

**Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 14, 2022**

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on July 14, 2022 at 10 a.m. at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere St. Richmond VA 23220

**Members Present**

- Richard Shook, Air Force Association
- Rich Mansfield, Air Force Sergeants Association
- William Aramony, American Legion
- Glenn Yarborough, Association of the United States Army
- Denice Williams, Disabled American Veterans
- Sha'ron Martin, Fleet Reserve Association
- Jack Hilgers, Legion of Valor
- John Clickener, Marine Corps League
- Monti Zimmerman, Military Officers Association of America
- Mark Atchison, Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Preston Curry, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Terence Moore, Reserve Association of America
- Dan Karnes, Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
- Rick Raskin, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- George Corbett, Vietnam Veterans of America
- Kevin Hoffman, Virginia National Guard Association
- Michael Dick, Chairman, Board of Veterans Services
- Jack Lanier, representing the Veterans Services Foundation
- Daniel Gade, Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services

**Members attending virtually**

- Jose Ramos, Wounded Warrior Project

**Members Absent**

- Richard Van Norton, AMVETS
- Lauren Augustine, Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
- Vernon Peters, Military Order of the World Wars
- Michelle Ramos Domingue, Navy Mutual Aid Association
- Robert Barnette, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association

**Alternates Present (representing their VSO)**

- Jay Marts, AMVETS
- Meredith Burns, Navy Mutual Aid Association
- Carl Holcomb, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association

**Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)**

- John Cooper, Air Force Sergeants Association

- Lisa Gregory, Disabled American Veterans
- Joanne Smith, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- John Down, Military Officers Association of America
- Jeremy Villanueva, Wounded Warrior Project (attending virtually)

### **Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present**

- Jordan Stewart, Assistant Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
- Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Claudia Flores, DVS
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Jayla Plymouth, DVS
- Ravi Padma, DVS
- Cassy Russell, Department of Military Affairs

### **Guests**

- MacKenzie Heidelmark, Office of Congresswoman Spanberger
- Anne Crittenden, Women Marines Association
- Clifford Kurten, Assistant Team Lead for Fallen Outdoors
- Andrew Bond, Military Officers Association Legislative Officer
- Michael Sopko (attending virtually)
- Colonel Frank Richardson USAF (Ret) (attending virtually)
- Barry Garber (attending virtually)

### **Items included in the Agenda Packet**

- Draft Agenda
- Draft Minutes May 12, 2022 meeting
- BVS Report to JLC
- VSF Report to JLC
- VDVS Operations Update
- Legislative Initiatives
- Proposed By-Law changes

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Denice Williams called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Chair Williams welcomed the Wounded Warrior Project to the JLC and introduced its representative, Mr. Jose Ramos.

### **Thoughts and meditation**

The JLC Chaplain, Mr. Kevin Hoffman, provided thoughts and meditation.

### **Roll Call of VSOs, Quorum Determination, and Introduction of Guest**

The roll was called, and 20 of the 22 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) were recorded as being represented. A quorum was determined. The three *ex officio* members were recorded as present.

### **Approval of the Agenda (Attachment 1)**

Chair Williams noted change required on draft agenda to correct the name of the Chairman of the Veterans Services Foundation. The new Chairman is Mr. Paul F. Haughton Jr. Chair Williams asked for a motion to accept the change asked and approve the Agenda. Mr. Jack Hilgers made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. John Clickener to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **Approve May 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Williams asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2021 meeting as drafted. Mr. Sha'ron Martin made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. William Aramony, to approve the minutes as drafted. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **Reports / Updates**

#### **BVS Report** *(Attachment 2)*

Chairman Michael Dick of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) provided the BVS report. He noted the next meeting is planned for August 25, 2022 at the Virginia War Memorial. Chairman Dick also recognized two legislative reappointments and two new members. Chairman Dick noted the BVS Point of Contact report process.

#### **VSF Report** *(Attachment 3)*

Mr. Jack Lanier of the Veterans Services (VSF) presented the VSF report. Noted the last meeting was June 9 and the library in Henrico. Mr. Lanier announced new VSF leadership. He further commented on the revenue and expense report to include receipt of a large financial donation in June 2022.

#### **VDVS Report** *(Attachment 4)*

Commissioner Gade thanked the JLC for ongoing collaboration. He highlighted a main effort of the agency currently in creating the Gold Standard Digital Hub, a place for organizations that provide services to veterans to register and list services. Veterans will also be able to register and list their needs. Commissioner Gade noted he anticipates increased agency outreach activities to get all of Virginia's veterans to register in the Hub.

