

## Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force Meeting Minutes/Notes of January 10, 2018

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

**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 38 in attendance.

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

Larry Neumann shared goodbyes to 2017 and welcoming 2018 for new outlooks and suggestions for "where do we go from here". HVVTF 150 members, 50 agencies in 5 counties.

Introduced Ron Hennel who helps with Task Force initiatives. Met to Identify problems in our veteran community and the most one of the biggest problems is transportation. Looking for creative ways to address this problem. Some agencies have vans, especially wheel chair accessible; creating an Uber account.

Opportunities to explore and have creative ways to address needs. Rapid response is helping with the immediate need. What are we doing for the veteran beyond that? What does not mean? Once they are housed, what are we doing to find employment, practical skills training, and other services to move forward.

Larry reviewed the highlights of last month's meeting of December 13th and reminded the group of the speakers and their services.

### **GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS**

#### **Emily Sassano & Brian O'Keefe of United Way/Americorp**

Community Heroes Project - Brian reported train veterans and veteran family members to become volunteer leaders. Training sessions - 3 this year; possibly Saturdays in March. Train the Trainer model. Create volunteer projects. They start their own projects or continue to work with veteran agencies. Qualifications: See brochure. Emily - broken down community leads assessment to identify the needs in the area. Decide as a group what issue they want to tackle. 10 hours of training. Dutchess Community College for the first venue and second in Orange County. Work up to doing the project during the National Volunteer week in April. Guide in budget and evaluating. Create a group of volunteers for services to Veterans. Program is free. United Way is looking for volunteers. The project will need a lot more volunteers that will work on project and not necessarily the 10 weeks of trainings. Questions and comments: How will they be identifying veterans and their families? Larry expressed appreciation for their projects.

#### **Melinda NAMI Rockland County -**

January 26th Focus on Unique needs of family members of veterans. Dealing with post deployment issues; taking care of your loved ones and taking care of yourself. Working closely with Elaine of Veteran Administration. 6 sessions on Saturdays. Questions: Is there one in Orange or Sullivan County

## VETERAN SERVICE AND COUNTY UPDATES:

- **Dutchess County**
  - **VSO: Nelson Eddy Rivera, Director, Dutchess County Veterans' Services**, excused.
  - **Vet2Vet: Adam Roche, Program Manager, Vet2Vet Veterans' Peer Services**
    - *Past events:* Still having support groups, now up to 3 groups a month and giving 4th; UW helping hands gave out gift cards; Vet2Vet Christmas Party - 200 attendees and had great reviews; Movie night - the Last Jedi; local high school - the things that carry book and they spoke at the school interactive talk; more involved with the colleges.
    - *Coming up:* Larry asked for updates with Nelson's replacement.
- **Orange County**
  - **VSO: Christian Farrell, Director - Orange County Veteran Services**
    - Thank you for participants of Wreath's Across America. Everything looked great and well
    - Shop Rite - with their help OC veteran 200 weekly packages; \$25 gift cards; holiday packages distributed; later this month will identify the amount giving for the 2017 fundraiser.
  - **Vet2Vet: Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator -**
    - Family Workshop for the families of veterans - see flyer.
    - Movie Night - January 29th - free, "The Bomb" experimental film, discussion to follow-  
**cancelled**
- **Putnam County**
  - **VSO: Karl Rohde, Director, Putnam County Veterans Service Agency**
    - Wreaths Across of America - Cemetery in Carmel - 23 Revolutionary War Veterans they also are forgotten. It is not an active cemetery and was nice placing wreaths there.
    - Veteran Home - community assisting - 10 veteran residence - Open house - Bloomberg family to farms. Wagon rides for the veterans and their families. Event 200 participant. Fun day and food.
    - Exclusive Home - The only county that has such a home. Must be Putnam county residents. Small rent - free laundry, free cable. Veterans feel secure at the house.
  - **Vet2Vet - Kevin Cook - Outreach studio Family Support group; women's group Edie; Mary Wagner runs Poughkeepsie ROTC also there; Veterans support group, PBS Vietnam series with discussion;**
  - Youth bureau - Veterans with youth to September 11 museum.
  - November every Saturday had a Art studio and veterans performing; had over 100 at opening;
  - Planning
  - 3 baseball games
    - Veteran Art Writing and Music Gala - show 30 people - free of charge and very successful
- **Rockland County**
  - **Vet2Vet: Ismael (Izzy) Quintana Jr., Veteran Outreach Coordinator**
    - Last month received turkeys and trimmings - fed a lot of veterans for the holidays
    - Home Depot and Carlucci - renovate a veterans house in Carmel
    - NAMI training
    - Working with VSA to identify the needs of veterans
    - Next month will report the new VSA. Susan Brennan possible; jobs for assistant director and secretary
  - **Vet2Vet: Dr. Allen L Hershman, Veteran Services Coordinator**
    - Military Behavioral Vet2Vet Mentor training 14 cycle is on the way; graduating 10 more mentors. pushing 200 mentors
    -
- **Orange County will going back to a smaller group of immediate agencies**
- **Dutchess County has their own Task Force in place for about 6 years.**
- **Sullivan County**

