

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2023

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on May 9, 2023 at 10 a.m. at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere St. Richmond VA 23220

Members Present

- Rich Mansfield, Air Force Sergeants Association
- William Aramony, American Legion
- Glenn Yarborough, Association of the United States Army
- Denice Williams, Disabled American Veterans
- Thad Jones, Fifth Baptist Church Veterans Ministry
- 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
- Vernon Peters, Military Order of the World Wars
- Meredith Burns, Navy Mutual Aid Association
- Preston Curry, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Terence Moore, Reserve Organization 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
- Paul Houghton, Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation
- Daniel Gade, Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services

Members attending virtually

- Richard Shook, Air Force Association
- Ann Crittenden, Women Marines Association

Members Absent

- Richard Van Norton, AMVETS
- Michelle Ramos Domingue, Navy Mutual Aid Association
- Carl Holcomb, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
- Jose Ramos, Wounded Warrior Project

Alternates Present (representing their VSO)

- Jay Marts, AMVETS

Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)

- John Cooper, Air Force Sergeants Association

- Lisa Gregory, Disabled American Veterans
- Rich Rinaldo, Legion of Valor
- David Jennings, Marine Corps League
- John Down, Military Officers Association of America
- Joanne Smith, Veterans of Foreign Wars

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Jordan Stewart, Assistant Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
- Major General Timothy Williams, the Adjutant General
- Captain Joshua McNallay, Virginia Air National Guard
- Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Clay Mountcastle, DVS
- Claudia Flores, DVS
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Monique Brabham, DVS
- Montwrace Cunningham, DVS
- Cassy Russell, DMA
- David Wingfield, VADOC

Guests

- MacKenzie Heidelmark, Office of Congresswoman Spanberger
- Michael H. Schoelwer, American Veterans Vote
- Elaine Reed, Fifth Baptist Veterans Ministry
- Ken Golden, Fleet Reserve Association
- Karla Boughey, Veterans Services Foundation
- Pat Rinaldo
- Michael Sopko (attending virtually)

Items included in the Agenda Packet

- Draft Agenda
- Draft Minutes December 15, 2022 meeting
- Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Report to JLC
- Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Report to JLC
- Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Operations Update

Call to Order

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) Chair Denice Williams called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and led the JLC in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Thoughts and meditation

Kevin Hoffman provided thoughts and meditation.

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

The roll was called, and 19 of the 23 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) were recorded as being

physically present, therefore a quorum was determined. Two VSOs participated electronically as recorded. The three *ex officio* members were recorded as present.

Approval of the Agenda *(Attachment 1)*

Mr. John Clickener made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Jack Hilgers, to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Approve December 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Sha'ron Martin made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Thad Jones, to approve the minutes as drafted. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

DVS Operational Update *(Attachment 2)*

Commissioner Daniel Gade provided an operational update and discussed the strategic planning effort and the DVS staff assembled to support the effort. Commissioner Gade announced the reveal of the Virginia is for Veterans logo. He also provided an update on the Women Veterans license plate, the new VESA scheduling application on the DVS website, and the suicide prevention grant.

DMA Update

Major General Williams provided an operational update on the Virginia National Guard. MG Williams also commented on his retirement, the planned Change of Command, and noted that Cassy Russell, Legislative & Policy Analyst for DMA is leaving to join her spouse on a new assignment.

JLC Chair Denice Williams presented a Certificate of Appreciation and a JLC pin to Major General Williams for his support of the JLC during his service as The Adjutant General of the Commonwealth.

BVS Report *(Attachment 3)*

Chairman Michael Dick of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) provided the BVS report. Chairman Dick reported that RADM Terry McKnight (Ret) is now a member of the BVS.

VSF Report *(Attachment 4)*

Mr. Paul Haughton of the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) provided the VSF report and commented on the success of the Petersburg Collaboration.

