**Virginia Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees**

**Virginia War Memorial**

**621 S Belvidere St**

**Richmond, VA 23219**

**Meeting Minutes**

**December 5, 2024**

**10:00AM – 2:00PM**

A meeting of the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, December 5, 2024 at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S Belvidere St, Richmond, Virginia. The meeting was called to order at 10:08a.m.

**Trustees Present**

* Brad Williamson *(Veterans Services Foundation Chairman)*
* Mike Coleman
* Marc Andersen
* Allan C. Burke *(virtual)*
* Tim Pillion
* Jarris L. Taylor, Jr.
* Craig Colucci
* Shannon Spencer-Watson *(virtual)*
* James R. Poplar
* Joel Griffin
* Brandy Jones
* Danny Vargas (virtual)
* Mike Coleman
* Omari Faulkner (virtual)
* Jack O. Lanier
* **Trustees Absent**
* Kathleen Murphy

**VSF Advisors Present**

* Chuck Zingler *(Commissioner of Department of Veterans Services)*
* Jordan Stewart *(**Assistant Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs)*
* Jack Lanier
* Juanita Farrow

**VSF Staff Present**

* Kayla Arestivo *(Executive Director)*
* Darius McKenney *(Business Manager)*

**Commonwealth of Virginia Office of the Attorney General**

* Val *(OAG, Assistant Attorney General) Deputy*

**Board of Veterans Services Members Present**

* Carl Bedell *(Chairman)*

**Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Services Organization Members Present**

* Daniel Cortez *(Deputy)*

**DVS Representatives Present**

* Kim Barton
* Tramaine Carroll-Payne
* Antionette Johnson
* Patrice Jones
* Ben Shaw
* Kendra Ellison
* Tiffany Woody-Wiggins
* Dara Hector

**Materials Distributed and Attached**

* VSF Agenda *(Attachment 1)*
* VSF September 12th Board Meeting Minutes *(Attachment 2)*
* VSF Finance Committee Report *(Attachment 3)*
* Schedule of Receipts, Expenditures and Budget, by Activity For the Month Ended June 30, 2024 (FM12) *(Attachment 4)*
* Schedule of Receipts, Expenditures and Budget, by Activity For the Month Ended July 31, 2024 (FM01) *(Attachment 5)*
* Statement of Assets For Month Ended July 31, 2024 (FM01) *(Attachment 6)*
* VSF Sept 2024 Development Committee Update *(Attachment 7)*
* VSF Procedures and Policies Committee Report *(Attachment 8)*

1. **Call to Order**
   1. **Opening and Pledge of Allegiance**

VSF Chair Williamson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:03a.m. Chair Williamson led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

* 1. **Roll Call of Trustees and Quorum Determination**

With 10 of 15- trustees present, VSF Chair Williamson advised a quorum was determined.

Introductions were made for the newly appointed staff in attendance –Heather Hopkins.

Introductions were conducted by DVS staff and members of the public in attendance.

* 1. **Approval of Agenda**

**The meeting agenda was previously sent to the Trustees electronically, and a printed copy was included in the Board Agenda Packets.**

Chair Williamson asked if everyone had the opportunity to review the meeting agenda, to which there were no objections. Mike Coleman **moved** to approve the meeting agenda and Tim Pillion **seconded** the motion.

1. **Review and Approval of June 13, 2024 VSF Meeting Minutes**

VSF Chair Williamson asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ros Poplar **moved** the approve the minutes as presented and Craig Colucci **seconded** the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

1. **REPORTS**
2. **Secretary’s Report: Craig Crenshaw, Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs**

Deputy Jordan Stewart provided an update on the preparations for the future.

The Governor tasked a work group to produce a piece of legislation for data to allow stats on Vet suicide to.

Education help. Tidying up loose encountered in year one. With the partneships, we are confident they csan get it done. I appreciate the partnership

The report concvluded with a strong call to action, edncouraging team members to share their ideas and work together to advance the group's objectives as they move forward. The commitment to an aggressive and deliberate engagement strategy was reaffirmed, setting a positive tone for the upcoming initiatives.

