

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2018**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on Thursday, November 15, 2018 at the DVS Henrico Office, 121 Cedar Fork Rd., Henrico, VA.

Members Present

- Carl Bess
- Michael Dick
- Susan Hippen
- James Icenhour
- Nick Kesler
- Tammi Lambert
- John Lesinski
- Bryce Reeves
- Frank Reyes
- Jack Lanier, 2nd Vice Chair, representing Frank Finelli, Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation
- Rick Oertel, representing Frank Wickersham, Chairman, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
- John Newby, Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services (*Note: Deputy Commissioner Steven Combs represented Commissioner Newby during the first part of the meeting*)

Members Present by Phone (Remote Location)

- Victor Angry
- Kathleen Murphy

Members Absent

- Carl Bedell
- Paige Cherry
- Gordon Helsel
- Jason Miyares
- Lyla Kohistany
- Julie Waters
- Jennifer Wexton

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Steven Combs, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Carrie Ann Alford, DVS
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Beverly Van Tull, DVS
- Greg Escobar, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- Becky Chambliss, Legislative Aide to Del. Jason Miyares
- Deborah Morton, Session Aide to Del. Jason Miyares

Materials Distributed as part of the Agenda Packet

- Agenda
- Minutes from the September 6 meeting (Agenda Item IV)
- Reports (Agenda Item V)
 - Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
 - Veterans Services Foundation
- Presentation from the FOIA Council (Agenda Item VI.a)
- Update on 2019 DVS Legislation and Budget (Agenda Item VI.c)
- Proposed Amendment to Bylaws regarding the election of chair and vice chair (Agenda Item VIII.a.)
- 2019 BVS Meeting Schedule (Agenda Item VIII.b)
- Initial Working Group Reports (Agenda Item VIII.c)
 - Benefits WG
 - Education WG
 - Veterans and the Arts WG
- Agenda for Education Working Group meeting immediately upon adjournment of full board

The start of the meeting was delayed, due to bad weather and members arriving late.

Call to Order

Chairman Jim Icenhour, called the meeting to order at 10:25 a.m. Chairman Icenhour led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then welcomed the BVS members and made several announcements: Board member Julie Waters was absent due to hip surgery that morning. Board member Del. Jason Miyares' brother passed away last week, and was absent due to court commitment. Board member Paige Cherry was absent due to court commitment. Board member Joana Garcia resigned her seat this week due to family issues and the board wishes her well. Board member Jennifer Wexton is now Congresswoman-elect and is absent due to congressional orientation. Notes may be sent to each of the board members at the addresses in the membership matrix.

Chairman Icenhour asked the two new board members to introduce themselves. New member Tammi Lambert is an army veteran who lives in Woodbridge. New member John Lesinski also serves on the Veterans Services Foundation and is a Marine Corps retired Colonel who lives in Rappahannock County.

Chairman Icenhour asked Ms. Carrie Ann Alford to call the roll. The roll was called and a quorum was determined with 11 of 21 members or representatives present (and two additional members were at remote locations, for a total of 13). One member arrived shortly after the roll was called, for a total of 14 members present.

Chairman Icenhour then asked everyone to go around and introduce themselves to the new members. Chairman Icenhour asked Ms. Alford to introduce the guests. She introduced new Women Veterans Program Manager Beverly Van Tull, Del. Miyares' LA Becky Chambliss and presenter Alan Gernhardt, to the board and then asked the other guests to introduce themselves. Their names are recorded above. The chairman thanked them all for attending.

Approval of Agenda and April 26, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Jim Icenhour asked for a motion to approve the agenda (*Attachment 1*). Ms. Susan Hippen made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Michael Dick, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried **unanimously**. Mr. Jim Icenhour asked for a motion to approve the September 6, 2018 meeting minutes. Mr. Frank Reyes made a **motion, seconded** by Senator Bryce Reeves to approve the minutes. The motion carried **unanimously**.

Reports

Mr. Rick Oertel, American Legion rep to the **Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC)** representing Chairman Frank Wickersham, III, gave a short report on the JLC, which includes their policy priorities summary matrix for 2019. The next JLC meeting is December 19 at the RTD Hanover Plant in Mechanicsville, VA. (*Attachment 2*)

The **Veterans Services Foundation (VSF)** 2nd Vice Chairman Jack Lanier, representing Chairman Frank Finelli, gave a short report on the VSF and their most recent meeting. Mr. Lanier gave a brief description of the VSF and how it functions, and stated that currently they raise about a half million dollars per year and their goal is to double that. (*Attachment 3*)

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation from Virginia FOIA Council

Mr. Alan Gerhardt, Executive Director of the Virginia FOIA Advisory Council, gave a presentation on FOIA and meeting requirements to the board. He provided a handout for reference, which was in the agenda packet. (*Attachment 4*)

He covered usage of text messages, emails, letters and phone calls. He covered the requirements for retention and what constitutes board records, including emails, text messages and letters from non-board members sent to the board discussing board business.

He covered electronic participation including calling in from remote locations, streaming meetings live on platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. He said with the requirement for one non-electronic meeting per year, members are allowed to call in and monitor – but they cannot be counted as part of the roll, and they are not allowed to vote or speak during the meeting, they can only listen in. He did say the requirement for remote locations to be publicly accessible.

He advised the board regarding their working groups and rules for conducting their business. Working groups with less than four members have a quorum of 2. Current working groups have 5 or 6 members so the quorum requirements is 3. If working groups or the full board are sending emails back and forth or editing a shared document, if the email responses between members are delayed it is not a meeting, but if the responses are exchanged within a few minutes of each other it does constitute a meeting and is subject to the FOIA requirements.

