter 20 – Code of Virginia, which addresses State authorities, boards, commissions, councils, foundations and other collegial bodies.

He evaluated the powers and duties of the Joint Leadership Council as specified in the Code of Virginia noting that the JLC is an advisory body, providing advice and comments and acting as liaison between Commissioner Mangis and the Veterans population. He reiterated the need for

the Council members to be the “mouth pieces” of the Veterans Community, with an open door policy, guided by the Freedom of Information Act.

Call to Order:

Commissioner Jon Mangis officially called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a roll call.

Governor’s Goals and Objectives:

Secretary Sandra Bowen welcomed the members of the Council and guests. She presented the Governor’s goals and objectives for the Veterans of the Commonwealth, and spoke of new beginnings and the high potential and challenges before the Board, the Council and the Foundation.

She stressed the importance of good communications and reiterated to the Council that their purpose is to keep the Veterans of Virginia informed. Additionally, she addressed the recent move of a Richmond Claims Office, stating that the Eighth Street building had been neglected and is in need of renovation. She stated that this is a temporary move, and Commissioner Mangis will find the precise location, where the Veteran can drive-up, conveniently park and enter the facility easily.

Election of Officers:

Due to the absence of several members, Commissioner Mangis recommended forming a Nominating Committee, and asked that Connie O’Neill chair the committee composed of members, John Edgerton, John Jackson and Dan Miller. Those in attendance agreed to serve and Ms. Claybrook was asked to contact Dan Miller.

Update on Governor’s Executive Order 40: State Agency Services to Veterans:

Dr. Sheryl Bailey, Deputy Secretary of Administration, reported that Governor Warner's Executive Order 40 (December 2002) required all state agencies to “identify opportunities for improving services to veterans and to make and implement appropriate changes” and to report on their progress by June 30, 2003.

She reviewed the first report produced as a result of Executive Order 40 (See Attachment) that summarizes state agency services to veterans.

Dr. Bailey reported that Executive Order 40 has had a significant impact on the services offered to veterans by the Commonwealth's agencies. For the first time, the array of services currently offered by 15 different agencies has been documented in one place (DVS plus 14 other agencies). Thus, the availability of these services can now be more effectively communicated to the veteran community, thereby enhancing access to these useful services.

Additionally, 39% of the reporting agencies (31) are expanding services to veterans as a result of the Governor's Executive Order 40. The majority of these agencies did not previously provide direct or unique services to veterans. Moreover, another 28% of the reporting agencies (22) have requested additional assistance or indicated a willingness to partner with DVS to enhance services to veterans, providing fertile ground for more service expansions in the future.

Dr. Bailey reported that Executive Order 40 also required other ongoing activities to improve veterans services with additional reporting dates in October and December 2003. Along those lines, she announced that DVS had applied for \$404,000 in grants for facility improvements at the Veterans Care Center in Roanoke and other grants were also being pursued.

There was a brief general discussion following Dr. Bailey's presentation addressing Veterans' service programs, home loan programs and veterans small business owners.

Briefing on the Department of Veterans Services:

Colbert Boyd, Chief Deputy Commissioner announced that due to a computer glitch, his presentation would be e-mailed to members of the Council, and as per requests by guests. He reviewed the operations of the benefit services, care center, cemeteries and administrative services divisions of the Department.

Mr. Boyd discussed the need for Service Agents and addressed the Virginia Veterans Care Center, which is now under the Department of Veterans Services. The Suffolk Cemetery groundbreaking ceremony was held September 8, 2003 and the dedication should be in November of next year.

Remarks: Commissioner Mangis

Commissioner Mangis stressed the importance of communications with the veterans of Virginia and all organizations speaking with one voice. Training of staff will be a priority as well as developing the care center into a show place and marketing the Amelia cemetery.

