

## **Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force Meeting**

### **Minutes of September 13, 2017**

**OPENING:** The meeting of the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force was called to order at 9:10 am on Wednesday, September 13, 2017 at the Orange County Chamber of Commerce, Montgomery, NY by Larry Neumann. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The mission statement was read by Larry Neumann.

***The mission of the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force is to address the needs of those who served by having relevant agencies meet collectively, regularly and cooperatively, to ensure the timely administration of services and referrals in order to achieve an end to Veteran homelessness and meet their immediate and long term needs.***

**PRESENT:** Many veteran and human service agencies of Orange, Dutchess, Putnam, Rockland and Sullivan Counties were represented. Also in attendance were the guests/presenters: Brian Maher, Barbara Allen, David Lionheart, Rob Bowen and Kendall Klass. There were a total of 34 in attendance.

Recap of last month's meeting.

#### **September is Suicide Prevention Month**

George Barnes, West Point Suicide Prevention Manager: Walk to Fight Suicide, September 16 - Linda McNiff reported/announced.

Dr. Mark Lombardo, VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator Suicide Prevention Webinar: three dates in September - see flyer

#### **GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS**

**Brian Maher: National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, Inc.** - Peer 9 event tonight. Looking to get family and friends to send information.

**Barbara Allen: American Snippets** - Introduced the "We Are Strong" retreat for military spouses and family members to be held in October. An event to assist participants with a experience that would help them move forward.

- Barbara experienced her own personal loss in 2005 and stayed involved with veteran organizations.
  - She had trouble reentering the workforce, could not find work and make ends meet.
  - She moved forward with the help of people she knew.
- 10 attendees. They pay for flight. Everything is covered.
- Attendees are mothers and wives.
- Grief is not the emphasis, but moving forward.
  - Too many events give emotional support, but don't give the opportunity to move forward with the economical loss.
- Presenters: Mike Gallardo, David Lionheart, and Kent Clothier
  - Training - physical well being and opportunities of home careers.
- How can we get involved: Monroe Game event on October 18 with active component.
  - Interested in coming, helping contact David Lionheart at barballen1994@gmail.com.

**David Lionheart: 2017 Football Classic and Veterans Benefit** - started because of a group of friends helping one their own. workshops/sport events for veterans - community football game with some NFL players. Dietz Stadium in Ulster County - September 30th. Local dollars helping local vets.

**Rob Bowen/Kendall Klass: Overseas Troop Support:** Kendal Klass spoke of her experiences and the reasoning for the Boxes for Soldiers project.

She experienced the loss of one of her three sons, and was touched by stories of her son's good nature and many acts of kindness.

Mom of 3 three sons, daughter of World War II veteran. Older son in active duty, 2nd son a lawyer in the city, younger son murdered. Heard many stories of his acts of kindness. Hearing these stories helped her heal. 3 months later received a letter from a mother of one of his college friends. She was touched by this young man who in the middle of war asked his parents to make his donation.

Healing through good deeds. She wanted to do something, and during the years, 2012 to 2014 - 250 packages to soldiers overseas. By coincidence saw the suits for soldiers event. She took them in and while at Rob Bowen's office was able to share her story and the feeling of giving.

They collaborated and the 2017 project was initialized. The collection will begin on November 11.

This year, would like to send boxes to our local men and women who are serving overseas. She is looking for HVVTF to facilitate the process by receiving names and addresses. The boxes must have a recipient - cannot go to just any soldier.

Discussion: Orange County Veteran Services volunteered to assist with the names and addresses. Some of the veterans spoke on the experience of getting care packages. "*Is there a formal list?*" There is a abbreviated list on flyer. No industrial sizes. No aerosols.

Others volunteered to assist with drop off points, names; and many attendees offered to get their civic groups involved.

#### **REPORTING:**

Veteran Appreciation Day - Thanks to Linda McNiff for making the event a success. Great committee - thank you to them. 35 resource booth. Representation from 5 counties. At the beginning of the event, they did not have a World War II veteran. Someone came across 2 WWII vets and one of them was strutting. It turned out that he was General McCarthur's radio person. He was 90 years old and he was able to throw the first pitch.

Attendees watched the 854 Engineer Battalion Video - Armed Forces members pictured and speaking - sending a thank you to Renegades and veterans. Also, hellos to their families. Family members did not know which made it special. Many Gold star mothers and families present.