- **VSO: Howie Goldsmith, Coordinator, Sullivan County Veteran Service Agency**
  - Coalition meeting cancelled due to snow. Started with the new year
  - Assisted veteran families with the holidays
- **Office of US Representative Sean Patrick Maloney**
  - **Cullen Lyons/Khristian Silvis, Veteran and Military Advocate**
    - Friday at 11:30am, OC Chamber of Commerce trip to Iraq and Afghanistan
    - Valentine for Veterans flyer, 13 February at Castle Point Veterans - business, agencies, schools welcome to
    - Veteran History Project - first hand memorabilia and stories. training people to document these. MSMC March 24th at 1pm Training with snacks. Interviews by 10th grader and over. An interview event for veterans to tell the story.
    - Ceremony to Vietnam Veterans lapel March 29th - 25 Vietnam Veterans have not received their commemorative pins. First one of the year, we can probably 3 or more. Maybe get pins through other means if not able to attend. Register to become a Commemorative pin sponsor/ambassador. They would need to go through process. The Representative is such an agency can possibly assist other agencies. Criteria? served during the time of Vietnam era.
    - Survey sent out by congressman about feelings on North Korea situation - He will speak a little on Friday March 12th at 10:30am. He went to South Korea.
    - Dutchess County - 100 anniversary of WWI - mock WWI parade
    - Orange County - billboards up - welcoming veterans

**TASK FORCE HOMELESS CASES Status:** went first before (leaving early for a meeting)

- **WestCOP SSVF: Open/New Case Report - Tenisha Terry**
  - *Qualifications:*
  - 5 Dutchess - 1 staying in car (relocate to NC); 1 Webster House; 1 referred to HUD-Vash couch surfing; 1 staying in car (going to shelter to identify as Vet); 1 female staying in car where she is most comfortable (APS meeting to create a wellness plan). approved for section 8 - hold an apartment for her for when she gets the voucher.
  - **5 Orange County** - 6 - 2 HONOR; 1 Newburgh Ministry; 1 Port Jervis Warming Station; 1 Middletown Hotel; 1 Substance Abuse program. Possible new case -1 Safe Haven (HRC referred to WESTCOP)
  - Christian Farrell - 2 weeks from Friday homeless point and time count.
  - Video about homelessness. She could not sleep in the bed. She did not feel entitled. it took her several months to feel worthy and safe in her own home.
  - **Questions:**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS/ROUNDTABLE**

**Terry - Supervisor SSVSF program** - few months transition. Linda McNiff left. Community liaison to do case management network position, network get resources, get information and be hands on with veterans for aftercare.

**Shara Abraham - Legal Services of the Hudson Valley** - task force going? Love to be involved. Sees everyone is in crisis. Database for resources in place. Larry first step to start a website. She is thinking vet friendly landlords, etc.

