

Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2023

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on April 27, 2023 at Amelia State Cemetery Chapel:

Members Present

- David Ashe
- Joe Campa
- Michael Dick
- Mario Flores
- Buddy Fowler
- Jamie Inman
- Carlton Kent
- Terrence McKnight
- Kathy Owens
- Melissa Watts
- Denice Williams, Chair, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
- Karla Boughey, Veterans Services Foundation
- Daniel Gade, Commissioner, Virginia Department of Veterans Services
- Pam Seay, President, Virginia War Memorial Foundation

Members Attending Virtually

- Carl Bedell
- Mike Cherry
- Thurraya Kent
- Bryce Reeves

Members Absent

- Victor Angry
- Jason Ballard
- John Bell
- Paul Haughton
- Joyce Henderson
- John Lesinski
- Mamie Locke
- Kathleen Murphy

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Jordan Stewart, Assistant Secretary
- Steve Combs, VDVS
- Claudia Flores, VDVS
- Ravi Padma, VDVS

- Brandi Jancaitis, VDVS
- Monique Brabham, VDVS
- Glendalynn Glover, VDVS
- Jayla Plymouth, VDVS

Members of the Public

- No members of the public in attendance

Materials Distributed as part of the Agenda Packet (sent via e-mail and posted on BVS webpage)

- Draft Agenda
- Draft Minutes of the December 16, 2022 meeting
- VDVS Operational Update
- JLC Report
- VSF Report
- VWM Report
- BVS New Member Handbook
- BVS Point of Contact List

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Michael Dick called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Chairman Dick led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call, Introduction of Members, and Quorum Determination

The roll call determined that there were 14 of 25 members present at the meeting site, and a quorum was established. Four members attended the meeting virtually (as noted above) citing Electronic Member Participation Permission #3: Principal residence is more than 60 miles distance from the meeting location. Chairman Dick asked if there were any objections to allowing the virtual members to participate. No objection noted.

Approval of Agenda and December 16, 2022 Draft Minutes (See Attachment 1)

Chairman made a **motion, seconded by** Buddy Fowler to approve the April 27, 2023 draft agenda. The motion carried by unanimous consent.

Buddy Fowler made a **motion, seconded by** Carlton Kent to approve the December 16, 2022 meeting minutes. The motion carried by unanimous consent.

Introduction of VDVS staff and guests

Commissioner Gade recognized DVS staff.

Update on current VDVS operational status (See Attachment 2)

VDVS Commissioner Gade gave an update on VDVS Operations and categorized wins, losses, and future outcomes. Commissioner Gade reported on grant funding for the DVS Suicide Prevention and Opioid Addiction Prevention Services (SOS) and noted efforts to develop new capacity and enhance current capabilities.

Commissioner Gade provided an update on veteran data noting DVS is working with the Office of Data Governance and Analysis.

Commissioner Gade highlighted strategic planning and noted the Women Veterans License Plate approval. Additionally, the Commissioner announced the launch of the new DVS appointment system scheduling application on the DVS website and provided an update on the Gold Standard Digital Hub and the two new Care Centers. The Commissioner also commented on DVS turnover rates and the efforts underway to address staff turnover.

Commissioner Gade discussed outreach efforts and building the connective tissue between Virginia Values Veterans (V3) certified companies and Virginia's veterans seeking employment.

Commissioner Gade revealed the Virginia is for Veterans logo.

Joint Leadership Council Report *(See Attachment 3)*

JLC Chair Denice Williams reported that four of the six JLC 2023 legislative priorities passed the General Assembly on their way to becoming law. Chair Williams noted that the JLC is beginning to look ahead to 2024.

Veterans Services Foundation Report

Karla Boughey reported the next VSF meeting is May 4, 2023 at the Virginia War Memorial.

