

Virginia Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees
Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center
1601 Broad Rock Blvd
Richmond, VA 23224
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2026
10:00AM – 12:00PM

DRAFT

A meeting of the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, September 17, 2026, at the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond, Virginia. The meeting was called to order shortly after 10:00 a.m.

Trustees Present

- Mike Coleman
- Heather Hopkins
- Matt Scalia
- Joel Griffin
- James Ros Poplar
- Benjamin Haas
- Tim Pillion
- Jarris Taylor, Jr.
- Craig Colucci
- Brandy Jones

Trustees Absent

- Shannon Spencer-Watson
- Steven Arango
- Omari Faulkner
- Kathleen Murphy
- Danny Vargas
- Amanda Brownfield

VSF Staff Present

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

Office of the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs

- Tim Williams (*Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs*)
- Leslie Kipling (*Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs*) [Virtual]
- MacKenzie Heidelberg (*Advisor for Intergovernmental Affairs*)

Commonwealth of Virginia Office of the Attorney General

- Valentine Southall (*Assistant Attorney General*)

Virginia Department of Veterans Services / Commonwealth Representatives Present

- John Maxwell (*Commissioner, Virginia Department of Veterans Services*)
- Steve Combs (*Deputy Commissioner, DVS*)
- Sloane Rose (*Deputy Commissioner, DVS*)
- Tammy Davidson
- Kim Barton (*VSF Treasurer*)
- John Hall
- Suzanne Armstrong
- Tramaine Carroll-Payne

Materials Distributed and Attached

- VSF Agenda
- VSF Trustee Roster
- VSF June 11th Board Meeting Minutes
- DVS Commissioner Report
- VSF Chairman Report
- BVS Chairman Report
- JLC Chairman Report
- VSF Finance Committee Report
- August 31, 2026 Financial Statements

1. Call to Order

a. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance

Because actions taken at the June 11, 2026 Board meeting were later determined to have occurred without a valid quorum, Trustee Joel Griffin, who had been serving as Chairman prior to the June officer elections, called the September 17 meeting to order and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Following roll call and introductions, the Board confirmed that nine of sixteen trustees were present and that a quorum had been established. The Board then proceeded to reconsider the Nominating Committee recommendations from the June meeting.

b. Reconsideration of Nominating Committee Recommendations

With a quorum established, Chairman Griffin returned to the Nominating Committee recommendations originally acted upon at the June meeting. The slate presented was Mike Coleman for Chairman, Heather Hopkins for First Vice Chair, and Matt Scalia for Second Vice Chair. No additional nominations were made. The Board voted unanimously to approve the slate. Trustee Mike Coleman then assumed the role of Chairman and presided over the remainder of the meeting.

c. Welcome from Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center

Representatives from Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center welcomed the Board and thanked the trustees for the Foundation's continued support of the facility and Virginia's veterans. Attendees were also invited to remain after the meeting for a tour of the care center.

2. Reconsideration of June 11, 2026 Actions

A. FY27 Funding Goals

Chairman Coleman noted that the June agenda referenced approval of FY27 funding goals; however, upon review, no specific funding goals had actually been established. He recommended removing the item from consideration, and no further action was taken.

B. FY27 DVS Budget Proposal

Chairman Coleman reviewed the proposed FY27 DVS budget. The Board had previously discussed an \$850,000 appropriation at the June meeting. Since that meeting, the Disabled American Veterans Department of Virginia contributed \$42,000 to fund three six-passenger golf carts for Virginia's state veterans cemeteries. The contribution provided \$14,000 for each of the three cemeteries. The FY27

budget was therefore revised from \$850,000 to \$892,000 to incorporate the additional cemetery funding.

A motion was made by Trustee Scalia and seconded by Trustee Colucci to approve the revised FY27 DVS budget of \$892,000. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

C. FY26 Third Quarter Financial Report

The Board reconsidered the FY26 Third Quarter Financial Report that had previously been acted upon during the June meeting. A motion was made by Trustee Pillion and seconded by Trustee Poplar to approve the report. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of September 17, 2026 Agenda

Chairman Coleman proposed four changes to the meeting agenda:

- Move the discussion item listed under the Foundation Report to the Development Committee portion of the agenda.
- Update the agenda to reflect Mike Coleman as Chairman rather than Joel Griffin.
- Move the Development Committee discussion behind the Procedures and Policies Committee report so that the regular reports could be completed before the larger Board discussion.
- Remove the separate new-business item regarding approval of DAV funds because the \$42,000 contribution had already been incorporated into the revised FY27 budget approved earlier in the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Review and Approval of June 11, 2026, VSF Meeting Minutes

Chairman Coleman asked for a motion to approve the June 11, 2026 meeting minutes. During discussion, trustees raised the need to revise the minutes to accurately reflect that the Board did not achieve quorum during the June meeting. The June minutes had stated that quorum was established upon Trustee Jarris Taylor, Jr.'s arrival, but the Board determined this was incorrect.

