

Virginia Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees
Virginia War Memorial
621 S Belvidere St
Richmond, VA 23219
Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2026
10:00AM – 12:00PM

A meeting of the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S Belvidere St, Richmond, Virginia. The meeting was called to order at 10:04a.m.

Trustees Present

- Joel Griffin (*Veterans Services Foundation Chairman*)
- James R. Poplar
- Mike Coleman
- Allan C. Burke
- Tim Pillion
- Matt Scalia
- Heather Hopkins (*virtual*)
- Brandy Jones
- Steven Arango (*virtual*)
- Jarris Taylor, Jr.

Trustees Absent

- Kathleen Murphy
- Craig Colucci
- Danny Vargas
- Shannon Spencer-Watson
- Omari Faulkner
- Amanda Brownfield

VSF Advisors Present

- Jack Lanier

VSF Staff Present

- Kayla Arestivo (*Executive Director*)
- Darius McKenney

Virginia Department of Military Affairs

- Tim Williams (*Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs*)
- Lesley Kipling
- MacKenzie Heidelberg

Commonwealth of Virginia Office of the Attorney General

- Valentine Southall (*OAG, Assistant Attorney General*)

Board of Veterans Services Members Present

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Services Organization Members Present

- Bill Aramony (*virtual*)

DVS Representatives Present

- John Maxwell (*Commissioner of Virginia Department of Veterans Services*)

- Steve Combs
- Tammy Davidson
- Kim Barton
- Brandi Jancaitis
- Monique Brabham
- Chase Stanga
- Tramaine Carroll-Payne

Materials Distributed and Attached

- VSF Agenda (*Attachment 1*)
- VSF Trustee Roster (*Attachment 2*)
- VSF March 11th Board Meeting Minutes (*Attachment 3*)
- DVS Commissioner Report (*Attachment 4*)
- VSF Chairman Report (*Attachment 5*)
- BVS Chairman Report (*Attachment 6*)
- JLC Chairman Report (*Attachment 7*)
- VSF Finance Committee Report (*Attachment 8*)
- VSF Procedures and Policies Committee Report (*Attachment 9*)
- VSF Budget for DVS FY2027 (*Attachment 10*)
- VSF Funding Memo (*Attachment 11*)
- VSF – DVS FY2027 MOU (*Attachment 12*)

1. Call to Order

a. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance

VSF Chair Griffin Chairman Joel Griffin called the meeting to order at approximately 10:17 a.m. A quorum was not present at the start of the meeting; therefore, voting items were deferred until quorum was reached. The Board proceeded with reports and discussion items.

b. Roll Call of Trustees and Quorum Determination

Trustee Jarris Taylor, Jr. arrived at approximately 10:45 a.m., at which time quorum was established.

c. Approval of Agenda

Chair Griffin asked if everyone had the opportunity to review the meeting agenda, to which there were no objections. Trustee Pillion **moved** to approve the meeting agenda and Trustee Jones **seconded** the motion.

2. Review and Approval of March 11, 2026, VSF Meeting Minutes

VSF Chair Griffin asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Trustee Poplar **moved** the approval of the minutes as presented and Trustee Coleman **seconded** the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. REPORTS

A. Secretary's Report

Secretary Tim Williams thanked the trustees and DVS staff for their continued work and support of the Foundation. He noted the importance of strengthening the Foundation's marketing efforts and acknowledged the videographer present to capture footage for future Foundation promotional materials. Secretary Williams stated that approval had been received to use available state resources for initial marketing work and recognized this as a modest but important step forward.

The Secretary also thanked Executive Director Kayla Arestivo for her leadership and noted that

additional events and opportunities are being explored to support the Foundation's future growth.

B. Department of Veterans Services

Commissioner John Maxwell provided an overview of DVS's broader strategic direction and thanked the Board for the Foundation's continued support of veterans and their families across the Commonwealth. He emphasized that Foundation funding helps DVS address needs that may not otherwise be met through state or federal resources, including support for housing stability, behavioral health, workforce development, care centers, cemeteries, and other veteran and family services.

Commissioner Maxwell explained that DVS is working from a focused strategy intended to guide the agency's priorities and resource decisions. He noted that the agency's work touches nearly every stage of a veteran's life, from transition out of military service to long-term care and final honors through Virginia's state veterans cemeteries. He also stressed the importance of partnerships, stating that DVS cannot meet every need alone and must continue working with community partners, donors, agencies, and organizations throughout the Commonwealth.

