



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
TO THE  
OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Al Herrera, Chair .....Beaverton  
Dennis Guthrie, Vice Chair .....Redmond  
Mike Jones, Secretary ..... Ontario  
Tony Garcia .....Portland  
J. Ryan Howell ..... Albany  
Trisa Kelly .....Portland  
Jerry Lorang.....Portland  
Mary J. Mayer ..... Portland  
Kevin Owens.....North Bend

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Cameron Smith ..... Director  
Tracy Ann Gill .....Special Assistant to the Director  
Edward Van Dyke .....Deputy Director  
Eric Belt ..... Statewide Veteran Services Director  
Cody Cox ..... Veterans' Home Loan Program Manager  
Nicole Hoeft ..... Communications and Information Services Manager  
Mary Jaeger..... Aging Veteran Services Director  
John Osborn ..... Facilities and Construction Manager  
Julie Owens .....Human Resources Manager  
Bruce W. Shriver ..... Chief Financial Officer  
Laurie Skillman .....Senior Policy Advisor  
Peter Trnavskis..... Information Services Manager



## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Edward C. Allworth Oregon Veterans' Home

600 North 5th St., Lebanon, OR 97355

### **AGENDA**

#### **I. WELCOME AND ADMINISTRATION**

- Call to Order – Al Herrera
- Pledge of Allegiance – Ryan Howard
- Invocation – Trisa Kelly
- Introduction of Board Members
- Approval of December 3, 2014 Minutes

#### **II. PUBLIC COMMENT (Speakers Limited to 3 Minutes)**

Public comment opportunities are available for the Committee to hear from interested members of the community. Committee members do not provide responses or engage in direct conversation during public comment. Members of the community may also submit written public comments to the Committee at the following email address:

[vaac@odva.state.or.us](mailto:vaac@odva.state.or.us)

#### **III. ODVA DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Cameron Smith**

#### **IV. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

- Statewide Veteran Services – Chair: Gerard Lorang; Al Herrera; Trisa Kelly
- Veteran Home Loans – Chair: Kevin J. Owens; J. Ryan Howell, Michael Jones
- Aging Veteran Services – Chair: Mary J. Mayer; Dennis Guthrie; Al Herrera
- Finance – Chair: J. Ryan Howell; Gerard Lorang; Trisa Kelly
- Legislative Affairs and Policy – Chair: Dennis Guthrie; Kevin J. Owens, Tony Garcia

#### **V. VETERANS PREFERENCE LEGISLATION – Laurie Skillman**

#### **VI. LEBANON VETERANS' HOME OVERVIEW AND UPDATE – Jacade Hanson**

#### **VII. OLD BUSINESS ITEMS**

- Committee Member Orientations:
  - Portland VA Medical Center – April 8, 2015
  - Willamette National Cemetery – May 2015 (TBD)

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- Suicide Prevention Resources for Veterans
- Annual Report Framework and Timelines
- Officer Nominations
- Proposed 2016 Meeting Locations
  - March 2, 2016 - Newport
  - June 1, 2016 - Klamath Falls
  - September 7, 2016 - The Dalles
  - December 7, 2016 - Salem
- Next Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
  - Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2015 | Time: 9:30 AM
  - Location: Department of Public Safety Standards and Training  
4190 Aumsville Highway, Salem, OR 97317

**IX. BUSINESS MEETING ADJOURNED**

**BREAK**

**VETERANS TOWN HALL**

**CONNECT WITH ODVA**

<b>FIND ODVA</b>	<b>WEBISTE</b> <b>BLOG</b> <b>FACEBOOK</b> <b>TWITTER</b>	<a href="http://www.oregon.gov/odva">www.oregon.gov/odva</a> <a href="http://www.oregondva.com">www.oregondva.com</a> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/odvavet">www.facebook.com/odvavet</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/OregonDVA">@oregondva</a> or <a href="http://www.twitter.com/OregonDVA">www.twitter.com/OregonDVA</a>
<b>TALK TO US</b>	<b>ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b> <b>PUBLIC INFORMATION</b> <b>SUBMIT AN EVENT</b> <b>SUBMIT A STORY</b>	<a href="mailto:vaac@odva.state.or.us">vaac@odva.state.or.us</a> <a href="mailto:ODVAinformation@odva.state.or.us">ODVAinformation@odva.state.or.us</a> <a href="http://www.oregon.gov/odva/INFO/Pages/index.aspx">www.oregon.gov/odva/INFO/Pages/index.aspx</a> <a href="mailto:VetsNews@odva.state.or.us">VetsNews@odva.state.or.us</a>
<b>SIGN UP</b>	<b>EMAIL SUBSCRIBE</b> <b>VETS NEWS</b>  <b>LEGISLATIVE BILL DIGEST</b>	<a href="http://www.oregon.gov/odva">www.oregon.gov/odva</a> (Under "Connect with ODVA") <a href="http://www.oregon.gov/odva/INFO/Pages/vetsnews.aspx">www.oregon.gov/odva/INFO/Pages/vetsnews.aspx</a> 503-373-2389 <a href="http://www.oregon.gov/ODVA/Pages/VetsLeg.aspx">www.oregon.gov/ODVA/Pages/VetsLeg.aspx</a>

## Summary of Minutes

Quarterly Meeting of the Advisory Committee  
to the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

**Date:** December 3, 2014  
**Time:** 9:30 a.m.  
**Location:** Camp Withycombe, 15300 SE Minuteman Way, Clackamas

### Advisory Committee Members Present:

Al Herrera, Chair	Ryan Howell	Gerard (Jerry) Lorang
Dennis Guthrie, Vice Chair	Trisa Kelly	Kevin Owens
Mary J. Mayer, Immediate Past Chair		

