



Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force Meeting Minutes/Notes of April 10, 2019

FINAL

OPENING: The meeting of the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force was called to order at 9:15 am on Wednesday, April 10, 2019 at the Orange County Department of Health, Goshen, 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. 33 people signed the Sign-In sheet, but a complete headcount was not performed. There were approximately 40 people in attendance.

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

Larry started the meeting with a recap of the March 13th meeting. He asked if anyone has been on the Hudson Valley Veteran Task Force (hudsonvalleyvets.org) website. He said, the prior month's meeting was one of the most significant, poignant and important meetings to date. The speakers were great especially Janelle Marina Mendez. Never before has someone had a standing ovation at our meeting. Larry stated the need for the team to step outside of its comfort zone to consider these important issues.

This was also evident in our next speaker, Lauren Sandstrom with the Warrior Promise Wall which contains the names of those who have lost the battle at home and completed suicide. We are hoping to display the wall at our upcoming Veteran Appreciation Day event at the end of August. Other guests brought awareness to veteran suicide. Tommy Zurhellen will be walking across America to bring awareness of veteran suicide, and meeting with American Legion and VFWs along the way. His walk will begin April 15 in Portland, Oregon. If you go to his website, veteranzero.org you can track his progress. 22 miles a day for the 22 veteran suicides.

Larry reviewed last month's announcements and reported on their successes.

GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTERS

Kristi Greco/Catherine Little: March of Dimes, West Point Baby Shower

The military Baby Shower for all 'moms to be' or have given birth within the year. The event is on October 11. There are 50 moms and with volunteers there should be over 75 people in attendance. The moms will be provided a meal, receive gifts from our sponsors and are provided with healthy pregnancy information. Volunteers are needed for this event. If you know of any pregnant moms on active duty, reserve, etc. Volunteers take gifts to the mom, set up, wrapping gifts, etc. Friendships and connections are made by the moms and after the shower the moms have a Blog to talk to each other and maintain contact.

Adam Zananski: VA Healthcare Whole Health Program - Power Point/slide presentation

Larry spoke a little on whole health approach for our veterans and how programs provided by Vet2Vet takes that into consideration. Introduced Adam and the VA Whole Health initiative. Adam said the VA is transitioning its care model - one must think of health and well being as whole health. This initiative would consider all aspects of the veteran's life. This is already happening in private sector. This initiative is born out of the opioid addiction epidemic. The bill, comprehensive health act tasked the VA to extend and expand comprehensive healthcare. It is not a program - every provider is coming from a whole health perspective. It will have an emphasis on veteran to veteran relationship/contacts. It will shift from disease model of care to whole health care.

"Whole health is an approach to health care that empowers and equips people to take charge of their health and well-being and live their life to the fullest." Inclusive of conventional clinical treatment and prevention, self care strategies, and complementary practices. "Whole Health is not a PROGRAM."

See flyer with circle. Provider goals/ veteran goals to identify shared goals and have providers reach these shared goals. Coming from Washington, the whole health was born of the executive order tasking the VA to do something immediately. Initial services started in March. Part of the initiative is that newly discharged veterans receive one month of healthcare.

Castle Point and Montrose have introduction sessions of this whole health perspective of care once a month. Sessions introduce the looking at health care in a new way. The current initiative provides facilitated groups to help veterans thinking about whole health. 9-week groups to identify goals and link to services. It is a class or discussion group and not therapy. The groups facilitate the veteran to come up with their own goals.

For example, you have knee pain - WHAT IS CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR PAIN? How are you moving? Are you eating inflammatory foods? Are you sleeping enough? How is your spirit and soul? - the whole health looks at all areas which may contribute to an issue or problem.

Expanding complimentary integrative services to include: Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Group Yoga, Aromatherapy, Acupuncture, Reiki, Whole health creative arts. All are therapies to assist the veteran in different and unique areas. They may incorporate all or some programs to treat the patient.