Update on construction projects and office openings

Deputy Commissioner Steven Combs, on behalf of Commissioner Newby, who was delayed getting to the meeting due to weather (and arrived shortly after the end of this update) gave the board an update. He mentioned the Pentagon office ribbon-cutting and grand opening on October 29. The office is already one of the most busy offices with appointments booking five weeks out. He mentioned the Virginia War Memorial expansion project is on track for a grand opening on or near Patriot Day, September 11, 2019. He mentioned the ceremony at the Suffolk cemetery last Wednesday for the largest grant VA has ever awarded for a state veterans cemetery expansion project. The Albert G. Horton, Jr.

Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk received \$10.2M for expansion. DVS has also applied for VA grant funds to expand the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia), but has not heard a decision yet. He mentioned the VA matching funding for the two new Care Centers that should be coming in the spring. The agency anticipates “shovel in ground” in August 2019 and the two centers opening two years later in 2021. An ideal time for the grand opening ceremonies would be November 10 for Puller VCC – it is the Marine Corps’ birthdate and General and Lt. Puller were both Marines. And then the grand opening for the Jones & Cabacoy VCC on November 11, Veterans Day. Chairman Icenhour asked about the commitment from the Governor General Assembly in bond money. Mr. Combs stated that \$100M in bond funding had initially been authorized, but that only a portion will be needed because of the VA grant contribution. There were no questions from the board members. Chairman Icenhour thanked Mr. Combs for the report.

Update on 2019 Legislation and Budget

Ms. Alford started off by asking Mr. Combs to review the two budgetary planning charts included in the agenda packets. (*Attachment 5*). He stated that they were a little out of date but still fairly accurate. The charts start in 2003, when the agency began, and runs through the investments that have been made in the past few years for the new care centers, expansion of the Virginia War Memorial, expansion of Benefits and DVS field offices, launch of V3 and VTAP and the new positions for women veterans and veteran entrepreneurs.

Mr. John Lesinski asked about the grant programs shown on the chart. Mr. Combs said there are two grant programs – Granting Freedom, about \$200,000 in funding that began as \$4,000 grants to veterans for home modifications, first younger combat veterans and now also older veterans. This is now an appropriation from the General Assembly. The second grant is the V3 Employment Grant, which is \$500,000 annually for V3 companies under 300 employees who hire and retain veteran employees for one year. The company can receive \$1,000 grants for hiring, up to \$10,000 or 10 employees.

Mr. Lesinski also asked about broadband and DCHD and other groups that are working on that and if it is an issue that DVS hears about from veterans. Mr. Combs said that DVS does get inquiries and is working with veteran and groups to partner on various broadband and technology services to veterans, especially in rural areas.

Ms. Alford then reviewed the legislative package for DVS for 2019, (*Attachment 6*) which has been approved by the Governor’s policy office. The budget items, however, had not been cleared to share with the board, and she will send out information via email as soon as possible.

Patron requests were sent to the policy team and hopefully decisions will be made and announced shortly after Thanksgiving. Ms. Alford asked the legislative board members to continue to hold a slot open for potential legislation.

The agency will have three legislative priorities in 2019:

1. Clarifying the Virginia War Memorial’s code section to include the Shrine of Memory and give detailed information on which Virginia veterans are honored on the Shrine and which veterans are honored in other ways at the Memorial, including through the educational and display programs.
2. Sunset the Virginia War Memorial Board. The VWMB was presented with this at their September 21 meeting and unanimously voted to approve the resolution put before them: *The Virginia War Memorial Board established as an advisory board within the meaning of § 2.2-*

2100 for the purpose of supporting the Virginia War Memorial, has completed its mission of oversight through the transition from independent entity to incorporation into the Department of Veterans Services; and through two construction projects. The Virginia War Memorial's mission will be assumed by the Virginia Board of Veterans Services beginning January 1, 2020. The board members will work with BVS to transfer all meeting minutes, papers and other items before January 1, 2020.

3. With the sunset of the VWMB, DVS will also request to the General Assembly that the BVS be increased by 1 senator, 1 delegate, 1 citizen and add the Chair of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation Board as ex officio. These three new seats will all assist the current BVS POC for the War Memorial to ensure the War Memorial continues to have a robust support system.

There were no questions after her report and Chairman Icenhour thanked her for her report. The handouts were also distributed to the members after the meeting.

As Commissioner Newby entered the meeting during this section, Chairman Icenhour took this moment to greet him and ask him to say a few words. Commissioner Newby apologized for being late, he had been at a meeting in Northern Virginia and stuck in the snow driving back down. He thanked the board members who participated in Veterans Day events around the Commonwealth. It had been a good weekend with lots of activities and the ceremony at Dogwood Dell and the Carillon on November 11 with the Governor and Speaker Cox had gone very well.

New Business

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

At the September 6 meeting, an amendment to the bylaws was proposed. The proposed amendment makes it clear that if the Chair or Vice Chair steps down the person elected to fill that role will have that time counted as a full term. This is not to discriminate against anyone, but to encourage every board member to take a turn as Vice Chair and Chair of the board and allow the opportunity for more board members.

Mr. Mike Dick offered a floor amendment and passed it out to the other members. (both amendments are *Attachment 7*). The floor amendment states that if the Chair or Vice Chair position is vacated with less than a year left in the term the member who is elected to serve the remainder of the term may still have two full terms in that position. If the remainder of the term is greater than one year, then the term shall count toward the two term limit.

Chairman Icenhour asked for a motion.

Mr. Dick made a **motion, seconded** by Ms. Susan Hippen, to have Article III.5 be amended to state that: "In the event the office of Chair or Vice-Chair is vacated prior to the scheduled completion of that officer's term of office, a **Chair or Vice-Chair shall be elected to serve the remainder of the term of office, in which case an election to fill an unexpired term greater than one year shall count as one term toward the two consecutive term limit.**"

The floor was opened up for discussion. Mr. Lesinski asked if they needed to add "less than one year" to the amendment. Mr. Dick said that he felt it was implied. Ms. Alford stated that Mr. Lesinski could offer a friendly amendment. Mr. Lesinski declined.

