



**VETERAN AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION COMMITTEE
MEETING**

**Saturday, March 14, 2020
10 am**

Discussion Notes

The Department Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman David K. Cook Sr. The invocation was given by Darell Bishop of the 5th District. Chairman Cook appointed as secretary and took meeting minutes.

Roll Call of Members

District	Name	Present	Excused
1	Patrick Gryzbowski	X	
2	Charles Craynon		X
3	Joe Law		X
4	Aaron Cunningham, II	X	
5	Darell Bishop	X	
6	David Cook, SR	X	
7	Neil Miller		X
8	Tina Walker		X
9	Frank Adley		X
10	Gary Ickes	X	
11	Carol Berg		X
12	John Tepper	X	
13	Leroy Brinkhoff	X	
14	Robert Carson		X
Total		7	7

Roll call was conducted, and it was determined that there was no quorum and the meeting was adjourned immediately. Discussion followed. Discussion items which require an action from the committee will be sent out to the committee for an email vote in the coming weeks.

Review of Previous Committee Minutes

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes from October 5th, 2019. No amendments or comments were suggested.



Old Business

a. Ohio Veterans Treatment Court Program

1. The committee reviewed a resolution drafted by Darell Bishop (5th) that calls for National to add volunteer hours and monies donated to support Veterans Treatment Court on Consolidated Post Report.
2. The ad-hoc committee has not yet met to draft guidelines for the Ohio Veterans Treatment Court Program.
3. The committee reviewed a draft questionnaire that will be sent out to the individual Veteran Treatment Courts. The Ad Hoc committee will consider questionnaire responses as they draft program guidelines.

b. Veterans Suicide Prevention

1. The committee reviewed three reports: (1) 2019 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, (2) 2019 American Legion Mental Health Survey Executive Survey, and (3) The Suicide Prevention Plan for Ohio 2020-2022.
2. The committee stated that The American Legion Department of Ohio should submit a resolution to confirm its commitment to provide suicide prevention training to our members.
3. The committee also recommended that a resolution be draft to call for National HQ to study suicide rates within our membership.
4. The committee recommended that we support the current Suicide Prevention Plan for Ohio.

New Business

a. Washington Conference

1. Pat Grzybowski presented a report of the VA&R Commission meeting. A firm that the Legion partners with reported that they have a 99.1% success rate on VA Claim appeals.
2. Darell Bishop presented his report regarding legislative visits and The American Legions' legislative agenda.

b. Commanders' VHA Visits

1. The committee explored some ideas for the upcoming Department Commander's visits to Ohio's VA Medical Centers and Ohio Veterans Homes. The committee stressed the importance of visiting the Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, especially the locations that do not have an American Legion VA Voluntary Services Representative.
2. Jermaine Ferguson will discuss this Committee's recommendation with the upcoming Department Commander.



c. VA Voluntary Services

1. Due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the VA Health System and The Ohio Veterans Homes are requiring that the VAVS volunteers stay home.

d. VA&R Department & National Awards

1. The Committee discussed our VA&R awards:
 - i. (1) why do we not have any nominations?
 - ii. How can we increase Post and District participation?
 - iii. Should there be a VA&R Award for a Post? This would be more inline with other Convention Awards.
 - iv. Should we reconsider guidelines of our current awards?
 - v. Current VA&R Awards are:

Al Schaefer Award

Department VA Award

Certificates of Appreciation to Outstanding VA Officials

VAVS National Advisory Committee Volunteer of the Year

William F. Lenker National Service Trophy

Department of Veterans Affairs Health-Care Provider of the Year Award

Department of Veterans Affairs Physician of the Year Award

e. Post Service Officer School

1. Department Post Service Officer School will be held on the first Saturday of November.
2. The committee was asked to consider how we can improve our curriculum?

f. Gifts for Yanks Update

1. An official monthly update will be sent out to the District the following week.
2. Darell Bishop (5th) asked that the committee check with the VA facilities to see what items will be permitted to hand out at our Christmas distribution.

The meeting adjourned in regular form at 12:35 pm.

Minutes (Discussion Notes) Submitted By:

David K. Cook Sr. (6th)

Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman