

Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force Meeting

Minutes/Notes of March 14, 2018

OPENING: The meeting of the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force was called to order at 9:10 am on Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at the Orange County Chamber of Commerce, Montgomery, NY by Larry Neumann. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Larry Neumann welcomed all present.

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission statement was recited 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. The guests/presenters are listed below. There were a total of 43 in attendance.

INTRODUCTIONS, Opening Remarks and Review of last month's meeting:

Larry reviewed the highlights of last month's meeting of February 14th, and reminded the group of the speakers and their services.

Larry stated there has been many happenings since we last met. Many challenging weather-related issues. He personally had some challenges which made him think about our homeless veterans. He reminded us of how precarious and delicate are our situations. It does not take much to create a crisis, and shared such a story about a veteran couple. All of our agencies were involved in supporting the couple in one way or another.

This brought us to the question - are we being as efficient as we possibly can? He was reminded of the a Yellow Ribbon event he attended where every soldier was instructed to visit each display and information booth. The soldier and his family were able to connect with each group. For us it would be a delicate hand off and keep the transition from agency and needed assistance.

Discussion:

Monica - mentioned how Emily of United Way introduced an up and coming training to create leadership for future projects assisting veterans and their families. She is thinking that there has to be a better way in addressing the needs. A suggestion for the training and trainees can possibly be a project to assist the Veteran Task Force. Building healthy military communities - a venue with people trained for information provision. We need a catapult - they are starting small and have a catapult scheduled - Family day in August.

Terry - In past, we have done committees. Hasn't been implemented and has been discussed. Homelessness is critical in Orange County.

David Lionheart - Everett was present at an Fight For Your Freedom event and made available information of resources available to veterans and their families. He suggested having someone at the hospital with information of resources. This would be helpful for those being released.

Angela - One challenge of housing is with fair market value up, the person is unable to come up with the additional finances needed to be housed.

Howie - This organization was looking for transitional housing for veterans. We need to revisit this for Orange County. Transitional housing should be available for men, women and/or families.

Angela suggested - At general housing meeting for Orange County - Larry to bring up and address this issue.

Khristian - suggested a written checklist of agencies. Andy - Develop SOPs for the transition or hand off. He also suggested getting assistance from Pat Lopez (Yellow Ribbon). She has been successful with such a database. (need name of rep of Congressmen Faso's office Veteran) - this group is a great tool. Where I sit in the congressional arena, we have to learn what each agency is doing. We find someone in the region to assist with crisis or situations.

Christian Farrell and Larry will meet and bring to the next meeting a plan and possibly a committee to identify a solution. A suggestion of a database. Hoping to be part of the website. Suggestion to also have a booklet.

GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS

Russ Vernon - Veteran Victory Center, Newburgh - Colonel in National Guard until 2005, very decorated - established a mission to provide referrals to a myriad of services for United States Veteran.

An exercise - had everyone stand and then close their eyes, then point north - many pointed many different ways. He stated we all need to be pointed in the same direction to work best as a team. In today's society there is a lack of understanding and respect.

First - August 2nd to 5th - secured the Wall that Heals. Coming to Newburgh. 375 feet long. A perfect replica of the Vietnam Memorial. 24/7 for 5 days. Military guard; right on Hudson River; training pavilions.

Discussion: There will be a need for volunteers and funding for the wall.

Second - Newburgh Armory; 7 years ago with Senator Larkin bought for a dollar. Repurpose and rebuild that Armory. We started with a basketball court. Many kids do not have the opportunity to progress and many did not know how to read. They opened their doors and after 2 months, they introduced accountability to the kids by asking them to show proof of progressing. They needed to show that they were going to library, to school, and taking opportunities to learn. They quickly progressed to 1000 kids a week.

Russ's friend Mike took over the Wounded Warrior organization. He felt that society is not doing right by veterans. Why can't we do what we did with the Unity Center, and let veteran organizations use the place for free. Can we find a facility like the Unity center and provide it for veterans? They are currently looking at Grant street property site; 3 buildings; sits across from SUNY Orange. The center would be a triage center. Wants veterans to come to the Victory Center and have people available to make the instant call so the veteran is not spinning his/her wheels. It is frustrating when we have a veteran with a big problem and we cannot help. We will be able to do that all throughout the region.

Third - Purple Heart Hall of Honor Board - the museum that heals. Ask us to ask veterans if they have a purple heart and have them visit. Veterans that visit are moved. It is therapeutic. Unless you walked in their moccasins, you cannot understand.

Questions?

Will it be limited? All are welcomed, just need to get there. Volunteers to take ownership so that it will be successful. David Lionheart asked about the fitness component - offered his services. Where is the funding coming from? Most coming local or regional supporters. Keeps the budget small, and has had a lot of success creating a formula for grassroots/shoe string funding.

Comments: Russ - At the armory, their mission is to have every child to read by third grade. Reading is done by one on one mentor. Will build a database with veterans, and hopefully link them with veterans with similar talents, issues, hobbies etc. "HUA" Heard Understood Acknowledged

Russ Vernon - (914) 588-7200; rvrnn@aol.com.

