

Mission

The mission of the Commission for Veterans is to elevate, develop and promote new and existing programs and services for Veterans and their families within Prince George's County.

Vision

It's our vision that Prince George's County offers our Veterans quality services and programs to ensure the enrichment and enhancement of life for our men and women and their families.

COMMISSION FOR VETERANS PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES

Monday, April 1, 2024

In person Meeting Minutes

*The meeting was held at the Veteran Affairs Office located at
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Suite L-023,
Upper Marlboro, MD*

- i. Call to Order 5:40 pm
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 5:40PM by Chair, Kimberly Lewis. Photographer Michael D. Davis took group photos and individual action shots that are to be loaded on the Commission website.
 - b. Following the group photo, participants partook in refreshments that were sponsored by Veteran Affairs Officer Dr. James Dula.
 - c. The Business portion of the meeting commenced at 6:10PM with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for the Prisoners of War (POWs) and fallen veterans, followed by Roll Call.

Roll Call:

Chair, Kimberly Lewis- **Present**
Commissioner Kenneth Hafford- **Absent**
Commissioner Richard Hollis- **Present**
Commissioner Glynn Parker- **Present**
Commissioner Riddick- **Excused Absence**
Commissioner-At-Large Ethel Sligh - **Present**
Commissioner James Childs, Jr. (AMVETS) - **Present**
Commissioner Dr. Gerald D. George (Marine Corps) - **Present**
Vice Chair, Commissioner Darrell C. Odom. Sr. (VFW) – **Excused Absence**
Commissioner Henry W. Harris (DAV) - **Present**
Veterans Affairs Officer Dr. Dula - **Present**
Secretary Montre' Dupree – **Excused Absence**

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II. Commissioner Reports

A. Commissioner Richard Hollis

- a. Commissioner Hollis reported that the Purple Hearts placed a wreath at George Washington tomb on 2/22/2024.

B. Commissioner Glynn Parker

- a. Commissioner Parker reported that the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) has held Department and Chapter Meetings. The DAV had a big event in March where the National Commander testified on Capitol Hill. They talked about what the DAV wants to do this year. Commissioner Parker took informational handouts to the meeting. There are critical policy goals that the veterans present to members of Congress. The DAV focuses on all veterans, male and female. The DAV will have department meetings in Ocean City in May. They will vote on officers and install members for the upcoming year. Then the officers will attend events and present what DAV is doing for veterans.

C. Commissioner Ethel Sligh present

- a. Commissioner Sligh reported that she is working with the Department of Veteran Affairs to get updated copies of the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents, Survivors, and Caregivers Veteran resource book that covers a myriad of issues from claims to burial information.
- b. She attended a Vietnam Veteran Recognition event at the Prince George's County Office of Veteran Affairs on March 29, 2024, and shared information about the Commission with women veterans and widows of veterans. On that same day, she met the founder and CEO of Apryl Showers, Bernadette Fobbs and her husband. The mobile Apryl Shower travels throughout DC, Maryland, and Virginia community to provide showers, toiletries, and clean clothes to the homeless, particularly veterans. Ms. Fobbs is an Army Veteran. The contact information is 210-323-6499, <http://www.aprilshowers.org>. The organization accepts donations.

D. Commissioner James Childs, Jr.

- a. Commissioner Childs represents American Veterans (AMVETS). He reported that he is the commander of the local post. His post aims to conduct quarterly events. They visit nursing homes quarterly. They go to Althea Woodland in Silver Spring, MD and they have visited Manor Care. Chair Lewis suggested that they consider adding the Clinton Healthcare Center located at 9211 Stuart Lane, Clinton, MD 20735.

E. Commissioner Dr. Gerald D. George (Marine Corps)

- a. Commissioner George represents the Marine Corp. He is part of the Free State Detachment 544 of the Marine Corp League and has resigned as

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Department Detachment. He reported that they are rebuilding and trying to increase their presence. He would like to conduct more outreach. His group will be at Bowie Fest this year.

F. Commissioner Henry W. Harris

- a. Commissioner Harris represents the DAV. He will meet with Commissioner Parker to discuss how they can best serve the DAV.

G. Commissioner Lewis (Chair)

- a. Commissioner Lewis reported that she is ironing out a few details of the inner workings of the commission.
- b. She was a panelist at a job fair in March and talk about the Commission and OVA's partnership with the Memorial Library System to assist students who are interested in the military in scoring higher on the ASVAB Test
- c. On March 27, 2024 in celebration of National Vietnam War Veterans Day, Commissioner Lewis, Commissioner Odem, and Dr. Dula attended the Cameron Grove Resort Center at 100 Cameron Grove Boulevard, Upper Marlboro, MD. We recognized all Veterans but gave specific honor and Welcome Home to the Vietnam Veterans and their spouses. The Vietnam Veterans were presented with a letter from County Executive, Angela Alsobrooks and their spouses were presented with a letter of appreciation from Dr. Dula. The Vietnam Veterans received pins.
- d. On March 29, Commissioner Lewis participated in a Vietnam Veteran Recognition ceremony at the Prince George's Veteran Affairs Office.
- e. Commissioner Lewis referred two veterans to the Veteran Affairs Office. One was suffering from depression due to the recent death of his son and another is a widower and a caregiver.

III. Report of Dr. Dula, Veterans Affairs Officer

- H. Dr. Dula reported that he is searching for grants for homeless veterans and for Apryl Showers. Housing for women veterans will become available in Suitland, Mayland.
- I. Dr. Dula will work with Commissioner George to help keep the Marine Corp Detachment open. The Marine Detachment League is looking for good Marines to join the detachment and establish a regrowth.
- J. The Galliant Warrior initiative will work with Purple Hearts and Wounded Veterans groups. Galliant Warrior project is similar to Wounded Veterans Program, but they provide more services.

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- K. The Warm Hearts and Surviving Spouses Initiatives are making hats for homeless veterans for the cold season. They donated some of the hats to Apryl Showers.
- L. New Programs – 1. Foster Care, We Care; 2. Operation Gallant Warrior – program that will lend assistance simply because you are wounded or disabled; 3. Apryl Showers
- M. Grants – Dr. Dula encouraged Veteran Groups to reach out to businesses such as Walmart, CVS, etc. for grants for programs such as Apryl Showers.
 - a.
- IV. New Business
 - A. It was a consensus that we have some in person meetings and some virtual meetings. In person meetings will be at 5:30 at the Veterans Affairs Office in Upper Marlboro and Chapter 7 in Bowie. The Virtual Meetings will remain at 7PM.
- V. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm. **Next meeting is scheduled for a virtual meeting on May 6, 2024, at 7PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Commissioner Lewis, Chair