Virginia War Memorial Foundation Report *(See Attachment 4)*

Pam Seay reported that the War Memorial Foundation is supporting the Memorial's presence on the DC Mall to include a tent and a traveling version of the 50 years and Beyond exhibit. Ms. Seay also noted the Commonwealth's Memorial Day Ceremony planned for May 29. Additionally, Ms. Seay noted that the Virginia War Memorial is working on a Virginia at War Series in combination with a Public Broadcasting Station. Ms. Seay also noted the War Memorial's veterans' creative art center and on-act plays written by veterans which educates a non-veteran audience about military service.

General Assembly Session

Chairman Dick turned the floor over to Senators and Delegates for their report on the 2023 General Assembly Session

Delegate Fowler noted the state park admission JLC initiative that passed allowing National Guard members free admission to Virginia state parks.

Senator Reeves noted the Strategic Working Group to guide veteran related budget and legislation. Senator Reeves also noted the efforts of the General Assembly Military and Veteran Caucus.

New Business

Chairman Dick discussed the BVS Point of Contact (POC) Report assignments and highlighted the duties of the POCs. Chairman Dick asked each member to review the POC assignment list

and provide him remarks by e-mail within ten days.

Chairman Dick noted he received recommended changes to the ByLaws by Joyce Henderson, which will be brought before the Board at the next meeting.

Good of the Order Reports

Kathy Owens highlighted that she and JLC Chair Denice Williams participated in the groundbreaking ceremony of the new Memorial Honor Guard Corps Building at the Albert G. Horton Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery on April 25, 2023.

Public Comment

CDC Combs provided a brief history of Amelia State Cemetery

Wrap Up & Adjournment

Chairman Dick adjourned the meeting at 1145.

ATTACHMENT 1

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES

DRAFT AGENDA
April 27, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Chapel
Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia
10300 Pridesville Road Amelia, VA 23002

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman* (10:00 – 10:02)
 - II. Roll Call and Quorum Determination – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman* (10:02 – 10:10)
 - III. Approval of Agenda – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman* (10:10 – 10:11)
 - IV. Approval of Minutes of the December 16, 2022 meeting – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman* (10:11 – 10:12)
 - V. Introduction of DVS staff and guests – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman* (10:12 – 10:15)
 - VI. Welcome to new BVS Members / BVS Handbook – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman* (10:15 – 10:25)
 - VII. DVS Strategic Plan and Operational Update – *Daniel Gade, DVS Commissioner* (10:25 – 10:45)
 - VIII. Reports (10:45 – 11:05)
 - a. Joint Leadership Council – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Paul Haughton, VSF Chairman*
 - c. Virginia War Memorial Foundation – *Pam Seay, VWMF President*
 - d. Legislative Report – *BVS Legislative Members*
 - IX. New Business: (11:05– 11:40)
 - a. Point of Contact Reports and Working Groups - *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
 - b. ByLaws - *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
 - c. "Good of the Order" Reports – *all members*
 - d. Other new business – *as requested by members*
 - X. Public comment (11:40 – 11:50) – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
 - XI. Wrap Up & Adjourn – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman* (11:50 – 12:00)
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ATTACHMENT 2

VDVS OPERATIONAL UPDATE



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Veterans Services

Daniel M. Gade, PhD
Commissioner

Telephone: (804) 786-0220
Fax: (804) 786-0302

Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) Operations Update for the Board of Veterans Services

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for the opportunity to report on the activities of the Department of Veterans Services. We have many successes to report, and many opportunities on the horizon.

A major initiative this year was the rollout of the "Gold Standard Digital Hub". UniteUs was chosen in a competitive bidding process to provide the initial, pilot version of the hub. Our initial fielding shows that the hub provides a unique new tool to connect veterans and their families to resources; we are still building out capacity across other service lines, but the VVFS service line is operational on the hub. VVFS services fit well on the UU platform which specializes in connecting individuals and families to statewide resources for social care needs. Veterans can request services by clicking on [\[link\]](#) on our website.