#### **VETERAN SERVICE AND COUNTY UPDATES:**

- **Dutchess County**

- **VSO: Nelson "Eddy" Rivera, Director** - Remember Petty Officer Ingram's family in our thoughts.
  - Dutchess - loss of federal funding SSVA- official functional zero determination. Others got full cut or half cut. Need program to have something in place. The program takes veteran to complete process. Meetings to keep the program are set up. Meeting with senator Maloney and other.
  - Dutchess County Veteran Appreciation Day - free admission for those who attend.
- **Vet2Vet: Adam Roche, Program Manager - excused.**

- **Orange County**
  - **VSO: Christian Farrell, Director -**
    - September 29 - Orange County Memorial Day - 1918 Ceremony 10am at Cemetery
    - Dinner with the Terrorist Whisperer - Dinner Wednesday September 27, speaker writer Terrorist Whisperer book. Sacrifice our troops make.
    - December 16th laying of the wreaths - Getting involved with the programs provided by the Cemetery.
  - **Vet2Vet: Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator -**
    - Annual strategic plan - jobs, transportation, women veteran. Veteran Family workshop. Last years, people who attended were mostly mothers with young veteran sons in basement that won't come out. This year guest speakers, dealing with their veteran and their own
    - Annual Vet2Vet conference coming up in October.
    - TRR warrior camp - for combat veterans
    - MHA - with other agencies. innovation grant. received funding. a veteran component for training of care managers can be equipped with someone with complex needs.
    - Mount Saint Mary College - Wednesday, November 8th, 3-6p for Veteran and Service Animals.
- **Putnam County**
  - **VSO: Karl Rohde, Director - excused**
- **Rockland County**
  - **VSO: Dr. Allen L Hershman, Veteran Services Coordinator -**
    - 12 cycle of training half way through. 13 cycle scheduled. 20+ participants.
    - Bridges oversight agencies purchased 2 wheel chaired accessible vans.
    - Mentee/Mentors significant amount of requests.
    - Mike & Esther - starting a 501c3 Family Foundation - Veteran focus
    - Vet2 Vet program has obtained a officer/coordinator
- **Sullivan County**
  - **VSO: Howie Goldsmith, Coordinator - excused**
- **Office of US Representative Sean Patrick Maloney**  
**Cullen Lyons, Veteran and Military Advocate.**
  - SSSVF program - Guy is living in townhouse and someone ran a car into his house. Legislation drafted to get DD214 to the county VSO.
  - Another legislation. POW you are only permitted 3 months of combat pay.
  - Service Academy - application on website now.
  - Monday - Wounded Warrior funding - woman veteran working

**NEW BUSINESS/SUB-COMMITTEES:**

**TASK FORCE HOMELESS CASES/REFERRALS/NEW CASES -Linda McNiff**

**Discussion of loss of SSVF Federal funding** - reactionary response instead of prevention of homelessness. Need for grant providers to understand the need for continued support. Transition plan is being developed by Hudson River Housing. Cullen appealing this decision. Linda McNiff - Westcop has not been told about their funding. Westcop does cover seven (7) counties including Dutchess county. Letter announces how to prepare closure of

program. Asking program to close in 3 weeks. Westcop works closely with Hudson River Housing. Angela - build in funds to provide unemployment for staff members.

- 6 homeless veterans in orange county
  - 1 HONOR
  - 2 housed
  - 1 living with someone - still trying to locate
  - 2 chronically homeless - 1 needs to complete application. Declined voucher and declined housing. MHA and Everett working toward getting housing through Home to Stay. Meet with Paul Stoltz - to complete application. Larry spoke with him today about taking advantage of voucher. The other veteran - criminal aspect - following up with veteran about the shelter. Possibly, issues with addiction. Veteran space may assist with housing these individuals. Many clinical professionals on board to assist these veterans.
- Questions - Do we have a website or other accumulated veteran service list? We don't have a website. Many have lists not necessarily veteran specific. Others mentioned Helpline and 211. Sean Patrick Maloney's office has a comprehensive list. Our website is in the works. David Lionheart suggested an information portal. Can work with the task force to set up. Verifying needs is another important component.
- HONOR in Middletown has a veteran room. United Way came in and finished the project.

#### **2017 HVVTF Initiatives -**

#### **Upcoming Events - review, introductions and additions.**

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 11:06am by Christian Farrell.

The next meeting will be at 9:00am on **Wednesday, October 11, 2017**, at Orange County Chamber of Commerce, Larkin Conference Room, 30 Scotts Corners Drive, Montgomery, NY.

Minutes taken and typed by: Millie Rivera-Velez

Minutes reviewed and submitted by: Larry Neumann