Roundtable Discussion:

Discussion centered around Concurrent Receipt and the need for all Veterans' organizations to write letters to legislators voicing their support. Additionally, Connie O'Neill passed out a draft of a constitution and by-laws based on Kentucky's version and asked that the Council review the data and consider it for their own. (See Attached) He also reviewed American Legion's Legislative Agenda. (See Attached)

Jeff Martin, DAV mentioned that the DAV had also addressed many Veterans' issues and would send a copy of the resolutions passed to Commissioner Mangis.

John Jackson, Paralyzed Veterans of American mentioned the location of the new Richmond field office stating that it is very difficult for a person in a wheelchair to obtain entrance to the

building due to the fairly sharp incline in the front of the building and that finding parking is a real difficulty.

Mel Drisko, member Board of Veterans Services mentioned that the Board had just met and he reiterated the importance of speaking with one voice.

Council Meet Schedule:

Discussion ensued regarding a meeting schedule, noting that the Council is required to meet four times a year. There can be other meetings and when three people meet and discuss council issues it is considered a meeting and should be posted prior to the meeting. (As advised by Don Ferguson, Assistant Attorney General. He will advise Board members of the legalities of telephone meetings.

Council Meet Schedule:

Next meeting will be held Wednesday, October 15, 2003 at 1:00 P.M.

Adjournment:

**JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (JLC)
OF VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS OF VIRGINIA**

JLC
CONSTITUTION

**PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION
JLC of VIRGINIA**

For God and Country, we the veterans of the Commonwealth of Virginia, have joined together for the following purposes:

To acknowledge our faith in our Creator; to reaffirm our belief in the principles of justice, freedom, democracy and loyalty to our country; to rededicate ourselves to the sanctity of our homes and our families; to re-establish the comradeship begun in our periods of service to our nation; and to pledge ourselves anew to the ideal of serving our veterans, their families and survivors, and each other through our association in our various service organizations and this Joint Leadership Council.

**JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
OF VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS OF VIRGINIA**

Origin

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Organizations of Virginia officially originated at a meeting held in Richmond on 18 July 2003. Representatives of the following veterans organizations were present:

AMVETS
American Legion
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Military Officers Association (MOAA)
Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)

The organization was originally an outgrowth of the Leadership Advisory Council (LAC), which advised the Governor's Advisory Commission for Veterans' Affairs during the 2002-2003 time frame. The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) is established as an advisory council, within the meaning of § [2.2-2100](#), in the executive branch of state government. The Council shall be composed of 1 representative from each qualifying veterans services organization and appointed by the Governor. The Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services shall serve as a nonvoting ex officio member.

ARTICLE I

Name and Headquarters Operation.

- A. Organization Name.** The name of this organization shall be the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Organizations of Virginia, hereinafter called JLC.
- B. Location of Headquarters.** The Headquarters of the JLC. shall operate in a manner and place as determined by the Chairman to be most effective. The parent veterans' organization headquarters element, if the organization agrees, may be used to provide administrative support services as needed by the Chairman and other elected/appointed officers. The office of the Va Department of Veterans Services is also available to the Chairman and elected-appointed officials at their request. Support should be requested from the Commissioner, VDVS.

ARTICLE II

- A. Aim and Purpose** As a separate and distinct entity of veterans organizations of Virginia, it is the JLC's aim to be mindful of, address and pursue the needs of Virginia veterans. Its purpose is to provide a forum in which to present, discuss, debate and propose procedural and/or legislative solutions to inequities in ongoing veterans programs, to address the concerns of the future and to advise the Governor, General Assembly and Commissioner, VDVS, on issues that relate to Virginia's military veterans.
- B. Jurisdictional Control** The JLC consists of previously approved volunteer, non-profit organizations, and is self-governing. It exercises control over procedures and matters discussed in accordance with this Constitution and any and all duly approved By-Laws and operating procedures.
- C. Constitution and By-Laws** The Constitution and By-Laws of the JLC, along with duly approved procedures, once ratified will be the governing authority of this organization.
- D. Organization is Non-Political** The JLC shall be absolutely non-political and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office
- E. Supports Veterans Program** The JLC, through its elected/appointed officials and through its member-organizations, shall publicize, promote and lobby for priority veterans programs that are presented to, approved by, and prioritized by the JLC at its regular or special meetings. The JLC recognizes the individuality and sovereignty of each service organization. In some cases, support and prioritization of issues may differ. In these rare instances where differences arise, each organization has the right to abstain from support, or establish its own legislative priorities.

ARTICLE III

- A. Organization.** The JLC is organized as a single body that expresses its purposes at meetings held at times and places as approved by the body.

B. Eligibility: An organization, to be eligible for membership, must provide the following documentation for certification to the Secretary of the Commonwealth:

1. Articles of Incorporation
2. By-Laws of the organization
3. Letter from IRS designating its status as a 501©(3) or a 501©(4) organization, and/or a copy of the organization's National Congressional Charter, and a statement of good standing from the parent organization
4. If applicable, confirmation from the State Corporation Commission of the current status of the organization.

C. Representation: Each member organization is responsible for selection of its own representatives, to act on its behalf at JLC meetings.

1. In accordance with the 1950 Virginia Code, as amended, each organization will be required to report, in writing, annually, the name, address and phone number of the representative, and if so desired, an alternate to serve for the year.

2. Organizational representatives and alternates are to serve for a three year term, and not to exceed two consecutive terms. Substitution is not authorized, and replacement should occur only under extreme circumstances.

ARTICLE IV

A. Meetings

1. Regular. To be held quarterly, with time and place for the next meeting to be determined prior to adjournment of each meeting. The JLC will meet monthly in Richmond during General Assembly sessions.

2. **Unscheduled.** May be directed by a majority of the Council members who are present and voting agreeing to the need. The Chairman, upon written request of two or more organizations, may call an unscheduled meeting.

3. **Special.** Meetings with the Commissioner, and/or Director, VDVS, may be requested by a majority vote of JLC members present. The Chairman, upon written request of two or more organizations, may request a Special Meeting.

B. Voting.

1. Each organization shall have one vote.

2. Only delegates of record, as certified in writing by the Chief Administrative Officer or Commander of the Organization concerned, are entitled to a vote.

3. An individual may represent only one organization. At the direction of the Chairman, the Secretary/Treasurer will request and record the vote of each organization

4. A majority of the votes cast will decide the issue unless otherwise specified by the Constitution and/or By-Laws. Roll call votes will be taken under the following circumstances;

(a) Upon a proposed change of the Constitution or By-Laws.

(b) When requested by at least 3 member organizations.

ARTICLE V

A. Elected Officers. The following officers will be elected:

1. Chairman
2. Vice-Chairman

B. Appointed Officers. The following officers will be appointed by the duly elected Chairman, subject to ratification by the Council and shall serve without remuneration:

1. Secretary/Parliamentarian
2. Legislative Officer
3. Chaplain

C. Election of Officers.

1. Election of Officers will be held every other year in July. The Chairman may not serve two successive terms.

2. Elections will be held as the last agenda item at the regularly scheduled meeting in July. Newly elected officers will assume the responsibility of the position to which elected immediately upon completion of election of all officers as specified in paragraph 1 or this article.

3. The newly elected Chairman will submit his recommendations for appointment of officers named in paragraph 1 of this article.

4. Outgoing officers will have all records pertaining to their office available to turn over to the

newly appointed/ elected officers·

5. Election of all Officers shall be by secret, written ballot.

6. Election shall require a majority of votes cast. When no one candidate achieves a majority vote on the first ballot, the two candidates with the most votes will be voted on by a second secret ballot.

D. Nominations The Chairman will appoint a nominating committee to make recommendations at the annual meeting, to be presented to the membership, for the elected offices.

ARTICLE VI

Financial Structure. No organizational dues will be assessed.

ARTICLE VII

Authorization for By-Laws

A. **Suitable By-Laws shall be enacted** by the JLC to establish operating procedures. Adoption will require approval of two thirds of those delegates present and voting.

