

Veterans Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: October 8, 2018/10:00 a.m. /Veterans' Conference Room, Whatcom County Health Department

Members Present: Richard Conoby, Lynne Graham, Elizabeth Harmon-Craig, Allan Jensen, John Mitchell, Ward Nelson, Paul Pelot, Andrea Vance, Wes Weston

Members Absent: Robert Hines

County Staff: Elizabeth Harmon-Craig, WCHD Veterans Specialist; Emily West, WCHD Coordinator

Guests: Mac (David A.) McMaster; Nathaniel Davis, OPPCO; Mike Parken, OPPC; Bill Adamek, Worksource.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Call to order	Meeting called to order by Chair Paul Pelot	Paul Pelot
2. Roll Call/ Introductions	Roll call, quorum present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of new members Lynne Graham and Andrea Vance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lynne Graham ○ Andrea Vance 	All
3. Review/Approval August 13, 2018 minutes	Minutes of August 13, 2018 reviewed. Motion made (Ward) and seconded (Dick) to approve minutes as presented. A vote was held and the motion passed.	Motion: To approve the August 13, 2018 minutes as presented. Aye: 9, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1
4. New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Whatcom Homeless Service Center - Mike with OPPC 	Mike with Whatcom Homeless Service Center under Opportunity Council presented a report on their findings that also shows how many Veterans they have served this year to date using the Veterans Advisory Board Funds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year we sent \$80,000 down to the Whatcom Homeless Service Center because they blend the funding with the SSVF grant and some cash with VASH- the idea is that working with a partner agency we are able to serve more people with more dollars. While SSVF is a great program, it does have time limits. So with the County funds they are able to take these funds and blend them with SSVF funds to extend periods of assistance for Veterans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can serve a Veteran for 6 months; however, depending on the circumstances such as the income a Veteran had when they enrolled services can potentially be extended to 9 or 12 months. There are several variables, but the basic number is 6 months. 	<i>Mike</i> <i>Liz</i> <i>Mike</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is a great program but gives Veterans a very limited time frame to get raised income, a new job, etc. It is a short period of time for them to achieve basic stability. ○ We try to get the Veteran a year. We use as much of the SSVF as possible. ● Something that may be useful in the report is that we are helping a lot of Veterans keep the housing that they have and also stave off an eviction. We serve a lot of prevention households. ● In this last quarter we assisted 20 new households and of those only 4 of those were unsheltered ● SSVF for those who are not familiar with it is Supportive Services for Veteran Families is a VA program. It can pay for things like rent, late charges, application fees for rentals, modest move in costs and in some cases can be used towards work and care maintenance. While it is not long in duration it tends to be flexible and can be deep in that short period of time. There are a lot of rules and regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you get a Veteran housing and once they get a job the assistance isn't turned off? Do you prorate rent for a few months until they start getting steady paychecks? ○ Yes, at some point we will be working month to month. We do extensive budgets with projections based on not only getting housed but what other issues need to be solved; outstanding debts, bad credit. We are always looking at what needs to be done for self-sufficiency down the road. In terms of temporary financial assistance, we may look at participation – the client paying part of the rent to weening clients off to where they can go forward on their own. ● Whatcom Homeless Service Center does not have the year requirement but the County does. ● Do you track repeats? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not in this report; we do have an ability to look back though to get a deeper dive into what Veterans have had multiple service intervals over time. ○ When I look at these types of reports I see numbers places out per year: What are the scenarios going on that causes them to need prevention or they need housing and how many of them are from year to year. How long can they stay in the program? And what happens after they aren't eligible for the program? ○ They can only stay in the program for a year and then it depends on what their needs might be, if we have already served them with 	<p><i>Paul</i></p> <p><i>Nathanial</i></p> <p><i>Liz</i></p> <p><i>Ward</i> <i>Mike</i></p> <p><i>Ward</i></p> <p><i>Mike</i></p>
--	--	---

