

Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force Meeting

Minutes/Notes of October 10, 2018

FINAL

OPENING: The meeting of the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force was called to order at 9:10 am on Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at the 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 **34** in attendance.

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

Larry opened with today is World Mental Health Awareness day. He shared a story of a young veteran in crisis. He spoke with him over the phone for over 2 hours. The veteran in tears was shared that he was reliving his experiences in Afghanistan and struggling with coping. As Vet2Vet mentors, we become good listeners. One of four is dealing with mental health issues. Remember this does not mean that it is permanent.

Angela Jo Henze elaborated on the Mental Health awareness and the many regional events such as candlelight vigils. She announced that Orange County is moving towards a one number system for mental health calls. This system should be active by January 1st.

A special slide show was shown about Veteran Appreciation Day.

GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS

Kendell – Boxes for Soldiers: Last year, Kendell and Rob Bowman “Suits for Soldiers” visited the task force and introduced their project. This year they would like to send boxes in May. Families and other agencies send packages during the holidays. Looking for support with volunteers.

Ryan O’Sullivan, Heroic Food: showed video with highlights of program. Provide workshops to learn skills for farming life with 4 to 6 workshops a year. They have joined the “farm to table” movement. Currently, working with Castle Point on a greenhouse project and educating school aged children at Montessori school. Question: opportunity for housing and wages? It depends on the farm. The work is labor intensive. Last workshop was on bees.

Robert Solano and Kate Hannon, Clear Path for Veterans: showed video and power point with testimonials. Highlights of the wellness program: it allows veterans to “redefine and readjust.” Veterans connect with mental health professionals while exploring complete wellness. Program compliments health care with providing social opportunities and healing therapies. They are located in the Syracuse area, formerly a resort. Also have therapy dog program.

Christopher Holshek, Travels with Harley and the National Service Ride Project: Christopher is a retired US Army Colonel with a background in public relations. He retired in May 2010 and decided to take an 8,000-mile journey which inspired him to write “Travels with Harley”. He came to a question and a philosophy. The question is “What does it mean to be an American in the world today?” This brought him to a philosophy of good citizenship and what it means to live in that manner.

TASK FORCE HOMELESS CASES Status:

- **WestCOP SSVF: Open/New Case Report - Christine**
 - Last month's count was 14. Number represents 2 received in the last 2 days.
 - Dutchess – 5. Orange County – 6. Ulster – 3
 - Challenges for housing include sex offender status, wheelchair disabled and discharge status.
 - With a 29 day average placement, SSVF best in nation. National average is 60 days.

VETERAN SERVICE AND COUNTY UPDATES:

- **Honor Flight** – Bill Sestrom shared photos of first Iraqi/Afghanistan veteran on flight. Veteran has Parkinson's.
- **Dutchess County**, not in attendance
- **Orange County**
 - **VSO: Christian Farrell, Director - Orange County Veteran Services**
 - 100 anniversary of WWI Sep 29, 1918 loss of 40 soldiers at Orange County veteran memorial
 - **Vet2Vet: Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator**
- **Putnam County**, excused
- **Rockland County**, excused.
- **Sullivan County**
 - **VSO: Howie Goldsmith, Coordinator, Sullivan County Veteran Service Agency and Sullivan County Veteran Alliance**
 - 2 homeless veterans
 - Bells for Peace. A request for churches to sound their bells on November 11 at noon.
- **Office of US Representative Sean Patrick Maloney**, excused.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ROUNDTABLE

Upcoming events: Sullivan County Historical Society – WWI event, Equine Therapy Program-3 week program, RECAP-fundraisers, Annual Trauma Conference, United Way financial training, ANG yellow ribbon event.

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

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 14, 2018, 9am

Location: TBD

Minutes taken and typed by: Millie Rivera-Velez

Minutes reviewed and submitted by: Larry Neumann

Attached sign sheet.