

## Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force Meeting Minutes/Notes of June 13, 2018

**OPENING:** The meeting of the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force was called to order at 9:10am on Wednesday, June 13, 2018 at the Newburgh Armory 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 40 in attendance.

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

Larry Neumann announced that RECAP was able to assist the veteran needing funds for a state test -\$185. Adam announced there is a "Go Fund Me" page for a homeless Vietnam veteran to raise \$2500 for his own apartment, TV and bed.

Larry announced that many agencies stepped up during the severe storm in May that caused tremendous amount of damage throughout our region. The following agencies offered shelter and food: MHA, Cornerstone, RECAP, and Community Newburgh.

Mount Saint Mary has a new staff members, Lisa Alvarez, Major General Glenn Lesniak and Cynthia Laudato, academic advisor was introduced. They assist military students.

Also, introduced was Jessica Bugbee Porro, Army veteran providing holistic lifestyle services.

Diane Travers introduced her creative writing program. She is in the Cornwall area. She gives writing workshops for the non writer. Her mantra is "feel, deal and heal."

Marc Coviello, Dutchess County Veteran Services introduced himself and is working on a grant for Wheels to Work for veterans.

In the News: Larry wanted us to take a moment to reflect on the recent, much publicized celebrity suicides and how effects those we serve. We need to work hard on removing the stigma of mental illness so that those suffering can seek help.

### **GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS**

**Michelle Herrera – Point in Time Homeless Count:** not present

**Brian Maher- "Purple Heart Patriot Project and the "National Purple Heart Hall of Honor Commemorative Coin Act":** There are 2 million Purple Heart Recipients.

The US treasury has issued commemorative coins which funds will assist in maintaining the Purple Heart Museum and its educational program.

He introduced Stephanie Keegan, legislature director for the Purple Heart museum. She introduced the coin bill and continued to do the grassroots and footwork to get it passed. Her drive came from the loss of her son

who suffered from PTSD. She fought for his honorable discharge status so he could receive much needed treatment. Before her son passed of a blood infection, he was looking to work with veterans to get their veterans in a timely manner. Question: Is this a specific campaign? Yes, but other work is being done. She asked we continue to know our Veteran Act and share the information on local resources.

**Everett Cox – ‘Crazy Vet’ monologue:**

Everett is very instrumental in arts programs with veterans. Everyone seemed to appreciate and were moved by this performance.

**Christine Bruckner – Squirrelwood Equine Therapy video:**

The video was of participants of the program. Some quotes: Soldiers return and have no new purpose. “Without purpose there is chaos.” “The horses are a buffer for your anxiety.” “...helps me with my anger; ... helps me be patient.”

- **Dutchess County**
  - **VSO: Marc Coviello, Director, Dutchess County Veterans’ Services**
    - Collaborate with Vet2Vet to assist and provide services
  - **Vet2Vet: Adam Roche, Program Manager, Vet2Vet Veterans' Peer Services, excused.**
    - Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual \_\_\_\_\_
    - Car wash fundraiser in July 21<sup>st</sup> – Rock climbing, 50/50
- **Orange County**
  - **VSO: Christian Farrell, Director - Orange County Veteran Services, excused.**
  - **Vet2Vet: Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator –**
    - Reported on Gymkhana fundraiser -
- **Putnam County**
  - **VSO: Karl Rohde, Director, Putnam County Veterans Service Agency**
    - Working with veteran who has been living in Jeep for 6 weeks. 2 weeks of check-ins.
    - NYS Senate Bill 8210
      - Will impact Veteran Service agencies
      - Unfunded mandate. Training needed for VS officers and purchase of software
      - 20,000 a year depending on size of county
  - **Vet2Vet:**
    - 3 trips to Renegade games with tickets, food and bouncy house for kids
- **Rockland County**
  - **Vet to Vet: Ismael (Izzy) Quintana Jr., Veteran Outreach Coordinator**
    - 8 hour Mental Health First Aid course
    - May 21 VSO sponsored event for single older veterans
    - May 24 representation and program honored at county celebration at Piermont Pier
    - June 1<sup>st</sup> Mental Health summit
    - June 3<sup>rd</sup> Yellow Ribbon Event
    - June 9<sup>th</sup> Service Dog Info event -\$7,000 to train a dog
    - Veteran Farmer’s Market vouchers available
    - June 30<sup>th</sup> Monthly Acupuncture program for veterans
    - June 30<sup>th</sup> Ball game – free for veteran and 50% discount for family members
    - Bridges and Vet to Vet and VSO received to volunteer referrals and signed them up
- **Sullivan County**

- **VSO: Howie Goldsmith, Coordinator, Sullivan County Veteran Service Agency and Sullivan County Veteran Alliance**, excused.
- **Office of US Representative Sean Patrick Maloney**
  - Cullen Lyons/Khristian Silvis, Veteran and Military Advocate
    - Service Academy applicants
      - 2 Putnam, 2 Dutchess, 1 Sullivan and 6 Orange

**TASK FORCE HOMELESS CASES Status:**

- **WestCOP SSVF: Open/New Case Report -**
  - Dutchess - 5
  - Orange County - 8
  - 13 veterans at risk of homelessness in Orange and Dutchess
  - As per HUD survey, our numbers considerably lower; Westchester's number is 60
  - Number of homeless women and families increased
  - Dutchess' Veteran impact program lost funding.
  - Dutchess County Report: 28 with 23 housed. 4 rehab or jail or M.I.A.
  - Dutchess total for year is 82
  - Other services provided include homeless prevention, continued support after housed, and financial literacy workshops.

Comments: Larry – 2 veterans housed in Bella Vista apartments. Housing is only one step in supporting our veterans.

Angel Jo Henze – The city of Middletown has instituted mandatory background checks by landlords. If already in housing, grand parented. Background checks to show issue, but details.

**UPCOMING EVENTS/ROUNDTABLE**

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

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, July 11, 2018, 9am Location: TBD

Minutes taken and typed by: Millie Rivera-Velez

Minutes reviewed and submitted by: Larry Neumann