

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE
OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS (ODVA)**

Quarterly Meeting
Wednesday, September 2, 2015
9:30 AM – 12:00 PM
Hermiston Conference Center
415 S Hwy 395, Hermiston, OR 97838

MEETING MINUTES

Dennis Guthrie, Advisory Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.
Mary J. Mayer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
Tony García gave an invocation.

Installation of New Officers – Immediate Past Chair Al Herrera introduced the new executive committee members of the Advisory Committee and asked them to raise their right hand and take an oath of office for their new positions. New executive committee members are:

Dennis Guthrie, Chair
Trisa Kelly, Vice Chair
Tony García, Secretary

Announcements – Chair Guthrie reminded the audience this is a business meeting of the Advisory Committee. The audience is welcome to ask questions about the agenda and business meeting discussions during the Public Comment section of the program. Immediately following the business meeting there will be a Town Hall forum for attendees with the Advisory Committee.

Introductions – Chair Guthrie introduced himself and asked the Committee and others at the table to introduce themselves, state where they live, and service affiliation:

Dennis Guthrie, Redmond
Trisa Kelly, Portland, Oregon Air National Guard
Ed Van Dyke, ODVA Deputy Director
Tony García, Secretary of the Advisory Committee
Al Herrera, Beaverton, Immediate Past Chair of the Advisory Committee
Ryan Howell, Albany, Oregon Army National Guard
Mary Mayer, Portland, Retired Air Force Colonel
Tracy Ann Gill, ODVA Director's Office

Audience Introductions:

Bill Marshall, Air Force, Hermiston
Rich Halverson, Navy, VFW Sr. Vice Commander, Washington
Bill Stevens, Farm Near Pendleton, Navy
William Hill, US Army, Hermiston
Bruce Shriver, ODVA Financial Services Director
Laurie Skillman, ODVA Sr. Policy Advisory
Andy Smith, Association of Counties, Navy
Al Prosser, Army, Hermiston
John Good, Pendleton, US Air Force

Clifford Smith, Athena, VFW District 8 Commander
Ron Morgan, Salem, Army
Joe LaVerdure, Native Oregonian, Army, VFW
Brian Westfield, Director of VA Medical Center, Walla Walla
Dave? Hermiston, US Navy, Navy Reserves
Mary Jaeger, ODVA Aging Veteran Services Director
Jerry Walker, Air Force
Van Moore, Westcare Management
Cody Cox, ODVA Home Loans Program Manager
Jay Lillie, Marine, 1st Marine Division
Kenneth Elliott, Hermiston, Army
CJ McMeyer, Hermiston, American Legion
Bob Daniel, Hermiston, Second Vice Commander, District 6 American Legion
Bill Runion, VFW, AL, DAV
Al Frost, VFW 922, Argon, US Air Force, Korean Conflict
Len Scott, Pendleton, Marine, 17 Years ORNG
Stan Getz, Army, CVSO, Pendleton
Betty Herrera, Ladies Aux Military Order of the Purple Heart
Bill Tidd, US Air Force, Silver Lake WA
Toni Cordell, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Mitch Sparks, ODVA Statewide Veteran Services Director, navy
Brian Hunt, CVSO, Wheeler County
Tom Sanders, Salem, US Navy
Alfred Hansen, Airforce
Sandra McAlvey, Navy
John Cook, Air Force
Erick Olson, Hermiston KOHU/KQFM Radio
Gary Allen, Navy
Robert Daniel, American Legion Post #37
Glenn Scott, Umatilla County VSO
David and Jewell Mull, Retired Veteran
Linda Skendzel, Morrow County CVSO
Roger Ford, Veteran
Ken Hess, Retired

Review and Approval of June 3, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Chair Guthrie asked the committee members if they had reviewed the June advisory committee meeting minutes and if there were any corrections. Mary J. Mayer made a motion to accept the minutes as published. Al Herrera seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Directors Report - Ed Van Dyke

Ed Van Dyke thanked the board for coming and guests for attending. He reported Director Smith is at the National Association of State Directors of Veterans' Affairs (NASDVA) meeting in FL and sends his gratitude to you all for attending.

Mr. Van Dyke reported the 2015 Annual Report is complete and copies will be available to advisory committee members within the next week. A copy was passed around for review, but because of a printer error, a new report is being printed and will be made available to the advisory committee within the next week. Mr. Van Dyke thanked Nicole Hoeft and the communications team at ODVA for all their work preparing the report, ODVA staff for their input and advisory committee members for all they do. This year's report is more than statistics and budget analysis; it is a story about Oregon Veterans.

Mr. Van Dyke shared a few things on behalf of the Director:

The 78th legislative session has adjourned in July and will reconvene in February. ODVA is thankful for all the legislature did for our veterans this session. There were a number of significant policy bills and bills passed that honor Oregon veterans.

The Veterans Benefit Expo held in June was very successful. It was an impressive event serving veterans from all eras. ODVA is looking at holding next year's event in a larger venue, closer to Portland. Director Smith went on a listening tour and met with veterans and community partners around the state to better chart and organize veteran issues as we move forward to the next legislative session. Mr. Van Dyke announced that Eric Belt has retired and Mitch Sparks has accepted the challenge to be the Statewide Veteran Services Director. Mary Jaeger is the Aging Veteran Services Director and oversees both Veterans' Homes and the Conservatorship Program.