Our new scheduling application is also live on our website. The previous method for getting an appointment with DVS was both inefficient and ineffective, literally requiring 4-5 emails and several phone calls. The new system simply requires a few mouse clicks, and is currently available on our website as well: [\[link\]](#)

VVFS team is building a new grant program for Suicide Prevention and Opioid Addiction Services (SOS). The SOS team is led by Dr. Angela Porter and consists of four current team members (two Grant Administrators and one Ops Manager) and recruiting for a final Suicide Prevention Coordinator position. The SOS team launched two rounds of community grants to enhance suicide prevention and opioid addiction services among military-connected individuals and families in February and March. Both rounds of applications (30 complete applications) are being evaluated. The first two rounds of funding awards should be finalized by the end of May. The SOS team also launched a call for research proposals which will be implemented with Memorandums of Agreement with Higher Education institutions. Research proposals are due in mid-May.

Since January 2023, the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, to include V3 Transition, worked closely with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce to host two Hire Vets Now (HVN) networking events. One event was held at Fort Eustis and the other was held on Naval Air Station Oceana. Both events had approximately 100 service members and military spouses present to engage with over 25 V3 Certified

Employers and five resource providers. The V3 Transition Coordinators, V3 Military Spouse and Dependent Employment Specialist provided customer service, along with VDVS service lines such as the Military Medics and Corpsman Program and the Education Directorate.

VDVS Benefits is driving a new initiative to reach more transitioning military members and their families through Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and other associated transitioning programs. We are taking a dual pronged approach to integrate with military members transitioning to reserve and/or retire status. Our primary goal is to provide a 30-minute brief to all TAP participants.

The VDVS Director of Research Development and Partnerships is working with the Office of Data Governance and Analytics (ODGA) to maintain a veterans contact list for the Commonwealth to integrate with services and develop a tracking method to identify veteran's needs. We received new contact information for over 550k veterans; our next step is a major marketing and outreach push to let these veterans know about the services the Commonwealth provides for them.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded DVS two grants, totaling \$3.5M, to add additional columbarium niches at the Amelia and Dublin state veterans cemeteries. Construction is underway on both projects, part of the phased expansion of both cemeteries. We expect final VA approval of a similar project at the Suffolk cemetery later this year.

We are ever closer to the "soft opening" of the Puller Veterans Care Center in Fauquier County and the Jones and Cabocoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach. Please plan on joining us for the grand openings of those new care centers on 10 and 11 November, respectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Gade".

Daniel Gade, PhD.

ATTACHMENT 3

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT



101 N. 14TH ST., 17TH FLOOR
RICHMOND VA 23219

Air Force Association
Air Force Sergeants Association
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United States Army
Disabled American Veterans
Fifth Baptist Church Veterans Ministry
Fleet Reserve Association
Legion of Valor of the U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Military Order of the World Wars
Navy Mutual Aid Association
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Reserve Organization of America
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
Virginia National Guard Association
Women Marines Association
Wounded Warrior Project

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES April 27, 2023

The Joint Leadership Council (JLC) last met on December 15, 2022 at the Virginia War Memorial. During the meeting the JLC prioritized the six legislative initiatives and made final preparations for the 2023 General Assembly Session. We held our annual JLC Day on the Hill in January. The Day on the Hill included both an in-person and a virtual session. JLC members had an opportunity to speak with many legislators to advocate for the 2023 JLC priorities. We also welcomed remarks from Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears during the virtual session. Additionally, JLC members participated in the General Assembly Military Veterans Caucus (GAMVC) each week during session.

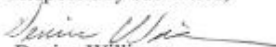
The JLC is proud to report that four of six priorities passed the General Assembly this session:

- JLC 2023-01: Expansion of tax relief for surviving spouses of military service members to include "Died in the line-of duty (SJ231). *An identical resolution must pass in the 2024 General Assembly to be on the ballot in the November 2024 General Election*
- JLC 2023-04: Elimination of Spouse / Dependent and Guard / Reserve Burial Fees (HB2362 / SB924)
- JLC 2023-05: Virginia National Guard State Park Admission (HB1388/SB915)
- JLC 2023-06: Virginia national Guard Adjustment in Income Tax Exemption (HB2373)

The 2023 JLC priorities and status sheet are posted to the JLC webpage: [Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations - Virginia Department of Veterans Services](#)

Our first meeting of 2023 is planned for May 11, at the American Legion Building in Richmond.