**Jeff Lock - Action Towards Independent** - Veteran with service dogs. 20 veterans with service dogs. Funded by Wounded Warrior project. Phase I training and 8 weeks of basic training for veterans and then start working with the dogs. Phase II - go to retail outlets. Veterans apprehensive about going out. After receiving dog have been able to go out. Did not want to go out after shooting is able to go out. Larry: fantastic with following up and troubleshooting the relationship. Wounded Warrior guidelines for dogs - dogs not allowed. Size and dog is not limited except for pit bulls, Rottweilers or dogs raised with pit bulls. If they have a dog, work with the dog. They can get the dog for the veteran.

**Bryon Abrams - V2V facilitator of OC** - puts together movie nights and service dog owner. Does Tai Chi and other exercise classes.

**Michael Barton, OC Youth Bureau** - we always youth and family serves that are underserved and sometimes veteran families. Youth volunteers for connecting veteran projects.

**Sharon Military Coordinator MSMC** - programs out of West Point for education for military and veterans discounts. Hudson Valley Consortium of Higher Education. Adult accelerated. Main campus that work with children and spouses of veterans. Partner with community. Star graduate is Cullen. Willing to talk about.

**Kevin Tier II Manager OC, Mount Vernon Tier I** - interest in working with veterans - director veteran affairs brother in law; radio programs

**Kristine Saugerties /Monica** - Stewart - 500 soldiers that returned throughout NY, NJ Vermont- summer family day will be like a fair, resources -

**Pat Fayo - RECAP** - Fresh start cafe, supportive housing, OC fuel fund and many other programs.

Mark - Access support for living - affordable housing - specifically for February 1st new housing 15 units for and 26 units in second phase. Extremely bedding and going deep into backgrounds. begin their life. 1 veteran working with. apartment available. Meet criteria - thank you collaboration. Heavily regulated. Situation may be uncomfortable for some. Smoking is limited and a consideration when housing someone.

**Larry** - smoking cessation course at your facility or here at MHA.

**Barbara - American Snippets** - next event for Gold Star Families, internship opportunities for entrepreneurial programs. Not just women veterans - all veterans. Connections across the country for moving toward finding something that works for them.

**Ed Devitt** - Talking Brains Initiative - TBI group - speaks on overcoming his Traumatic Brain Injury.

Melinda - NAMI Rockland County - helping families with mental health issues,

**Andy - Trustee with VFW 973** - donation breakfast every Sunday morning. Larry added Andy is everywhere. Boots on the ground. He is helping everywhere.

**Liza Bove'** - Teach - Private Acute and Chronic Trauma - alternative therapies, places, situations - out in community - focus incorporate family and partners of people suffering from trauma. Because of families also. Working with an animal, you are as an individual or family, you can't hide and it is very safe. Responding to an animal and the animal respond to the person. "The animal is the 3rd therapist."

**Christine Bruckner - Equine Therapy** - Meditation, yoga programs. Film crew in September to document event. Share quotes of veterans of the value this work.

**Vianney Martinez - yellow ribbon support service** – Would like to provide community resources. June 3rd is next event.

**Ron Hannel - Rep. Maloney Advisory group** – Interested in volunteering. Marketing and sales background - Larry challenged him to assist with website and immediate needs. Agreed to assist with website.

**Melissa Clark - United Way** - Glad to funding health educational and veteran's needs. training MSMC. Tomorrow opens the tax assistance appointments. 211 24/7 live. Andrew Dodd - V2V Dutchess County.

**Nicole Embry - Outreach Coordinator VA - Castle Point** - DD214 – She or Steven Williams can give immediate assistance with verifying veteran status.

**Karl Rohde** - VFW magazine - Introduced veteran with comedy therapy.

**James Valentino - Hospice** – veteran breakfast - March 8<sup>th</sup>, 220 people - sending flyer.

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

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, February 14, 2018, 9am, Location: 30 Scotts Corners Drive, Montgomery, NY.

Minutes taken and typed by: Millie Rivera-Velez

Minutes reviewed and submitted by: Larry Neumann