



**COMMISSION FOR VETERANS
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES
6420 ALLENTOWN ROAD
CAMP SPRINGS, MD 20748**



The mission of the Commission is to evaluate the needs of county veterans and their families against the programs and services offered within Prince George's County, and to promote the development or expansion of programs and services when a need is identified.

The January 6, 2020 meeting began at 7:02 p.m at the Department of Family Services in Camp Springs, Md.

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Moment of Silence
Roll Call

Minutes from December were approved. Motion by Com. Martel and seconded by Com. Dickens.

Excused Absences: Com. Lewis
Com. Sligh arrived at 7:17 pm

Chairman's Report:

Chair Jewitt wished everyone a happy new year. He noted that the agenda offers a time for comments by citizens, there was a request to change the item to: veteran's comments. However, Chair Jewitt explained that as anyone is welcome to speak, some people may not be veterans.

He also commented that all members of the commission should be prepared to listen to the comments and that it should be expected that proper titles and appropriate speech be used when one is addressing the commission.

He apologized to Dr. Dula, the commissioners and the secretary for the unprofessionalism from a citizen's comments at the last meeting.

Chair Jewitt gave a reminder regarding Census 2020,

He reiterated that a resource guide created by Dr. Dula and Com. Lewis is in the works.

VeteransCommission@co.pg.md.us

<http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/709/Commission-for-Veterans>

The mission statement is on the website and on top of all Minutes.

Chair Jewitt stated that the commission is not operational, but the mission is executed in consultation with Dr. Dula and the County Executive. The commission is the eyes and ears of veterans services or lack thereof, and identifying the needs of veterans through organizations. The Commission is an advisory board.

VAO Report

Dr. Dula gave an overview of 2019. The first women's initiative, a surviving spouse initiative, and other benefits to help veterans have been created. These include questions from the veterans on how to complete their taxes, balance a checkbook and if they qualify for other medical benefits.

He is confident that the County Executive will make her decision to donate money towards the etching the names of the Prince George's County veterans who served in the Korean War on the memorial in DC.

Dr. Dula has money set aside for commission polo shirts and business cards. At the February meeting each commissioner will be given their new badge.

He believes that veterans are the diamond in the crown jewel of Prince George's County.

Focus Area Reports:

Com. Dickens is actively working with Census 2020 and passed out his business card. He highlighted the work of Retired Army Captain Georgia Eves, who can be reached at 240-882-3037.

Com. Sligh stated that a veterans with a disability of 30% or more will be placed at the top of the list for a federal job. Also, the 2020 Winterhaven Standdown event is in need of thermal clothes, ponchos, winter hats, playing cards, socks, and tissues. Be sure to register for the event. It was suggested by Com Martel to contact the MGM casino to obtain used playing cards. Dr. Dula will donate socks.

Com. Hafford would like to have a guest speaker from the Vietnam Veterans of America to discuss the status of the national organization. He will spearhead the effort.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Com. Martel asked to host another retreat. Chair Jewitt stated that the commission will host another when all members are assigned to the commission.

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Chair Jewitt asked of Dr. Dula to follow-up with the American Legion to identify a replacement for Com. Milligan.

Announcements

Guest speaker Brian Smith, retired Navy Captain and Vice chair of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC), spoke on the 2020 MMC's goals for the Maryland General Assembly. He provided a handout that explained several pre-filed bills of interest in the House and the Senate. These include: HR12 and HR32 and SB 20, 25, 59, 84, 90 and 109. Additionally, he passed out his business card. He can be reached at 703-623-3678. He also mentioned he has a blog, a Twitter account and Facebook page that posts many veteran focused information.

Ms. Silcott of the PG Vet Center highlighted two new groups with her organization. The Women's only support group and the Spouse support group which starts in two weeks. Also, the Warrior to Soulmate weekend retreat will be held February 8-9, 2020.

Com. Martel asked if it was allowable for a commissioner or the commission to endorse a proposed bill in the state legislature? Dr. Dula said he would research. The group collectively discussed that it would most likely have to come from the individual and not the commission. Additionally, it would be the same and testifying.

Com. Dickens asked if more information can be placed in the Prince George's County newspapers. Dr. Dula mentioned they are already looking into it.

Citizen Comments

Mr. Thaxton asked where the county veterans resource list is. Dr. Dula answered that it is being developed in stages.

Honors to Colors

Motion to adjourn made by Com. Martel and seconded by Chair Jewitt.

Meeting ended at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Jewitt

Acting Secretary

Guests: 4

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