### Guests:

Chaplain Terry Larkin, Oregon National Guard  
Michelle Kochosky, Oregon National Guard  
Bill Tidd, Military Officers Association of America  
Betty Herrera, Ladies Auxiliary, Military Order of the Purple Heart  
Gary Grange, Military Order of the Purple Heart  
Angela Walz, Oregon Air National Guard  
Crystal Atkinson, Oregon Air National Guard  
Dan Herringstad, Veterans' Affairs  
Evan Hessel, Senator Wyden's Office  
Adolph Valfro, Washington County Housing Authority  
Gary Calvent, Washington County  
Greg Goloborodha, Easter Seals  
Jessica Radke, SMMR  
Tina McDowe, SMMR  
George Bickford, Association of Naval Aviation  
Jim Main, Military Officers Association of America  
Monica Froese, Oregon Coast Community Action  
Bill Griffith, LTCO  
C. Beanchamp, Military Order of the Purple Heart  
Erika Silver, Clackamas County Veterans Service Office  
J. Fenner, Oregon Air Force Association  
Bert Key, Veterans' of Foreign Wars  
Gary Brannan, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division  
Tina Kennedy, Clackamas County Homeless Veteran Outreach  
Alisha Hamel, Historical Outreach Foundation  
Steve Robb, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde  
Tyler Marriot, Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Jay Lilly, Unites States Marine Corp Coordinating Council  
John Murphy, Unites States Marine Corp Coordinating Council  
Don Schram, Air Force Sergeants Association  
Van Moore, Westcare and Veterans Care Centers of Oregon  
Wayne Harvey, United Veterans' Groups of Oregon

Terry Brown, American Legion  
William Harold, National Association of Black Veterans  
John Stensland, Military Officers Association of America  
Ron Cook, Military Order of the Purple Heart

**ODVA Staff Members Present:**

Cameron Smith, Director  
Edward M. Van Dyke, Deputy Director  
Sue Shaffer, Executive Assistant  
Bruce Shriver, Financial Services Administrator  
Nicole Hoeft, Public Information Manager  
Eric Belt, Veterans Services Administrator  
Cody Cox, Home Loan Program Manager  
Dallas Swafford, Program Director, Oregon Veterans' Home, The Dalles  
Jeremy Woodall, Program Director, Oregon Veterans' Home, Lebanon  
John Osborn, Facility and Construction Manager  
Dave Cooley, Grant Contracts Administrator

Chair Al Herrera called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Dennis Guthrie led the group in the pledge of allegiance. Chaplain Terry Larkin gave the invocation.

**Chair Al Herrera:** Welcomed those attending and introduced himself and his wife Betty Herrera. Mr. Herrera called for introductions of the committee members and guests.

**Motion:** Chair Al Herrera asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 3, 2014 meeting as written.  
Minutes were approved unanimously.

**Director Cameron Smith:** Thanked Chaplain Larkin, Alisha Hamel, and the Oregon National Guard for hosting the meeting and gave an overview of the facility and the Oregon Military Museum.

Director Smith announced:

The memorial service on December 5, 2014 for Portland real estate developer Tom Moyer who served in the Oregon National Guard 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade.

The unveiling of Leonard DeWitt's memorial statue on December 7th in McMinnville, OR.

The Afghan-Iraqi Freedom Memorial Ceremony at the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs. Happily, no names were added for Veterans Day 2014.

Cameron Smith asked for those attending to keep the men and women who are deployed in their thoughts and prayers this holiday season and beyond.

### **Director's Report:**

Director Cameron Smith began with the highlights of the report:

- The September presentation of the Advisory Committee's Annual Report to the Governor and the Legislature.
- The Secretary of State's audit and the results presented with the ODVA strategic framework to the House and Senate Veterans' committees.
- The Governor's budget request submitted by ODVA and general funds requested.
- The Veterans Service Officer (VSO) training in October which was very successful and a key role for Statewide Veterans' Services.
- Proposed ODVA Information Technology modernization and expertise staff to link to the VA healthcare system and other providers for education, health and economic opportunity for Oregon veterans.
- The announcement of Tony Garcia as the new Advisory Committee member effective January 1, 2015 and the conclusion of Irv Fletcher's eight year term as an Advisory Committee member.

Cameron thanked both Tony and Irv for their dedication to serve on the committee.

Cameron announced the birth of his second child, Romy Nimitz Smith, born during the October total lunar eclipse.

Cameron thanked the staff of ODVA who drives the work for the subcommittee reports.

### **Subcommittee Reports:**

#### **Veterans' Benefits:**

##### **Chair: Gerard Lorang; Al Herrera; Trisa Kelly**

Chair Lorang began with the highlights of the report.

- The October 2014 VSO Training Conference in which attendance was an all-time high of 98 attendees. The ODVA Strategic Plan was presented at the conference; Mr. Lorang felt the plan would be a positive change in direction for ODVA. For the first time at the conference, The National Veterans Legal Services Program provided training which he acknowledged was a very valuable addition to the conference.
- The Highly Rural Transportation Grant has sub-agreements signed with eight Oregon counties for grant funding and still two pending approval. The goal of the grant is to improve transportation for veterans in rural Oregon counties.
- Veterans Administration (VA) implementing of the direct electronic claims filing process which will allow Statewide Veterans' Services, Portland and Oregon counties with the ability to file all claims electronically beginning January 1, 2015. Mr. Lorang felt the electronic filing process should shorten the claims processing time.

## **Home Loan Program**

**Chair: Kevin Owens; J. Ryan Howell; Michael Jones**

Chair Owens began with highlights of the report.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2014, the ODVA Home Loan Program closed 73 loans for a volume of \$18,250.00 which represents a 12% increase in volume dollars, which marks the highest closing volume since 2008. Year to date production is 200 units for \$44,771.00. If production holds through the end of the year with an estimated 265 units for close to \$60M, it will represent the highest closing levels for the ORVET Home Loan program since 1997.
- The current State Owned Property inventory is three properties, which is a decrease from five properties the prior quarter. One property is sale pending on a lease option, and two are listed for sale and showing interest.
- ODVA foreclosure status is seven loans, which is up by two from the last reporting date. ODVA loans in bankruptcy remains at 13.
- ODVA ORVET Home Loan Program delinquency rate is 2.4%, the Federal VA loan program delinquency rate is 3.95 % and the FHA delinquency rate is 6.41%

Kevin thanked ODVA Home Loan Program manager Cody Cox for his leadership and the home loan staff for their hard work.