Chairman Icenhour asked the two members on the conference line if they were clear on what the

amendment entailed. They both stated in the affirmative.

Chairman Icenhour called the vote. The motion passed **unanimously**. The bylaws will be updated and distributed to the members.

Vote to Support DVS Legislative Agenda items in 2019

Chairman Icenhour asked the members to support the legislative agenda, as presented by Ms. Alford and in their agenda packet. Mr. Dick made a **motion, seconded** by Ms. Susan Hippen, the motion passed **unanimously**.

Approve 2019 BVS Meeting Schedule

Chairman Icenhour stated that the proposed meeting dates, as in their agenda packet for 2019 are:

May 2

August 22

November 14

Mr. Kesler asked about setting one of the dates as a non-electronic meeting, given then FOIA presentation they had just received. Chairman Icenhour said it was better to see how things go and if the first two have remote locations then naturally the third is non-electronic. Ms. Alford agreed.

Mr. Kesler made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Reyes to approve the 2019 meeting schedule, and the motion passed **unanimously**.

Locations will be secured by Ms. Alford upon approval of the dates and information sent out to the board.

Work Groups Initial Reports

Chairman Icenhour then asked the working group chairs to give their initial reports to the full board. Ms. Alford stated that all three reports need to be amended to change the final reports from “September” to “November” as there will be no September meeting in 2019.

In Mr. Bedell’s absence, Mr. Kesler gave the Benefits working group report of examining the DVS Benefits Services and how they can sustain and grow the positive momentum into FY20 and beyond. (*Attachment 8*)

Mr. Dick gave the Education work group report on how they will examine education programs in Virginia and at the federal level are interacting and if there are areas for improvement and/or better engagement. (*Attachment 9*) He also announced there will be a meeting of the working group upon adjournment of the full board meeting and the agenda was included in the packet.

In Ms. Waters’ absence, Mr. Reyes gave the veterans and the Arts Initiatives working group report. (*Attachment 10*)

Ms. Alford stated that there are two additional special projects to aid and mentor the new Women Veterans Program Manager and the new Veterans Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Coordinator. Delegate Murphy and Ms. Kohistany representing BVS and Ms. Marie Juliano, representing JLC will be assisting Ms. Beverly Van Tull, Women Veterans Program Manager. Del. Murphy said a few words about the round tables she and Beverly have conducted around the state and gathered good data. She is hoping to

get some legislative ideas as well. For Chris Carlton, the new Veterans Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Coordinator, Mr. Kesler representing BVS and Lauren Augustine representing JLC will support Mr. Carlton. Mr. Kesler stated that he is working with Chris, and VETE Director Annie Walker and Employment & Transition Director Charlie Palumbo to get Chris tied into the existing system in Virginia.

Commissioner Newby thanked the members for taking on these projects and Delegate Murphy for the round tables. He was able to attend one and it was a great experience and the roundtables will get Beverly good data to work with.

Legislators' Pre-Session Reports

Delegate Murphy stated that she was still not certain what all she would be submitting for legislation. She has 15 slots and is looking at a wide range of issues, including legislation to assist women veterans.

Senator Reeves also stated that he was still not certain what all she would be submitting for legislation. Traditionally, the senate has not had bill limits like the House, but the leadership is looking at limiting senators to 25 bills. He is looking at bills for DMA and will be carrying two of the JLC priorities.

"Good of the Order" Reports

Nick Kesler mentioned he is tracking healthcare and Sec. Wilkie is pushing for VA-DOD integration, as well as a reorganization of TriCare and TriCare looking to enter state markets with retirees, veterans, Guard and Reserves may all be affected.

Susan Hippen reminded everyone that for retirees it is open enrollment season for dental and vision insurance and a choice must be made.

Mike Dick thanked DVS for its' support of the Board.

Carl Bess thanked DVS and Ms. Alford for the new member orientation.

Rick Oertel stated that the Virginia Military Advisory Committee (VMAC) meeting the day before had been very informative and the next meeting will be focused on child care.

Tammi Lambert thanked Ms. Alford for speaking at the American Legion Post 176 on Veterans Day (Observed) and answering all the tough questions.

John Lesinski thanked DVS and Ms. Alford for the new member orientation, and asked about JLC day. Ms. Alford stated that it will be January 16, starting with the General Assembly Military & Veterans Caucus meeting then JLC members meeting with legislators. There will be no room for everyone to gather and legislators to visit them like the old days.

Frank Reyes stated that he went to the entrepreneurship graduation ceremony with Secretary Hopkins and met Chris Carlton who he thought was a great guy and is looking forward to working with him.

Sen. Bryce Reeves gave a short update on the Spotsylvania Veteran Treatment Docket with Judge Rigual and that potential donors keep offering to pay for things but the court is not set up to accept donations. Ms. Alford and Mr. Lanier both said to have the judge send all donors to the VSF.

Jim Icenhour mentioned the ceremony he and others organized in Williamsburg, where 75 Vietnam Veterans were recognized and thanked for their service to the Nation and the Commonwealth. He noted that DVS staff attended, it made the local papers, and now other veterans are requesting similar ceremonies, so he has an order in for more pins to Steve Combs. Mr. Combs reminded everyone that DVS is an official commemorative partner to the DoD 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War celebration, and that DVS can provide pins and other materials to BVS members if they wish to do ceremonies like the one that Chairman Icenhour organized. Mr. Combs added that DoD is keeping track of pins distributed and Virginia is far and away the number one state giving out the pins.

Vic Angry stated that it was a very different experience being on the phone for the meeting.

There were no further Good of the Order reports from board members.

Public Comment

There were no individuals seeking to make public comment.

