

**MN Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Care Advisory Council Monthly Meeting Minutes January 20, 2009**

Council Members Present: Kathryn Roberts, Chair; James Birchem; Diane Windham; Michael Tripple; Dr. Kenneth Hughes; Brad Bennett; Julie Eszlinger-Jensen

Council Members Absent: Tom Mullon; Ronald Sanford

MDVA Staff Present: Clark Dyrud, Gilbert Acevedo, Anna Long, Patty Ryan

Meeting was called to order at 1:35pm and adjourned at 3:36pm.

Subject	Discussion	Follow Up
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Welcoming Remarks

Chair Roberts	Chair Roberts called the meeting to order. She commented on the inauguration of the new President and historical moment that was shared earlier in the day.
Commissioner Dyrud	Commissioner Dyrud welcomed everyone and thanked them for being there. The Commissioner gave a brief review of the past year and all the accomplishments the Department has made. He also mentioned that we recently celebrated the 1 year anniversary of Deputy Commissioner Gil Acevedo.

MN Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Care Advisory Council Monthly Meeting Minutes January 20, 2009

**Deputy Commissioner
Acevedo**

Deputy Commissioner Acevedo has recently been very busy testifying before legislative committees. The Office of Legislative Auditors (OLA) recently completed a review of MVH- Minneapolis, MVH- Fergus Falls and the financial affairs of the previous Board of Directors. The Fergus Falls home did very well during their audit and there were only 3 minor findings for the Board of Directors. The Minneapolis home had several findings, many of which were repeat discrepancies that had never been corrected. Deputy Commissioner Acevedo has been testifying on how the Minneapolis home is planning on correcting the OLA findings as well as updating the different committees on patient care improvements. The Central Office has recently contracted with Larson Allen, LLC to complete an assessment of the Medicare/Medicaid certification process. There are several Minnesota state rules that would complicate the process if the MN Veterans Homes would become Medicare/Medicaid certified. The Central Office has also recently contracted to have 2 different demographic studies completed, 1 for the entire state and 1 for the 7-county metro area. The 7-county study has been completed and will be discussed later.

Patty to send out copies of the mock survey done by Pathways and the DVA survey for the Minneapolis home once it is received.

MN Veterans Homes Updates

MVH- Minneapolis

**Deputy
Commissioner
Acevedo**

The Minneapolis home has been working on completing their strategic plan and preparing for the CRIPA visit. They have also been granted federal funding to demolish bldg 9 and build a new 100 bed nursing care facility. This project is currently being held up by the requirements and paperwork needed for approval by the Historical Society. Minneapolis was also awarded federal funding for the renovation of bldg 4 which will become an Adult Day Health Center. Also new at the Minneapolis home are 3 new additions to the leadership team. Judy Kurki-Coleman is the new Administrator, Mary Zabel is the new Assistant Administrator and Ron Kaylor is the new Quality Director.

MN Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Care Advisory Council Monthly Meeting Minutes January 20, 2009

MVH- Luverne	The Luverne home recently opened their Specialty Care Unit. They are also using a Real Time Location System (RTLS). The RTLS is an electronic system that tracks residents, staff and equipment so they are all easily located.	
MVH- Fergus Falls		
MVH- Silver Bay	The Silver Bay home is currently being remodeled. The home is an old school that was turned in to Nursing Home and desperately needs to be updated. The renovations include giving the home a old log cabin feel. The Silver Bay home will be the next home to start using the RTLS.	Patty to send out Silver Bay plans.
MVH- Hastings	The Hastings home has a Supportive Housing Project in which they will provide meals and medical support for a 60-unit apartment building.	
Other Updates	The Central Office has hired a new Director of Quality Services, Robin Gaustad. Senior Director Pam Barrows is busy helping the Minneapolis team prepare for CRIPA, Feb 3-5.	Patty to send out Tennessee and Alabama results of CRIPA

**Comments/
Recommendations**

Resident Centered Change, Culture Change and one-stop	<p>The Council discussed ideas on different assisted living and independent living options that could be offered to Veterans. Is it possible to partner with privately run facilities to help ease the transition for Veterans from Independent and Assisted Living into long-term care living? This is being addressed and is a part of the Veterans Homes Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The Council discussed the importance of resident centered care. Creating a culture and opening the doors to the community would greatly benefit the Veterans. They also discussed the need to get people involved in volunteering and donations. The decline in membership of the Veterans Organizations is really having an effect on the out state homes. These concerns are also currently being discussed and are a part of both the Veterans Homes Strategic Plan as well as the strategic plan specific for the Veterans Home in Minneapolis.</p>	Patty to send out completed Strategic Plan once it is finished.
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MN Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Care Advisory Council Monthly Meeting Minutes January 20, 2009

The Council discussed the challenges in trying to capture the care of ALL of our veterans in the state. There is no way of identifying veterans unless they come forward and ask for assistance. The Council recommended doing more with the internet. PTSD was discussed at length and the care options currently available. This concern is also addressed in the Veterans Homes strategic plan. Medical Director at the Central Office level...? Best practices to be shared between the homes. Would/could be one of current directors to pull together the roles of the 5 homes.

Medical Director at the
Central Office

The Council discussed the recommendation made by the Governor's Commission that the Veterans Homes hire a Medical Director at the Central Office. The Council all agreed that quality is very important, coordination is very important, but a full time Medical Director would not be necessary.

Wrap-Up

Commissioner Dyrud shared that Governor Pawlenty has publicly announced that he supports NO budget cuts for the MDVA this year. This is very welcome news considering the state of the economy and the increasing need for Veterans support. Chair Roberts commented that there was a lot of good discussion and she is looking forward to the next meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held April 21, 2009, on the 5th floor of the Veterans Services Building in St Paul.