

MN Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Health Care Advisory Council Monthly Meeting Minutes July 20, 2010

Council Members Present: Mike Tripple, Acting Chair; Ronald Sanford; Diane Windham; Tom Mullen; Julie Eszlinger-Jensen; Dr. Kenneth Hughes;

Council Members Absent: Kathryn Roberts; Brad Bennett; James Birchem;

MDVA Staff Present: Commissioner, Michael Pugliese; Deputy Commissioner, Gilbert Acevedo; Pam Barrows; Craig Barnes; Dennis Devereaux; Anna Long; Sherry Kromschroeder; Ev Wright; Dan Thielman; Amy Rudolph; Patty Ryan

Meeting was called to order at 1:31pm and adjourned at 3:30pm.

Subject	Discussion	Follow Up/Link to Info
Initial Comments	Mike Tripple, Acting Chair	Mike called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. He opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.
Welcoming Remarks	Michael Pugliese, Commissioner	Commissioner Pugliese welcomed the Council and thanked them all for their continued support and dedication to the MN Veterans Homes. He recently visited the Silver Bay home and was able to see first hand the renovation work being done up there, it is really starting to come together. He also shared the recent letter he sent to all MDVA staff regarding the Early Retirement Incentive program and explained how this program works for the homes. The Commissioner was also able to attend his first Family Council meeting at the Mpls home and he really enjoyed meeting this dedicated group of advocates.

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MN Veterans Homes Updates	Gil Acevedo, Deputy Commissioner	<p>Gil shared that since the last Council meeting the Mpls administrator, Dan Steen, has retired from his position. He is actively searching for a replacement. The Mpls home also has a new Assistant Administrator, Craig Barness, who has submitted his interest in the Administrator position as well. Gil gave a brief review of the construction projects at each of the homes. The Central Office has been busy securing funding for the operation of the Fergus Falls addition and also working through the 70% service connected cost of care changes. Gil explained and updated the Council on Bldg 4 renovation and the MN Historical Society. The MN Historical Society has changed their view of the situation is they are actively assisting the Mpls home with seeking approval to replace the lead based pieces with exact replicas.</p>
Medicare Update	Robin Gaustad, Quality Assurance Director	<p>Robin has been working through the Medicare certification and feasibility process. The homes are moving forward with an implementation plan and have recently contracted with Larson Allen for this process. The Mpls home will be starting with A and B and the plan is to be ready to apply for certification by March of 2011. In the mean time, Robin has coordinated an electronic software upgrade and training at all 5 homes. All 5 homes should be using MDS 3.0 by October 1st and will be implementing new billing software sometime this winter. She is also working on ensuring clinical skills and competencies will all be up to par.</p>
Budget Review	Sherry Kromschroeder, Finance Director	<p>Sherry reviewed and explained her handout on the MN Veterans Homes budget. (attached)</p>
Construction Update	Ev Wright, Programs Administrator and Dan Thielman, Sr Project Consultant	<p>Ev and Dan explained a handout reviewing all the projects happening at all 5 homes. (attached) Dan also explained in a bit more detail the work being done in Bldg 4, Adult Day Care, on the Mpls campus.</p>

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Council Comments and Questions

The Council discussed the 70% service connected changes, how the total cost of care is calculated by the VA and how the homes might be able to make up any differences. There was also discussion about the Mpls Strategic Plan and if there has been any progress. The plan was completed 2 administrators ago so Gil would like to wait for the new person to be hired and get acclimated before approaching them about an update. Gil mentioned the Federal VA Foster Care Program and how the MDVA is meeting to learn more about this program. He will have more on this at the next meeting.

Additional Comments

Warren Wolf from the Star Tribune shared that this will probably be his last Council meeting as his father-in-law is looking to be admitted into the Mpls home and his coverage would be a conflict of interest.

Wrap-Up

The Advisory Council toured the Bldg 4, Adult Day Center, on the Mpls campus and departed afterwards.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 19th, 1:30pm-3:30pm. Site to be determined.