

Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force Meeting

Minutes/Notes of May 9, 2018

OPENING: The meeting of the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force was called to order at 9:15 am on Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at the Newburgh Unity Center, Newburgh, 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 36 in attendance.

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

May is Mental Health Awareness Month – when you ask most people, “Are you OK? Most respond yes, but when we are not ok, we should be able to seek help. There are many resources and we should encourage and be encouraged to seek out what we need.

Larry Newman gave a heartfelt farewell to Sherry S_____. He shared all of the work she has done with Mt Saint Mary College at West Point for the past nine years. She will be missed. We were introduced to Ms. Alvarez who will be stepping into Sherry’s role. She was welcomed to the group.

An announcement was made that there was a suicide at the 84th ANG. A briefing on suicide prevention has been prepared and will be given on May 20th. Also, there has been another suicide from the 84th.

Larry Newman and Christine Farrell reported and opened a discussion on the current meeting location and other possibilities. The girl scouts would like to offer the previous space in the future, but currently does not have the space furnished. The 99th has a possible space big enough for our meeting. We are still waiting to hear back.

GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS

Jillian Nadiak – Adam C. Nadiak Scholarship Fundraiser -

She introduced her upcoming event, a concert on Saturday, June 2. The funds raised provide scholarships to SUNY Sullivan County students pursuing careers that will assist with veteran issues. The scholarship fund is born out of the loss of her brother who was a war hero that struggled with depression and other veteran issues and ultimately committed suicide. She shared how he always wanted to help others feel better and he used his gift of humor. Jillian wants to eradicate the misunderstanding of veterans. Her goal for this event is \$25,000. There will be a silent auction.

Irina Sushko, President and Wilhelm Lipp, Trainer – Dogtreff Training Facility:

- Their training facility started a year ago.
- Primarily use German Sheppards. Also use other working breeds
- The dogs our graduates of the Schutsen sport program
 - Testing/training
 - Ensure the dogs: mental health , physical health
 - Highly trained dog

- Advanced obedience
- 70 dogs adopted from kill shelters
- All requirements and guidelines for veteran service
- Have a zero rate of return of dogs

Jeff Woodlock of Action Towards Independence

- The program was reviewed and accepted by Wounded Warrior
- Reduction of anxiety level
- The dogs sense a change in the veterans because of a change in body chemistry.

Service Dog Demonstration – grassy parking area

William Kaplan Chair of the Board of the Unity Center stopped in to introduce himself and welcome the task force. He gave a short film presentation. The Unity Center is to Eliminate Poverty through Education.

VETERAN SERVICE AND COUNTY UPDATES:

- **Dutchess County**
 - **VSO: Marc Coviello, Director, Dutchess County Veterans' Services**, not present.
 - **Vet2Vet: Adam Roche, Program Manager, Vet2Vet Veterans' Peer Services**, excused.
 - **Julio**
 - Introduced new director of VSO, Marc Coviello and gave a brief introduction.
 - Since October, the veteran impact program addressing housing and preventing homelessness
- **Orange County**
 - **VSO: Christian Farrell, Director - Orange County Veteran Services**
 - Veteran's Picnic well attended and many agencies present.
 - Upcoming Memorial Day events
 - Flags placed at each grave at the Veteran Cemetery in Goshen
 - Newburgh events – see upcoming events
 - The names of the 800 Orange County residents lost in war are read.
 - **Vet2Vet: Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator –**
 - HONOR fundraiser
 - My Brother Vinny walk
 - Movie “The Bomb” poignant movie
 - Next movie night is July 31. Movie to TBD
 - Honor Flight #19 – 85 WWII veterans, 218 motorcycle escort
 - Next Honor Flight on May 19th in Westchester County
 - May 16th Hudson Valley Gives
- **Putnam County**
 - **VSO: Karl Rohde, Director, Putnam County Veterans Service Agency**
 - Watchfire event – needs guards for 6pm to 6am, food will be provided.
 - July 21st Congressional Medal of Honor Parade
 - Traveling Wall (see upcoming dates)
 - **Vet2Vet: excused.**
- **Rockland County**
 - **Vet to Vet: Ismael (Izzy) Quintana Jr., Veteran Outreach Coordinator**
 - 15 cycle of the military behavioral training ended on April 28th with 6 new mentors
 - Run the Rock event – 30 veterans participated. Funds for Homes for Heroes
 - May 1st participated in Carry the Load for veterans and first responders; 1 mile walk.
 - Partnership with VSA – good relationship; 5 veterans referred.
- **Sullivan County**

- **VSO: Howie Goldsmith, Coordinator, Sullivan County Veteran Service Agency and Sullivan County Veteran Alliance**
 - April 26 Veteran Town Hall Meeting – VA present and well attended.
 - May 16 Gold Star Mothers
 - May 10 Monster – sponsored by Rotary; fun event.
- **Office of US Representative Sean Patrick Maloney**
 - Cullen Lyons/Khristian Silvis, Veteran and Military Advocate
 - Senator introduced bill for Korean War POW status
 - Currently only receive 3 months combat pay
 - May qualify for back pay
 - One situation where veteran was a POW for 37 months and received only 3 months pay
 - Family Burial Act - passed
 - Dependent access to burial services as active duty service member

TASK FORCE HOMELESS CASES Status:

- **WestCOP SSVF: Open/New Case Report - Tenesia Terry**
 - Referred Veterans: 18 veterans and their families; yesterday 20.
 - Dutchess - 5
 - Orange County - 9
 - Sullivan County - 1
 - Ulster County - 3
 - Working with veteran agencies and community groups to assist with veteran needs.
 - Other services provided by SSVF: vehicle maintenance, taxi, childcare etc.
 - Referrals are going up and are working diligently

Discussion: Larry shared some case experiences. Westchester model – Steps, Veteran housed within 60 days team meets every week. Orange County is hoping to follow model.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ROUNDTABLE

Monica – Rich Walls, Tour of Troops – Family Readiness Group needs sponsors.

Website status – very close to launch, would like contributors. Contribute information about your organizations and services provided. Service directory needed and hopefully will be part of website.

Adjournment: meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am by Larry Neumann.

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 13, 2018, 9am Location: Unity Center, Newburgh, NY

Minutes taken and typed by: Millie Rivera-Velez

Minutes reviewed and submitted by: Larry Neumann