Respectfully submitted,


Denice Williams
Chair

THE 23 ORGANIZATIONS OF THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL HAVE MORE THAN 250,000 MEMBERS

ATTACHMENT 4

Virginia War Memorial Foundation Report



2022 SERVICE: Laying the Groundwork for 2023 and Beyond



Gold Transparency 2023
Candid.



The mark of a great nonprofit is the reach of its mission. Thanks to your support, we are gaining ground every day. In 2022, nearly half a million* people accessed Virginia War Memorial programs on-site, online, and on air.

OUR MISSION is to support the Virginia War Memorial in its efforts to preserve the stories of veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice, to honor all veterans and active-duty military, and to inspire love of country through education.

OUR VISION is that a global audience will recognize the valor and sacrifice of Virginia's military veterans in the pursuit of liberty, democracy, justice, and peace for all.

PRESERVING the Stories of Veterans

Oral Histories — Grant funding from the Alfred duPont Trust has made it possible to begin the laborious process of transcribing what is possibly the largest single trove of veteran oral histories in Virginia, many from World War II veterans.



Virtual Shrine of Memory — A searchable database to identify any of the nearly 12,000 individuals remembered at the Memorial will soon be available on our website. The Shrine of Memory at the Virginia War Memorial honors the service of the Virginia men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II, and in the wars in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. Those Virginians killed during the Global War on Terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and other locations throughout the world are also memorialized.

The Virginians at War Documentary Film Series — This award-winning film series includes 26 films, telling the stories of military and cultural history through firsthand accounts from veterans and families. They are available online at



Our 2022 documentary, *Known but to God: The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*, marked the 2021 centennial of this beloved American monument at Arlington National Cemetery.

Our 2023 documentary, *One Week in October*, will focus on the 40th anniversary of the week in 1983 that included two fateful events: the bombing of the U.S. Marine Corps Barracks in Beirut and the U.S. invasion of Grenada during Operation Urgent Fury.

Mighty Pen Project — Now in its 10th year, this program offers intensive writing classes to help and encourage veterans to commit to paper their memories and reflections that tell the larger story of American military service around the world. The natural extension of this tuition-free writing program has been a play-writing class. Four one-act plays are selected from the class for our *War in Pieces* stage production. The cast for the 2023 production consists of more than 30 percent military veterans, providing even more authenticity to this emerging arts offering.





K9 Veterans Day
 ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
.9k for K9s
MEMORIAL WALK



• With Public Programs

Special commemorations on Memorial Day, 9/11 Patriot Day, Veterans Day, K-9 Veterans Day, POW/MIA Recognition Day, and Pearl Harbor Day feature musical programs, keynote speakers, and recognition for veterans and their families. Hill of Heroes Day (above) is a community activity beginning in June and extending over the Independence Day weekend.



It is an inspirational tribute to our fallen veterans. American flags are planted on our grounds to recognize the nearly 12,000 names etched on our Shrine of Memory.

We observe African American History Month, Women's History Month, the Month of the Military Child, Asian American and Pacific Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Native American Heritage Month by offering free and insightful programming. These free events ensure that a grateful Commonwealth has frequent opportunities to show respect and admiration for our veterans.



LEFT: Veteran Patients Week — Volunteers across the state wrote thank-you cards to remember our veterans receiving medical treatment.



• With Exhibitions

Who They Were: Lives Worth Knowing profiled 32 individuals (6 shown below) whose names are etched on our Shrine of Memory. This poignant exhibit was on view during 2022 and is now available to travel.