Whole health clinical care: acupuncture, battlefield acupuncture in pain clinic, healthy teaching kitchens quarterly, 2 HV physicians enrolled in 2 yr integrative medicine fellowship, etc.

All the programs are being used and are at about 60%.

Comments: Larry there is still a stigma of mental health among veterans. There are benefits of the many elements that were presented. Our own Bryan Abrams provides Tai Chi. Introduces the tea cup move and the importance of these programs help with mental wellness. Larry also met with Rosemarie Rogers who works with the Veteran Art Showcase and at Castle Point providing art therapy for veterans. She is also an integral part of the VA's Whole Health initiative.

Questions? Functional medicine or Integrated medicine? Integrated medicine is offered by the 2 physicians. What is the difference between functional medicine and integrated medicine? (citation needed)

Faith Moore, ARDAC, Housing Program - NYS State access to home for heroes. \$300,000 available to make accessibility modifications on the home. Up to \$25,000.00 to each veteran home. This contract is up in June of this year. Process - call office, intake (name, home, work needed) 120% AMI is the income guidelines. VA benefits do not count toward income. Interview with Faith and she does initial assessment and then sends contractor to do an estimate. It is a grant, it does file mortgage for three years. It is payable if sold within the 3 years. ARDAC has having legacy dinner in July 29. Offering to task force \$250 for journal ad and 2 tickets. How quickly project is done? Goal is within 30 days.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Laurie Bryceland: GAIT Therapeutic Riding Center

Horses 4 Heroes program. Whole person well being offered through mindfulness. Without the use of drugs we are benefiting patient's treatment. Tremendous program. Retreat coming up at Milford Dude Ranch. Free of cost for veteran and support person. Many activities and workshops. Veteran volunteers. Only 10 spots left. Deadline May 15. Register. June 8th, open house - resource table.

Thanks to Izzy from Rockland for introducing this fundraiser. Dine Around raffle - 37 different restaurants. \$10 a ticket or 3 for \$25. - winner takes all.

Kim Mahoney: Middletown Elks: Veteran Stand Down Event

Does grant writing for Elks. Remember her from Freedom backpack program. Our grant writing for the Elks and has applied 4 out of 5 grants. Awarded all 4 and 2 are for veterans. Veteran Stand Down September 28 9am to 2pm. Working with Christian and Larry. Freedom grant again this year.

Questions for Howie? Any pointers from their Stand Down. Military surplus offered at location/event. A truckload of clothing is brought to the event. Ulster County's Stand Down is moving to the old JC Penney location. What is a stand down? Geared to homeless veterans - when they can come and get resources and supplies.

TASK FORCE HOMELESS CASES Status:

- **WestCOP SSVF: Open/New Case Report - Christine**
 - Dutchess - 5
 - Orange - 13 aware of and working with.
 - Ulster County - 1
 - Westchester - 34
 - Sullivan - 0
 - Working more closely with agencies that help with homelessness. Meeting bi-weekly to get a better picture. More agencies involved to service more veterans and faster. It is good to meet with each county.

VETERAN SERVICE AND COUNTY UPDATES: Meeting location: Revisiting location due to Dutchess having issues with location.

