

Veterans Advisory Board of Skagit County

Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, April 11, 2023, at 1300
1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA, 98273-5625

Attendance – Total Attendees

1. Pete Sill – VAB Board Chair / CVMA
2. Bob Garrison - VAB First Vice Chair / American Legion Post 91
3. April Patterson – VAB Second Vice Chair / American Legion Post 91
4. Chris Diaz - Skagit County Veteran Service Specialist
5. Carmina Villalobos - Community Action of Skagit County
6. Richard Cranley - American Legion Post 91
7. Bob Stratton - VFW 5056
8. Kelly Blau - VASH
9. Randi Bowman - WorkSource Mount Vernon
10. Ande Mitchell - American Legion Post 43
11. Martin Symonds - Worksource Oak Harbor
12. Robert Steele - VFW 12220 Anacortes
13. Rebecca Skrinde - Helping Hands
14. Miranda Wilson - Helping Hands

Call to Order

- Pete Sill called to order the regular meeting of the Skagit County Veterans Advisory Board at 1301 on Tuesday, March 14, 2023.
- We have a quorum and can continue with business
- We have a guest
 - Robert Steele - Commander of the recently chartered Anacortes VFW post 12220

Meeting Minutes Approval

- March 2023 minutes were available for review
 - Printed copies available - all members should have received an email with these minutes for review before the meeting
- ***Ande M. motioned that we accept the VAB general meeting minutes as presented***
 - ***TJ Molendyk. seconded the motion***
 - ***Motion passed unanimously***
 - ***Robert Steele abstained due to him not being at the last meeting***

Reports

- Pete Sill - Board Chair Report
 - The meeting with the Skagit County Health Department scheduled for tomorrow has been canceled. We will let everyone know when that is rescheduled.

- Carmina Villalobos – Financial / Vets Connect Report
 - Financial Report is attached as well as included in the earlier email
 - Carmina noted the month at the top was incorrect. She will fix that.
 - Motels are listed as miscellaneous. We discussed moving these to a different category, such as temporary housing
 - Richard Cranley talked about getting more specific data to track how much we are spending and to which hotels/motels
 - The more detailed the data, the better our argument to ask the county for more money for veterans
 - **Bob S. motioned to accept the financial report as presented**
 - **Bob G. seconded the motion**
 - **Motion passes unanimously**
 - Vets Connect will be at the stand down on Friday, April 21, 2023.
 - The office in Burlington will not be open due to staff being at the fairground for the stand down
- Chris Diaz (Skagit County Veteran Service Specialist)
 - It is in the works to get Chris over to the CBOC Mondays and Tuesdays
 - Currently, Chris is scheduled to be at the Mount Vernon CBOC on Monday, April 24, 2023, from 0800-1200
 - More days will be added. Stay tuned for more information
- Kelly Blau - VASH
 - We have three veterans on the senior stipend
 - Two veterans are moving into Martha's Place
 - Two veterans in Cascade Landing on subsidies
 - There is a two bedroom available at Cascade Landing
 - We have 25 VASH vouchers with nowhere to put people
 - If you know property owners interested in participating in the VASH program, send them to Kelly. She would also love to talk to anyone building units in Skagit - Janicki, BYK, Grafton Place folks, etc.

Old Business

- Marine Corps League will be sending a request for funds to cover rent for meeting space
- March 30th Community Action had their Spirit of Hope fundraiser
 - They raised almost \$100,000 from our community
 - Jamie Thornberry shared her story at the event
 - Jamie's story seemed to be very impactful
 - We appreciate her sharing with our community
- Skagit County Stand Down
 - Friday, April 21, 2023, and Saturday, April 22, 2023, at the Skagit County Fairgrounds in Mount Vernon

- Richard Cranley in the point of contact for this event
- Lots of vendors, nonprofit connections, and other services
- We have 150 bus passes to give out
 - Any veteran can ride the bus to the stand down for free by simply telling the driver you are going to the stand down. They will get you to the fairgrounds for the event.
- Skagit County Fairgrounds wants to partner with us biannually for these stand down events. They are very supportive.
- Randi Bowman reminded us of the Veteran Networking Lunch this week
 - Thursday, April 13, 2023, at 11:00
 - Royal Star Buffet
 - 2300 Freeway Drive
 - Mount Vernon, WA 98273
- Welcome Home Picnic at Ande's place in Woolley
 - Saturday, August 5, 2023
 - Flyers are available

New Business

- Martin - Worksource Oak Harbor
 - Martin will be sending out an email with a list of all the upcoming job fair events
 - Mentioned Janicki is looking to hire veterans. Lots of positions available
- Neighbors Night at Tulip Valley Farms (Veteran Owned)
 - Helping Hands will be out there supporting the community
- Becky (Helping Hands) has everything you need
 - Reach out about your needs - we can get you set up to tour our facility to see what we have and how we can partner to best serve the community
 - Let's hook up with SKAT about mini routes
 - Let's talk about getting a van - connect with Rotary
 - TJ would be happy to be the liaison for getting board members connected with Helping Hands

Good of the Order

- Stand Down Support Update
 - CVMA voted to contribute \$1,000 to the stand down
 - Money donated by the community during their food drive
 - American Legion Post 43 donated \$500 to the stand down
 - This is from Friday coffee donations at their legion in Woolley
 - VFW 4046 will be sending \$500 for the stand down

- This support has been so awesome to see. We appreciate each and every organization that is supporting in whatever ways they can. We are so much Stronger Together!

Adjournment

- ***TJ Molendyk motioned for the meeting to adjourn***
 - ***April P. seconded the motion***
 - ***Motion passed unanimously***
 - Meeting adjourned at 1403
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Minutes submitted by: April Patterson, Second Vice