NOW ON VIEW



Arms for the Nation
Virginia Medal of Honor Gallery



Undercroft Exhibit Hall

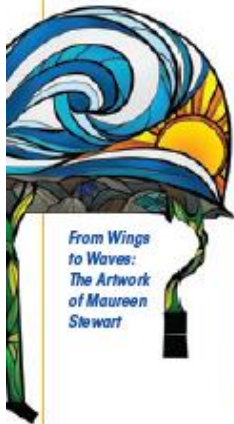


50 YEARS BEYOND
The Vietnam Veteran Experience

THIS EXHIBIT MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF
 Roller-Bottomore Foundation
 Peachtree House Foundation
 E. B. Duff Charitable Lead Annuity Trust
 War Heroes' Initiatives Fund at the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation
 Virginia War Memorial Foundation

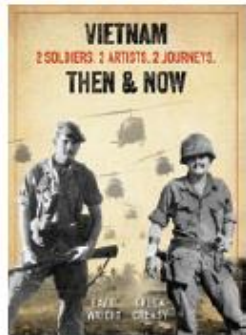
• In the Veterans Art Gallery

Our changing exhibition program highlighting the work of veterans across all art mediums included:



From Wings to Waves: The Artwork of Maureen Stewart

Vietnam: 2 Soldiers, 2 Artists. 2 Journeys, Then & Now: The Vietnam Art of David Wright and Chuck Creasy (traveling exhibition from the Monthaven Arts and Cultural Center)



The Color of Freedom: Honoring the Diversity of America's Servicewomen (traveling exhibition from the Military Women's Memorial)

My Art is My Portrait: The Artwork of Charlie McConnell



Opening in the Veterans Art Gallery May 31, 2023:
 Photography by Rich Davis, a Roanoke-based Navy veteran, whose work is primarily focused on landscape, night, and infrared photography



INSPIRING Love of Country through Education

SELECT HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2022

26

PROGRAMS
designed for
students
and teachers

22

GUEST SPEAKERS and
partner organizations

58

LIVESTREAMS covering diverse topics ranging from the Battle of the Bulge to "The Evolution of the United States Flag," "The Conflict in Bosnia," "Holidays on the Home Front," "The American POW Experience," "Military Cuisine," and "Comics on the Battlefield"

41

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

20

Schools awarded ASSISTANCE GRANTS for field trips

2

ADMIRAL JOHN MAROCCHI SCHOLARSHIPS awarded to Virginia students entering an ROTC program at a Virginia university

* 400,000+ people accessed our programs: 250,000 online via vawarrior.com, YouTube, Vimeo, scholarcompass.vcu.edu, and other sites; 124,000 viewership of Memorial Day and Veterans Day commemorations: CBS6 Richmond, WTKR-TV Norfolk, and WDBJ Roanoke; 50,000 on-site; 5,000 community outreach.



2022 Special Events



At Ease on the Bus



Leadership in America

We launched our At Ease on the Bus Insider Trips to give participants an opportunity to visit:

- Fort Lee, Fort Lee Ordnance Training Center, U.S. Army Women's Museum, U.S. Army Quartermaster Museum, and Petersburg National Battlefield Park
- The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier: A Century of Honor by Philip Bigler
- Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Army Caisson Platoon
- From West Point to the World: The Army Museum Enterprise by Dr. James C. Kelly
- Fort Belvoir and the National Museum of the U.S. Army
- Fat Boy and The Champagne Salesman by Rush Loving Jr.
- China Rx: Exposing the Risks of America's Dependence on China for Medicine by Rosemary Gibson

Our annual Sips on the Skyline saluted Virginia's spirits industry, which includes many veteran-owned businesses.



A Note about Our Financial Statements

As we went to press, the draft of the annual audit of our financial statements for the period ending December 31, 2022, had been reviewed. The numbers, which will be made available on our website when accepted by our board of directors, show a strong post-pandemic rebound. This was only possible because of the remarkable level of private support — from you and other like-minded people — for the Virginia War Memorial Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Thank you.