1. **Department of Veterans Services**

Zingler say we have to better reaching veterans. I don’t there is a better state serve. Homlessness and trasnsition isn’t where it should be. There is more work to do.

VVN formally launched November 11. We ensure improvement. 2/3 is positive feedback. It shows where we can improve. We held off the attempt to stop VMESDEP. We have gone back to normalcy. We have to go back to work January to keep it. Grant programs are growing. Crenshaw and Zingler have gone to prisons to meet with veteran inmates. There is great hope for us. Time talent and treasure. People is the most important. We are blessed to have great talent. Car centers.

1. **Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Williamson led the report by providing updates regarding the board of trustees, which now has 15 out of 16 positions filled. This has allowed for 3 members per committee. This has elevated the committees to do great things.

Instituted ways for committees to meet.

Jack Lanier was asked to stay on as an advisor.

Ms. Ann Hand agreed to donate 50% of proceeds to the foundation. We hope to keep this membership. Shout out to Craig for his Hit-a-thon.

Spoke to the Co-Star group. Leader in commercial real estate. Building a bigger facility. Opportunity with them.

Upcoming events, reef laying ceremony at the cemeteries. Let Kayla know if you are interested in attending the event.

1. **Board of Veterans Services**

Carl Bedell delivered his report

Initiatives vet groups, connect veterans,

Worked with JLC to support their legislation. Met with Kayla to know how the board can support.

Next meeting is tomorrow

Chairman Bedell announced that the next board meeting is scheduled for two weeks from now, where various task forces will be discussed to enhance the operations of the Department of Veterans Services (DVS). He has also attended several veterans-related events in recent months, emphasizing the board's commitment to increased visibility and engagement within the community.

He noted that he has had productive discussions with Kayla and Bill from the JLC to improve coordination and support for veterans at the state level. Chairman Bedell expressed his enthusiasm for connecting with everyone and contributing to the mission of the board.

He concluded by thanking the group for the opportunity to share his update and looks forward to future collaboration.

1. **Joint Leadership Council**

Daniel Cortez,

Veterans are coming ack. Initiatives, verification with status in jails and prisons. Exploitation of veterans. Vet national guard…..

Providing honor for women’s vets. We have sponsors. I never seen a group work more in harmony and that’s because of Chuck Zingler’s leadership.

**Foundation Report**

Executive Director Arestivo mentions how this meeting is her one year mark.

Executive Director Arestivo mentions the team is very

Mike Coleman asked about other DVS services lines and what they do. Kayla mentions obstacles.

Zingler mentions how the care centers are great. Competition for care. Veteran network will market the service. DMVCC was ranked 4th best care center in the state. One of the best in the country. SBVCC had similar recognition.

OKRs have been moderately advised. $603,123.24 since 1/1/2024. Increases in foundation engagements. Networking is impactful. 1000 donors, 150 active donors.

We are in the yellow for attracting younger donors. Social media people to further our reach.

$110k for VETE pipeline. Corporate sponsorships. Grants are in que. New grant writer starting 12/10/24. Discussions with Cap1

Leadership academy.

$45k raised for JCVCC through Craig Colucci.

Ann Hand fundraiser, $5k raised.

Kendra Scott fundraiser, $600 brought in

During a discussion with Secretary Crenshaw, Executive Director Arestivo shared insights about VSF’s presence at events. For the first time, VSF has created promotional materials that allow for better visibility, even in settings where it’s challenging to set up a table. Arestivo emphasized that her role often involves direct engagement—shaking hands, initiating conversations, and introducing the VSF’s mission. While not every interaction leads to tangible support, the visibility of the VSF and its mission is crucial. She expressed a desire for the VSF name to be more prominent and relevant, underscoring the importance of being present at events to foster recognition and connection.

Chairman Williamson added that at these events, both he and Kayla make a point to say a few words, informing attendees about the foundation and how the funds raised support DVS and its programming.