The Commissioner discussed several major areas of focus for DVS, including economic stability, access to behavioral health and healthcare, housing stability, improved digital tools and referral systems, military family support, and honoring the legacy of service. He highlighted the importance of helping veterans access earned benefits, employment resources, healthcare, housing support, and behavioral health services. He also noted that DVS is working to strengthen the Virginia Veterans Network and improve the referral process so community members, providers, and partners can more easily connect veterans to the appropriate services.

Commissioner Maxwell spoke about the seriousness of veteran suicide prevention and the need to support veterans during transition, particularly those facing behavioral health or substance use challenges. He explained that Foundation support for behavioral health services helps veterans access care when services may not be available, appropriate, or preferred through other systems. He also noted that DVS continues to work with partners and grant programs to support behavioral health initiatives across the Commonwealth.

The Commissioner also discussed the importance of understanding and addressing housing instability among veterans. He noted that while Virginia has previously been recognized for functionally ending veteran homelessness, DVS must continue evaluating current needs and ensuring that veterans and their families can access stable housing support.

In discussing military families, Commissioner Maxwell emphasized the value and resilience of military spouses and the need to better understand family needs related to employment, childcare, and stability during transitions. He also spoke about the importance of telling the story of military service and veteran contributions, including the impact veterans and their families continue to have in their communities.

Commissioner Maxwell closed by reiterating that the Foundation's work is essential to DVS's ability to meet emerging needs and respond flexibly to veterans and families. He encouraged trustees to contact DVS when speaking with potential donors or partners, noting that DVS can provide impact stories and program information to help demonstrate the value of Foundation support.

A question was raised regarding whether Foundation funding could support suicide prevention. Commissioner Maxwell explained that Foundation funding supports behavioral health efforts by helping veterans access providers and services that may not otherwise be available or may not be accessed through VA care. He also distinguished between clinical behavioral health services, peer recovery support, and broader grant-funded behavioral health initiatives.

C. Chairman's Report

Chairman Griffin provided a brief report and highlighted ongoing activity with the Joint Leadership Council and the Board of Veterans Services. He noted continued movement around the VMSDEP-related subcommittee work and stated that updates will be shared as additional information becomes available.

Chairman Griffin also announced that Amanda Brownfield had been appointed as a new trustee and would join future meetings. He then recognized Trustee Allan Burke for eight years of service on the Board. Trustee Burke thanked the Board and stated that it had been an honor and pleasure to serve. Chairman Griffin presented Trustee Burke with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Board.

D. Board of Veterans Services

No presentation during the meeting, but their report was included in meeting packet.

E. Joint Leadership Council

Bill Aramony provided a brief JLC update. He noted that his term as chair had ended and that Katherine Martinez is now serving as the new JLC chair. He stated that the JLC met on June 10 and that its next meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2026. He also noted that JLC voted on several initiatives, including VMSDEP, and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between DVS, VSF, BVS, and JLC.

F. Foundation Report

Executive Director Kayla Arestivo provided the Foundation report. She noted that the Board is currently full with the appointment of Amanda Brownfield, though a vacancy is expected with the conclusion of Trustee Burke's term.

Executive Director Arestivo reviewed the Foundation's impact areas and referenced the April budget meeting and impact report, which provided insight into how DVS has used Foundation funds over the past year. She encouraged anyone who had not reviewed the report to request a copy.

Executive Director Arestivo reported that the Foundation is below the \$1 million revenue goal set for the year and is currently at less than half of that target. She noted that touchpoints, newsletters, networking, and engagement efforts have increased, but grant opportunities have been difficult due to the Foundation's current 170(c)(1) structure and the competitive grant environment.

Executive Director Arestivo also discussed the potential for future trustee-hosted events, networking opportunities, and fundraisers. She noted that a previously considered gala is not currently moving forward, but she remains interested in working with trustees and partners on future donor engagement opportunities.

Executive Director Arestivo also reported that general funds had been approved for limited

marketing work and Foundation lapel pins. The marketing footage being captured at the meeting is intended to support future website and donor engagement efforts.

Executive Director Arestivo highlighted two recent community fundraising events: the GStek golf tournament in Chesapeake and the Bull Run Harley-Davidson poker run. She thanked the organizers and supporters of those events and noted the value of continued community-based fundraising.

Chairman Griffin added that the Foundation is behind its funding needs and encouraged trustees to identify opportunities in their own networks, including small events, local businesses, and community gatherings. He emphasized that even smaller gifts can add up when trustees actively engage their networks.

