



Multnomah County Veteran Services Taskforce

November 3rd, 9:00am – 11:00am

Multnomah Building, Copper Conference Room, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, Oregon 97214

MEETING MINUTES

Focus – Housing

Welcome and Introductions

Task Force meeting attended by: Diane McKeel, Sean Files, Andy Smith, Diane Labany, Cathy Spofford, Col. Steven Easterday, Katie Burgard, John Concepcion, Doug Kuhl, Jill Behunin, Shane Maher, Javelin Hardy, Adam Renon, Seth Lyon, Andrea Jusiko, Brendan Phillips, Ryan Waldron, Alex Glover, Chris Aiosa, Don Weber, Pete Pringle, Eric Ensley

TOPIC / PRESENTER	NOTES	Action
Updates All	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Association of Oregon Counties' annual meeting is from November 17-20 in Eugene. The Veterans Committee will meet the 19th from 8:30-10:30am. Committee has a regional focus and membership includes Commissioners from across the state. Open meeting and anyone is welcome to attend.• Mental Health First Aid Summit is scheduled November 21st from 8am-4:30pm in Eugene. Handout distributed by Andy and uploaded on Task Force website with VTF meeting materials.• The ODVA conference for Veterans Service Officers was held two weeks ago in Portland. Eric provided a brief overview, and discussed one focus on VBA changes to forms and impacts to appeals process.• This Thursday, 11/6, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners will adopt a proclamation recognizing Veterans Day. Meeting is at 9:30am in the board room and available to view online.• Commissioner McKeel reported that Oregon State University is offering free tickets to all active or veteran military members and up to 3 family members for the November 15th game again Portland State. Call 1-800-GOBEAVS for more information.• Military Child of the Year award is accepting applications. Winners will be awarded a laptop computer, \$10,000, and have a trip to Washington DC to receive the award. More info and nominations at www.militarychildoftheyear.org. Accepted through 12/12/2014.• Steven reported the Portland USO will receive its 2,000th visitor this month and described advisory board & volunteer coordinator.• Pete provided an East County Stand Down recap. There were 203 veterans registered and in attendance, and some brought additional veterans with them. In all, 375 meals were served and 180 clothing vouchers filled.• Eric reported that Jonathan Sanford has been hired as a CVSO in Multnomah County and is beginning training.• Veteran Job Fair scheduled November 14th at Veterans Memorial Coliseum. 118 employers have signed up so far.	

<p>Community Resource and Referral Center Update</p> <p>Cathy Spofford</p>	<p>CRRC opened two and a half years ago has had 1,878 unduplicated veterans come in for services so far. The CRRC acts as a “front door” for the VA and helps homeless veterans access housing, provides case management, and helps get ID or assessment/evaluations that are necessary for subsequent referrals.</p> <p>Cathy presented overview of services available, including psychologist on site for assessments and referrals, two new clinical social workers, new peer support staff, and hiring community outreach person who will also help with Stand Downs. Two staff are trained in SOAR model to access SSI/SSDI, especially important resource for veterans who served during peace times and may not be eligible for other service-connected benefits. Recently started a group for transgender veterans, which has been popular with 5-7 regular attendees. Doing substance abuse intakes with med workup and intake on demand when people are ready to engage in treatment. Offering rapid HIV tests every day for drop-ins. Trying to set up smoking cessation classes, which would overcome a barrier for some veterans who get HUD-VASH vouchers but live in no-smoking apartments. Partnerships with VBA, TPI, dual diagnosis, and working to build relationship with county Veteran Service Officers for a presence at CRRC as well. Last year responded to 975 homeless hotline calls, plus consult calls from VA facility on the hill. Have capacity for up to five veterans a night housed at City Team Ministries, and additional five beds at Bud Clark Commons. Significant resource for veterans who aren’t eligible or wouldn’t do well with HUD-VASH.</p> <p>Greatest need that Cathy has observed is flexible funding for housing. Many of the federal programs fund some costs but not others so flexible rent assistance and move-in resources are very important.</p> <p>Cathy announced that she is retiring this month and Carolyn Bateson will be contact person until her replacement is hired.</p>	
<p>Diversity & Equity – Equity and Empowerment Lens Briefing</p> <p>Ben Duncan</p>	<p>Ben provided an introduction to the equity and empowerment lens. Veterans have a unique perspective and life experience, and the goal is to better utilize opportunities of what they bring to the table.</p> <p>What is their experience before engaging with Multnomah County (and other partners on the task force), during, and following engagement? The county website, https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens, has the lens itself and some of the background and principles of applying it to the county’s work. From the graphic on the website, Ben discussed the purpose, people, place, process, and power in making decision on certain issues. When an individual has experience where it feels like their voice matters, it gives hope that input will be valued and make a difference.</p> <p>Group discussion covered different points along continuum – from reintegration to employment – where veterans can be engaged, identified, and HR and other partners can be educated about veterans.</p>	<p>Will schedule follow-up presentation to discuss in more depth at a future meeting</p>

<p>Veteran Housing Resources</p> <p>Ryan Fisher, Alison McIntosh</p>	<p>Ryan presented an overview of HB 2417 (2013 session), which started with housing authorities struggling to utilize HUD-VASH vouchers. In 2013 this bill was brought forward to use existing document recording fee to provide flexible resources for housing.</p> <p>This is a dedicated revenue source for veterans from the document recording fee, which is paid whenever a home is purchased. It had previously been \$15 per transaction for housing services, and this bill increased it to \$20 with the additional \$5 to go toward veterans housing. Since passage of the bill, organizers have met with ODVA, County veteran services officers, and other partners to determine how the funds will be spent. In the first six months of this year a total of \$1.4mil has been collected for veterans. Within this fund, 72% will go to development of affordable rental units, 10% for emergency housing assistance, and 18% toward home ownership for veterans.</p> <p>The emergency housing assistance will be important flexible funding to support HUD-VASH and SSVF programs to fill some of the gaps such as utility bills, deposit, furniture, and household goods.</p> <p>The home ownership funds will support the ODVA home ownership program (which helped 32 veterans last year around the state) and provide down payment assistance, mortgage payment assistance for veterans returning from deployment, and home adaptability projects such as ramps and shower handles for disabled veterans.</p> <p>Affordable rental housing currently has about \$1mil reserved, and will likely either support model of smaller developments with 8-10 units for veterans, or else supporting larger projects that will designate some units specifically for veterans.</p>	
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