Kevin asked for community support for proposed legislation to allow ODVA to refinance home loans.

## **Oregon Veterans' Homes, The Dalles and Lebanon**

**Chair: Mary J. Mayer; Dennis Guthrie; Al Herrera**

Dennis Guthrie began with highlights of the Lebanon Veterans' Home report.

- Overview of the dedication ceremony for the Lebanon Home on September 20, 2014.
- The current census of the home is five residents, and the home's operator Veterans' Care Centers of Oregon (VCCO) has begun the process of interviewing and hiring for the home.
- The campus phone system has experienced some problems which are being worked out with the provider, and the system is expected to be fully operational by the end of November.

Dennis invited those attending to visit the Oregon Veterans' Home, Lebanon to see the beautiful model design.

Cameron Smith announced that the March 2015 Advisory Committee Meeting will be at the Lebanon Home Community Center.

Chair Mary J. Mayer announced Jeremy Woodall as the Program Director of the Lebanon Home.

Chair Mayer began with the highlights of the Oregon Veterans' Home, The Dalles report.

- The Gold Award by the American Health Care Association to the Oregon Veterans' Home (OVH), The Dalles. The home is the first and only state veterans' home nationally to ever

receive this prestigious award. Mary recognized Dallas Swafford, Cheryl Maitland and the staff of the home for their excellent work and the achievement of the award.

- The Multi-Sensory Room at the OVH is also a new addition to the home that provides audio, visual, touch and smell in a relaxing manner to help stimulate human senses. The addition has provided dementia patients with improved memory skills and relaxation therapy which can reduce aggression in some residents and possibly reduce medication amounts.

Van Moore, VCCO/ Westcare presented the Gold Award to ODVA on behalf of the Oregon Veterans' Home, The Dalles, which is the 20<sup>th</sup> nursing home recipient to receive the award.

### **Financial Services Division**

**Chair: J. Ryan Howell; Gerard Lorang; Trisa Kelly**

Chair Howell began with highlights of the report.

- The 2014 Cash Flow Analysis of the Department's Veterans' Loan Program will be complete the end of January.
- The proposed bond sale in December 2014 will raise lendable funds from the issuance of Qualified Veteran Mortgage Bonds for the Veterans' Loan Program. Variable rate bonds will be replaced with fixed rate bonds.
- The ODVA Agency Requested Budget for 2015-17 biennium was submitted in August to the Department of Administrative Services, Chief Financial Office. It is hoped that most of the department's budgetary requests will be incorporated into the Governor's Recommended 2015-17 Budget.
- 2014 Audited Annual Financial Reports were conducted by the Oregon Secretary of State's Office for the Veterans' Home Loan Program and for the Veterans' Home Program by Merina & Company. The Home Loan Program audit showed a loss for the program but also a gain in the number of loans in for the year. The Veterans' Home Program showed a gain in net position. Federal VA funds received for the Lebanon Home contributed to the gain.

Ryan shared details of both Oregon Veterans' Homes designs and outstanding care provided to Oregon Veterans.

### **Legislative Affairs**

**Chair: Dennis Guthrie; Kevin Owens**

Chair Guthrie began with highlights of the report.

- Legislative Concept #504 - Makes amendments and repeals outdated statutes relating to veterans in ORS 406-408.
- Legislative Concept #505 - ODVA acts as a fiduciary for veterans. The current broad statutory authority for ODVA to act in this capacity is not clear and specific as needed. ODVA proposes a change in the verbiage to better serve veterans in the ODVA conservatorship program.
- Legislative Concept #509 – ODVA Home Loan Program provides Oregon veterans with below market rate home loans. The Foreclosure Avoidance Program requires lenders to meet with loan borrowers and a mediator prior to the foreclosure process. The

proposed solution to exempt ODVA from the requirement to enter into mediation and negotiate a foreclosure avoidance agreement with veteran borrowers.

- Legislative Concept # 510 – Limited information on veterans (such as loan application, HIPAA, DMV and DD214 records) is protected. Personal contact information is not protected, and, in order to protect veteran personal information obtained by ODVA, there must be an exemption to the disclosure requirements under the Oregon Public Records Law Chapter 192.
- ODVA policy and process for memorials on ODVA grounds. Ground rules for proposed memorials are in the process of being developed by the work group to present to the advisory committee.

### **Oregon National Guard Deployments and Reintegration Efforts**

Chaplain Terry Larkin began by introducing Michelle Kochosky and expressing his delight with the strategic partnership between the Oregon National Guard (ORNG) and ODVA. ORNG staff attended an ODVA Strategic Plan briefing at the department and plan to attend a legislative briefing. Mr. Larkin acknowledged the significance for Cameron Smith and General Hokanson attending together which presents an image that ODVA and ORNG are strategically linked together. ODVA and ORNG are partners in taking care of our service members, veterans and their families.

Chaplain Larkin gave an overview of deployed Oregon Army National Guard soldiers who are in Afghanistan and Kuwait since August and September, returning in May or June. Chaplain Larkin gave an update of the Air National Guard deployed soldiers and engineers. The total deployment is in excess of 1,300 soldiers and he asked for continued prayer for the soldiers and their families. Chaplain Larkin continued with an overview of the Oregon National Guard and the services they provide to all service members in Oregon.

Michelle Kochosky began with an overview of the Oregon National Guard resources available to Oregon veterans and their families highlighting the strain deployment can put on family members and The Guard's Family Assistance Programs that assists families including spouses, siblings, parents and children. Ms. Kochosky encouraged those attending to contact the ORNG if they are aware of any families in need of assistance and concluded with a reminder of the over 1,000 Oregon soldiers deployed and stated that they offer assistance throughout the state of Oregon to those families.

Chaplain Larkin concluded that while the Oregon National Guard does not directly offer services, they are an excellent resource to connect resources available to service members their families and veterans within the state of Oregon.

Cameron Smith gave an overview of the nationally recognized reintegration program, the federal funds available and potential tightening of those funds. Champlain Larkin gave an update of Federal and State funds the guard receives and how those funds could be cut, highlighting the need for state funding to replace cut federal funds.

Announcement of the demobilization ceremony scheduled for December 7, 2014 at the Portland Air National Guard Base, to recognize Airmen from the 142<sup>nd</sup> Civil Engineer Squadron and members of the 142<sup>nd</sup> Security Forces Squadron.

## **Break**

### **Unfinished Business**

Follow up on policy and process for establishing new memorials on ODVA grounds.

Laurie Skillman, Senior Policy Advisor gave an update to the process for memorial placement as discussed between ODVA staff and the Legislative Affairs and Policy Subcommittee of the ODVA Advisory Committee. Guidelines and polices will be established by the ODVA for future memorial placement. A process will be established for submission of proposals. Memorial criteria such as size and location will be established.

Dennis Guthrie, ODVA Advisory Committee member, announced he would address questions asked during the break regarding a campaign by State Representative Julie Parrish (representing the West Linn area) to have a referendum put on the 2016 ballot for Oregon lottery funds to benefit Oregon veterans. A goal of gathering 150,000 signatures has begun with support from veterans' organizations.

Gerard Lorang, ODVA Advisory Committee member, gave an overview of his report on the challenges facing volunteers to become certified van drivers. Noted was recognition of the challenges by the Veterans' Administration, communities and the Advisory Committee. Mr. Lorang expressed that it is not the role of the Advisory Committee to fix the process, but the committee offered advice to ODVA.

Mr. Lorang referred to the actions items included in the report and noted that the Bend area has overwhelmed the volunteer driver system with applicants and commended the work they do to recruit volunteer drivers.

Action Item: The ODVA Advisory Committee to commend the Bend area for their extraordinary work in organizing and gathering volunteer drivers.

Motion: The ODVA Advisory Committee advised ODVA to step up their efforts to communicate the need for volunteer drivers around the state and to report back to the Advisory Committee on the progress of those efforts.

Kevin Owens asked for clarification of the expectations for ODVA to recruit volunteer drivers in Oregon.

Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: The ODVA Advisory Committee members should continue to increase their outreach efforts to communities, County Veterans Service Officers and Veterans Service Organizations. The committee members should report back with issues facing their communities.

Motion approved unanimously.

Question: Wayne Harvey asked if the Portland VA will go to Bend to complete the driver certification process, instead of requiring volunteers to travel to Portland for certification.

Gerard Lorang answered that the VA has many steps for certification of drivers, and it would require VA send multiple staff members to complete certification.

Ian Dirks, Portland VA, gave an overview of the Transportation Work Group at VA which consists of multiple agencies, veterans groups and community members that together in part of their work address veteran transportation issues.

Mary J. Mayer, ODVA Advisory Committee member, gave an update to the development of the Advisory Committee page on the ODVA website that she and Nicole Hoeft have been working on. Ms. Mayer gave an overview of the webpage and commended Nicole for the layout and ease of navigation for the site. The new ODVA website is expected to be available in the spring of 2015.

Ms. Mayer gave an overview of the ODVA donation webpage and the opportunity to donate to the Oregon Veterans' Homes, Suicide Awareness, Women Veterans and the Veterans Support Fund.

Director Cameron Smith and Bruce Shriver, ODVA, gave an overview of donations made to ODVA and the use of the donations received. Donations to the Veterans' Homes can request a specific use such as projects and recreation at the homes. Other donation categories are general use of funds received.

Mr. Smith announced:

- The Military Museum Tour for the Advisory Committee, following the meeting and the Advisory Committee Orientation scheduled for January 21, 2015.
- A proposed tour of the Portland VA Medical Center for committee members in April 2015.
- Deputy Director Ed VanDyke has successfully identified veteran cremains from the Oregon State Hospital, and the interment of those cremains is scheduled for May 2015 at Willamette National Cemetery.

**New Business:**

Mary J. Mayer, ODVA Advisory Committee member, gave an overview of the Veterans' Homes Subcommittee Annual Project which involves creating a comprehensive marketing plan for admissions and staffing for the two Oregon Veterans' Homes. This morning, Mary met with Dallas Swafford, Jeremy Woodall and Ed VanDyke to review who is responsible for the overall marketing plan. In reviewing the contract, it was established that the homes' contractor, Westcare Management, is responsible for the overall marketing of the homes. The subcommittee and ODVA staff plan to meet again in January with Westcare representatives to discuss the overall marketing plan, home admissions and staffing.

Mary J. Mayer gave an update to the upcoming Advisory Committee feature exposé which will be in the February issue of the *Vets News* and the internal ODVA newsletter, *Now Hear This*.

**Public Comments:**

Tina Kennedy, Homeless Veteran Outreach Specialist, of Clackamas County Health, Housing & Human Services gave an overview of the services they provide and the outreach efforts to reach Clackamas County veterans. Ms. Kennedy announced the January 17, 2015 Stand Down at the Oregon City Christian Church which hopes to assist 200 Oregon veterans.

ODVA Director Cameron Smith gave an overview of the Oregon State Hospital cremains interment by the Willamette National Cemetery in Portland, Oregon.

**Announcements:**

Gary Grange, Military Order of the Purple Heart gave an overview and announced signature gathering efforts for the ballot measure which calls for 5 percent of the net proceeds of the Oregon Lottery to be invested into a fund for veteran services.

Crystal Atkinson, Oregon Air National Guard, gave an overview of volunteer opportunities the Guard can help coordinate.

Gerard Lorang, ODVA Advisory Committee member, commended the Historical Outreach Foundation which provides non-profit support to the Oregon Military Museum which is undergoing a \$15 million remodel. Mr. Lorang acknowledged the program offered by the foundation to educate Oregon students on military history and encouraged those interested to contact the Historical Society or the Military Museum.

Gerard Lorang announced the opportunity for all Oregon veterans to provide their stories to the Veterans' Legacy Database at [veteranslegacies.com](http://veteranslegacies.com).

Alisha Hamel, Historical Outreach Foundation, announced the re-opening of the Oregon Military Museum scheduled for August 15, 2015.

Al Herrera, Advisory Committee Chair, announced the events submission form on the ODVA website for submitting events for publication.