Closing Remarks

Chairman Icenhour thanked everyone for attending and reminded them that even though it was the last meeting for the year, to keep an eye on emails from Ms. Alford and to stay engaged during the legislative Session.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 1
BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES

DVS Henrico Office
121 Cedar Fork Rd., Henrico
November 15, 2018
10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Remote Location: Kelly Leadership Center
14715 Bristow Rd., Manassas, VA 20112

Education Working Group
12:15 – 12:45

REVISED DRAFT 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. Introduction of DVS staff, guests, and new BVS Members – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:05 – 10:20)
- IV. Approval of Agenda and September 6, 2018 Meeting Minutes – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:20 – 10:25)
- V. Reports (10:25 – 10:30)
 - a. Joint Leadership Council – *Frank Wickersham, JLC Chairman*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Frank Finelli, VSF Chairman*
- VI. Presentations (10:30-11:30)
 - a. Presentation on FOIA & BVS work groups, *Alan Gernhardt, Virginia FOIA Council*
 - b. Update on construction projects & office openings – *John Newby, Commissioner*
 - c. Proposed 2019 DVS legislation and budget – *Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Policy Director*
- VII. New Business: (11:30-12:05)
 - a. Vote on By-laws amendment proposed at Sept. 6 meeting, *Jim Icenhour*
 - b. Vote to support DVS legislative agenda items in 2019, *Jim Icenhour*
 - c. Approve 2019 BVS meeting schedule, *Jim Icenhour*
 - d. Initial Reports from Work Groups, *Julie Waters, Mike Dick, Carl Bedell, Chairmen*
 - e. Legislators’ pre-session reports, *Senator Reeves, Delegates Helsel, Murphy & Miyares*
 - f. “Good of the Order” Reports, *All Members*
- VIII. Public comment (12:05 – 12:10)
- IX. Wrap Up & Adjourn – *Jim Icenhour, Chairman* (12:10-12:15)
- X. Immediately upon adjournment of the Board of Veterans Services, at the same location, there will be a meeting of the BVS Education Working Group, *Mike Dick, Chair* (12:15-12:45)

ATTACHMENT 2

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES November 15, 2018

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) met on October 17, 2018 at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA.

General Walter Mercer gave an updated on the Virginia National Guard and answered questions from JLC members. We also received a report from Donna Harrison, DVS Criminal Justice Coordinator on VVFS programs to assist justice involved veterans.

Additionally, the submitted potential policy papers had one last round of discussion and all were approved to move forward. They were then ranked for 2019. Seven papers were presented and seven were approved. Please find the Summary Matrix of our 2019 Policy Priorities as an addendum to this report.

The Council provides advice and assistance to the Governor, General Assembly and the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) on matters of concern to the veterans community and provides a conduit of information to and from the veterans service organizations on policy and legislation, pending and enacted, as well as information on existing services.

Our final meeting of 2018 will be on December 19 at the RTD Hanover Plant in Mechanicsville, VA at 10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank G. Wickersham, III
Chairman

Summary of 2019 JLC Policy Initiatives

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
JLC 2019-01 Increased State Active Duty (SAD) Pay	That the Governor and General Assembly appropriate \$50,000 to ensure that all Virginia National Guardsmen are paid at least at the E6 rate.
JLC 2019-02 <i>Income Tax Subtraction for Certain Low-Income 100% Disabled Veterans</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly approve an individual income tax subtraction for 100% service-connected disabled veterans with a federally adjusted gross income, not exceeding 150% of the federal poverty level for a four-person household, who have not already claimed another exemption.
JLC 2019-03 <i>Electronic Ballot Return</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation and provide budget support of a pilot program at the Virginia State Board of Elections for \$100,000 and funding for one FTE, for a limited pilot program for the electronic return of absentee ballots by Virginia's deployed military service members.
JLC 2019-04 Personal Property Tax Relief for Certain Disabled Veterans	That the Governor and General Assembly approve legislation creating a standardized, statewide personal property tax exemption for one vehicle for 100% service-connected, total and permanent disabled veterans.
JLC 2019-05 Free Tuition for Virginia National Guardsmen	That the Governor and General Assembly provide budget support of approximately a \$1 million increase in the annual State Tuition Assistance program for a pilot program to cover the estimated 3.5% of Guardsmen seeking a degree who are not currently completely covered by federal and state tuition assistance.
JLC 2019-06 <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.
JLC 2019-07 Phased-in System for Partial State Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Income	That the Governor and General Assembly support changes to the current Virginia tax laws for a phased in system to reduce state tax on military retirement income up to \$40,000.

ATTACHMENT 3
VIRGINIA VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT
Board of Veterans Services
November 15, 2018

The Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees has held one Board meeting since the last Board of Veterans Services meeting on September 6, 2018. The Veterans Services Foundation met on November 8, 2018 at the American Legion Department Headquarters in Richmond. The Development Committee and newly formed Procedures and Policies Committee also met on the same date and at the same location.

This was the first opportunity for the Procedures and Policies Committee to conduct a meeting. The committee members approved the proposed revisions to the Foundation's by-laws. The revised bylaws were then presented to and approved by the Board of Trustees. In addition, the committee began work updating the Foundation's Policies and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DVS. The Foundation Chair, Frank Finelli nominated, and the Board of Trustees approved, Tom Mulrine to serve as the Committee Chair and Jack Hilgers to serve as Vice Chair.

Fundraising will continue to be a top priority for the Foundation. All members of the board continue to work on the proposed fundraising plan implemented by the Development Committee. Each member has received informational marketing materials that can be used when contacting past donors and any potential donors. All are encouraged to set up VSF presentations with organizations in their area. VSF has made many commitments to host tables at upcoming event throughout the Commonwealth.

