

## **NH STATE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting Date: 4 April 2023**

**Location: ECTC, 722 Riverwood Dr., Pembroke, NH**

### **OFFICERS and VOTING MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

**Chairman** - Paul Loyd

**Vice Chair** - Andrew Patterson

**Secretary** - Denise DeBlois

**Treasurer** - Kelly Dobens

**Chair Emeritus** - David Kenney

**Chaplain** - Armand Soucy

#### **Air Force Association**

Kevin Grady (prim)

#### **Air Force Sergeants Association**

Martha Gladu (alt)

#### **American Legion**

Mike Lopez (prim)

Bill Roy (alt)

Robert Blais (alt)

#### **AUSA - Col. Cross Chapter**

Greg d'Arbonne (prim)

#### **Catholic War Veterans**

Denise DeBlois (prim)

Robert Guldner (alt)

Armand Soucy (alt)

#### **Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association**

#### **Disabled American Veterans**

Rick Borrazas (prim)

Andrew Patterson (alt)

#### **Korean War Veterans**

Mike Lopez (pri)

#### **Marine Corps League**

Shawn Carboni (prim)

Gary Gahan (alt)

**Military Officers Association (MOAA)**

Peter Burdett (prim)

Robert Jaffin (alt)

William Luti (alt)

**Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)**

Laurance Miller

**National Guard Association of NH**

Steve Greco (alt)

**NH Army Retiree Council**

Mike Rice (alt)

**NH National Guard Enlisted Association**

Mike Rice (alt)

**NH Veterans Association**

Kelly Dobens (prim)

**Patriot Resilient Leader Institute (Camp Resilience)**

Steve Veinotte (alt)

**Reserve Officers Association of NH**

David Kenney (prim)

**Rolling Thunder**

Bruce Garry (prim)

Robert Brown (alt)

Diane Domenicis (alt)

**Veterans of Foreign Wars**

Leon Rideout (prim)

Paul Lloyd (alt)

**Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA-41)**

Raymond Goulet, Jr. (prim)

Robert Heichlinger (alt)

**LEGISLATIVE ADVISORS - non voting**

**Governor's Office - Trevor McAden**

**Senator Maggie Hassan - Justin Troiano**

**Senator Jeanne Shaheen** - Chris Scott  
**Congressman Chris Pappas** - Brett Lavasseur  
**Congresswoman Annie Kuster** - Molly Small

**LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS**

Rep. Terry Roy

**COMMITTEE ADVISORS/AGENCIES:**

**VAMC, Manchester, NH** - Kevin Forrest, Director  
**NHNG** - BG David Mikolaities, Adjutant General NHNG  
Warren Perry, Deputy Adjutant General  
**NH Veterans Home** - Kimberly MacKay  
Margaret "Peggy" LaBrecque, Sage Emeritus  
**Martins Point** - John Reed  
**State Veterans Council** - Jim Adams  
**Easterseals/Veterans Count** - Andrea Christoffels

**GUESTS:**

Arlene Madeiros - American Red Cross

Barbara Anderson - American Red Cross

Laura Gilman - Mobius Mobility (iBot)

Dr. Laura Laderman Garber - Holiday Cards 4 Our Military NH Challenge

Alicia Somers - Greater Manchester Mental Health

Brenda Pennels - Martin's Point Healthcare

Jorg Dreusicke - VFW

Miguel Morales - SBA

**OPEN MEETING/CALL TO ORDER:**

Paul Lloyd, Chairman, convened meeting at 1700.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Chairman

**Invocation:** Armand Soucy.

**Welcome - Remarks of the Chair:** None

**Secretary's Report:**

Meeting has a quorum; attendance on file.

There was one change to the minutes of the last meeting on 7 March 2023; minutes approved and placed in the record.

**Treasurer's Report:** Account balance is \$652.67. No change.

**Comments from Vice Chair:** Andrew Patterson - This is his last meeting. It has been a pleasure and a rewarding experience molding and developing policies for veterans in New Hampshire. He is leaving for North Carolina the end of May. Thank you for the opportunity.

**Comments from Director Emeritus:** David Kenney - none.

**Guest Speakers:**

1. Arlene Madeiros - American Red Cross

She presented information on the Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces (SAF). She reviewed the Red Cross Lines of Service Programs - International, Disaster Services, Preparedness, Health and Safety, and Biomedical.

Her PowerPoint presentation was sent out after the meeting.

Phone: 603-393-3026

Email: [arlene.medeiros@redcross.org](mailto:arlene.medeiros@redcross.org)

Web: [www.redcross.org/NNE](http://www.redcross.org/NNE)

2. Laura Gilman - Mobius Mobility (iBot) - Director of External Partnerships

The IBOT was invented by Dean Kamen in Manchester, NH. His focus was to invent something to improve lives around the world.

Laura discussed how the IBOT came about. The IBOT is a self balancing powered wheelchair. It can keep its balance while scaling obstacles such as curbs and stairs. It can raise its user from sitting to standing level. It can travel 22 miles on a charge. It is water resistant. Cost is \$32,000-\$45,000. The IBOT is free of charge at the VA for eligible veterans. There is no insurance reimbursement yet.

Laura gave a demonstration of how the IBOT works.

Phone: 1-833-346-4268 ext 6860

Email: lgilman@mobiusmobility.com

### 3. Dr. Laura Landerman-Garber - Holiday Cards 4 Our Military NH Challenge

This is a 501(C)3 non profit. The Holiday Card Challenge is NH based. Dr. Laura collects thousands of cards to send to our troops over the holidays. Cards are addressed to "Dear Warrior" and a message is included. Dr. Laura needs help with proofreading and bundling. She is looking for grants, donations, postage, resources and ideas.

The Holiday Card Challenge is on Facebook.

Email: holidaycardsnh@gmail.com.

## **SUPPORTING AGENCY REPORTS:**

### **Manchester VA Update:**

Director Kevin Forrest was not present.

Ena Lima, Executive Director of the VBA Regional Office in Boston spoke on the PACT Act and Claims processing. Over 2,500 claims processors were hired along with administrative staff. The VBA is updating processing tools. The grant rate is at 80 percent. Hypertension is the highest claim.

1.7 million claims were completed across the country last year. There is a 26 percent increase in claims. This generates more for VHA in screening and enrollment.

The VA is updating its rating schedule language. Twenty-six (26) presumptive conditions will be included.

**DMAVS Update:** Bill Gaudreau gave an oral report.

NHSVC (Shawn Buck):

Memorial Walkway & Headstone Cleaning Event on April 30th beginning at 10:00 AM. Bring your garden gloves, rakes and other small equipment to help with cleaning the walkway. Bring rubber gloves and arm-strength to help clean headstones. We will provide brushes, soap and water for headstone cleaning. All are invited to attend.

Due to several mitigating factors - military honors will be conducted at the beginning of all committal services.

Memorial Day Ceremony - Tuesday, May 30th at 11:00 AM. This years host is the American Legion.

Flags go out on Thursday, May 25th at 1:00 PM.

Flag retrieval is on Thursday, June 1st at 1:00 PM.

The 2nd Annual Memorial Planting Event is June 1st at 11:00 AM.

NHOVS (Bill Gaudreau): a lawyer is needed if suing the VA.

Gold Star Spouses Day is tomorrow (April 8th) from noon to 1:00 PM.

Dept of Military & Veterans Services: Warren Perry mentioned they are still looking to replace Amy Cook.

**NH Veterans Home:** Commandant Kimberly MacKay gave an oral report.

Resident status: 128 veterans (117 men and 11 women). Average age is 83.

There are 2 scheduled admissions over the next 3 weeks.

Vacancy rate is 36% - nursing 51% and LNA 41%.

NHVVH has an LNA training program.

Request for nursing service applications.

They are bidding on a contract for nursing services for RN's, LPN's, and NA's.

There is mandatory Overtime.

The in-house Pharmacy contract is expiring. They are hoping for a new contract.

Covid - the NHVH is out of Covid outbreak.

Budget: testifying April 21st on budget.

April is when the VA does its annual unannounced survey.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Nominations next month for Vice-Chair and Treasurer.

**LEGISLATIVE BRIEFINGS:**

Kevin Grady, Legislative Chair, gave a brief report and update on LSR's.

There were 3 hearings last week.

HB 163 - OTP in Senate.

HB 189 - should go through; in committee in Senate.

HB 206 - OTP

HB 229 - retained in committee

HB 330 - sent to finance; OTP

SB 174 - moved through; OTP

**LEGISLATIVE ADVISORS:** Written reports attached or emailed separately if submitted to Chair.

**Trevor McAden ((Gov. Chris Sununu):** not present.

**Chris Scott (Senator Shaheen):** brief report.

**Justin Troiano (Senator Hassan):** brief report

**Molly Small (Rep. Annie Kuster):** brief report..

**Brett Levasseur (Rep. Chris Pappas):** brief report.

**Upcoming Events:**

15 April 2023 - NGANH 2023 State Conference at the Puritan Backroom

1 June 2023 - Our Community Salutes - Fisher Cats Game - 4:00 PM.

1st Wednesday - Monthly POW/MIA Vigil - 1900 at Veteran's Park, Manchester, NH

4th Tuesday - Monthly POW/MIA Vigil - 1900 at Langdon Park, Portsmouth, NH

Every Thursday - Weekly POW/MIA vigil - 1900 at Hesky Park, Meredith, NH

1st Friday - Monthly POW/MIA vigil - 1900 at Pine Grove Cemetery, Salem, NH

**Next meeting date:** Tuesday, 2 May 2023

**Adjourn Meeting:** 1835

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise DeBlois, Secretary