**Next Advisory Committee Meeting:**

Date: March 4, 2015

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Location: Edward C. Allworth, Oregon Veterans' Home, Lebanon, Oregon

**Motion to adjourn at 11:44**

Approved unanimously.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**  
**Cameron Smith**

We have had a very busy start to the year. The odd numbered year means we have a long legislative session. The 78<sup>th</sup> session of the Oregon State Legislature opened in February and will likely run through the end of June or early July. With the Legislature in Salem, we will present our biennial budget as well as testify on numerous bills affecting and of interest to veterans.

This quarter also saw the resignation of Governor John Kitzhaber and the swearing in of the Secretary of State, Kate Brown, as the new Governor. The resignation was a sad day for Oregon, but in times of transition like this, it is reassuring that our team remained focused on our mission of serving and honoring our veterans and their families. Governor Brown is hitting the ground running and we will work closely with her and her team, the Legislature, and all of our stakeholders to implement on our strategic plan and initiatives.

This February also was the start for one of our new team members, Mary Jaeger. She will be the Aging Veteran Services Director and bring excellent expertise to the State Veterans' Home program as well as the Conservatorship program. Mary previously was the state's Long Term Care Ombudsman and is a passionate, smart and creative advocate for Oregon's seniors. We are very fortunate to have her joining our team.

I travelled to Washington, D.C. in February for the National Association of State Directors of Veteran Affairs (NASDVA) conference. Many of our peer departments look to learn from our experiences in Oregon and it is a fantastic group for us to get ideas from for our work. It is also a powerful venue to help advocate for continued improvements in the Federal VA.

We also extend a welcome to Tony Garcia as a new member to the Advisory Committee. A graduate of Georgetown University and the University of Oregon, School of Law, Tony is an Oregon Army National Guard soldier and attorney. He was a Judge Advocate for the 41<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade and served as Chief Trial Counsel in Iraq to the 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade in 2009 on their largest deployment since WWII. Tony lives and works in Portland where he is a deputy city attorney for the City of Portland.

Please dig into all the reports section by section to get the full quarterly updates and I look forward to our March meeting at the new Lebanon Veterans Home.

**FINANCIAL SERVICES DIVISION**  
**Bruce Shriver, Chief Financial Officer**

**2015-17 Governor’s Budget for the Department of Veterans’ Affairs**

In early December 2014, the Governor released his 2015-17 Governor’s Budget (GB) document. Included in this document was his proposed budget for the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (Department). The table below summarizes the Department’s budget by program area and source of funds.

	Other Funds Limited	General Funds Limited	Total All Funds Limited	Total Non-Limited & Debt Service **	Total Budget*	Positions
Home Loans	\$ 15,010,129	\$ 0	\$ 15,010,129	\$318,333,710	\$ 333,343,839	51
Veterans’ Home	\$ 65,667,428	\$ 0	\$ 65,667,428	\$ 2,618,940	\$ 68,286,368	4
Veterans’ Services	\$ 796,249	\$ 10,751,146	\$ 11,547,395	\$ 0	\$ 11,547,395	33
<b>TOTAL 2015-17 GB</b>	<b>\$ 81,473,806</b>	<b>\$ 10,751,146</b>	<b>\$ 92,224,952</b>	<b>\$320,952,650</b>	<b>\$ 413,177,602</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>TOTAL 2013-15 LAB (comparison)</b>	<b>\$ 50,400,107</b>	<b>\$ 9,097,928</b>	<b>\$ 59,498,035</b>	<b>\$335,727,814</b>	<b>\$ 395,225,849</b>	<b>84</b>

\* The figures shown above consist of Other Funds (OF) and General Funds (GF) only. Federal Funds consisting of \$1 in the 2015-17 GB and \$400,000 in the 2013-15 Legislatively Approved Budget (LAB) are not included in the table above.

\*\* The funding sources for the Non-limited and Debt Service information shown in the table above consist of \$318,333,710 of OF for the Home Loan Program and \$2,618,940 of GF for the Veterans’ Home Program in the 2015-17 GB; and \$335,225,000 of OF for the Home Loan Program and \$502,814 of GF for the Veterans’ Home Program in the 2013-15 LAB.

Included in the proposed 2015-17 GB is approximately \$0.4 million of GF to help preserve enhanced Veteran Service Officer training, approximately \$1.3 million of GF to preserve county grant monies and veterans’ outreach, approximately \$0.4 million of GF to begin the process of modernizing the Department’s IT infrastructure and approximately \$0.4 of GF to leverage resources through strategic partnerships. The 2015-17 GB budget contains 4 additional positions as compared to the 2013-15 Legislative Approved Budget. The Department will likely have its budget hearings held before the Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development of Ways & Means in early March 2015. No legislative action is anticipated to happen on the Department’s budget until the May/June 2015 timeframe.

### **Annual Cash Flow Projections of the Department's Veterans Loan Program**

Caine Mitter and Associates (the Department's Financial Advisor) and Department staff completed the annual set of multi-year, cash flow projections of the Department's Loan Program for 2014. The various cash flow scenarios generally project that the Loan Program will continue to be self-supporting over a medium term basis. Program reserves however are projected to continue to decline. Factors that can negatively affect the strength of the cash flow projections over time include high loan prepayment rates, an extended low interest rate environment, higher operating costs than anticipated, veteran services program support subsidies, home price erosion, high levels of unemployment and elevated levels of delinquencies & foreclosures. The Department and its Financial Advisor will continue to analyze the financial strength of the Loan Program each year in order to detect significant changes or trends that may arise.

### **2014 Series G and H Bond Issuance**

In December 2014, the Department issued approximately \$36 million of 2014 Series G and H Bonds. The purpose of this bond sale was to raise approximately \$10 million of lendable funds for the Veterans' Loan Program and also to refund approximately \$26 million of outstanding variable rate debt and replace it with fixed rate debt. This bond issue ended up with a yield of 3.16% and consists of both serial and term bonds. The scheduled final maturity date of the 2014 Series G and H Bonds is December 1, 2044.