G. Treasurer's Report

Kim Barton presented the Treasurer's report. As of March 31, 2026, the total income for the FY26 3rd Quarter reached \$467,956.17. Total expenditures during the same period amounted to \$581,583.13, resulting in an excess of income over expenditures of (\$113,626.96).

The beginning fund balance was \$2,888,716.38, leading to a total FY2026 3rd Quarter ending fund balance of \$ 2,775,089.42.

H. Finance Committee Report

Trustee Mike Coleman provided the Finance Committee report. He noted that funds raised through grants and donations through the end of May totaled approximately \$582,000. While the Foundation is not expected to meet the \$1 million goal, current fundraising is above the previous year and above the recent average. He noted that FY25 included a significant amount of in-kind support, including four vans, which affected year-to-year comparisons.

Trustee Coleman stated that DVS has identified approximately \$2 million in annual needs over the past several years, while current fundraising levels are not sufficient to meet that full need. He stated that the Foundation should continue evaluating its fundraising strategy and structure to better support Virginia's veterans.

The Finance Committee reviewed current expenditures by program area. Discussion included the fact that some restricted funds cannot be moved between programs, even when other areas have greater need. Trustees discussed the importance of encouraging unrestricted giving, as unrestricted donations provide greater flexibility to respond to DVS priorities.

Trustee Coleman reviewed the proposed FY27 budget. He stated that the Finance Committee recommends allocating \$850,000 to DVS effective July 1, 2026. He also noted that approximately \$600,000 in unrestricted funds would be used to support the FY27 budget. The Board discussed maintaining reserve levels and ensuring that funds are used in accordance with Foundation policy.

Additional discussion included DVS care center needs, possible future appropriations, and cemetery requests for three six-passenger golf carts. Trustee Coleman stated that the Foundation may seek outside support or in-kind donations for the golf carts.

I. Procedures and Policies Committee Report

Trustee Jarris Taylor provided the Procedures and Policies Committee report. The committee discussed proposed bylaw language related to trustee attendance expectations. The goal of the

proposed language is to support consistent trustee participation, maintain quorum, and ensure continuity of governance.

The committee also discussed the potential creation of a separate 501(c)(3)-type fundraising entity to support the Foundation. The committee supported continued exploration of that structure and recommended that the Board consider moving forward cautiously.

J. Nominating Committee Report

Chairman Griffin stated that he is completing his year as Chairman and will not seek another term due to increased professional demands and personal circumstances. He stated that he remains committed to serving as an active trustee and supporting the Foundation through fundraising, awareness, and support for staff. He thanked the Board and staff for their support during his tenure as Chairman.

Trustee Coleman provided the Nominating Committee report. He stated that the committee had planned to present a full slate, but the chair position became vacant after Chairman Griffin indicated he would not seek another term.

The presented officials included: Vacancy for Chair, Trustee Heather Hopkins as 1st Vice Chair, Trustee Matt Scalia as 2nd Vice Chair.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Development Committee Recommendations

- I. No vote

B. Approval of Finance Committee Recommendations

- I. Approval of FY27 DVS Budget Proposal
 - i. Trustee Coleman **made a motion** to approve the budget proposal presented by the finance committee. Trustee Burke **seconded** the motion.

C. Approval of Procedures and Policies Committee Recommendations

- I. Approval of Policy Updates – Trustee Attendance
 - i. Trustee Coleman **made a motion** to approve the committee’s proposed attendance policy. Trustee Pillion **seconded** the motion.
- II. Approval to endorse the creation of VSF 501(c)(3) Fundraising Entity
 - i. Trustee Coleman made a motion to approve the creation of a 501(c)(3). Trustee Jones **seconded** the motion.

D. Approval of 3rd Quarter 2026 Financial Report

- I. Trustee Pillion **made a motion** to approve the finance report as presented. Trustee Jones **seconded** the motion.

E. Approval of Nominating Committee Recommendations

- I. Trustee Coleman **made a motion** for Trustee Hopkins as the 1st Vice Chair. Trustee Scalia **seconded** the motion. No objections were made and Trustee Hopkins was elected.
- II. Trustee Coleman **made a motion** for Trustee Scalia as 2nd Vice Chair. Trustee Jones **seconded** the motion. No objections were made and Trustee Scalia was elected.
- III. Trustee Jones nominated Trustee Coleman to take the vacant Chair position. She **made a motion**, to which Trustee Hopkins **seconded**. No objections were made and Trustee Coleman was elected Chair.

5. Adjournment

The next Board of Trustees Meeting will be held on **September 10, 2026, at the Virginia War**

Memorial, beginning at 10:00am. The meeting was adjourned at 11:54am.