B. **By-Laws may be amended**, repealed or altered in whole or in part at any regular meeting or at any special meeting called for that announced purpose, by the vote of two-thirds of the total authorized votes cast by the delegates present and voting at that particular meeting, provided that the proposed changes shall have been furnished in writing to each organizational representative at least 15 days in advance of the meeting at which proposed changes will be voted on.

ARTICLE VIII

Constitutional Amendments. This Constitution may be amended at any meeting, regular or special, of the JLC, provided the following conditions are met:

A. All member organization representatives have been furnished copies of proposed changes at least 30 days in advance of the proposed meeting date.

B. All member organization representatives have been advised of the date, time and place of the JLC meeting at which proposed changes will be voted on.

C. Proposed changes are approved by 2/3 of the delegates present and voting.

Executive Order 40: Report of State Agency Services to Veterans September 12, 2003

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Synopsis of State Agency Services to Virginia's Veterans

Executive Order 40 directed all state agencies to “identify opportunities for improving services to veterans and to make and implement appropriate changes.” All agencies were directed to report on their progress on this directive to the Secretary of Administration by June 30, 2003.

- 79 state agencies have responded to date
 - 15 agencies identified veterans as a unique customer group and provide unique or direct services to veterans
 - 64 agencies did not identify veterans as a unique customer group and thus do not provide unique services to veterans at present
- 31 agencies (39%) identified ways to offer new or improved services to veterans
 - 9 currently provide unique services to veterans
 - 22 do not currently provide unique services to veterans
- 22 agencies (28%) requested assistance from the Department of Veterans Services on providing new services to veterans or indicated a willingness to partner with DVS.
- 5 agencies reported special recognition programs for their employees who are veterans
- 1 agency (Department of Business Assistance) reported an external recognition program – the Virginia Small Business Veteran of the Year Award

Section 1 – Agencies that provide unique or direct services to veterans (15)

- Department of Veterans Services (Secretary of Administration):
 - Commonwealth's primary veterans service agency
 - Provides extensive benefit claims, care center and cemetery services
 - Veterans Benefit Claims
 - 15 offices statewide assisting veterans with federal and state benefits
 - Federal benefits: Service-connected disabilities, pension, educational, dependency and indemnity compensation, medical and rehabilitation services
 - State benefits: Dependent tuition waivers and professional representation at personal hearings at federal VA regional office and Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington, DC
 - Veterans Care Center
 - 240-bed facility in Roanoke: 180 beds for nursing and long-term care; 60 beds for assisted living
 - Services: Nursing and long-term care; assisted living, alzheimer's unit, ambulance and transportation, pharmacy, canteen
 - Proposed 2nd Care Center in Richmond: Awaiting federal VA construction grant; state matching funds already authorized
 - Veterans Cemeteries
 - Amelia: Opened 1997
 - Suffolk: Groundbreaking Sept. 2003; Scheduled Opening Fall 2004
- Department of Human Resource Management (Secretary of Administration):
 - Established Veterans Outreach Council in June 2002
 - Brings together veterans groups and state agencies to learn about customer needs, communicates available job opportunities, resources, and services within state government
 - Developed a veterans web page at <http://www.dhrm.state.va.us/veterans.htm>
 - Serves as resource for information and services available to veterans
 - Maintained and created links between DHRM and other state agency websites to provide additional information about veteran-related services
 - Developed relationships with veterans groups to communicate state recruitment process and to obtain information about employment opportunities for veterans
 - DHRM serves as a conduit of information regarding career fairs and available employment opportunities for veterans
 - Participated in annual job fairs targeted towards veterans at Ft. Lee and the McGuire VA Medical Center
 - Maintained a program specifically designed to capture veteran demographic information within the state work force through the state's Personnel Information Management System (PMIS)