Review of the 2023 Session

The Legislative Officer, Mr. Clickener provided a summary of the JLC's work leading up to the 2023 Session. Mr. Clickener also provided a summary of the JLC legislative initiatives that passed the 2023 General Assembly and asked the VSO members who sponsored the legislation to provide feedback.

Mr. Clickener discussed efforts to update the JLC Binder in preparation for the July meeting.

Jay Marts provided a summary of the after-action review and recommendations for planning efforts leading up to the 2024 General Assembly session

Way Ahead for 2024

Several JLC members provided initial thoughts on 2024 legislative initiatives. Mr. Clickener announced he is stepping down as the Legislative officer.

Sha'ron Martin made a **motion, seconded** by Jack Hilgers to appoint Glenn Yarborough as interim Legislative Officer. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Mr. Clickener discussed the location for the JLC meetings and recommended that they be held at the War Memorial.

BVS Chair discussed that a sizeable number of veterans are not aware of benefits available to veterans, either state or federal. Asked the JLC Chair to join the BVS Chair in sending a letter to the Governor for an information campaign to inform transitioning members of benefits.

John Cooper discussed the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide and asked to present brief at the July meeting.

Glenn Yarborough asked for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair

Public Comment

Michael Sopko asked if the Policy and Guidelines are revised and published. Commissioner Gade reported the update is posted and updated on Regulatory Town Hall and was sent to the Commissioners of the Revenue.

Adjourn

Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 12:50 and asked members to return for the National Fentanyl Training.

National Fentanyl Awareness Day REVIVE Training

The JLC received training by the Virginia Department of Health. First Lady Suzanne Youngkin and Secretary Crenshaw attended.

The next regular business meeting is July 13, 2023 at 10 a.m. at the Virginia ABC Building Hearing Room in Mechanicsville, VA.

ATTACHMENT 1

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

May 9, 2023

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Virginia War Memorial

AGENDA

- I. Opening, Meeting Notes, and Pledge of Allegiance – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (11:00 – 11:05)
- II. Opening Thoughts & Meditation, *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chaplain* (11:05 – 11:08)
- III. Roll call, quorum determination, and introduction of guests – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (11:08 – 11:15)
- IV. Approve Agenda – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (11:15 – 11:16)
- V. Approve December 15, 2022 meeting minutes – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (11:16 – 11:17)
- VI. DMA Update – *MG Timothy Williams, The Adjutant General of Virginia* (11:17 – 11:30)
- VII. VDVS Operational Update – *Daniel Gade, VDVS Commissioner* (11:30 -11:40)
- VIII. Reports (11:40 – 11:45)
 - a. Board of Veterans Services (BVS) – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) – *Paul Haughton, VSF Chairman*
- IX. Review of 2023 Session – *John Clickener, Legislative Officer* (11:45 – 12:10)
- X. Way-ahead for proposed 2024 JLC Initiatives – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (12:10 – 12:20)
- XI. New Business - *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (12:20 – 12:30)
- XII. Public comment period – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (12:30 – 12:35)
- XIII. National Fentanyl Awareness Day REVIVE Training -*Virginia Department of Health* (12:35 – 12:55)
- XIV. Closing remarks and prepare for next meeting – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (12:55 – 1:00)
- XV. Adjourn (1:00)

ATTACHMENT 2 **VDVS Operations 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 Joint Leadership Council

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: [VESA \(virginia.gov\)](https://vsa.virginia.gov)

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 Cabacoy 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,



Daniel Gade, PhD.

ATTACHMENT 3

Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Report



101 N. 14TH STREET, 17TH FL.
RICHMOND, VA 23219

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES

Michael Dick
Chairman
Thuraya Kent
Vice Chair
Victor Angry
David Ashe
Delegate *Jason Ballard*
Cari Bedell
Senator *John Bell*
Joe R. Campa
Delegate *Miba Cherry*
Mario Flores
Delegate *Buddy Fowler*
Joyce Henderson
James P. Inman
Cariton Kent
John Lesinski
Senator *Mamie Locke*
Terence E. McKnight
Delegate *Kathleen*
Murphy
Kathy Owens
Senator *Bryce Reeves*
Melissa Watts
Denice Williams
Chair, Joint
Leadership Council of
Veterans Service
Organizations
Paul Houghton
Chair, Veterans
Services Foundation
Rick St. John
Vice Chair, Virginia
War Memorial
Foundation
Daniel M. Gade, PhD,
Commissioner, Virginia
Department of
Veterans Services