Commissioner Gade announced the new Director of Partnership and Research position for the agency to centrally manage partnerships and internal work for better clarity and accomplishment of goals. He noted a 1 August virtual session hosted by VDVS for members of the JLC and BVS to provide more of a deep dive into agency Objectives and Key Results (OKR) as an opportunity for members to ask questions.

The Commissioner commented on the new Suicide Prevention program as a result of budgetary appropriations from the 2022 session.

### **Proposed Initiatives for 2023 Consideration**

American Legion presented an initiative to remove the age limitation from the veteran retirement income tax subtraction for those earning \$40,000 or less in retirement income. Mr. Aramony noted that veterans give back to the economy and this would encourage veterans to stay in Virginia.

Fleet Reserve presented an initiative to remove the state cemetery spousal burial fee. Mr. Clickener noted this initiative was presented in the 2022 session and passed in the House of Delegates, but was carried over in the Senate.

Mr. Martin noted the federal cemeteries do not charge a spousal burial fee.

National Guard Association presented two initiatives. One to increase the \$3,000 tax subtraction for Guard members to adjust for inflation and the second to provide Virginia Guardsmen free state park entry. Mr., Hoffman noted other states that allow for free admission for National Guard members to state parks.

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) presented an initiative for back-dating of real property taxes beyond the current plus three years to 2011 if applicable to the veteran's effective date. Monti Zimmerman asked if the Reserve Organization of America will support.

Chair Williams turned the floor over to Mr. Sopko, a member of the public attending virtually who expressed that he had been pursuing this effort for two years and noted the 2017 Attorney General Opinion on this matter. He also noted HB1168 from the 2022 session which passed in the House of Delegates but did not pass the Senate Finance Committee. Mr. Sopko also noted the VDVS Policy and Guidelines that provided the decision to backdate to be at the county's discretion.

Mr. Clickener asked members to provide a one page white paper on all legislative proposals by 1 September.

Chair Williams opened the floor for additional initiatives. Nothing further was added.

### **Constitution and By-Laws**

Monti Zimmerman noted the JLC Constitution did not require any changes and asked that the revision date of the Constitution reflect the date of the JLC meeting, July 14, 2022. Monti Zimmerman made a **motion, seconded** by John Clickener to reflect the new revision date to the JLC Constitution. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Monti Zimmerman proposed that the changes to the by-laws previously sent to the members in advance of the meeting as required be adopted. Rick Raskin asked for a friendly amendment to remove the word 'all' in from paragraph 5.a.iii and remove language in 5.a.ii, making 5.a.iii the new 5.a.ii. Monti Zimmerman accepted the friendly amendment and the changes passed unanimously

### **Other New Business, Open Discussion, and "Good of the Order" reports**

Nothing to report

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Clifton Kurten from Fallen Outdoors introduced his nonprofit organization supporting veteran hunting and fishing. Mr. Kurten further commented on the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP). Mr. Kurten commented that he has a stepson who does not qualify for VMSDEP since he, the veteran, is still living. Current legislation allows for

qualifying stepchildren of deceased military members. Mr. Kurten noted the VMSDEP benefit was a significant factor in his decision to retire in Virginia.

**Adjourn**

Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

The next regular business meeting is September 15, 2022 at 10 a.m. The meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Virginia War Memorial.

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# **ATTACHMENT 1**

## **Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations**

### **AGENDA**

**July 14, 2022**

**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

### **Virginia War Memorial**

- I. Opening & Pledge of Allegiance – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Opening Thoughts & Meditation, *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chaplain* (10:05 – 10:10)
- III. Roll call of VSOs, quorum determination, and introduction of guests – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:10 – 10:15)
- IV. Approve Agenda – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:15 – 10:17)
- V. Approve May 12, 2022 meeting minutes – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:17 – 10:20)
- VI. Reports (10:20 – 10:45)
  - a. Board of Veterans Services (BVS) – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
  - b. Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) – *Paul Haughton, VSF Chairman*
  - c. Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) – *Daniel Gade, VDVS Commissioner*
- VII. Proposed initiatives for 2023 consideration, *John Clickener, JLC Legislative Officer* (10:45 – 11:30)
- VIII. Constitution and Bylaws, *Monti Zimmerman, JLC Vice Chair* (11:30 – 11:45)
- IX. New Business and Open Discussion, *Denice Williams JLC Chair* (11:45-11:50)
- X. Public comment period – *Denice Williams JLC Chair* (11:50-11:55)
- XI. Closing Remarks – *Denice Williams JLC Chair* (11:55 – 12:00)
- XII. Adjourn (12:00)