Following consultation with the Office of the Attorney General representative, the Board agreed that the June minutes should be amended to remove the statement that quorum had been established and to reflect that actions requiring a vote from that meeting were not official. Those items were reconsidered as necessary during the September meeting. The Board approved the June 11, 2026 meeting minutes as amended.

5. REPORTS

A. Secretary's Report

Secretary Tim Williams provided an update on work underway across the Secretariat, DVS, and the Department of Military Affairs related to upcoming budget and legislative priorities. He noted that the current budget year was expected to be relatively limited but would help establish the groundwork for the next administration's budget priorities.

Secretary Williams also discussed coordination with veterans affairs leaders in other states and stated that Virginia continues to serve as a leader in several areas of veterans services. He highlighted upcoming Virginia National Guard mobilizations and recognized the success of the September 10 veterans resource fair in Lebanon, Virginia, which drew more than 200 attendees.

Secretary Williams thanked staff and partners who supported the Dave Marchant Memorial Virginia Veterans Tournament and encouraged trustees to continue supporting and promoting Veterans Day events throughout the Commonwealth.

The Secretary concluded by recognizing Executive Director Kayla Arestivo for her service to the Foundation. He noted her contributions to fundraising, marketing, organizational development, and engagement with DVS and the Board. Arestivo was formally recognized for her leadership and service.

B. Department of Veterans Services

Commissioner John Maxwell provided an update on several DVS priorities. He highlighted the Department's suicide and opioid prevention grant program, which was accepting applications during September, and discussed DVS's continued emphasis on veteran suicide prevention, peer support, and personal outreach through initiatives such as Buddy Check.

The Commissioner discussed challenges affecting housing and homelessness programs, including instability in federal HUD funding that has impacted community providers. He stated that DVS has been working with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to strengthen coordination and help address gaps in available services.

Commissioner Maxwell also discussed veteran treatment dockets, transition services, and the Department's evolving approach to military transition. He emphasized that successful transition involves more than employment and also includes relationships, family stability, community integration, and overall well-being.

Upcoming DVS events were also noted, including office openings in Chesapeake and Fairfax and a veterans benefits event in Chesapeake. Commissioner Maxwell encouraged trustees to remain engaged with DVS and offered the Department's assistance when trustees are meeting with prospective donors or partners.

Veterans Care Centers

Deputy Commissioner Steve Combs provided an overview of Virginia's veterans care centers and discussed the role Foundation funding plays in enhancing residents' quality of life. He explained that the care centers operate primarily through non-general fund sources such as Medicaid, Medicare, VA reimbursement, insurance, and private payment. Foundation support provides additional resources for resident activities and quality-of-life initiatives.

Deputy Commissioner Combs noted that all four Virginia veterans care centers currently hold five-star CMS ratings and discussed DVS's continued focus on maintaining high standards of care, staffing, services, and resident experience.

Virginia Veterans Network

John Hall, DVS Director of Transformation, discussed the Department's efforts to improve service delivery and modernize how veterans access resources. He highlighted the Virginia Veterans Laptop Project, which was supported by Foundation funding, and discussed the development of Virginia Veterans Network 2.0.

Hall explained that DVS moved away from previously contracted platforms and developed a more veteran-focused system internally after receiving feedback from users. He emphasized the

importance of making information and services available where Virginians already live, work, and seek assistance and noted DVS's ongoing efforts to distribute Virginia Veterans Network materials throughout communities.

C. Board of Veterans Services

The Chair of the Board of Veterans Services was not present. The BVS report was included in the meeting packet for trustee review.

D. Joint Leadership Council

The Chair of the Joint Leadership Council was not present. The JLC report was included in the meeting packet for trustee review.

E. Chairman's Report

Chairman Coleman welcomed new Trustee Benjamin Haas and provided him an opportunity to introduce himself to the Board.