REPORT TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MAY 9, 2023

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) met on April 27, 2023, at the chapel of Amelia State Cemetery. We welcomed RADM (Ret) Terence McKnight as the newest member of the BVS. We also reported that Ms. Susan Riveland resigned from the Board. We appreciate all the hard work Ms. Riveland accomplished during her time with the BVS, to include her outstanding contributions with the Veterans in the Arts effort.

Commissioner Gade provided an update on DVS operations. The Commissioner discussed several recent positive actions for the agency, to include enhanced data that will support identification of and outreach to Virginia's veterans, the launch of the digital hub for veteran services, the passing of the Women Veterans license plate during the 2023 General Assembly Session, and the new DVS appointment scheduling application available on the DVS website. The Commissioner also noted efforts to address recruitment and retention within the agency and future efforts to link Virginia Values Veterans (V3) companies with Virginia's veterans to increase hiring opportunities.

Commissioner Gade revealed the new Virginia is for Veterans logo and we look forward to proudly displaying it across the Commonwealth.

I provided updated draft Point of Contact (POC) Report assignments to the members and discussed POC responsibilities related to this year's reporting. We also discussed the need to re-invigorate Working Group (WG) activities. I asked the leaders of the WGs (Metrics, Benefits, and Education) to review the composition of their WG and to assess how best to move forward with addressing the WG's mission and goals. Additionally, members were provided with a copy of the updated BVS Member Handbook that includes the mission of the Board and member responsibilities.

The next BVS meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2023, at the American Legion Building in Richmond.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Dick
Chairman

ATTACHMENT 4
Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Report



VIRGINIA VETERANS SERVICE FOUNDATION
Report to the Joint Leadership Council
May 9, 2023

The Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees held their quarterly meeting on May 4, 2023, at the Virginia War Memorial.

VSF Chair, Paul Haughton welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized Assistant Secretary Jordan Stewart to provide an update on Governor Youngkin's Partnership for Petersburg media event that took place on April 12th. The Assistant Secretary reported the Governor held a ribbon cutting for the Virginia Community Resource Center that day and the event was well attended. The Resource Center houses several community service organizations which includes DVS Benefits, VVFS and VETE service lines. The Governor is focused on expanding veteran services in Petersburg with the help of DVS and VSF.

Kim Barton, DVS Deputy CFO presented the FY 2023 Second Quarter Financial Report to the board as of December 31, 2022. In addition to the Quarterly Reports the Finance Committee requested the most current financial report be reported at each board meeting. As of March 31, 2023, a total of \$631,544 in donations have been received. Expenditures supporting various DVS service lines in FY 2023 totaled \$522,370.

Tammy Davidson, DVS CFO, reported on behalf of Commissioner Gade who was attending the DVS Benefits Training in Williamsburg. Currently, VVFS grant program staff are evaluating 30 applications. The goal is to finalize the funding awards by the end of May.

The VSF Finance Committee Chair, Mike Coleman announced the VSF Finance Committee will receive a DVS briefing regarding the various service line budget requests for the upcoming FY2024. The presentations are scheduled for Tuesday, May 16th from 12:00 – 3:00 PM at the Virginia War Memorial.

The VSF Chair recommended, and the Board approved, the names of Trustees, Bruce Waxman (Chair), Jack Lanier and Mike Coleman to serve on the 2023 nominating committee. Elections for VSF officers will take place at the June 22, 2023, Board of Trustees meeting.

The next VSF Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2023, at the American Legion Department Headquarters in Richmond.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul Haughton
Chairman
Virginia Veterans Services Foundation