### **Unaudited Quarterly Financial Statements**

The December 31, 2014 unaudited financial statements show a fiscal year to date reduction in net position in the Veterans' Loan Program of approximately \$0.5 million. This figure does not include year-end adjustments such as updated arbitrage rebate calculations, but did include the impact of the issuance of the 2014 Series G & H bonds. The same period for the prior fiscal year also showed a decrease in net position of approximately \$0.9 million.

The Veterans' Home Program shows an increase in net position of approximately \$1.8 million for the fiscal year to date, compared to an increase in net position of approximately \$8.7 million for the same period of the prior fiscal year. Included in these figures were transfers and capital contributions into the Veterans' Home Program from the Veterans' Home Trust Fund and federal grant monies which totaled approximately \$3.4 million for the first six months of fiscal year 2015 compared to approximately \$7.0 million in the first six months of fiscal year 2014.

Total Assets held in trust for the Conservatorship Program's Private-Purpose Trust Fund are approximately \$26.9 million as of December 31, 2014. Total Assets held in trust were approximately \$27.0 million as of December 31, 2013.

Funds held in trust for the Veterans' Home Trust Fund were approximately \$1.4 million as of December 31, 2014. Funds held as of December 31, 2013 were approximately \$1.2 million.

**VETERANS' HOME LOAN PROGRAM**  
**Cody Cox, Manager**

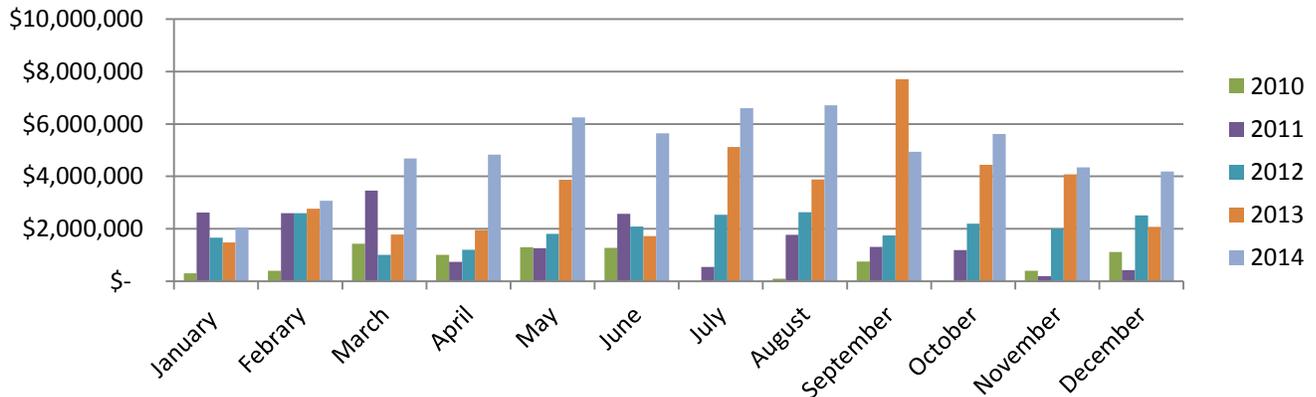
**Production Review**

For the 4th Quarter, 2014, the Home Loan Program closed 63 loans for a gross dollar volume of \$14,144,966. For the same period in 2013, the Home Loan Program funded 51 loans for \$10,593,103. 2014 4th Quarter volume represents an increase of 24% on a unit measurement, and 33% increase on a dollar volume measurement.

Calendar Year End 2014 ended with a total number of units funded of 269, an increase of 35% over 2013. Dollar production ended at \$58,916,746, an increase of 44.25% of 2013.

The 269 units funded in calendar year 2014 represent the 4th highest number of units funded for the OrVet Home Loan program since 1997. The \$58,916,746 of funded loans represents the 2nd highest dollar volume funded since 1997.

The chart below shows a 5-year history comparison of dollar volume funded for the OrVet Home Loan program.



**Loan Delinquency Review**

For the reporting period of 12/31/2014 there were 2 State Owned Properties/Real Estate Owned (SOP/REO) in inventory, down 1 from the prior quarter. Of these 2 properties, 1 is pending sale on a lease with option to purchase providing an income stream to the Agency, and the remaining property was under contract but not sold as of year-end.

There were 7 loans in a Foreclosure status, unchanged from the last report date. The number of loans in Bankruptcy decreased to 11. ODVA continues to experience reduced delinquency rates as compared to both Conventional and Government Residential Loan Programs.

**POLICY REPORT ON LEGISLATION, ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND AGENCY POLICY**  
**Laurie Skillman, Senior Policy Advisor**

The 78<sup>th</sup> session of the Oregon State Legislature opened on February 2, 2015. With the move to annual sessions, legislative leadership has established a tight schedule of deadlines to ensure that bills move through both chambers in a timely basis. The last day to introduce legislation is February 25. The Legislature may be in session for 160 calendar days, with a constitutional sine die of July 11, 2015.

Currently, 43 veterans-related bills have been introduced. Veteran's bills are typically heard in the House and Senate Veterans Services and Emergency Preparedness Committees. The House Committee meets Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. and the Senate committee meets at 1:00 on Tuesdays.

ODVA introduced four bills for the 2015 session:

- SB 250: Primarily a housekeeping bill that cleans up outdated statutes.
- SB 251: Clarifies the department's authority to serve as a representative payee for veterans.
- SB 252: Allows the home loan program to be exempt from mediation requirements because of the significant requirements ODVA has to work with borrowers to keep them in their homes.
- SB 253: Allows ODVA to keep veteran names and address confidential.

Other significant veterans-related bills:

- HB 2036: Names various highways in Oregon, including the World War I Veterans Memorial Highway, the Korean War Veterans memorial Highway, the Purple Heart Trail, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Memorial Highway.
- HB 2529: Requires a report on medical services in Oregon for women veterans.
- HB 2658: Provides for a Gold Star license plate for siblings.
- HB 2645: Requires community colleges and universities to provide veterans priority enrollment.
- HB 2691: Provides certification for service-disabled veteran small businesses.
- HB 2645: Requires community colleges and universities to provide veterans priority enrollment.
- HB 2763: Allows public employers to pay persons on active duty amount paid before leave of absence.
- HB 2828: Provides for incarcerated veteran outreach and support from ODVA.
- SB 87: Modifies laws on veterans' preference in employment,
- SB 434: Grants higher property tax for 100% disabled veterans.

