

# Veterans Advisory Board of Skagit County

Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, June 14, 2022, at 1300  
1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA, 98273

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## Attendance – Total Attendees

1. Bob Stratton – VAB Board Chair / VFW 5056
2. Chris Diaz - Skagit County Veteran Service Specialist
3. Carmina Villalobos – Community Action of Skagit County / Vets Connect
4. Martin Symonds - Member At-Large
5. Randi Bowman – Worksource / Veterans’ Employment
6. Kirk Pearson - Volunteers of America Western Washington
7. Sue Gregg – VFW Auxiliary
8. April Patterson – American Legion Post 91
9. \*Bob Garrison - VVA / American Legion Post 91
10. Ray Brown - American Legion Post 43
11. Bill Thomas - Elks Club
12. Bo Watkins - Skagit Valley College Veterans Club  
\*Member attending via telephone

## Call to Order

- Bob Stratton called to order the regular meeting of the Skagit County Veterans Advisory Board at 1306 on Tuesday, June 14, 2022.
  - There were technical difficulties that prevented us from having virtual guests
  - Robert Garrison was attending via telephone (speakerphone on April’s phone)
  - Susan, Kelly, and Vernon are excused for the meeting
- We have a quorum and can continue with business

## Meeting Minutes Approval

- May 2022 minutes were available for review
  - Printed copy available - all members should have received an email with these minutes for review before the meeting
- ***Bob Stratton accepted the May 2022 minutes as presented with no changes***

## Reports

- Carmina Villalobos – Financial / Vets Connect Report
  - Financial Report is attached as well as included in the earlier email
  - ***April motioned that we accept the financial report as presented***
    - ***Bill Thomas seconded the motion***

■ ***Motion passed unanimously***

- Chris Diaz (Skagit County Veteran Service Specialist)
  - Vet Connect will be opening at 0930 all week due to the electrical getting installed above their office
  - There was an email sent out with a letter of support from the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA)
    - The WDVA has voiced their support for Skagit County to be supported with a grant relating to housing
  - There will soon be a pamphlet available about services for incarcerated veterans
    - We are connecting with Mount Vernon Police Department to help implement these services and get the resources to those that qualify
    - Snohomish County HVRP program wants to offer support for Skagit County as well.
  - There has been a quick link for Vet Connect to link with the county website!

## **Old Business**

- Income Guidelines - See attached sheets for current rates
  - Discussion about what monthly income rates we want to present to the county for consideration. Majority agreed 66% was too high based on it disqualifying them from other programs
  - ***April motioned for the board to support changing the income guidelines to the very low category (50% of median income)***
    - ***Bill Thomas seconded the motion***
    - ***Motion passed unanimously***
- Handrail for a veteran has been completed. Materials were purchased at Home Depot and delivered to the veteran. The railing is complete and painted!
- First Vice Chair position is open
  - Bill Thomas nominated Bob Garrison for the First Vice Chair position
    - Bob accepted the nomination
    - Ray Brown seconded the nomination
    - Members approved unanimously
- Second Vice Chair position is open due to Bob Garrison accepting the 1st Vice Chair
  - TJ Molendyk nominated April Patterson
  - April accepted the nomination
  - Ray Brown seconded the nomination
  - Members approve unanimously

## **New Business**

- The board needs to remove members as representatives so that these organizations can

designate a new representative for that board position

- **April Patterson motioned to remove Bill Adamek as the representative for Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and to remove Chris Diaz as the Skagit Valley College representative**
  - **Bill Thomas seconded the motion**
  - **Motion passed unanimously**
- The board needs to add new agency representatives as board members
  - **Bill Thomas motioned to add Martin Symonds as a member at-large and to add Bo Watkins as the Skagit Valley College Veterans' Club representative**
    - **Ray Brown seconded the motion**
    - **Motion passed unanimously**
- Food and Gas Voucher Increases for Inflation
  - Food vouchers are currently at \$75 every other month
    - These will remain at this level and be reconsidered on a case by case basis
  - Gas vouchers are currently at \$50 (max of two per month, and 12 per year)
    - **Randi Bowman motioned to raise the gas voucher amount to \$75**
      - **Ray Brown seconded the motion**
      - **Motion passed with one Nay vote (April Patterson)**
    - This increase in voucher amount will be revisited in three (3) months

## **Good of the Order**

- Welcome Kirk Pearson from Volunteers of America Western Washington (VOAWW)
- The American Legion in Burlington is serving free coffee and donuts to veterans on Wednesdays from 10:00am - 12:00pm at the legion on Fairhaven
- The Sedro Woolley American Legion is serving coffee on Fridays from 8:00am - 11:00am at the legion on Ferry
- Bob Garrison reminded everyone of Berry Dairy Days this upcoming weekend.
  - There are several veterans groups participating in the event
- April has a lot of trees to donate for wood for the upcoming winter
  - Her HOA is cutting down nearly 100 (or more) trees. We simply need to coordinate hauling them out and getting them somewhere we can cut them up and chop them for firewood. This has been coordinated with Skagit Valley College in the past. We will bring this to discussion closer to the time it will be happening (August or September).
- Carmina will be absent for the next two meetings
- Bob Stratton will not be at the next meeting due to attending the VFW state conference

## **Adjournment**

- **April Patterson motioned for the meeting to adjourn**
  - **Bill Thomas seconded the motion**

- *Motion passed unanimously*
- Meeting adjourned at 1422

Minutes submitted by: April Patterson, Secretary

Minutes approved by: