



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
*PO BOX 41150 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1150 • 360-725-2167*

**Meeting Minutes**

<b>Meeting attended by (VAAC Member)</b>	Larry Alcantara, Rufus Hoefer & Bob Garrison
<b>Date</b>	May 3, 2018
<b>Time</b>	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
<b>Location</b>	SEL Event Center 1825 Schweitzer Dr, Pullman, WA
<b>Call to Order</b>	Meeting called to order by Rufus Hoefer Invocation by Charles Klaudt Pledge of Allegiance - All
<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions:</b>	Welcome and Introduction – Rufus Hoefer  Mayor Glen Johnson welcomed guests to their town and shared the commitment of his office and the city council to work with the community and partners in assisting veterans and their families that lives in the community.  Commissioner Michael Largent – He also thank the VAAC and the community for all the efforts being put forth in assisting veterans and their families that lives in Whitman County.
<b>Presentations</b>	<b>WDVA Update – Alfie Alvarado-Ramos</b>  WDVA continues to work with our community partners to ensure veterans and their families are connected with their earned benefits. WDVA priorities are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connecting veterans their families with their benefits</li><li>• Homeless Prevention and Intervention</li><li>• Veteran employment and Active Duty Transition</li><li>• Mental Health Care and Suicide Awareness &amp; Prevention</li><li>• Incarcerated Veteran Service and Prevention</li><li>• Enhancing internal Agency Capacity</li></ul> Legislative Updates: Link to veterans and military bills that passed this year: <a href="http://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/legislative-updates">http://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/legislative-updates</a>  <b>Employment – Hannah Schoepp &amp; Seth Maier</b>  WorkSource is available to everyone in Whitman County at: <a href="http://www.worksourcewa.com">www.worksourcewa.com</a>

Veterans also may have priority service by Disabled Veterans Outreach Coordinator or Local Veterans Employment Representatives in the Office. They can help reduce barriers to work by helping with transportation, wardrobe, work-required tools or other gear.

WorkSource also partners with WDVA to provide the Veterans Innovations Program and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program benefits to veterans who qualify. (more info at [www.dva.wa.gov](http://www.dva.wa.gov))

Other programs include the YesVets hiring initiative – [www.yesvets.org](http://www.yesvets.org)



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### **Vet Corps – Jason Alves**

Vet Corp is funded thru the AmeriCorps grant. Vet Corps members are stations at many colleges throughout the state and the Vet Corps help veterans achieve their higher education goals by:

- Providing training and support to college faculty, staff and administration and increase their awareness of student veterans needs
- Providing a peer connection for veterans new to higher education
- Helping the college to meet the needs of student veterans
- Providing veterans with connections to federal, state and local benefits
- Help veterans and their family member navigate Washington's higher education and training programs as they adjust from military to civilian life.

### **Behavioral Health – Peter Schmidt**

WDVA maintains a one of a kind state funded outreach/counseling program designed to provide confidential counseling services to veterans and their family members. Counseling services provided are: PTSD, Readjustment, Bereavement, MST Counseling. The list of statewide counselors can be found at:

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/program/counselors>

### **WA Veterans Cemetery – Rudy Lopez**

Eligibility for interment in the Washington State Veterans Cemetery mirrors National Veterans Cemetery eligibility requirements. In general:

- All U.S. Veterans discharged under conditions other than dishonorable;
- Spouses; and
- Dependent Children.

The Washington State Veterans Cemetery serves veterans and other eligible individuals from Washington and other States.

More information on the National Veterans Cemetery Eligibility Requirements is available at:

<http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/bbene/eligible.asp> or by contacting a WDVA Benefits Specialist directly at 1-800-562-2308.

The State Veterans Cemetery provides for in-ground casket burial sites and cremation interments.

For cremation interments the following options are available:

- A columbarium niche that includes an inscribed, granite marker;
- An in-ground cremation inurnment that includes an upright inscribed, granite marker;
- A scattering garden with a flush-to-ground inscribed granite memorial marker

### **Veterans Center Update – Joe Dumlao**

The Vet Center Program was established by Congress in 1979 out of the recognition that a significant number of Vietnam era vets were still experiencing readjustment problems. Vet Centers are community based and part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. In April 1991, in response to the Persian Gulf War, Congress extended the eligibility to veterans who served during other periods of armed hostilities after the Vietnam era. Those other periods are identified as Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, and Kosovo/Bosnia. In October 1996, Congress extended the eligibility to include WWII and Korean Combat Veterans. The goal of the Vet Center program is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to eligible veterans in order to help them make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life. On April 1, 2003 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs extended eligibility for Vet Center services to veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and on June 25, 2003 Vet Center eligibility was extended to veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and subsequent operations within the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The family members of all veterans listed above are eligible for Vet Center services as well. On August 5, 2003 VA Secretary Anthony J. Principi authorized Vet Centers to furnish bereavement counseling services to surviving parents, spouses, children and siblings of service members who die of any cause while on active duty, to include federally activated Reserve and National Guard personnel. For assistance after hours, weekends and holidays call: 1-877-927-8387.

## **WDVA Veterans Services Division – Cat Nichols**

WDVA is a full service state agency that assist veterans and their families or survivors. We advocate and aggressively pursues all federal and state benefits earned. Our office is staffed with qualified serviced officer to assist veterans and their families in accessing their benefits earned: VA Disability Compensation Claim, VA Pension or Widows Pension, Aid and Attendance, Health Care Benefits. Using a case management approach, our staff attend to the needs of veterans by providing behavioral health counseling, referral services.



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