

# *New Hampshire Justice Involved Veterans (JIV) Task Force*

*The mission of JIV is to serve justice involved veterans by promoting and supporting the development of veteran-centered programs throughout the State*

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

9:00 – 11:00am, NH National Guard State Military Reservation, JOC Conference Room  
1 Minuteman Way, Concord

## Meeting Minutes

Dial-in Number: 855.658.5908 PIN: 5060385#

*Thank you to NH National Guard for hosting and sponsoring the call!*

**In Attendance:** **Jill O’Neill**, Co-Facilitator of JIV Task Force/Community Mental Health Military Liaison, Greater Nashua Mental Health Center (GNMHC); Trooper **David Appleby**, NH State Police; **Daniel Bricker**, Reentry and Veterans Justice Outreach Officer, Manchester Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center; **Amy Cook**, Bureau Chief, NH Department of Health and Human Services (Department or DHHS), Bureau of Community-Based Military Programs (BCBMP); **Ed Drury**, Military Liaison/Special Projects, Lakes Region Mental Health Center; Trooper **Seth Gahr**, NH State Police; **Eric Golnick**, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Veterans and First Responder (VFR) Healthcare; **John Hattan**, Program Specialist IV/Military Families Liaison, DHHS, Bureau of Child Support Services (BCSS); **Dora Lavigne**, Unit Manager, Merrimack County Department of Corrections; **Diane Levesque**, LICSW, Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator, Manchester VA Medical Center; **Warren Perry**, Deputy Adjutant General, State of NH Adjutant General’s Department; **Terrie Raposo**, Director of Psychological Health, NH Army National Guard (NHARNG); **Lon Weston**, Treasurer, NH North Country Veterans Committee; **Excused:** **Larry Vogelmann**, Co-Facilitator of JIV Task Force/Director, Boots on the Ground Legal Project; **Susan Mead**, Community Educator & Outreach Director, GNMHC

- I. Welcome & Introductions** – All present introduced themselves and their professional affiliation.
- II. Approval of 11.28.2019 JIV Task Force Meeting Minutes** – minutes were approved.
- III. NH Military Leadership Entity- Update Governor’s Executive Order** – the trajectory to get this formally legislated was moving along
  - 2 new Veterans Service Officer’s hired – Executive Order has a bill # Senate Bill 208 (SB208) and was sponsored by State Sen. Bob Giuda, State Sen. Lou D’Alessandro, and State Sen. Dan Feltes, etc.; had broad bi-partisan support.
  - A veteran family member has been appointed to the Veterans Council, which reviews the activities of the Office of Veterans Services and provides guidance to the director, which at present is William Gaudreau. Link to Veterans Council page: <https://www.nh.gov/nhveterans/aboutus/council.htm>
  - **The Governor’s Challenge:** Amy Cook, Bureau Chief of Community Based Military Services at DHHS – moving along – Conference call on Friday regarding Governor’s Challenge – there had been a Site visit in December with SAMSHA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration).
    - Ten more people interested in getting involved in the challenge, which upped the total to 40 individuals who had expressed interest in getting involved.
    - The Friday conference call update would be informal. It would a data webinar with Rand Webinar about data resources.
    - A team of 13 was slotted as to going down to Washington D.C. in February to meet with SAMSHA.
    - There would be a Feb. meeting at the Policy academy.

