



Veterans Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: June 13, 2022 / 10:00 a.m. / Hybrid Zoom Meeting – WCHD, Girard St & Zoom
 Committee Members Present: Allan Jensen, Christopher Brown, Joseph Shepherd, Lynne Graham, Paul Pelot, Robert Wilson
 Committee Members Absent: Andrea Vance, Richard Conoboy, Wes Weston
 Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Ann Beck, Liz Witowski, Amanda Burnett, Ashley Geleyne / Steve Bennett, Melissa Nyberg, Martin Symonds, Bob Aspiras

Agenda Item	Discussion
1. Call to order	Meeting called to order by Lynne Graham.
2. Roll Call	A quorum was present.
3. New Business Review/Approval of April 2022 Minutes	Paul Pelot moved to approve the April meeting minutes. Al Jensen seconded the motion. The board voted and the motion passed. Aye: 6, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
Open Public Comment	There was no public comment.
4. Reports/Discussion Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) Presentation Updates from staff: WDVA Contract, Case Manager Position, New Location, Staffing	<p>Steve Bennett, PHAB chair, presented on the board’s plan to expand membership by adding members from other health department boards and committees following the passing of new legislation that outlines new requirements and scope of work for public health advisory boards. Steve asked if any members were interested in joining PHAB. Chris Brown and Lynne Graham expressed interest and will work it out among themselves who will join.</p> <p>Liz Witowski provided updates on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is contract in place between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) in which WDVA will advertise a request for proposals to federally accredited nonprofit veteran services organizations for providing a full-time VSO at the Bellingham Vet Center. The deadline for the request for proposals is June 18.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liz's office is now upstairs at the Health Department, and she is meeting with some veterans in person by appointment, but still working with most remotely. <p>Ann Beck provided updates on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Opportunity Council is now hiring for a Veterans Housing Services Navigator, a case management position supported by this board and fully funded by the Veterans Assistance Fund. Ann encouraged members to share the opportunity in their networks. A copy of the contract with Opportunity Council that includes this position will be sent to board members. Amanda Burnett, Human Services Supervisor, recently joined the Health Department. The original Human Services Division (HS) at the Health Department is undergoing some changes. A new Response System Division (RS) was created earlier this year. Behavioral health and Mental Health Court staff joined RS, and the remaining HS staff will be merging with Community Health to create another new division, pending an official title.
<p>5. Good of the Order</p>	<p>Paul Pelot shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A job opportunity through the Employment Security Department posted on careers.wa.gov will close tomorrow at 5:00. The position is for a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist on Whidbey Island. He and Martin Symonds recently presented about Work Source at a Transition Assistance Program (TAP) class on Whidbey Island. <p>Al Jensen shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He has received assurance from Senator Larson and Murray's offices' that the Skagit clinic will not be closing. There will be some changes once the new clinic in Everett opens up. The PACT Act, an act addressing toxic exposure from burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxics, will be taken to the US Senate floor in July. <p>Bob Wilson shared that American Legion Post 7 will be holding a flag retirement ceremony on Tuesday.</p> <p>Bob Aspiras asked about an update on the Northwest Annex building. Ann shared some information about the County's plans to redevelop the property for County operations, and will make sure the official notification from the County Executive gets sent to board members and Bob.</p>
<p>6. Next Meeting</p>	<p>The next meeting will be held Monday, August 8, 2022 on Zoom.</p>

7. Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.