In her next update, it was highlighted that Commissioner Zingler facilitated a connection with Ms. Ann Hand, an artisan in Washington, D.C., who has been recognized as a leader at the White House. Ms. Hand, known for her kindness and artistic talents, has agreed to create and sell a special veteran pin for Veterans Day, with proceeds benefiting the Foundation. This initiative was acknowledged as a significant contribution to the foundation's efforts in supporting veterans.

She goes on to mention that four vans were donated to the each of the Care Centers, marking a positive contribution this year. Darius represented the organization at the Dublin Cemetery Ceremony in August, supporting the DVS event.

Looking ahead, excitement was expressed for the 2024 Virginia Veteran Military Fair and Executive Forum on October 3rd, where the pipeline project will be showcased. This event provides an excellent opportunity for the Foundation to increase visibility and connect with attendees.

Additionally, the Birdies for Charity fundraiser, ongoing since May, will conclude at the end of October. There is also a golf fundraiser hosted by George C. Marshall MOAA, which will take place September 13th. The Frieden Agency & Wealth Management Veteran's Hit-a-Thon hosted by trustee Craig Colucci will be happening in November in Virginia Beach.

Mr. Colucci reported that the current fundraising goal is $45,000 for the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center, with $25,000 raised so far. The initiative aims to raise awareness about veterans' mental health issues, specifically targeting the alarming statistic of 6,400 veterans who commit suicide each year.

Executive Director Arestivo shared the final upcoming fundraising event will be held at the Kendra Scott store in Charlottesville on November 10.

After opening the report up to questions, trustee Shannon Spencer-Watson asked if the Foundation had any intention to start exploring social media to spread awareness. Executive Director Arestivo ensured that it is on the radar and will be something to focus on in the future.

1. **Finance Report**

Kim Barton presented the finance report.

1. **VSF Finance Committee Report**

Mike Coleman

Current checking amount is 2.8 million. 2 million to specific to care centers. 900 for VVFS. $550-660k. Last year 850k was allocated to service lines. Getting unrestricted funds is something we need to work on. We need to allocate the big donations in other places. We need to raise additional funds for other programs.

1. **Development Committee Report**

Mr. Marc Andersen provided a brief report from the Development Committee.

Mr. Andersen emphasized the importance of telling the story. Can we bring people together. Coffee, lunch. Get together and what actions we will take. Bring people together in some format to drive donations.

Conversation turned to action.

Mr. Andersen concluded by expressing enthusiasm for collaborating with the team to achieve their objectives.

Brad

1. **Policies and Procedures Report**

Brad presented the policies and procedures report.

He requested the Ms. Hopkins be on this committee to bring her expertise.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**
2. **Approval of Development Committee Recommendations**

Mike colman motioned, craig seconded

1. **Approval of Finance Committee Recommendations**

Approval was needed for Davis & McDaniel Care Center to spend the $663,500 for new beds. Mike Coleman **moved** to approve the motion. Craig Colucci **seconded** the motion.

1. **Approval of Procedures and Policies Committee Recommendations**

Joel motioned, Craig seconded

1. **Approval of 2nd Quarter Financial Report**

Coleman **moved** to approve the motion. Ros Poplar **seconded** the motion.

1. **Other New Business**
   1. **Board Chair**

**Board Committee Assignments:**

P&P Chair

Reef laying for cemeteries.

Brad presented Jack Lanier with recognition for his role as a trustee for over 8 years.

Lanier said being board member is a great opportunity. Gave a shoutout to Kayla (best decision).

Still has strong interest in supporting veterans of VA. Started first graduate program of public health at VCU. Stills serves with Richmond behavioral health society.

Motion to break for 10 minutes.

Marc motioned, Craig seconded.

* 1. **Executive Director**

**Hosting an event 101**

1. **Public Comment**

N/A

1. **Adjournment**

Chairman Williamson called for a motion to adjournment. Marc motioned, Craig seconded.

The next Board of Trustees Meeting will be held on December 5th, 2024 at the Virginia War Memorial. The meeting was adjourned at 11:09am.