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Report**



101 N. 14TH STREET, 17<sup>TH</sup> FL.  
RICHMOND, VA 23219

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
**BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES**

**REPORT TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**  
**JULY 14, 2022**

*Michael Dick*  
Chairman  
*Thuraya Kent*  
Vice Chair  
*Victor Angry*  
*David Ashe*  
Delegate *Jason Ballard*  
*Carl Bedell*  
Senator *John Bell*  
*Carl Bess*  
Delegate *Mike Cherry*  
*Paige Cherry*  
*Mario Flores*  
Delegate *Buddy Fowler*  
*Joyce Henderson*  
*James O. Icenhour, Jr.*  
*John Lesinski*  
Senator *Mamie Locke*  
Delegate *Kathleen*  
*Murphy*  
*Kathy Owens*  
Senator *Bryce Reeves*  
*Susan Fervaeit Riveland*  
*Melissa Watts*  
*Denice Williams*  
Chair, Joint  
Leadership Council of  
Veterans Service  
Organizations  
*Jack Lanier*  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Veterans  
Services Foundation  
*Rick St. John*  
Vice Chair, Virginia  
War Memorial  
Foundation  
*Daniel M. Gade, PhD,*  
Commissioner, Virginia  
Department of  
Veterans Services

The Virginia Speaker of the House of Delegates, C. Todd Gilbert, reappointed Delegate Kathleen J. Murphy and Delegate Hyland F. "Buddy" Fowler to the Board of Veterans Services and appointed two new members; Delegate Jason Ballard and Delegate Mike Cherry. Delegate Ballard is a U.S. Army veteran and currently serves as a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves. Delegate Mike Cherry is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force.

Though the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) is still pending its first meeting in 2022, our members have been busy working with the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS). Each BVS member serves as a Point of Contact (POC) for each VDVS service line and / or program. The BVS POC becomes the Board's 'subject matter expert' in their assigned area. Board members work with VDVS to review and update the agency's Objectives and Key Results, the annual review of the Compact with Virginia's Veterans, and the agency's Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly.

We have 16 POC reports in progress to include reports on behavioral health, suicide prevention, homelessness and housing services, employment, women veterans, justice-involved veterans, veteran treatment dockets, veterans care centers, and rural veterans. The POC reports will be available and posted to the BVS webpage in August.

Our next meeting is scheduled for August 25 at the Virginia War memorial. We look forward to meeting again in-person and welcoming new members. Several of our members completed their respective terms. We will take the time to honor and thank them for their service to Virginia's veterans across the Commonwealth.

We look forward to hearing of the Joint Leadership Council's 2023 legislative initiatives in the coming months and stand ready to help advocate as one team working on behalf of Virginia's veterans.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Dick".

**Michael Dick**  
Chairman

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
**Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Report**



**VIRGINIA VETERANS  
SERVICES FOUNDATION**  
**Report to the Joint Leadership Council**  
**July 14, 2022**

The Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees held their quarterly meeting on June 9, 2022 at the Varina Library in Henrico County.

The Board welcomed Secretary Crenshaw along with the Deputy and Assistant Secretaries to the meeting. Secretary Crenshaw expressed his appreciation to have the opportunity to meet everyone. He shared that as he started to look at the portfolio of the secretary's position, he recognized the value of entities at all fronts – veterans, DVS, Military Affairs, National Guard and the uniqueness provided by VSF. He is interested in bringing the level of visibility up in a dedicated, yet collective way.

Reginald Thompson, Senior Budget Analyst from DPB provided an overview of what the General Fund Budget process entails and specifically how it impacts the VSF. It was an informative presentation that was well received by the board.

Commissioner Gade reported that as the Commissioner and Karla as the Executive Director of VSF are fully aligned on making sure both organizations are working together and being committed to teamwork. There are some items DVS owes VSF to help make wise decisions on the budget side as well as the fundraising side. DVS plans to develop a 'menu' for VSF to pick from, regarding fundraising and specificity to accommodate the wishes of donors. Commissioner Gade expressed thanks and appreciation for all of the hard work the foundation is doing.