Subcommittee Updates:

Included with the briefing packet handed out to committee members and available on the website are quarterly updates from ODVA staff on Financial Services; Veterans Home Loan Program; Legislative Affairs; Statewide Veteran Services; Communications; Conservatorship Program; Oregon Veterans' Homes in Lebanon and The Dalles; Facilities and Construction for the past quarter. During subcommittee updates, ODVA staff presented their reports to the committee.

Statewide Veteran Services – Al Herrera introduced Mitch Sparks, Statewide Veteran Services Director, and congratulated him on his new assignment. Mr. Sparks stated that prior to his new role he served as Manager of the Salem Claims office and the Training and Outreach coordinator for ODVA. He is excited for this new leadership role. Mr. Sparks then reviewed the report submitted by Statewide Veteran Services. He reported on the Veterans outreach grant that ended in June this year. Overall, the vet extended outreach grant is a huge success. POA was increased by 28% with this grant. Umatilla County had an increase of over 328% in powers of attorney this past year due to the grant. Mr. Sparks let the audience know about the upcoming CVS0 training in Eugene, 12-16 October.

Chair Guthrie asked the committee if there were any questions for Mr. Sparks. Mary J. Mayer asked Mr. Sparks to share more about his background.

Mitch: I'm from Texas. During my 1982-2007 career in Navy, I have moved 13 times and when I retired I moved to Salem. I took 6 months off and then accepted a job as a VSO in Salem, then took manager job in Salem Claims. I then moved to the Training position and taught new County and State VSOs duties to better serve Veterans.

Home Loans Program – Al Herrera introduced Cody Cox, Home Loan Program Manager. Cody Cox presented the quarterly Home Loans Program report to the committee. He covered the federal regulation change effective October 3rd that requires all mortgage brokers follow a new closing process

called TRID regarding truth in lending and settlement disclosures. The Loan Program had to upgrade software to meet the needs of this new legislation. Mr. Cox reported effective June 2015 ODVA Home Loans offers a 97% loan program. However, if the vet is a highly qualified veteran, there are programs where the 3 percent can be gifted. Soon, a down payment assistance program will be available.

Aging Veteran Services – Mary J. Mayer introduced Mary Jaeger, Aging Veteran Services Director. In addition to presenting the Aging Veterans quarterly report, Mrs. Jaeger reported about 150 veteran clients are in the conservatorship program. In addition, there are approximately 80 veterans at the Oregon Veterans Home in Lebanon and 124 in The Dalles. She stated there are less skilled nursing homes in Oregon; there are more assisted living and short stay facilities.

Tony García asked: Is there interest in the community to have veteran assisted living or adult foster care – not only skilled nursing? Mrs. Jaeger stated ODVA has approached adult foster care providers and asked the same question and there will be more discussions going forward.

Mary J. Mayer asked: What about spouses taking care of veterans in their homes? Where do these folks go to get help? Mrs. Jaeger confirmed there are many agencies that can help families, for example, The Aging Disability Resource Center, partnering with the Alzheimer Association and Oregon Care Partners.

Financial Report –Trisa Kelly introduced Bruce Shriver, Chief Financial Officer, to present the Financial Services report.

Mary J. Mayer asked: Will the Women Veteran and LGBT coordinator positions be funded for one year only? Mr. Shriver confirmed they are not funded for the full 24 months of the biennium because they know it takes time during that period to advertise, interview and fill the position. They were both budgeted for 21 months and will be permanent and included in future budgets.

Legislation, Administrative Rules and Agency Policy – Tony García introduced Laurie Skillman, Senior Policy Advisor. Ms. Skillman provided an overview of the bills and legislation recently passed through the 78th Oregon Legislation Session. Ms. Skillman talked about next steps for filling the women’s veteran coordinator and LGBT coordinator positions, legislative days in November and the upcoming February legislative session. ODVA’s legislatively adopted budget included \$500K for counties. The Association of Counties and ODVA will work to get these additional funds distributed by formula involving the number of veterans to each county.

The legislature agreed to fund \$350K for the suicide prevention hotline for the next biennium, totally \$350K. Legislative days will be held in September, November and January; the next full session will be held in February 2016. During legislative days there are committee and task force meetings, in preparation for the February session.

Chair Guthrie: When will the hotline be up and running? Ms. Skillman explained the existing contract funding runs through February. The new contract will be up and running prior to that date. There will not be any down time.

Tony García: Do we have an agenda for what we are pushing forward for legislative days? Ms. Skillman explained there is an IT need to fix an issue with the current conservatorship program. ODVA is currently working the issue.

Legislative concepts for 2017-2019 biennium are due in the April/May 2016 timeframe.

Chair Guthrie shared that Director Smith and he have been looking at ways to get veterans and service organizations more involved in legislative affairs and educate them on how they can help.

Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center (Walla Walla):

Trisa Kelly introduced Brian Westfield, Director, Walla Walla Medical Center and read his bio to the committee. Mr. Westfield gave a presentation (slides attached) which included an update of the Walla Walla Medical Center leadership structure, performance measures, and construction projects at the Clinics. Mr. Westfield also gave an update of other facilities on campus which include the Residential Rehabilitation Unit, Specialty Care Clinic and Call Center.

Chair Guthrie announced the next Advisory Committee meeting will be held December 2, 2015 at the Hillsboro Civic Center.

Chair Guthrie adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.