- **Dutchess County, excused.**
 - **Vet2Vet: Adam Roche, Program Manager, Vet2Vet Veterans' Peer Services**
- **Orange County**
 - **VSO: Christian Farrell, Director - Orange County Veteran Services**
 - Orange County Picnic, 11am to 3pm, May 4, call Evelyn to reserve your display space. rain or shine.
 - Veteran appreciation breakfast, May 2.
 - Golf open. Benefits Honor flight
 - **Vet2Vet: Larry Neumann, Program Coordinator -**
 - Veteran movie - "Stray Dog" - follows the life of a veteran and his reintegration.
 - Veteran appreciation day August 31st. As a minor league may change their name for one day. Will be calling themselves Hudson Valley veterans.
 - Initiatives for veteran housing. Visited veteran housing in Putnam and hoping to have veteran housing in Orange County.
 - Honor flight - this Saturday April 13. come out.
- **Putnam County**
 - **VSO: Karl Rohde, Director, Putnam County Veterans Service Agency**
 - He just completed equine therapy. Likes horses and enjoyed it. Great program.
 - Evening hours every Tuesday at the Vet2Vet office so that can make claims.
 - Nicole of the VA comes 1 evening a month.
 - Their home has 2 openings.
 - Laws changing for Blue Water Navy. Now claims can be processed.
 - **Vet2Vet, John Bourges, Program Coordinator**
 - Possibly having nurses, food,
 - Received grant to fight veteran suicide in Putnam county specifically. Goal - changing perspective of veteran suicide. Reaching out to American Legions and VFWs to spread message it is our problem not just the VAs. Have them have a homelessness and a suicide prevention officer.
 - 25 to 30 calls. Some calls need immediate assistance.
 - Promise walk visits many locations.

- Suicide Prevention Coordinator. Would look towards having people come and speak on Suicide Prevention.
- **Rockland County**
 - **Vet to Vet: Ismael (Izzy) Quintana Jr., Veteran Outreach Coordinator**
 - Thanking for all those advocating for the Joseph P. Dwyer program. This year, had veterans that benefited from the program as speakers. Speakers were very eloquent. Moving and touching testimonies. Kenneth Samboski invited to come to assembly. Senator Carlucci in charge of suicide prevention task force, instrumental in pushing for funding. Larry thanked Rockland County for their efforts.
 - Month of March, Military Behavioral Training graduates of which 3 females. Peer support grant for those to work in prisons. New person hired to work with that program. Meet with them one on one. Help with transition when released from jail.
 - New alternative therapy, chiropractor. Practices physiological therapy. Touch Therapy: touching different parts of body to help other parts with pain and movement. Teaches other habits that will help. 3rd Friday.
- **Sullivan County**
 - **VSO: Howie Goldsmith, Coordinator, Sullivan County Veteran Service Agency**
 - **Sullivan County Long Beards** - sponsors turkey hunts. veterans to turkey hunt for 2 days. successful program.
 - Coalition transporting 3 veterans to the honor flight.
- **Office of US Representative Sean Patrick Maloney, excused.**

UPCOMING EVENTS/ROUNDTABLE

Larry, April 17th, Wednesday Citizen preparedness training, only 11 people signed up. Taught by Captain Brett White.

Ashley with Vet Drug Court and RSS - work with people with disabilities with support for people on Medicaid.

Izzy - Writing workshop for 6 Thursdays starting tomorrow.

Scott Fisher - My Brother Vinny serves NYC and 9 counties in Hudson Valley. Have served 804 veterans to date. Last year alone served 200 veterans. Full funded by donations. Main fundraiser of the year, walk on May. Raffles are unbelievable - Disney, Mohegan sun,

Kelly – Troops returning home soon. Would like to have dinner. June 1- 53 deployers and their family members. and November 2nd 200 deployers and their families. Looking for volunteers to assist and make it special. Probably Yellow Ribbon will be that Sunday.

Doug - Dr. Mike Burkes - 7 million grant - top PTSD clinicians to bring this therapy.

Michelle - HUD funding has received 2 million. Point of time a rough number 9 sheltered and 3 unsheltered.

Kendall - gearing up for May 18 deadline for boxes for soldiers. Did get GS cookies.

Angela - Crisis Call Center went “live”. Send resources to Larry to provide the call center staff.

Nicole - June 1st VA resource fair. asking for resource providers to come out.

Adjournment: meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am by Larry Neumann.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 8, 2019, 9am Location: Orange County Department of Health, Goshen, NY

Minutes taken and typed by: Millie Rivera-Velez

Minutes reviewed and submitted by: Larry Neumann