As a result of the joint Finance and Procedures & Policies committee meeting on June 6, 2022 committee chairs, Jack Lanier and Walter Stosch worked together to recommend the FY23 DVS/VSF MOU and FY23 DVS Program budget to the Board.

VSF prepared to enter the new FY by welcoming new leadership; Paul Haughton (Chair), Nicole Carry (1st Vice Chair) and Laura Schmiegel (2nd Vice Chair). VSF also welcomes new trustees, Tim Pillion and Brad Williamson to the Board. The terms of Lettie Bien, John Lesinski and Walter Stosch concluded on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The final revenue and expense reports will not be available until July 20<sup>th</sup>. However, the preliminary VSF total donation received in FY21 is \$602,463.21- *an increase of about 35%*. VSF also received the 1.3 million check on June 30, 2022 and will be included in the final FY22 total. This donation is a result of a finalized trust and will be the largest donation in the history of the Foundation.

VSF will be meeting with DVS Service Line Directors later in the month for a 1 on 1 discussion on funding needs. VSF wants to open the lines of communications directly with staff to fully understand the role the programs plays in assisting veterans and their families. The meeting will also provide the opportunity to discuss possible ideas to expand funding.

The next VSF Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2022 at 11:00 AM at the Virginia War Memorial.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Paul Haughton  
Chairman  
Virginia Veterans Services Foundation



**ATTACHMENT 4**  
**Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) Report**



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**

***Department of Veterans Services***

Daniel M. Gade, PhD  
Commissioner

Telephone: (804) 786-0220  
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**Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS)  
Operations Update for the Joint Leadership Council**

July 14, 2022

VDVS remains steadfast in service to Virginia's veterans, transitioning service members, and their families. With funding in the approved budget, we are able to enhance and strengthen services across the Commonwealth, to include greater capacity within our service lines to reach more veterans. We are creating new opportunities within our Virginia Values Veterans (V3) program to enhance veteran employment with V3 certified companies. We are also excited for the new Suicide Prevention program, and our two new veteran's care centers opening later this year.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) will be implementing the 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline on July 16, 2022. VDVS will participate as a partner to promote the 9-8-8 line on the July 20<sup>th</sup> "Digital Day of Action" focused on informing criminal justice stakeholders about the opportunities this new dialing code presents.

Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) program staff continues to expand in-person outreach and community training opportunities to reach Service Members, Veterans, and families in need of behavioral health, rehabilitative and supportive services. In June 2022, staff assisted 100 new clients compared to 94 new clients in June 2021. The total number of clients (including new and existing clients) served was also higher in June 2022 (369) compared to June 2021 (343). The number of returning clients in the last year is higher than pre-pandemic years and many of them have increasingly complex service needs.

In June 2022, veterans and families needed assistance with resource connections for housing needs (42%), behavioral health support (13%), benefits assistance (9%), employment (10%), and homeless assistance (10%). Together VVFS and Benefits staff screened 1,063 veterans and family members for suicide risk. Among those screened, 13 individuals screened at medium or high risk for suicide and received critical behavioral health support. To enhance internal agency and community capacity for suicide prevention, VVFS will recruit a new Suicide Prevention Director position this month. This new leadership position will enhance internal and community staff training (i.e. suicide prevention/risk screening and lethal means safety) and direct services delivery; Federal, State, and local stakeholder engagement; and research and data coordination. VVFS will also recruit for a new Housing and Criminal Justice Services Coordinator position to increase internal agency and community capacity to serve

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[www.dvs.virginia.gov](http://www.dvs.virginia.gov)

vulnerable veterans and families coping with housing instability and homelessness and navigating the criminal justice services system.

The Benefits team continues to see Virginia veterans at a steady pace. 1,888 Compensation & Pension claims were submitted in the month of June through 4,300 in-person appointments and walk-in services.

Benefits Appeals Attorney and 2 VSRs partnered with the Attorney General's office to provide a Wills Clinic for 20 veterans in the tidewater region. This partnership provided veterans with free legal service for power of attorneys, wills and advance directives. Benefits continue to increase outreach and partnerships with military installations to ensure we are available to process claims and referrals to all transitioning service members.

