



STATE OF WASHINGTON

VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PO BOX 41150 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1150 • 360-725-2157

VAAC PLANNING MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Ron Black, Bob Wallace, Heinz Haskins, Chuck Wharton, Ryan Morrison, Ryan Nabors, Shellie Willis, Chuck Whitman, Cat Nichols, Paul Herrera, Shawn Durnen, David Puente, Solomon Gilbert, Heidi Audette, Sue LaVoie, Liza Narciso, Steve Gill

Date: June 5, 2024

Time: 10:30-12:30

Location: Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs and Virtual

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Ron Black

Minutes Ron called the meeting to order:

Welcome and Introductions of all VAAC members present

Communications Plan

- Ron reviewed the Communications Plan and the responsibilities/duties of VAAC members.
- Town Hall protocols were reviewed.
 - Typically (4) town hall meetings are held each year.
 - Encouraged all VAAC members to attend when possible.
 - Explained the purpose and the role of the VAAC in these town hall meetings.
- RCW 43.60A.076 and WAC 484-10-035 were reviewed.

Ron called for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair

- Ron Black was nominated for a second term as Chair.
- Bob Wallace was nominated for a second term as Vice Chair.
- Chuck called for a motion to approve the nominations and the motion was approved.
- Ron asked that we nominate an alternate to serve as Chair or Vice Chair in the event one is needed.

- Shawn Durnen was nominated by Chuck Wharton, Shawn accepted the nomination. Motion was approved.

Upcoming Town Halls

- Long Beach/Pacific County – June 26th
 - Ron Black is the lead.
 - Ron shared the community visits that have been set up.
 - County Commissioners, Mayors, County Veterans Advisory Board
 - Transit
 - Long Beach Elks Club
 - Heidi has sent invitations to elected officials.
 - News article will be going out promoting the town hall – The Chinook Observer.
 - Heidi shared the purpose for the Women Veterans Forum portion of the town hall.
 - The town hall will be streamed on Facebook.
 - Portland VA will be present speaking on community care and prosthetics.
- Benton County – September 4th
 - Bob and Chuck to meet next week to discuss locations etc.
 - Suggested getting the information out at least a month in advance.
 - Liza suggested we connect with the Native American Tribes.
 - Try to have the facility confirmed at least 60 days in advance.
 - Steve offered his assistance in connecting with tribes for the town halls.
- Whatcom County – October 23rd
 - Shellie Willis & Shawn Durnen leads
 - Shellie has already reached out to the community.
- Commanders Call – December 4th
 - Post 1 AMVETS is available if we decide to have it in Tacoma.
 - A decision on the location for the Commanders Call will be decided at a later date.
 - Ron suggested having it at the National Armory in Tumwater again.
 - Cat suggested Island County

- Historically the Commanders Call is a joint meeting with the commanders and service officers of all veterans' organizations nationally recognized by the Federal Department of Veteran Affairs.

License Plate Emblem Fund

- We currently have \$25k in the fund.
- Suggested to let the community know and have them apply.
- Motion was approved to move forward.
- WDVA Communications will prepare a media release and information for the community.
 - Need to select a subcommittee to select the successful projects.

Outstanding Service to Veterans Awards

- Subcommittee selected to judge.
 - Ron Black
 - Shellie Willis
 - Shawn Durnen
 - Ryan Nabors
- Sue to send out information early.
- Proposal to include the National Guard and Tribes.
 - Motion was approved.
 - WDVA Communications will update the online nomination form and prepare a media release and information to the community.

2025 VAAC Town Hall schedule

- Feb. 5th – Kelso
 - Need VAAC volunteers for lead
- Apr. 23rd – Island County – Shawn Durnen
- Jul. 23rd – Omak – Ryan Morrison
- Oct. 22nd – Walla Walla – Chuck Whitman and a possible new VAAC member.
- County VSOs can assist with locations if needed.

Good of the Order

- David – if any VAAC member knows of something in the community that David needs to attend, let him know.
- Chuck Wharton – let everyone know that it's been an honor to serve on the VAAC. His term is up on July 1, 2024.

- David presented Chuck with a Certificate of Recognition for his service to the VAAC.
- Shawn asked that the form for the Homes visits be looked at.
 - Sue to review.
- VAAC information can be found here
<https://www.dva.wa.gov/councils-committees/governors-veterans-affairs-advisory-committee-vaac>

Motioned to adjourn @ 12:10PM.