- Registered with Operation Transition (Transition Bulletin Board), an automated system sponsored by the Department of Defense containing a list of job want ads and other useful information for separating/retiring military and federal civilian personnel
- Initiated the Commonwealth's Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance Program. One of the tools of the program allows agencies to track the potential disparate impact of employment practices against minorities, women, and veterans
- Department of Housing and Community Development (Secretary of Commerce and Trade):
 - Serves Virginia's veterans through grant programs
 - Homeless shelters that received grant funds served 1,120 homeless veterans in FY 2002 (FY 2003 numbers pending)
 - Provided grant funds for construction of 22 bed transitional housing facility for veterans on grounds of McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond
- Department of Labor and Industry (Secretary of Commerce and Trade):
 - Veterans actively participate in Virginia's Registered Apprenticeship Program. Program staff works diligently to encourage veteran participation
- Virginia Employment Commission (Secretary of Commerce and Trade):
 - Served 54,121 Virginia veterans in FY 2003
 - Major services include career guidance, job search assistance, and employment referrals
 - Helped 15,239 Virginia veterans secure employment in FY 2002
 - Helped 14,859 Virginia veterans secure employment in FY 2003
 - Operates the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) Program
 - Federally funded (staffing grant)
 - \$3.1 million in federal FY 2003
 - Will increase to \$3.8 million in federal FY 2004
 - 38 DVOP and 23.5 LVER positions at VEC offices around the Commonwealth
 - Provides Transition Assistance Program (TAP) services at eight military bases in Virginia
 - Given to personnel separating from the military
 - Three-day workshop that teaches job search and interview skills
 - Serves over 15,000 future veterans a year
- Virginia Housing Development Authority (Secretary of Commerce and Trade):
 - Offers the VA home ownership loan guarantee program – low interest rate financing, extended rate locks, and flexible program options

- Provides home ownership education classes on military bases (open to active duty and veterans) – 186 classes to date with 4,147 participants
- Department of Education (Secretary of Education):
 - State Approving Agency (SAA) for veterans eligible for Montgomery G.I. Bill (MGIB) benefits
 - Over 500 post-secondary education and training establishments in Virginia are approved for veterans education and training benefits under MGIB
 - U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs requires SAA approval in order to disburse MGIB benefits
- Library of Virginia (Secretary of Education):
 - Collection includes approximately 250,000 World War II separation notices
 - These notices represent the only proof of service for some veterans (necessary for obtaining benefits, health care, etc.)
 - Library is currently developing a policy as to who can access the records
- Department for the Aging (Secretary of Health and Human Resources):
 - Veterans 60 and older who meet agency eligibility requirements are served through Virginia's 25 local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)
 - The department has received a grant from the federal Administration on Aging to fund three pilot programs to test the feasibility of identifying and intervening with male caregivers
 - Two of the programs will focus specifically on retired military personnel
- Department of Medical Assistance Services (Secretary of Health and Human Resources):
 - Contracts with local Departments of Social Services to determine Medicaid eligibility for all Virginians
 - Several types of income/resources of veterans are not included in determining income eligibility
 - Veterans still able to receive these benefits without impacting their potential eligibility for Medicaid
 - Virginia Medicaid program provides reimbursement for services rendered to eligible veterans residing in the Virginia Veterans Care Center
- Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (Secretary of Health and Human Resources):
 - Maintains close relationship with U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and with VA Medical Centers in the Commonwealth
 - DBVI and USDVA routinely refer clients to each other
 - DBVI and USDVA services often complement each other: DBVI has a trained staff who assist veterans in their homes, while USDVA often assists by purchasing assistive devices recommended by DBVI staff
- Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (Secretary of Natural Resources):

- Offers the Disabled Veteran Lifetime License to hunt and fish for \$5.00
- Offers free freshwater fishing permits to organized groups from VA hospitals in Virginia

- Department of Historic Resources (Secretary of Natural Resources):
 - Lists on the Virginia Historic Landmarks and on the National Register of Historic Places those buildings, monuments, and sites associated with outstanding veterans
 - Assists community organizations to gain approval for historical highway markers that recognize outstanding historic military service
 - Manages grants to maintain and improve graves and monuments

- Marine Resources Commission (Secretary of Natural Resources):
 - Offers free saltwater recreational fishing licenses to organized groups of military veterans residing in VA hospitals in Virginia