### III. NH Military Leadership Entity- Update Governor's Executive Order (continued)

- What is interesting is that NH has been appointed as the Subject Matter Experts on Transportation issues.
  - Goal of Governor's Challenge is to address an initiative regarding identifying best practices which reduces Service members/Veterans/Family member suicide and sharing those best practices.
  - Most of involved states are out west. Virginia and NH are the only Eastern states represented. NH is the only state from the Northeast represented.
  - Teri Raposo stated that she was very impressed regarding Amy Cook's actions in addressing this very heavy lift.
  - There are four phases to the Governor's Challenge. The NH team-coordinated response was currently in the second phase. Third and fourth phases are local implementation which will involve area program managers. **JIV Task Force Membership- Update**
- Update from Jill O'Neill & Larry Vogelman, JIV Co-Facilitators who attended a meeting organized by Helen Hanks, Commissioner for NH Department of Corrections.
  - Currently the State of NH is able to service justice-involved Non-VA eligible veterans through Easter Seals. This ability was subject to end at the beginning of September 2019.
  - Update on Legislation to Senate Bill (SB) 51: establishing a commission to study expanding mental health courts across the state.
  - Review of data collected:
    1. **Scope of Problem- Validate Data** – Jill stated she had not been able to meet all her goals. Goal right now is polish the data. Realized in November 28, 2018 meeting with TAG that the data was insufficient to really present a clear picture of what makes the Veterans Tracks vital to both VA-eligible and Non-VA-eligible Veterans and Military members in the State of NH.
      - **Jill** stated the picture she had presented had not been clear enough.
      - **Stated we must look** to data and tell a story. One problem was that the data available to assist her in the presentation was old.
      - Amy Cook noted that the data available to her through the Governor's challenge was very helpful to her and might also be helpful to the JIV Task Force. Data had been provided through the Rand Corporation.
      - Ed Drury brought some data in today which he shared with all attending the meeting.
      - Data shows declining population of Veterans throughout the State. Data projects out through 2023.
      - Other data point that is most of the Veterans live in southern NH. Density of veterans in North Country is higher but community is more dispersed (is this true?).
    2. **Diane Levesque that Judge Chabot from Hillsborough North Superior Court is amenable to working with out-of-county participants in her Hillsborough County program.** Requires transportation and transfer from out-of-county districts..
      - Jill O'Neill stated she preached caution regarding this subject. She wondered aloud about how do we fold in veterans who are not VA-eligible into necessary treatment.

### III. NH Military Leadership Entity- Update Governor's Executive Order (continued)

- We need to vet that in case it comes up in the Legislature. Guard members are not considered Veterans. Need to go through this better with Rand Corporation. Think this is a great starting point. Kim Somarriba is interested in this.
  - Amy Cook stated she would look the RAND data and also talk to the instructor. Dan suggested that if we could general citizenship support. J stated that there might not be general awareness. Dan stated he would try to reach out regarding how citizens feel about the Veterans Track. We need to get Total number since 2014 DL is 104 have entered the Veterans Track in all three counties.
3. Jill O'Neill stated that the goal is to fund **a stand-alone coordinator to assist these programs throughout the State for Courts that serve both VA-eligible and Non-VA eligible veterans.** Volume currently not high because VA and Non-VA funding streams have been not been available.
4. **Susan Stearns – yesterday** first hearing on **SB51** – in 2014 state legislation directed the courts to implement as much as possible **the mental health court or treatment court model.**
- Four counties had not implemented such a model.
  - Hills North and Hills. South most similar amongst the courts that were active, but there was not a lot of cohesion between courts.
  - She felt the State needed to evaluate where it was in terms of its implementation goals.
  - Mental Health courts have a lot of impact on community of people who suffer from mental illness.
  - First Hearing on SB51 had gone well. They had also met with Judge King last week.
  - Someone from Administrative Office of Courts attended had attended SB51 Hearing.
  - I hope that if SB51 passes, what is implemented will also serve the Veterans Track process. Initial court in Veterans Track in Nashua began out of Mental Health Courts. This could be a plan B if we are not able to establish funding for Veterans Tracks throughout the State. This must be our focus ultimately.
  - Shift now in the Administrative Office of Courts to better embracing this model.
  - Diane Levesque stated that there is a real issue with Judges' time, i.e., availability to hear these cases. Currently 10 open Judge Positions.
  - Many judges do not have at time at present. This was why Merrimack County had not implemented Veterans Tracks, for example.
  - Currently Alex Casale does a great job with his limited resources.
  - Task Force definitely requires an advocate for Veterans Tracks in order to make the model sustainable.
  - Jill O'Neill stated that she would share the text of SB51. Link to SB1:  
[http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill\\_Status/billText.aspx?sy=2019&id=1081&txtFormat=pdf&v=current](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_Status/billText.aspx?sy=2019&id=1081&txtFormat=pdf&v=current)