The Foundation closed the first quarter of FY19 with a total of \$49,800 in donations and expenditures at \$218,322. An analysis of income and expenditures spanning from 2015 to 2018 shows that donations continue to fluctuate; however, expenses supporting the Department of Veterans Services programs continue to increase. This data once again demonstrated the immediate need to have a successful fundraising campaign to boost overall donations to assist our Virginia veterans and their families. The Chair made a detailed presentation to the Board on the Foundation's fundraising priorities for FY19. To increase funding to sustain the rate of expenses, the foundation will need to collaborate with the Department of Veterans Services to identify key donor relationships in regions across the Commonwealth.

The next Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 28, 2019 at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, 18900 Jefferson Davis Highway, Triangle, VA.

Respectfully Submitted,
Frank Finelli
Chairman
Veterans Services Foundation

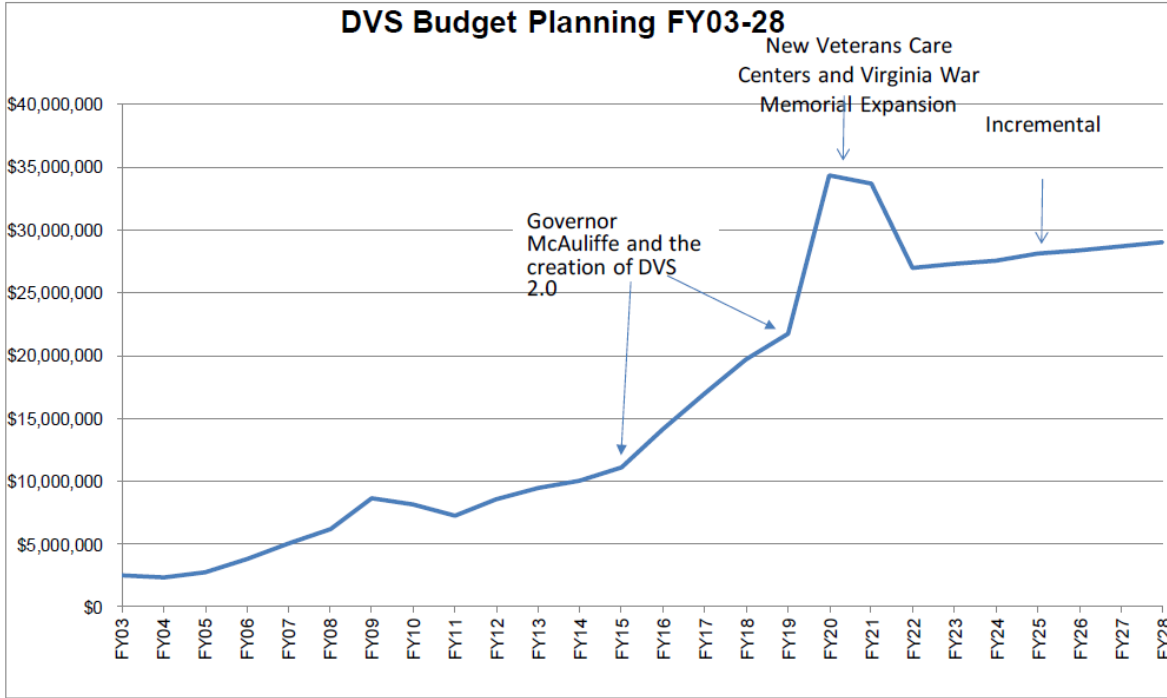
ATTACHMENT 4
FOIA PRESENTATION

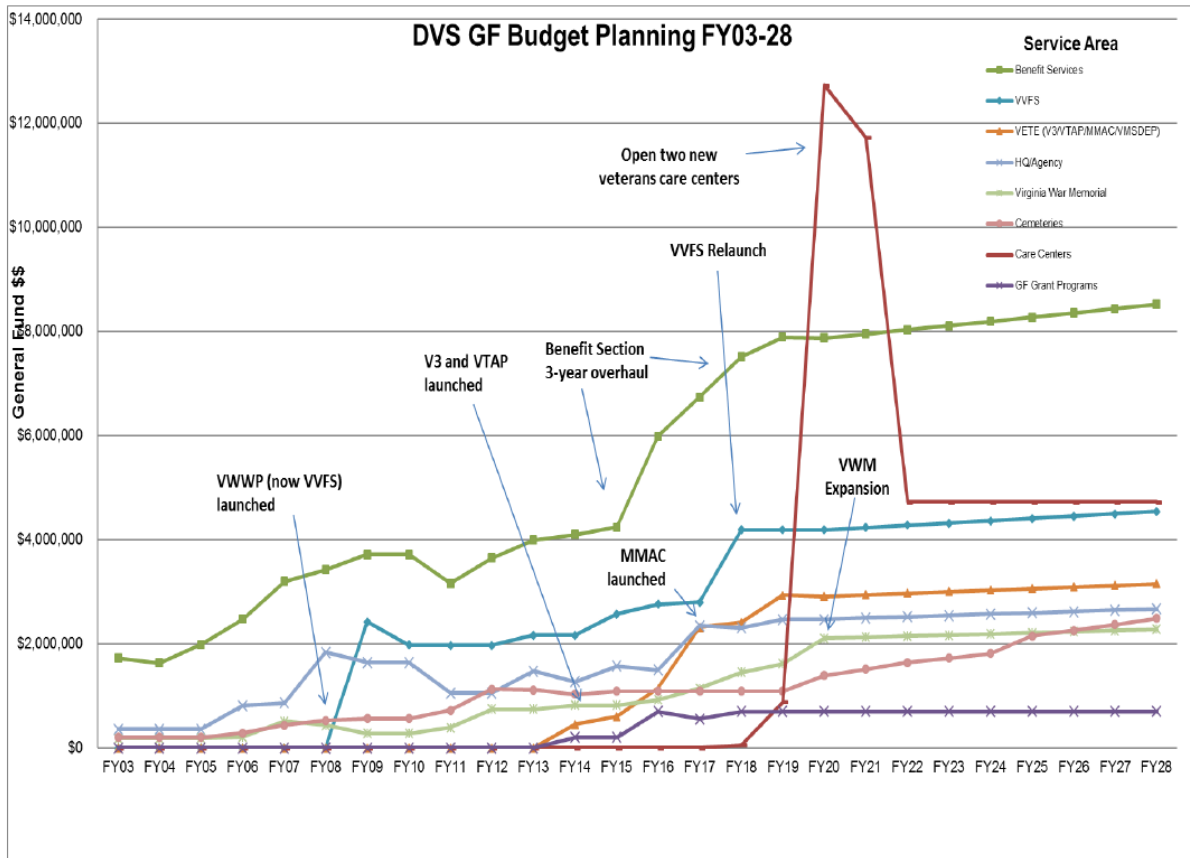
FOIA AND MEMBERS OF PUBLIC BODIES	FOIA AND MEMBERS OF PUBLIC BODIES	
<p><u>E-MAIL AND MEETINGS:</u> The VA Supreme Court has held that e-mails may constitute a "meeting" under FOIA if there is simultaneous e-mail communication between three or more board members. Avoid "reply to all" as a general rule. See FOIA Council handout entitled "<i>Email and Meetings</i>" available on the FOIA Council website.</p> <p align="center">*****</p> <p align="center"><u>*RECORDS*</u></p> <p>WHAT is a PUBLIC RECORD?</p> <p>ALL writings and recordings that consist of letters, words or numbers, or their equivalent, set down by handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photography, magnetic impulse, optical or magneto-optical form, mechanical or electronic recording or other form of data compilation, however stored, and regardless of physical form or characteristics, prepared or owned by, or in the possession of a public body or its officers, employees or agents in the transaction of public business.</p> <p>ALL public records are OPEN to the public UNLESS a specific exemption in law allows the record to be withheld.</p>	<p>WHAT about RETENTION of PUBLIC RECORDS?</p> <p>Public records MUST be retained according to retention schedules set by the Library of Virginia. The length of retention depends on the content of the record. After expiration of the applicable retention period, the records may be destroyed or discarded.</p> <p align="center">*****</p> <p align="center"><u>*E-MAILS*</u></p> <p>Emails that relate to the public business are public records, regardless of whether you use your home or office computer, text or other forms of social media. It is the content of the record, not the equipment used, that controls.</p> <p>As such, these emails must be retained as required by the VA Public Records Act. For practical advice for email use, access and retention, see FOIA Council handout entitled "<i>Email: Use, Access and Retention</i>" available on the FOIA Council website.</p> <p align="center">*****</p> <p>VA Freedom of Information Advisory Council: Alan Gernhardt, Executive Director Chad Ayers, Attorney Email: foiaocouncil@dls.virginia.gov Telephone (804) 698-1810 Toll-Free 1-866-448-4100 http://foiaocouncil.dls.virginia.gov</p>	<p align="center"><i>A Guide to the Freedom of Information Act for Members of Boards, Councils, Commissions, and other Deliberative Public Bodies</i></p> <div align="center" data-bbox="1068 659 1338 848"> </div> <p align="center"><i>Prepared by the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council</i></p>