ODVA offers an email subscription service that provides a weekly update on all veterans-related bills that is sent to a subscriber's email address. The update includes a description of the bill, the last three actions and the time, date and place of the next scheduled hearing. Interested

parties may subscribe by going to the department’s website [www.oregon.gov/odva](http://www.oregon.gov/odva) and selecting “eSubscribe” on the right-hand side of the home page.

Individuals, who are interested in watching a committee hearing or a House or Senate floor session, may go to [https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen\\_engagement/Pages/Legislative-Video.aspx](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen_engagement/Pages/Legislative-Video.aspx). Sessions are recorded and are streamed live. Earlier hearing from 2015 may also be found and watched online.

## STATEWIDE VETERAN SERVICES

Eric Belt, Director

Statewide Veteran Services is comprised of four programs: Conservatorship; Statewide Veteran Services (Salem and Portland); Training Certification and Outreach; and Grants Management. All programs directly relate to the agency mission and affect Oregon's 322,000 veterans. During the next quarter, Conservatorship will be relocated under the new functional area of Aging Veteran Services.

### **Conservatorship – Kelly Breshears, Manager**

Mission: The central role of the conservatorship program is to manage the financial affairs of disabled veterans, their dependents, and survivors who are unable to manage their finances.

#### Interviews/Motions:

33	Field Interviews conducted
45	VA inquiries responses
5	Incoming court inquiries
7	Closing Motions filed by ODVA
41	Annual/other Motions filed by ODVA
13	USDVA Claims filed

#### Current Status:

137	Protected persons currently under conservatorship
0	New conservator case gained this quarter
7	New conservator cases, pending court approval
11	Representative cases
2	Representative cases gained this quarter
5	Representative cases pending appointment

### **Statewide Veteran Services, Portland Office—Martin Ornelas, Manager**

Mission: Support of the County Veterans Service Officers through training, guidance, quality assurance and appellate representation; advocacy for our veterans, dependents and /or survivors in pursuit of benefits; and interoperability with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Portland Regional Office.

#### Outcomes:

2,197	New Powers of Attorney given to ODVA
77	Veterans assisted
22	Claims filed directly by PDX service officers
2,106	Claims filed by County Veteran Service Officers, and reviewed by PDX
114	Decision Review Officer Hearings
612	Board of Veterans Appeals Hearings
\$14,850,313	Retroactive benefits awarded

#### Appeals:

144	New appeals filed
55	Previously filed appeals granted
26	Previously filed appeals denied

**Statewide Veteran Services, Salem Office—Joe Glover, Manager**

Mission – Providing general reception service for the Department and direct service to veterans, dependents and survivors for Marion and Polk Counties. The office supports County Veteran Service Office daily operations as well as assisting the Statewide Veteran Services Director and Training Policy Analysts. The office also responds to official inquiries from elected officials on behalf of the director.

Outcomes:

710	Interviews conducted with veterans
180	New Powers of Attorney given to ODVA
272	New claims filed by ODVA service officers
177	Claims granted
107	Claims denied
31	Notices of Disagreement filed

Appeals:

20	New appeals filed
5	Previously filed appeals granted
4	Previously filed appeals denied
0	Board of Veterans Appeals hearings

Outreach/Community Service:

10	Events attended
10	Marion County Veterans Court appearances

**Training Certification and Outreach—Mitch Sparks and Gus Bedwell, Program Analysts**

Training and Assistance Onsite Visits - Coos and Curry County Veterans’ Service Offices and Umatilla County Veterans’ Service Office were visited. The intent and emphasis was to fine-tune and focus the initial training the new VSOs received in Salem.

**Grants Management—Dave Cooley, Program Analyst**

Highly Rural Transportation Grant - Eight rural counties, with population density of less than 8 residents per square mile, are transporting veterans to VA and non-VA medical appointments. Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Wallowa and Wheeler counties are sharing their best practices with each other, and requesting monthly reimbursement from ODVA.

Reported for October through December:

1,254.25	Hours of time expended on medical trips
649	Trips completed (round trip: home to appointment and back)
40,097	Total miles driven
570	Veterans served

Lines For Life - Lines For Life provides 24 hour phone and text services to at-risk veterans and their families. Ninety-Four calls were logged for the period October 1 – December 31, 2014.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Nicole Hoeft, Manager

As the agency's strategic planning begins to take shape into more actionable tasks, communications and information efforts have followed suit. Some of the more high level projects that are currently in process include:

- State website overhaul project development. This work requires the agency to initially coordinate project development plans with DAS and the state SharePoint vendor, NIC, USA. The team gathered extensive user analytics to help shape the planned usability of the new site. At this time, the communications team has submitted a project plan and is awaiting approval from DAS. Estimated launch date for the new ODVA website is early summer 2015.
- Working with the Training and Certification section to launch the iLearn platform - online training environment.
- The agency's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary research and plans:
  - Research has lead us to the original bill that formed our agency in 1945. The Governor signed the bill in March of that year. We are close to verifying the "official" anniversary date (July 1, 1945). Information forth coming.
- Ongoing communication support for ODVA budget and legislative needs
- ODVA publications and collateral development
- New internal emergency communication method and process development
- Strategic planning for "Drive Veteran Engagement"
  - Considerable attention to planning efforts aimed at deepening the connection with the veteran community as well as ensuring a positive and seamless experience by the veteran when seeking services.
- Ongoing communication, event and outreach support to the agency's programs and staff.

## **FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION**

**John Osborn, Manager**

### **The Dalles Veterans' Home**

Construction will begin on the garden areas at C and D wings about mid- March. The design will provide a safe and accessible outdoor experience for all our residents. The D wing garden is enclosed and will meet all the design requirements for our dementia residents. The C wing garden is open with the added feature of raised and assessable gardening beds for those residents who would like to raise vegetables or flowers.