	<p>SSVF there might be the opportunity that we didn't serve them all the months they were eligible for the year so there might be eligibility left so we would use that first. If the situation is they are still housed and they lose a job or something medically happens that really destabilized the financial stability of the household we are really going to look and see what they are eligible for. Veterans are not only eligible for Veterans resource but any other resource available in coordinated entry. It varies case by case. We work on a budget and stability plan with them to get them self-sufficient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you look towards for success? How do you measure your outcomes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We do see a lot of repeat service and a lot of the data shows that there are a lot of Veterans with Behavioral Health needs that are not able to raise their income enough to be self-sufficient so we want to target longer term supports. • Right now in Coordinated Entry we have 564 total household that need housing and the number of Veterans in that are 53 that are waiting services. Many of which have case managers. • We have a robust system for Veterans in Whatcom County but we still have a long way to go. • Coordinated Entry is essentially a housing pool for people that are experience homelessness if you are a Veteran you can also be in the program if you are at risk of being homeless. We have a variety of different housing partners that we work with. It's not first come first serve; we do it based on vulnerability. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With Coordinated Entry instead of coming to the County and going to multiple other agencies, Whatcom Homeless Service Center under Opportunity Council has become the "Be All, End All" for homeless services in Whatcom County. If you know anyone who is homeless please send them down to Opportunity Council so they can be screened into Coordinated Entry because the social workers there that look at all aspects of what is going on in a person life and determines what programs they qualify for. They are really well set up to be a one stop care for folks. ○ On intake, clients are offered an appointment with Doris Kent, who verifies they are a Veteran or orders a DD214. We get them registered for VA Health and find out what they are eligible for. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our rationale is that we will do anything in terms of case management to get a Vet housed, stabilized, and self- 	<p><i>Liz</i></p> <p><i>Nathanial</i></p>
--	---	---

	<p>sufficient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Worksource has the same types of resources and is also a “One Stop.” ○ Anyone you send to OPPCO get them a DD214 and make sure they get put in the Vet pool not the General pool. “What are your needs and what are you eligible for” and try to connect with the resources. ● We average about 500-600 each quarter for new households. This is new for the quarter out of the 564, 53 were vets waiting for services. The rates fluctuate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WDVA can get a DD214 to you on or before 1995 in a few minutes if the Veteran got out of the military on or before 1995. The gentleman I work with is John Stevens with WDVA. ○ Vet Reqs is usually hit or miss and takes usually 2 to 3 weeks if you are lucky. ● We have a HUDVASH case manager. They can look into whether Veteran’s are HUDVASH eligible. They are good partners with Housing Authority for get more vouchers for 22 North. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 22 North – 40 unit building with front door control and 24/7 assistance; service enriched housing for high acuity needs. There is no end date for residency; however, some people over time are able to become self-sufficient because they have received the help that they need to where they might be able to move out with more limited needs for help. 22 North is set-up as a very similar system to Francis Place. ○ Have you been running into problems with landlords refusing Veterans on vouchers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We still see it but only a couple of times a month. They cannot legally discriminate. Adrian Solenburger is the landlord liaison. ▪ Do we have landlord incentives such as landscaping, painting houses, maintenance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We do have a cash incentive program for landlords. ● Something we have done was a deposit system for landlords. We taught Veterans to be good tenants but if they were to cause damage to the property or to leave without paying rent then we had the deposit that covered those damages and rent; we would sometimes have a double deposit where we would give twice the amount for the deposit. 	<p><i>Paul</i></p> <p><i>Mike</i></p> <p><i>Paul</i></p> <p><i>Mike</i></p> <p><i>Paul</i></p> <p><i>Paul</i></p> <p><i>Mike</i> <i>Andrea</i></p>
--	---	--

	updates on how well our program is	
Fund Balance	<p>The veterans fund currently has \$647,224.88 cash on hand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liz clarified that the fiscal budget has already been submitted. • Ward asked to see the breakdown of expenditures quarterly; Liz will supply this information quarterly. 	Liz
Good of the Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans Day is coming up and the Veterans Day Celebration is not able to use City Hall so we are trying to get Bellingham High School. The Veterans Day Celebration will be held on November 5th. 	
8. Next Meeting	Next meeting will take place on December 10 th , 2018	Ongoing homework assignment: submit to Liz for discussion at next meeting
9. Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m. 	