FOIA AND MEMBERS OF PUBLIC BODIES	FOIA AND MEMBERS OF PUBLIC BODIES <u>*MEETING REQUIREMENTS*</u>	FOIA AND MEMBERS OF PUBLIC BODIES
<p align="center">*POLICY OF FOIA*</p> <p><i>By enacting this chapter, the General Assembly ensures the people of the Commonwealth ready access to records in the custody of public officials and free entry to meetings of public bodies wherein the business of the people is being conducted. The affairs of government are not intended to be conducted in an atmosphere of secrecy since at all times the public is to be the beneficiary of any action taken at any level of government.</i></p> <p><i>Unless a public body or public official specifically elects to exercise an exemption provided by this chapter or any other statute, every meeting shall be open to the public and all public records shall be available for inspection and copying upon request. All public records and meetings shall be presumed open, unless an exemption is properly invoked.</i></p>	<p>What is considered a MEETING under FOIA? ANY gathering, including work sessions, of the constituent membership, sitting (or through telephonic or video equipment pursuant to § 2.2-3708.2) as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the board, or • an informal assemblage of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (i) as many as three members, or ▪ (ii) a quorum, if less than three, of the constituent membership, <p>WHEREVER the gathering is held; REGARDLESS OF WHETHER minutes are taken OR votes are cast.</p> <p>NOTE: This requirement also applies to ANY meeting, including work sessions, of any subgroup of the board, regardless how subgroup is designated (i.e. subcommittee, task force, workgroup, etc.).</p> <p>WHAT is NOT a MEETING?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gathering of employees; or • The gathering or attendance of two or more board/council members at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any place or function where no part of the purpose of such gathering or attendance is the discussion or transaction of any public business, and such gathering or attendance was not called or prearranged with any purpose of discussing or transacting any business; OR ▪ A public forum, candidate appearance, or debate, the purpose of which is to inform the electorate and not to discuss or transact public business. 	<p align="center">*OTHER FOIA PROVISIONS*</p> <p>MINUTES: Minutes ARE REQUIRED for any meeting of the board/subgroup of the board.</p> <p>VOTING: NO secret or written ballots are ever allowed.</p> <p>POLLING: You MAY contact individual members separately (one-on-one) to ascertain their positions by phone, letter or email. REMEMBER: This exemption CANNOT be used in lieu of a meeting. REMEMBER ALSO: If you choose to use email to poll, you are creating a public record!</p> <p>CLOSED MEETINGS: Allowed ONLY as specifically authorized by FOIA or other law and REQUIRES a motion stating the purpose, the subject <i>and</i> Code cite. [See § 2.2-3711 of FOIA for allowable purposes for closed meetings.]</p> <p>E-MEETINGS: Are allowed for state public bodies under heightened procedural and reporting requirements (i.e. quorum must be physically assembled in one location, annual report to FOIA Council, etc.). For all public bodies, limited individual participation by electronic means is allowed under certain circumstances (personal matter, medical reason, or distance in the case of regional public bodies). [See § 2.2-3708.2 of FOIA.]</p>

ATTACHMENT 5
DVS Budget Requirement Projections

For illustration – shows DVS projected GF budget requirements for FY03-28.