Chairman Coleman emphasized that one of his primary goals as Chairman is to increase fundraising in order to better meet DVS program needs. He noted that DVS has identified approximately \$2 million in annual needs and stated that the Foundation remains well below that level of annual fundraising.

He also updated the Board on the Executive Director search. The position had been advertised through the Commonwealth and other employment platforms. Chairman Coleman reported receiving a significant number of applications and explained that candidates were being screened based on fundraising experience, nonprofit experience, and organizational ability. The selection committee would include Chairman Coleman, Trustee Heather Hopkins, Trustee Joel Griffin, and Secretary Williams, with the intent of narrowing the applicant pool and interviewing approximately six or seven candidates.

Chairman Coleman also provided an update regarding the potential creation of a separate 501(c)(3) fundraising organization. Because of Virginia FOIA considerations associated with overlapping Board membership, he had asked several individuals who are not current VSF trustees to assist with developing the initial structure and bylaws. Additional information is expected to be brought back to the Board at a future meeting.

He concluded by emphasizing the need for trustees to more clearly define their role in supporting fundraising and donor development.

F. Foundation Report

Executive Director Kayla Arestivo noted that, due to her pending departure, her recent work had primarily focused on maintaining routine operations and preparing for transition to new leadership.

Arestivo thanked the Board and DVS staff for their support during her tenure and stated that she remained willing to assist the Foundation, staff, and incoming leadership as needed during the transition. Trustees also recognized Arestivo's contributions to the organization and thanked her for her service, guidance, and work on behalf of Virginia's veterans.

G. Treasurer's Report

Kim Barton presented the FY2026 Fourth Quarter financial report. As of June 30, 2026, total income for FY2026 reached \$631,156.17, while total expenditures totaled \$743,668.32, resulting in an excess of income over expenditures of (\$112,512.15).

The beginning fund balance was \$2,888,716.38, resulting in a total FY2026 Fourth Quarter ending fund balance of \$2,776,204.23. She invited trustees to contact the finance team with any questions or requests for additional clarification.

H. Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee reviewed fundraising comparisons between recent fiscal years. Trustees noted that FY25 included several unusually large gifts and that year-over-year comparisons should be considered in that context.

The committee reiterated that current fundraising remains below the level necessary to fully address the annual needs identified by DVS.

I. Procedures and Policies Committee

No formal Procedures and Policies Committee report was presented.

6. Development Committee / Board Fundraising Discussion

The Board held an extended discussion regarding the role of trustees in fundraising and donor development. Trustees discussed the need for Board members to take a more active role in identifying prospective donors, attending community events, cultivating relationships, and reporting fundraising activity back to the Foundation. Members noted that fundraising should not be viewed solely as the responsibility of the Executive Director.

Discussion included the need to consider a variety of fundraising approaches beyond traditional events, including corporate outreach, community engagement, individual donor cultivation, and leveraging trustees' professional and personal networks.

Trustee Heather Hopkins volunteered to contact trustees individually before the December meeting to discuss what each Board member may be willing and able to contribute toward fundraising efforts. The goal is to return in December with a clearer understanding of individual trustee commitments and possible fundraising strategies.

Trustees also encouraged the outgoing Executive Director to document barriers and challenges encountered during previous fundraising efforts so the Board and incoming Executive Director can avoid repeating the same obstacles. Secretary Williams offered to assist trustees with donor engagement when appropriate and discussed opportunities for recognition of significant donors.

7. New Business

A. Financial Reports

The Board clarified that the financial report presented during the meeting reflected the period ending August 31, 2026, rather than a Fourth Quarter report. A motion was made by Trustee Scalia and Trustee Colucci seconded to accept the August 2026 financial report. The motion passed unanimously. No additional Procedures and Policies Committee action was required.

8. Public Comment

Suzanne Armstrong, DVS Suicide Prevention and Opioid Addiction Director, encouraged trustees and attendees to participate in Buddy Check efforts by reaching out to veterans, spouses, friends, and others in their communities. She emphasized the importance of personal connection and encouraged attendees to use the Department's suicide-prevention awareness materials as reminders to check on others. West also thanked Executive Director Arestivo for the Foundation's support of Virginia Veterans and Family Support programs.

9. Adjournment

Chairman Coleman announced that the next meeting of the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees is scheduled for December 10, 2026, at the Virginia War Memorial.

He noted that the December meeting is expected to include follow-up discussion regarding Board roles and fundraising priorities, as well as DVS's mid-year review of the FY27 budget.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:20pm. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.