#### IV. Veteran Behavioral Health Track Data- Validate Data

1. In addition, many Veterans Tracks have not figured out a way to serve Non-VA eligible veterans.
2. Some work to get Veterans Tracks within the Drug Courts but there was more flexibility within Mental Health Courts. Bill has a makeup with the Committee. Must be a way for our voice to be heard within this process. Jill stated she had not able to attend the Hearing. Docket is posted on-line.
  - Also, mapping where military service/veterans are in the state needed
  - Number of military service members/veterans booked through county jails in the state.
  - Total number of individuals referred both by VJO's and Easterseals Military Care Coordinators and referral source.
  - Diane Levesque stated she had met with Deanna Monroe and that she has worked to create a system that would track the individuals she meets with better.
  - Diane stated she might have trouble with getting the diagnosis for the Veterans who engage through Easter Seals. Stated that if the JIV Task Force can provide this.
  - Jill had some trouble with data that presents the complete picture of total number served in Veteran Behavioral Health Tracks.
  - Ed Drury had tried to dig up discharge information and had not found any, for instance bad paper discharges.
  - It was noted that criminality does not correlate with success in Mental Health courts
3. Numbers which would be helpful in quantifying Veterans
  - a. Total number entered the VBHT
  - b. Total number completed program
  - c. Total number terminated from program
  - d. Whom we serve – demographics
  - e. Which branch
  - f. Dates of service
  - g. Discharge status
  - h. Legal Charges
  - i. Diagnosis
  - j. Substance use
  - k. Current treatment model
  - l. Type of housing
  - m. Average length in program

Jill stated if this data could be compiled, it would be a great place to start.

**V. Operational Costs- assign Task Force members to conduct comparative analysis VBHT, Mental Health Court, Drug Courts across the state.**

**Jill stated the the JIV Task Force will work on this. We have Mental Health Liaisons and what the average.**

**Talked about the efficacy and efficiency of these treatment models. Terri Raposo** stated that there was not a lot of studies done nationally.

- Most articles she had read turned out to be abstracts of a single, larger article.
- In addition, the national study was surprising. Dovetailing courts in rural areas. One of the factors that contributed to recidivism was substance abuse.
- No reduction in cost to community. A lot of success in getting hooked with appropriate VA services. A lot of success in housing. Not a lot of increase in employment. Might be helpful in how to market.
- Amy Cook suggested that the awareness campaign must include measures of impact
- Data should include information about employment and stable housing
- Concrete evidence must support any pitch, which currently may not be out there.
- Soliciting input from community – definition of veteran may not be broad within the community.
- Terri Raposo stated we must be skeptical of what we are representing.
- Diane Levesque stated that there are judges who need education regarding veterans
- State Trooper Seth Gahr that some Veterans may assault EMS workers and State troopers. That Veterans Tracks can isolate and contain the individual and allow them to reengage with society.
- Need data and once we get it, whom do we use to put a face on it. Who represents us with the first-hand accounts. Need to think about who will be representing.
- Diane Levesque stated that the age of the Veteran when he or she becomes justice involved and the type of crimes that Veterans commits does not necessarily mean that the person will not benefit from involvement. Difficult for average person to understand.
- Also that Veterans do not come in with a diagnosis. They get a diagnosis once they engage with the VA or the Mental Health community.
- Missing right now is the pre-trial piece. Bail reform means relevant data is getting captured. Information may be available through Helen Hinks. Data about veterans in State Prison. Data also available is about trauma histories. Survey goes back five years. Would be nice to find out where we are now. Susan Stearns says she would share that data with Jill.

**VI. Veteran Track Sites-Updates:**

- Nashua Veterans Track – currently 7 enrolled, with 4 graduating February 7
- Manchester Veteran Track – 11 enrolled
- Rockingham Veteran Track – 5 enrolled– some more pleading in.
- Grafton Veteran Tracks (Three!) - unknown
- North Country Veteran Tracks – Lon Weston – met last week with Lara Saffo and picked her brains – she gave them the grant that had allowed them to get the Drug Treatment Courts stated. Five years ago had been reluctant to engage.
- Some back and forth regarding what is going on with the Mental Health Court funding

**VII. Further Discussion:**

Camp Resilience- scheduled to visit the Nashua Veteran Behavioral Health Track to discuss tailoring camp resilience for JIV participants on Thursday, February 7, at the Nashua Circuit Court, courtroom 9 at 2:30 PM, when Veterans Track commences.

Action Items – revisit mapping; Susan reach out to Kim, Diana reach out to Deanna. Jill will reach out to Justice for Vets, and will follow up with

**\*Next Meeting: Advisory committee meets on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 10am-12pm; location- Office of Nixon, Vogelman, Slawsky, & Simoneau; 77 Central St., Manchester**

**Next General Meeting at NH National Guard State Military Reservation, JOC Conference Room, 1 Minuteman Way, Concord Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM.**

***Thank you for your leadership and support to NH Veterans, Service Members & their Families!***