ATTACHMENT 6
DVS Legislative Package

	Service Line	Program	Goal	Reasoning
1	Virginia War Memorial	Shrine of Memory	Clarify Code language about the Virginia War Memorial and Shrine of Memory and which names are honored on the Shrine of Memory	There have been issues in the past with which Virginians qualify to be included on the Shrine, and who are honored in general through the educational programs and overall mission of the War Memorial. This amendment will distinguish between the Center and the Shrine in Code. With the new expansion project to be completed in FY20 this is a good time to update the Code.
2	Virginia War Memorial	Virginia War Memorial Board	Sunset the War Memorial Board and amend the Code Section for the War Memorial to shift that responsibility to the Board of Veterans Services. Have the enactment date be January 1, 2020	The Virginia War Memorial Board was created to oversee/advise the Virginia War Memorial when it was independent of DVS. With the expansion projects (Galanti Center and new expansion) nearing completion and the VWM now under DVS, the responsibility to recommend policy related to the Memorial should shift to the Board of Veterans Services as the single policy board responsible for DVS operations.
3	Admin/HQ	Board of Veterans Services	Amend Code section to add three additional seats: 1 senator, 1 delegate and 1 citizen member	To give the Virginia War Memorial 3 members of the Board of Veterans Services as Points of Contact.

ATTACHMENT 7

**BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
BY-LAWS**

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Article III – Officers

5.Term of Service: The Chair and Vice-Chair will serve a two-year term of office. The Chair and Vice-Chair are eligible for re-election, but can serve no more than two consecutive terms. **If the Chair or Vice-Chair are elected to fill an unexpired term that shall count toward the two consecutive terms.**

AMENDMENT FROM THE FLOOR:
PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Article III – Officers

5.Term of Service: The Chair and Vice-Chair will serve a two-year term of office. The Chair and Vice-Chair are eligible for re-election, but can serve no more than two consecutive terms. In the event the office of Chair or Vice-Chair is vacated prior to the scheduled completion of that officer’s term of office, **a Chair or Vice-Chair shall be elected to serve the remainder of the term of office, in which case an election to fill an unexpired term greater than one year shall count as one term toward the two consecutive term limit.**

The floor amendment is the one that passed the BVS.

ATTACHMENT 8

Board of Veterans Services
Benefits Working Group – Work Proposal

Team:

- Carl Bedell, Chair
- Nick Kesler
- Jim Icenhour
- John Lesinski
- Susan Hippen
- Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Support Staff

Background:

The Virginia Division of Veterans Services (DVS) advocates for Virginia veterans and connects them to benefits and services they have earned. The DVS operates 31 Benefits Service Offices across the Commonwealth that provides veterans information and assistance on current federal, state and local veterans' programs, and entitlements.

Since 2015, DVS has improved its Benefits operations by opening eight new Benefits Service Offices, a Center of Excellence, and focusing on employee training and quality. Despite this growth, and the budget increase that has funded it, DVS recognizes that obstacles exist that will hinder sustained growth of DVS Benefits offerings.

Course of Work:

This Working Group will study the strategy for continued growth and the obstacles that may hinder that growth. We will develop recommendations to support or strengthen the growth strategy and address any identified obstacles. We will study the current economic impact of received benefits by Virginia veterans and develop justifications for increased funding for DVS Benefits. Specifically, the Working Group will:

- Interview Benefits staff to understand issues affecting employee retention and issues affecting or limiting service offerings;
- Research other comparable State offerings to identify potential additional service offerings DVS could offer; and
- Analyze budget/funding issues and shortfalls and develop justifications for budget or funding increases.

End State:

The Working Group will produce a white paper that will summarize our findings and recommendations, provide actionable information addressing the current growth strategy and develop justifications for increased funding for DVS Benefits. We plan to present the final submission of our report at the September 2019 Board of Veterans Services meeting.

ATTACHMENT 9

10 November 2018

From: Michael Dick, Chair, Veterans Education Working Group
To: Mr. Jim Icenhour, Chair, Virginia Board of Veterans Services
Mr. John Newby, Commissioner, Virginia Department of Veterans Services

Subj: Veterans Education Working Group

1. As discussed at the meeting of the Board of Veterans Services on 6 September 2018, a Working Group has been formed to assess how education programs at Virginia's higher education facilities are addressing the needs of student veterans. Specifically, the Working Group will seek to gather information about the needs of student veterans attending Virginia's higher education institutions and will examine the structural, procedural, and administrative mechanisms that may hinder the efforts of student veterans to achieve their educational goals.

2. Members of the Working Group are:

Mr. Michael Dick, Chair
Mr. Nick Kesler
Mr. Paige Cherry
Ms. Tammi Lambert
Mr. Carl Bess

3. This study will be conducted in four phases as identified below. As an initial matter, members of the Working Group will review published research discussing the challenges facing student veterans today. This preliminary information-gathering phase, which will include a review of the activities of the Veterans Support Centers that are providing support to veterans enrolled in Virginia's Community College system, will serve to frame the issues for further review. Concurrently, the Working Group will seek to meet with student veterans and administrative support staff at several of Virginia's 4-year universities in order to learn how student veterans are being supported at such institutions. After a review of the information gathered, the Working Group will, as appropriate, develop recommendations for consideration by the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs and the Department of Veterans Services.