VETERAN SERVICE AND COUNTY UPDATES:

- **Dutchess County**
 - **Vet2Vet: Adam Roche, Program Manager, Vet2Vet Veterans' Peer Services**
 - 3 groups going; 22 veterans attending
 - lean mean and green - professional body building
 - Vet to Vet bowling event
 - CIT classes - 35 police officers learning about veterans
 - June 15 - veteran picnic
 - Training about moral injury and suicide prevention
- **Orange County**
 - **VSO: Christian Farrell, Director - Orange County Veteran Services**
 - This Saturday, 300 soldiers are deploying to middle east, ceremony. Shop Rite providing food.
 - **Vet2Vet: Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator -**
 - Warwick veteran resource center - opened up; VFW spearheaded.
- **Rockland County**
 - **Vet to Vet: Ismael (Izzy) Quintana Jr., Veteran Outreach Coordinator**
 - Buffalo Soldiers Award Ceremony on February 14th, sponsored by Vet to Vet; forged a relationship with black community; NAACP - thanked Vet to Vet for event;
 - February 26 - visited with veterans at Nyack adult living facility
 - March 1st Task force meeting - John Murphy of CEO Rockland Homes for Heroes - adding 12 additional apartments. Also adding training for service animals. Sharon Bailey's welcome.
 - March 10th - round table - Family, wives of veterans in attendance. Praises for Vet to Vet program.
 - Dwyer Vet to Vet program - 3 veterans sign on to volunteer
 - Run the Rock fundraiser - Homes for Heroes and other events
 - Military Behavioral Training 4/13 etc.
 - Joseph P. Dwyer annual conference - June 12
 - Introduction of Sharon Bailey - Meet and greet on April 7th
 - Involved with Warrior Writers - sharing their stories with HS students with Warrior Writers
- **Putnam County**
 - **VSO: Karl Rohde, Director, Putnam County Veterans Service Agency, excused.**
- **Sullivan County**
 - **VSO: Howie Goldsmith, Coordinator, Sullivan County Veteran Service Agency**
 - Getting ready for Memorial Day events
 - March 25 - Woodbourne Fire House
- **Office of US Representative Sean Patrick Maloney**
 - Cullen Lyons/Khristian Silvis, Veteran and Military Advocate
 - Veteran History Project - Training 28th April. Leading training: Ellen McHale

TASK FORCE HOMELESS CASES Status:

- **WestCOP SSVF: Open/New Case Report - Tenesia Terry**
 - *Qualifications:*
 - Referred Veterans:
 - **4 Dutchess** - 1 temporarily housed at hotel; 1 female in vehicle - family coming to get her; 1 unreachable at the time; 1 new referral with child
 - **9 Orange County** - 1 medical facilities; 1 assisted living; 1 in and out of Newburgh ministry; 1 with vet to vet in and out of warming station; 2 at honor pending April and June; 1 vouchered; 1 intake this week; 1 Montrose Domiciliary Veteran homeless program
 - **1 - Putnam County** - at home

- Agency changes: transportation - agency going through restructuring; temporarily no vehicles available.
- Eligibility: serve 1 day of active duty vs.
- **Questions:**

UPCOMING EVENTS/ROUNDTABLE

Nicole Embry - Town hall meeting, Carmel at 6pm VA will be present

_____ Trying to get the vet to vet program in Ulster County

Sheila Johnson - working with Monica - WWII veteran needs resources; Financial issues. Another veteran in need of repair.

Michele (HONOR) - March 22nd Horses; June 12 dinner; March 28 concert to end homelessness, Greenwood Lake - all day event and performances in the evening.

Adam Zananski Home Health Coordinator - Hudson Valley Home Health - change from conventional health care; coaching; setting up training; complimentary alternative health services (yoga, tai chi, etc.); opened to veterans, family members, via vital to clinics.

Emily - United Way - 16 registered for training. You can still sign up.

Jackie - Access Support for Living - 1 vacancy for a veteran or family. jjankas@asvl@org. Can go over application. Veteran housing in Sullivan County for next year.

Bryan Abrams - veteran movie next month

Kelly Williams - Home and Family Services Air National Guard - Request for clothing for family victim of fire.

Ron Hemmel - March 22nd working on website.

Bonnie Conrad - Army - deceased service member's families.

Cole - Hospice Veteran Volunteer - veterans needed to volunteer; other organizations to help with honor salute for veterans.

Andy - VFW - breakfast every Sunday morning 8:30 to 10:30

Vianney Martinez - Yellow Ribbon Support services - 180 service members - event coming up

Pat Fayo - RECAP - HEAP extended.

Tom - Towns for Troops - July 22nd Iron Chef fundraiser

Army veteran - Taconic Resource for Independence

Paula - My Brother Vinny - 43 veterans assisted - April 22nd walk-a-thon; Also, virtual baby shower fundraiser.

Adjournment: meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am by Larry Neumann.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 11, 2018, 9am Location: 30 Scotts Corners Drive, Montgomery, NY (**possible move to the Newburgh Armory**).

Minutes taken and typed by: Millie Rivera-Velez

Minutes reviewed and submitted by: Larry Neumann