The Virginia Values Veterans (V3) and V3 Transition Programs, working closely with the Virginia Chamber, embarked on a robust Hire Vets Now (HVN) Networking Event calendar in 2022. We had 1,028 service member and military spouse attendees over 12 networking events spanning five different military installations. The attendees were able to network with a total of 271 Virginia Values Veterans Certified employers as well as other strategic partners and resource providers. V3 Transition Coordinators and V3 Regional Program Managers attend all events to ensure quality customer service to service members and military spouses as well as our V3 Certified Employers.

The Military Medics and Corpsmen Program (MMAC) assisted 119 Veterans and 5 military spouses with obtaining healthcare related employment in the Commonwealth in FY22, setting a new fiscal year hiring record for MMAC. The program also added three new MMAC Partner Health Systems – The National Neuropathy Center, Kaiser Permanente and Velocity Health.

Between January 1 and July 8, 2022, The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) processed 4,662 applications, a 90 percent increase compared to the 2,460 applications processed during the same time in 2021. The VMSDEP Staff processed all applications in FY22 within 10 calendar days, which is 35 calendar days sooner than applications processed in FY21. The 10-calendar-days processing time frame for applications was accomplished while maintaining one business day response time frame for voicemails and emails, ensuring callers were able to speak with a representative at the time of call.

Military Education & Workforce Initiative (MEWI) partnered with the Veterans Services Foundation, Tech 4 Troops, and Altria Group to provide 50 refurbished laptops to Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). MEWI will host the Virginia Military Student Veteran Manufacturing Summit, its first sector strategy event on November 4, 2022, at the William H Tally Workforce Center, located at John Tyler Community College. The Virginia Chamber Foundation, Community College Workforce Alliance, and Virginia Employment Commission are partners for the event.

The Military Spouse Liaison conducted outreach and advocacy on behalf of military spouses and families in the Commonwealth. In June, the Liaison organized a Virginia working group consisting of military spouses and veterans that are leaders in their military-affiliated organizations. All service branches and sponsor statuses were represented. The group created ideas for potential initiatives and

legislation to ease the burdens our military families face when it comes to military family mental health and wellness, military child care and education, and military spouse employment. She is continuing to collaborate with Blue Star Families (BSF) to be the first state to bring the BSF Welcome Week Campaign statewide to include Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Ft. Lee in welcoming military families to those areas this fall.

The Administrators for the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach and the Puller Veterans Care Center in Fauquier County are both now on board, and we have begun hiring the senior leadership teams for both centers. Positions are posted on the state job website: [Jobs.Virginia.Gov](https://www.jobs.virginia.gov). We are targeting "Month 1" (first resident) in late 2022 for Virginia Beach and early 2023 in Fauquier County. We will be holding community open houses prior to opening - look for announcements from us in the coming months.

Lieutenant Governor Winsome Earle-Sears was the keynote speaker at the Commonwealth's Memorial Day Ceremony at the Virginia War Memorial. Over 1,200 people attended in-person and more than 60,000 watched on CBS TV-6 or livestream. The Virginia War Memorial is already planning for the Commonwealth's Patriot Day Ceremony on Monday, September 12 and the Commonwealth's Veterans Day Ceremony on Friday, November 11. Please plan to join us at both ceremonies. The Veterans Day ceremony will be broadcast and livestreamed.

DVS conducted an interment at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk on Monday, April 25, 2022 for CMCN David A. Corona, who was honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1996 after serving for eight years. It was the first interment since the signing of the federal Burial Equity for Guards and Reserves Act into law on March 15, 2022. The new law authorizes state veterans cemeteries to provide an honored final resting place to former Guardsmen and Reservists who may not have previously qualified for interment at a veterans cemetery because they did not meet the minimum active duty service time. With the interment of CMCN Corona on April 25, Virginia became the first state in the Nation to bury a former reserve component service member under the new eligibility standards. Under its new Special Category Interment Program (SCIP), DVS will offer three interment options for former Guardsmen, Reservists, and eligible family members: in-ground casketed burial, in-ground cremated burial, and above-ground cremated burial (in a columbarium niche). SCIP fees are \$2,000 for casketed burials and \$1,700 for cremated burials. These fees include the burial plot or columbarium niche, a headstone or niche cover, an outer burial receptacle for caskets, opening and closing of the grave, a place to conduct a committal service, and perpetual care.

Sincerely,



Daniel Gade, PhD.