Phase I: Review published research studies and related information.

Phase II: Meet with student veterans and administrators at selected universities.

Phase III: Review information gathered.

Phase IV: Submit recommendations for consideration by the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs and the Department of Veterans Services.

4. The anticipated outcomes of the Working Group are:

- a. a better understanding of how Federal and State educational support programs are or are not addressing the needs of student veterans in Virginia;
- b. the identification of structural, procedural and/or administrative challenges to student veterans' success in Virginia; and
- c. recommendations for consideration by the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs and the Department of Veterans Services.

ATTACHMENT 10

Board of Veterans Services
Veterans in the Arts Working Group – Work Proposal

Team:

Ms. Julie Waters, Chair
Mr. Carl Bedell
Ms. Joana Garcia
Mr. Victor Angry
Mr. Frank Reyes
Ms. Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Support Staff

Background:

Various arts programs serving veterans, both government-sponsored and private, exist throughout Virginia. Given Virginia's high population of veterans, and the increasing recognition of the arts' role in identity, community, mental health, and PTSD/TBI recovery, the Board of Veterans Services appointed this working group at its September 2018 meeting to review the current state of arts programs for veterans and make recommendations.

Course of Work:

This working group will make a survey of current programs and organizations serving Virginia veterans through work in the arts and identify unmet needs or potential for growth.

We will begin by reaching out to existing programs and organizations who work with veterans and the arts to survey what is currently being done and hear Virginia/industry leaders' ideas for the future of arts for veterans. Programs to be contacted include: Virginia War Memorial, Eastern Virginia Medical School Arts Program, House of Delegates Arts Caucus, Virginia Commission of the Arts, Veterans Project at the GMU Hylton Center, Virginia Film Office, Richmond International Film Festival, GI Film Festival, San Diego Combat Arts, Veteran Portrait Project, and CreatiVets.

We will then look at other states' arts programs for veterans, both for positive examples and for unsuccessful ventures.

Finally, we will begin to form a short list of program ideas and work with agencies who will be involved to determine feasibility, timelines, and final language for our recommendations.

End State:

This working group will make a survey of current programs and organizations serving Virginia veterans through work in the arts and identify unmet needs or potential for growth. We will identify 2-3 program or policy recommendations to the Board of Veterans Services and Virginia General Assembly which will serve to assist Virginia Veterans and/or enhance their quality of life through the arts. We will present the final submission of our report at the September 2019 Board of Veterans Services meeting.

ATTACHMENT 11
BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
Education Working Group

DVS Henrico Office
121 Cedar Fork Rd., Henrico
November 15, 2018
12:15 – 12:45

AGENDA

- I. Opening – *Mike Dick, Chairman* (12:15 – 12:20)
- II. Introduction of Members – *Mike Dick, Chairman* (12:20 – 12:25)
- III. New Business: (12:25-12:45)
 - a. Review proposal
 - b. Brainstorming on additional areas of research
 - c. Divide working group tasks
- IV. Wrap Up & Adjourn – *Mike Dick, Chairman* (12:45)

**Board of Veterans Services
Education Working Group**

DRAFT

**Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2018**

A meeting of the Education Working Group of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on Thursday, November 15, 2018 at the DVS Henrico Office, 121 Cedar Fork Rd., Henrico, VA.

Members Present

- Carl Bess
- Michael Dick
- Nick Kesler
- Tammi Lambert
- Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Administrative support

Chairman Michael Dick began the meeting at 12:26p. He began by stating the goals of the working group, which include looking at how schools are or are not supporting veteran students, identifying the needs of students and identifying what the schools are doing, gathering data, and examining what other groups like the Institute for Veteran and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University and Swords to Ploughshares are doing. He said it would be a range. He asked the group – “how do we define success?”

Ms. Lambert stated that she was concerned about the size of the scope of research.

Mr. Kesler said they needed to look at need 1st then the other things. He asked Ms. Lambert if she was asking about elevating some things above others in their scope? She said yes.

Ms. Alford stated that the chair had been tasked by DVS to look at two things – how are state and federal benefits interacting and being used now and can it be better; and what are schools doing for veteran students and is it what they need? Again, it will be a range of what is offered from one guy in a registrar’s office who may or may not be able to answer questions to a whole military student support staff working to support the students and provide events and networking opportunities.

She also said they may want to think about getting a graduate student to help with some of the tasks since the scope of their research project is large.

Mr. Bess aid they should look at both the schools and the veterans and how the benefits are being used.

Mr. Dick stated that they can’t really impact federal laws, but pinpoint how schools can help veterans navigate federal benefits. He said the group should look at the veteran centers at the seven Virginia Community College System (VCCS) campuses and ask if this “one stop shop”

should be brought to the four-year institutions? What is the attitude of the administrations? Are students staying in Virginia schools, or going to other states? If yes, then why?

There was discussion on which schools to visit and how to structure the visits, given the time constraints and FOIA laws.

Mr. Dick said he had been collecting literature for the group to review and would send it out to everyone and after that they could start to create a set of questions for all visits and go from there. Mr. Kesler asked about creating a Formal Plan of Action and Measurements (FPAM) in Google Docs.

Ms. Alford said that based on the FOIA presentation, as long as they are not in the document together or within minutes of each other it will not count as a meeting, but they will have to be careful about Google docs. She reiterated that especially for the baseline research and data collection on all the schools they may want to find a grad student to put it all together and then share with the group. She said there should be a set list of questions and check list for all group members to use on site visits so they are collecting the same data and can successfully analyze it against all visits.

Ms. Lambert suggested they each pick five pieces of literature to review and share what they have learned.

Ms. Alford said that was a good idea and after the lit review people might have a better idea of an area they would like to focus on and the work can be divided up by interest area.

Mr. Dick asked them to review and share the literature by December 2nd and then they would schedule another meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04p.