Replacement of the Nurse Call system will start sometime in mid-March. The plan is to install the new system, train staff and verify that all components an operational prior to disconnecting the old system and go live with the new system.

Parallel to the nurse call work will be the cabling for the cameras and the door access systems. The access control system will give us greater control of campus access and provide documentation at key supply room and entry doors across the facility. We will go live once the testing and all staff data is programed into the new system.

The installation of additional interior and exterior cameras will work in conjunction with the door access control to provide an integrated security platform across the entire campus.

### **Lebanon Veterans' Home**

On January 21, 2015 ODVA received CMS certification that now allows the Lebanon home to receive Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement. The last remaining hurdle is the schedule the recognition and certification survey with USDVA. With that final VA approval, the Lebanon home will be eligible to receive per diem payments for each resident. At this writing there are 18 residents in Charlie wing, with the plan to have over 21 residents by the end of February.

On the facility side, our project team is also considering some additional work at the home. As with all health facilities, storage space is always at a premium. With that in mind, we are building another storage area at the northwest corner of the campus next to the community garden. Also under consideration is the construction on a covered walkway from Delta wing to canopy at the main entrance. It will not be enclosed but will provide shelter during inclement weather. This latter element will depend on the cost fitting within the remaining grant dollars available.

**EDWARD C. ALLWORTH OREGON VETERANS' HOME, LEBANON**  
**Jeremy Woodall, Program Director**

**Overview**

We continue to learn and understand as we grow. We're enjoying a new physical plant, and establishing new processes and systems with new people. We're learning a lot from how The Dalles operates and in many cases we're taking that information and adjusting it to fit our specific community. It's a time of creativity and innovation!

**Census**

The resident census at the Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon (LVH) averaged 5.51 veterans for December 2014. We averaged 9.19 veterans in January 2015, and at the time of this report we had an average of 15.21 veterans for February. We are currently at a little over 10% occupancy.

**CMS Certification**

LVH received a zero deficiency survey by DHS in December 2014. Shortly after DHS left a representative from the Oregon State Fire Marshal's office arrived for their life and safety inspection. Several deficiencies were reported and a plan of correction was submitted. We received our CMS Certification letter on January 20, 2015.

**Campus Development**

We have received our Restaurant License from the Linn County Environmental Health Program to open our Canteen. The Radio Frequency Identification system used for inventory control and asset management is being set up.

**Hiring Summary**

LVH is extremely busy with hiring. A minimum of eight staff are needed to open each home. We are utilizing Facebook to post job needs, which seems to be successful to alert the community about our staffing needs.

**Quality Team**

With leadership from Jacade the staff underwent Quality Assurance Performance Improvement training just a couple weeks ago. Additionally, two representatives from The Dalles came to LVH for Performance Improvement Team training for the leadership team. This is a great opportunity for us to learn these quality improvement measures now as we're still young so that as we grow we keep Honoring Our Veterans with the highest quality possible.

**Online Presence**

Special thanks to Katie, Jeremy's assistant, for her work in helping get our social media presence very established. It's a great way to share stories and events from the LVH and get connected into the community. (If you've not yet *liked* the Lebanon Veterans' Home Facebook page, please pull out your phone and do so now!)

Our website continues to be updated weekly and is both a resource and an educational piece for us. If you've not checked it out, please do!

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers are really the lifeblood of the great care our veterans receive. Currently we have 28 active volunteers on the floor. Recreation Director, Megan Eddy, reports that 11 people are scheduled for the next volunteer orientation and 11 more to schedule an initial interview. Of note are the 409 total volunteer hours worked since November 13, our first volunteer orientation.

### **USDVA Recognition**

We have requested for our USDVA Recognition survey to happen in the middle of March. We need a minimum of 21 veterans to proceed. Kelly has made contact with an outside resource (nursing consultant) to help prepare our team. This group recently assisted a California veterans' home through their successful USDVA Recognition process.

**THE DALLES VETERANS' HOME**  
**Dallas Swafford, Program Manager**

**Success Update on Multi-Sensory Room:** In my December report I informed you of the installation of the Multi-Sensory Room in the Memory Care Unit of The Dalles Veterans' Home. As quick refresher, the Multi-Sensory Room is set to stimulate and enhance all the human senses and has a very therapeutic effect on those struggling with the effects of dementia. The positive results we have seen thus far have been extremely encouraging and the room is looking to be a very dynamic addition to OVH. The room is proving to be an innovative method in helping to counter some of the risky behavior and physical challenges of the veterans and spouses of veterans currently residing and OVH, The Dalles who are ailing from dementia.

I recently spoke with the head nurse in the Memory Care unit and asked for an update on how the room is impacting the quality of care on the unit. She informed me of three very encouraging trends that she and the staff in the unit have observed. The first, as of now the administration of psychotropic medication seems to be down, especially to those residents who typically display more aggressive behaviors. Monitoring this can be difficult as new residents admit and others sometimes pass away – to have an accurate data collection will be a long process but the results thus far are encouraging. Secondly, there has also been a noticeable reduction in the number of falls occurring on the unit. Collecting data on falls will also take a significant period of time before we can accurately state the reduction of falls is likely attributed to the Multi-Sensory Room, but again, the signs are very encouraging. The third and probably the most unexpected, is the effect it is having on the staff in the unit. Most of the components of the room are mobile and oftentimes staff will bring the components to the main living area of the wing. The feedback we are getting is that it is helping to calm and relax staff members and the residents see that and to become more calm themselves.

Oregon Veterans' Home is not the first state veterans' home to have a multi-sensory room. The Long Island Home in New York has that honor. However, the results we are seeing as a result of the Multi-Sensory Room in OVH, The Dalles have been shared with other state veterans' homes and the Maryland State Veterans' Home in Charlotte Hall has invested in a Multi-Sensory Room to add to their facility to enhance the quality of care for the veterans and spouses living at the home. I truly believe that we have an obligation to give those who served and the spouses of those who served our great nation the best and most innovation treatment and quality of care possible and we will stay vigilant in looking ways to achieve this goal and see to it that Oregon State Veterans' Home continue to be a pioneer in quality care and innovative treatment.