

# Veterans Advisory Board of Skagit County

Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 1300  
1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA, 98273-5625

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## 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. Jamie Thornberry - American Legion Post 147
7. Bob Stratton - VFW 5056
8. Vernon Hunter - Vets Connect
9. Randi Bowman - WorkSource Mount Vernon
10. Ande Mitchell - American Legion Post 43
11. Martin Symonds - Worksource Oak Harbor

## 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
- Welcome our guest - Miranda from Helping Hands
  - She was here to observe. She has heard all kinds of great things about this council and wanted to see what it's all about!

## Meeting Minutes Approval

- February 2023 minutes were available for review
  - Printed copies available - all members should have received an email with these minutes for review before the meeting
- Jamie noted a correction: American Legion Post 147 will be in the Veteran's Day parade in Burlington in November, not the Welcome Home Vietnam parade in March
- ***Ande M. motioned that we accept the VAB general meeting minutes as corrected***
  - ***Bob G. seconded the motion***
  - ***Motion passed unanimously***

## Reports

- Pete Sill - Board Chair Report
  - There's a review of Vets Connect that needs to be reviewed by executive board

- Executive board will be meeting Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at 2:00 pm in the Skagit Room
  - The executive board approved a request from American Legion Memorial Post 91 for money to rent the fairgrounds for the upcoming stand down in April 2023
- Carmina Villalobos – Financial / Vets Connect Report
  - Financial Report is attached as well as included in the earlier email
  - We are starting to see the VASH vouchers for veterans moving into new units
  - **Bob S. motioned to accept the financial report as presented**
    - **Ande M. seconded the motion**
    - **Motion passes unanimously**
  - Vets Connect will not have services Wednesday, March 15, 2023, for staff training
    - The office will be open, but services will not be available from 10:00am - 3:30pm
- Chris Diaz (Skagit County Veteran Service Specialist)
  - More letters are going out for the PACT act. More claims still coming
  - We are working on getting a Skagit County Vet Corps Navigator
    - Still working on where they will be physically working
    - We are getting a Peer Support Specialist case manager
- Kelly Blau - VASH
  - Cascade landing has started moving people into the units upstairs
    - Two veterans have moved in so far
  - Still have vouchers with nowhere to place veterans
- Vernon Hunter - Vets Connect
  - Working on a 90 day review of subsidies and feedback tracking
    - Vets Connect is working to implement a tracking system to better monitor the progress of veterans

### **Old Business**

- The landlord of several VASH units liked the idea of a gazebo for the tenants to be able to smoke outside covered from the elements.
  - This was an idea from the council. Kelly is still working out the logistics
- 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

### **New Business**

- Ande will get household items (toiletries, linens, etc) to Carmina. He just needs to know how much they need

- Helping Hands has drop in office spaces available. Reach out to Miranda for more information
- Randi Bowman informed us of a Veteran Networking Lunch
  - The first Thursday of every month
  - Contact Randi for more information
- Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans parade and ceremony
  - Saturday, March 25, 2023, at 1:00pm, at the Eagles in Sedro Woolley
  - Ceremony at 2:00pm at American Legion Post 43
- Welcome Home Picnic at Ande's place in Woolley
  - Flyers are available
- Martin - Worksource Oak Harbor
  - Job fair today at the technical center by SVC
    - Veterans get preference at some employers
    - Veterans get early access to the job fair
  - Always having job fairs - get your vets connected with Worksource
- Events & Training at American Legion Memorial Post 91 in Burlington
  - American Legion Memorial Post 91 is holding a suicide prevention training
    - Jeff Westlund is the person coordinating this. More information to come
  - Every first and third Wednesday from 11:30am - 12:30pm we will be serving free lunch to veterans
  - Every Wednesday from 10:00am - 12:00pm, we are serving coffee and donuts
- Events at American Legion Post 43 Sedro Woolley
  - Coffee for vets Fridays from 9:00am - 11:00am
- CVMA happenings
  - They are scheduled to build and install 6 ramps for veterans
    - Pete is trying to connect with a company out of Snohomish County that builds aluminum ramps that can be easily assembled and installed.
    - This would save on the cost of materials (wood is expensive!)
    - Pete will update us at the next meeting
- New VFW chartering in Anacortes
  - Installation of officers will be done at the Anacortes Elks, Saturday, April 01, 2023, at noon.
  - This is the first newly chartered VFW in the state of Washington in 5 years!
- Oak Harbor VFW happenings
  - Pasta night and silent auction
    - Saturday, March 25, 2023, at 4:00pm, at the Oak Harbor VFW
      - Address: 7392 N. Goldie Road, Oak Harbor, WA
    - They will be raising money to help offset travel expenses for VFW officers having to travel for business

## **Good of the Order**

- Sue Gregg will help Richard Cranley coordinate getting things out to the fairgrounds for the Skagit County Stand Down

### **Adjournment**

- ***Bob G. motioned for the meeting to adjourn***
  - ***Bob S. seconded the motion***
  - ***Motion passed unanimously***
- Meeting adjourned at 1354

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Minutes submitted by: April Patterson, Second Vice