



## **SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS COUNCIL**

**The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapters 1054 & 959, Military Order of the Purple Heart**

### **MINUTES OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS COUNCIL MEETING (SDVC), WEDNESDAY, MICHAEL J. FIZMAURICE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE VETERANS HOME – HOTSPRINGS, SD 19 APRIL 2023 - 3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M. (MT)**

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting of the South Dakota Veterans Council was called to order by President Connie Johnson at 3:16 p.m.

#### **2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGINECE AND PRAYER:**

Vice President Kevin Hempel led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

#### **3. ROLL CALL:**

Secretary/Treasurer Marty Pennock called the roll call showing the following members present:

American Legion (TAL): Doug Feltman, Kevin Hempel, and Fred Nelson

Disabled American Veterans (DAV): Dan Francis and Marty Pennock

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW): Tom Hafner, Anna Arnold, and Dave Baumiller

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapters 1054 and 959 (VVA): Phil Braeger (1054) and Terry “Hawk” Mayer (959)

Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH): Connie Johnson

North Central Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA): Mike Olson

Official Officers Absent: (DAV) Gene Murphy, (VVA 1054) Jerry Denman, (MOPH) Bill Flippo, (MOPH) Buck Underwood, (PVA) Terry Paulsen, and (PVA) Lisa Cummings.

There was a total of 27 present for the meeting with a head count (attached sign in roster – 24 signed in).

#### **4. WELCOME DISTINGUISHED GUESTS / VISITORS /ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

President Johnson welcomed members of the Council and Guests.

#### **5. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

President Johnson called on Secretary-Treasurer Pennock to read the minutes from the January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, SDVC meeting.

On a motion by (VVA) Terry Mayer and seconded by (VFW) Anna Arnold to waive the reading of the minutes from the January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, SDVC meeting, as they were mailed to members of the council, posted on the website and provided at the meeting. Motion carried.

## **6. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

President Johnson called on Secretary-Treasurer Pennock for a Treasurer's Report. Beginning Balance as of January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, was \$11,241.19 and expenses of \$1,589.78 leaving a balance, as of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, of \$10,051.41.

On a motion by (VFW) Anna Arnold and seconded by (DAV) Dan Francis to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

On a motion by (DAV) Marty Pennock and seconded by (VVA) Terry Mayer to approve \$500.00 to be donated to the MJF State Veterans Home for the future movement of the MJF memorial statue from the old resident building to the new resident building. Motion carried.

## **7. INVITED GUEST SPEAKERS:**

### **South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Update: Secretary Whitlock**

#### VETERAN RELATED SENATE BILLS THAT SDDVA MONITORED AND THAT PASSED:

Accept Uniformed Services ID as proof of veteran status to have veteran designation added to a state license or ID card (DPS Bill)

#### VETERAN RELATED SENATE BILLS THAT DID NOT PASS:

Revise the eligible disability level for veterans to receive state park benefits (legislator bill)

Provide free tuition for a resident whose parent died while on active duty in the United States armed forces (legislator bill)

Designate a portion of U.S. Highway 83 as Sicangu Lakota Code Talker Highway. (already a process in place for the naming of roads/bridges --- must work with DOT)

Provide for the study of long-term care services and to provide an appropriation therefor. (a summer interim committee is going to study this issue)

#### HOUSE BILLS SDDVA INTRODUCED BY DVA:

Amend the eligibility for admission to the state veterans' home and repeal the residency requirement. (Failed - concerns from legislators on availability for SD Veterans)

Revise certain provisions pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs and residency in the State Veterans Home. (Cleanup bill of 33A - DVA statutes - passed)

Increase the basic salary schedule for county veterans' service officers. (passed - counties and tribes notified)

Provide free tuition at Board of Technical Education institutions for children or spouses of members of the South Dakota National Guard disabled or deceased in the line of duty (passed)

#### OTHER HOUSE BILLS:

Revise certain provisions regarding the payment of tuition for members of the South Dakota National Guard (passed – SDNG bill)

Require counties to hire veteran service officers in proportion to the number of veterans residing in the county (failed – legislator bill)

Change the eligibility requirements of a property tax relief program for disabled veterans and surviving spouses (failed – legislator bill)

Provide a stipend for the erection of a private headstone for a deceased veteran (passed – legislator bill)  
 Increase the maximum amount of dollars payable by the state to erect the headstone of a deceased veteran (passed – from \$100 to \$200 – legislator bill)  
 Make an appropriation to provide a grant for the construction of a military heritage museum in Sioux Falls and declare an emergency (failed – legislator bill)  
 Make an appropriation for improving the buildings and grounds of the capitol complex and declare an emergency (passed – legislator bill)

**Michael J. Fitzmaurice South Dakota State Veterans Home Director:** Chuck Johnson covered in detail the following.

Construction projects at the facility  
 Priority of cemetery enhancement  
 MJF memorial monument to be moved  
 Effort from the DON to become Medicare certified  
 56 patients currently with a 78 personnel capacity  
 Staffing was highlighted but was not detailed  
 South Dakota Veterans Home Solar and Bio-Mass Handouts provided

**DAV Transportation:** (VVA) Phil Braeger and guest Bob Frink presentation given (attached).

**Medical Center Director BHVAHCS:** Director Lisa Curnes covered in detail the following.

#### Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)

Home-Based Primary Care has been made possible through a grant from the Office of Rural Health, which is fully funded for three years. VA medical staff including Physician Assistants, Registered Nurses, Dietitians, Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, and Pharmacists travel to the homes of Veterans in rural communities. For our highest acuity (sickest) Veterans, it gives them the opportunity to stay in their community and age in place while receiving primary care services.

Currently, HBPC operates teams of providers out of Rapid City, Fort Meade, and Hot Springs. Rapid City will be increasing by one team to meet the needs of the community. We are expanding home-based primary care to Scottsbluff NE and Pierre SD communities. Working with HR to post these positions. The successes of home-based primary care have been shown in a 0% readmission rate for all veterans using home-based primary care at VA Black Hills. It has reduced inpatient days by 94.3%. Meaning, in the past when we have had veterans spend 100 inpatient days in our facility, we only see these veterans spending six days in the hospital. This has led to an 80% decrease in Veteran admissions throughout the healthcare systems.

#### Home Health Program

This program focuses on enhancing the daily living tasks that our veterans need. This includes assistance with showering, housekeeping, getting groceries, and wound care. Our team members who provide this service allow the veterans to age in place. We currently provide this service to over 40 veterans and look to expand this program in the next few months to provide to over 100 veterans.

Currently, approximately 130 Veterans were able to utilize VA Care instead of Care in the Community. Home Care averages \$3,319 per veteran per 365 days. Skilled care averages \$3,692 every 180 days per veteran. This is around \$10,000 per year per veteran cost savings which is over \$700,000 in annual cost savings. And as we grow this program, we expect to see more cost savings by providing this much-needed care through VA caregivers.

#### Construction Updates

My goal remains constant: “We take care of Veterans where they want to be seen. They have a choice; we want them to choose VA Black Hills.” In order to accomplish this goal we continue to update and improve our facilities.

#### Hot Springs

Dom Renovation for Semiprivate Rooms Building 8 – Construction begins July 2023, completion anticipated Summer/Fall 2024. 50 DOM beds are available during this time. We are also addressing the mobility issues due to the slope of the ramps.

Replace Roofs on Building 53 and SPS Mechanical Room – 70% complete, completion Spring 2023  
The construction for the EHRM Infrastructure project for Hot Springs is 10% completed. Completion is set for January 2024.

Expansion of the PACT Area in Building 12. We need more room in Primary Care and this expansion allows us to treat more Veterans in Hot Springs. Design phase completion May 2024.

#### Fort Meade

Renovate and Consolidate Inpatient Functions – Construction phase 1 of 3 is in process. This will consolidate our ICU and Med-Surg. Beds making rooms more flexible to be able to accommodate our Veteran needs. 10% complete, with anticipated completion Sept 2024.

Upgrade Overhead Page and Nurse Call – 98% complete, with anticipated completion April 2023.

Improvement to the Water Treatment plant. As Fort Meade supplies its own water, improvements to this system ensure we are always supplied with clean water.

#### Rapid City CBOC update

The Rapid City CBOC has increased its workload by over 6.5%. By increasing our services at the Rapid City CBOC we will meet the need of the community to provide VA Care to Veterans.

98% complete. Expected to open in August 2023.

The new clinic is located at 2165 Promise Road in Rapid City. Drywall, paint and flooring are being installed currently in this 45,000 sq.ft. newly constructed building.

Approximately 120 FTEE will be located at the new facility.

Parking increased from 96 to over 300 spaces.

GEO-Thermal system installed in the new clinic to use best practices in green technology to provide energy-efficient solutions to heat and cool the building via Geo-Thermal pumps in the ground.

Zero-graded incline entrance for ease of access for wheelchairs.

Covered drop-off location to protect from weather elements.

Increase in access allows us to meet the needs of Veterans by increasing PACT teams from 5 to 8 teams.

Increase in Mental Health exam rooms to include cutting-edge technology via biofeedback services that provide evidenced-based treatment to Veterans experiencing PTSD and Military Sexual Trauma (MST).

Addition of Women’s Health Services specializing in providing comprehensive care across the spectrum to treat and provide prevention services. Enrolled Women Veteran has increased from 2021 to the present by 16%. Women Veterans make up the largest growth in the VA and we are ready to care for them.

Multiple specialty services to include: Audiology, Physical Therapy, Chiropractor, etc.

Laboratory services will allow Veterans to receive their lab results at their clinic appointment with their clinician.

Radiology services include X-ray, Mobile CT and MRI exams with the potential to expand to include mammography services in the future.

#### Ambulance/Transportation

Fort Meade Ambulance is currently operating Monday thru Friday, 8am – 4 pm. I anticipate that to go to seven days a week in mid-May or early June. This depends on the hiring the second Hot Springs crew member.

As of 4/10, the Hot Springs office is open. We are utilizing staff from Fort Meade to begin operations and will transition them back to FM when the two paramedics have been hired and are oriented to our operations. Currently, the hours of operation are 11am to 7pm, Monday thru Friday.

Ambulance data:

VA BHHC has three ambulances. Two at Ft Meade and One in Hot Springs.

Our Ambulance, unlike our Fire Department, do not have a mutual aid agreement. The Ambulance service is for transporting Veterans from one medical facility to another. It is not available for 911 calls. Since becoming fully operational in 2023, we have transported 45 patients and been available 47 days. If we continue at this pace, we will have completed 250 calls for service for the year. That number is a low estimate based on five day per week availability and only using the numbers generated by Fort Meade. At seven days per week that number will likely be closer to 350-400 calls.

VA BHHC Ambulance are staffed to always provide Advanced Life Support. Half the staff is critical care transport qualified. It is the goal to have all paramedic's critical care transport qualified.

The rates our partner ambulance services charge varies widely but the average for a transport from FM to RC is approximately \$1800 one way. From Hot Springs to Fort Meade, it is approximately \$3000.

In 2023, we have saved the VA approximately \$99,300 over a period of 12 weeks.

## VTS Travel

Total unique Veterans served with transportation FY23 to date is 411 Veterans. Total unique Veterans served in FY23 is 411.

BTSSS claims total pending is 450 claims; of those claims greater than 10 days is 0 claims with the oldest claim dated 04/02/23.

Paper claims total pending is approximately 600 claims; of those claims greater than 10 days is 0 claims; with the oldest claim dated 04/01/23.

Travel Supervisor and Lead Travel Clerk are working OT/CT to stay caught up; we have also detailed staff to the area to assist the department with their outstanding claims. We have gotten recruitment and retention incentives for this department to stabilize staffing as 5 of their 7 positions are currently vacant.

## Hiring Event

At our last Hiring Event, March 22<sup>nd</sup> here in Hot Springs, 25 new employees hired.

This Hiring Events are focusing on bringing high-need positions on board

The type of employees who will be attending the surge event include Providers, Nurses, EMS, Nutrition and Food Service workers, Social Workers, and Medical Support Assistance (MSAs).

Next event will be held in Fort Meade April 27th.

## MASKING Updates

Due to lowered Community Transmission rates in our Service Areas, we have been able to intact the following at Fort Meade, Hot Springs, and Newcastle Wy. CBOC, Pine Ridge CBOC, and the Gordon NE, CBOC.

VA Black Hills has an update to our VHA Health Protection Levels and updated guidance:

Counties listed in Medium and Low Community Transmission rate can follow the guidance below.

Counties in VHA Protection level High must still follow universal masking precautions e.g. wearing a mask. Currently, the VA Medical Center in Fort Meade and the CBOCs in Newcastle WY and Gordon NE may follow the guidance below. For the Medical Facilities still in a High Transmission rate, we will continue to monitor the Community Transmission rates and make adjustments when we are able based upon the Operational Plan.

Guidance for Medium and Low:

Universal Masking is not required in the following locations:

Outpatient Clinics

Hallways

Common areas

Waiting rooms

Check in  
 Canteen  
 Non-Patient Care areas  
 Administrative locations

Universal masking still required in these locations regardless of Protection Level:

CLC  
 Inpatient units  
 Emergency Department/Urgent Care  
 Chemo  
 Dialysis

Areas where aerosol generating procedures are completed

This is not an exhausted list, any other location where patients have a high risk for complications from COVID-19

Staff are required to mask if asked by a Veteran patient, caregiver, or family member  
 We will update masking guidance every Monday and update signage across the facilities.

#### COMPACT ACT

What is the COMPACT ACT?

The Veterans' Comprehensive Prevention, Access To Care, And Treatment Act (or Veterans' COMPACT Act) was implemented on 1/17/23. It provides emergency suicide crisis care (at VA facilities and authorized non-VA facilities) for eligible individuals including:

All enrolled Veterans,

Covered Veterans not yet enrolled and

Veterans and Patients ineligible for enrollment but meet Other Than Honorable (OTH) requirements including Veterans who are eligible for care as well as those who are otherwise ineligible for health benefits, but present for emergent suicide care.

An individual is eligible for emergent suicide care if the individual is in an acute suicidal crisis. The term "acute suicidal crisis" means that an individual was determined to be at imminent risk of self-harm by a trained crisis responder or health care provider.

Emergent suicide care includes:

Inpatient or crisis residential care for no more than 30 days and

Outpatient mental health care for no more than 90 days.

Medical care associated with the emergent suicide episode will be provided for a total of 30 days.

If the individual remains in acute suicidal crisis, extensions may be provided.

VA will ensure eligible Veterans are not financially responsible for costs associated with emergent suicide care, including emergency transportation.

VA will ensure eligible Veterans are not financially responsible for costs associated with emergent suicide care, including emergency transportation. We have identified 3 leaders In Mental Health, Kay Ermish for Outpatient MH, Holly Shield for RRTP, Danielle Rogers for Suicide Prevention Team.

They will ensure Veterans who meet the criteria under the COMPACT ACT receive this benefit.

\*To date 29 Veterans have been able to utilize services under the COMPACT Act with the area.

PACT Act and C&P updates

No current vacancies in C&P.

At this time, VA Black Hills is performing 75% Audiology exams, 25% Dental exams, and 50% Sleep exams. All other exams are being outsourced via the VBA contracts.

We have asked the Office of Disability and Medical Examinations to separate our FTM, HS, and RC facilities to enhance access to "in-house" C&P exams. ODME was unable to break our facilities into

separate “divisions” (i.e FM, HS, and RC) and it must remain at the “station” level (i.e Western South Dakota).

To address the reported issues in availability and access for C&P Audiology exams, we have adjusted our rates for internal exams from 25% to 75%. We know our Veterans need C&P Audiology exams as we are expanding our service to meet this need.

We are expensing a backlog of C&P exam. On March 8th, VA Black Hills had 20 pending exams, that number has decreased to 15, a 25% decrease. The backlog will be completed by May 5th, 2023.

#### PACT ACT

More than one in three Veterans report that they have experienced toxic exposures such as:

Airborne Hazards/Open Burn Pits

Gulf War related exposures

Agent Orange

Radiation

Contaminated water at Camp Lejeune

#### Toxic Exposure Screens (TES)

Clinical reminders for Nurses and Providers are in place for the assessment of Veterans for their exposure to toxins. Toxic Exposure Screens are being offered through your Primary Care Team. TES is also being done in some specialty care areas as well and we continue to expand these screens into other areas of the healthcare delivery system.

VABHHCS has screened 7,732 veterans with 35% endorsing at least 1 exposure concern.

We are hiring an Environmental Health Coordinator – \*\*\*VABHHCS Environmental Coordinator has been selected. Environmental Health Coordinators are experts with VA’s registries. They can connect you to the Environmental Health Registries that are designed for the time period you served and guide you to information that can help you to better understand your exposures and health.

VA Black Hills has hired an additional 3 Providers to assist with C&P exams – 3 Physicians Assistants (PAs) in HS, 1 PAs at FTM.

#### My HealtheVet Secure Messaging

Black Hills VA Health Care System was recognized nationally as being in the TOP 5 facilities to have a 0% escalation rate for secure messaging. This has continued through the last 4 months with a current escalation rate of 0.04% (4 one-hundredths of a percent). Secure Messaging teams have three business days to respond to and manually complete a secure message. If the message is not completed in three business days, the message is considered escalated. The Black Hills staff responded to and closed more than 7100 secure messages from Veterans.

#### QUESTIONS

**Medical Center Director SFVAHCS:** Sara Ackert covered in detail the following.

#### VACANCIES

Sioux Falls is up 63 positions overall for the FY

We have been able to open 4 additional CLC beds taking us from 40 to 44 beds being open

#### PACT ACT

Outreach events: December 10th, March 9th, and the next one is Sioux City July 11th

Toxic Exposure Screening: 12,225 screened; 4886 veterans reporting at Least One Exposure Concern (40%).

The top 2 exposures reported are Burn Pit (38%), and Agent Orange (36%)

## COMPACT ACT

Any Veteran can go to a VA or non-VA emergency room for emergent suicidal care.

VA will provide the treatment or cover the costs for treatment including transportation, inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days, and outpatient care for up to 90 days.

Regardless of VA enrollment status, COMPACT-eligible individuals are:

Former members of the armed forces who were discharged or released from active duty after more than 24 months of active service under conditions other than dishonorable.

Former members of the armed forces, including reserve service members, who served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

Former members of the armed forces who were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces.

MEGABUS ACT, Section 3002 – final rule published to the Federal Register on April 4, 2023.

American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans who are enrolled and eligible for VA health care are no longer required to pay copayments for hospital care or medical services.

Veterans must submit official tribal documentation to begin receiving this new benefit.

This is retroactive to January 5, 2022.

Copays for domiciliary care, institutional respite care, and nursing home are still required.

Eligible American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans seeking copayment exemption will need to mail copies of the following:

Any one of the following official tribal documents, including, but not limited to:

Tribal Enrollment or Membership ID Card

Tribal Census Documentation

Certificate of Indian Blood issued by the Bureau of Indian Affairs

Documentation issued by a Tribe on official letterhead indicating individual affiliation

AND

VA Form 10-334, Tribal Documentation Form

Copies can be mailed to:

VHA Tribal Documentation

PO Box 5100

Janesville, WI 53547-5100

To learn more: [www.va.gov/health-care/copay-rates](http://www.va.gov/health-care/copay-rates)

Learn about the Tribal Enrollment Process: [www.doi.gov/tribes/enrollment](http://www.doi.gov/tribes/enrollment)

## EHRM

Were still scheduled to go live in late 2024. This is of course subject to change and will be updated once a national decision is made regarding moving ahead in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin as those VISNs are scheduled before any facilities in VISN 23.

In the meantime, we currently have projects going on within the medical center doing much needed updates to the IT infrastructure on our campus in CBOCs.



## CITC – Data for March

Scheduling numbers:

Average Daily incoming consults: 141

Average Daily appointments scheduled: 153

Days to Schedule: 9.5 (national average is 26 days)

Call Center Numbers:

Average daily calls: 228

Average wait time: 24 seconds

Calls handled: 98.5%

Call 605-333-6800 Option 2 to speak with the CITC Team

## Health Administration Service

New leadership in HAS – Steve Kurban

Enrollment backlog is clear.

The next backlog being tackled is in bene travel. We used bene travel staff to assist with enrollments, and now we are working on bene travel. As of 4/18 the backlog is 2600 claims with the oldest claim is from 2/15/2023. Currently doing a stand down and have 5 staff processing claims.

There continue to be backlogs in Release of Information with the oldest being from 1/9/23. Recruiting for 3 vacancies.

Scanning – CITC 3600 documents, oldest 3/3/23; Non-CITC – 870, oldest date 2/3/23

## TRANSPORTATION

In March, the Veterans Transportation Service completed 1211 rides with VTS providing 856, and 355 provided by contract or DAV. Recruiting for 2 VTS drivers

## CONSTRUCTION

Opened for patient care in February and we had an open house on April 4th. Majority of all outpatient Mental Health Services are now located in this 16,000 Sq ft. building. Inpatient Mental Health remains in the same location.

Hospice Cottage approximately 20% complete.

Renovating the old auditorium for a new Prosthetics space. Estimated completion is winter 2023.

Same day surgery and Pre-op area – Estimate completion winter 2024

Current Masking Guidance for Sioux Falls VA and CBOCs

For asymptomatic Veterans, visitors, and employees, universal masking will no longer be required in all areas of the facility.

24/7 units (Emergency Department, Medical/Surgical units, MH, ICU, and CLCs): Staff within 6 feet of patients or entering patient rooms/providing direct patient care will need to utilize masking for source control. Veterans and visitors will not need to mask unless they have symptoms of a respiratory illness or are suspected/confirmed to have COVID19.

Oncology Clinic: Staff within 6 feet of patients or entering patient rooms/providing direct patient care will need to utilize masking for source control. Veterans and visitors should also be encouraged to mask while in the waiting area, but are able to unmask once they are brought to their bay, unless they have symptoms of a respiratory illness or are suspected/confirmed to have COVID19.

For any Veteran, visitor, or employee with any symptoms of respiratory illness or any potential signs of COVID19, masking for source control should be used.

If a Veteran or visitor request that their care team wears masks during provision of care, this request will be granted without question.

Additionally, active screening at the facility entrances will end and passive screening for all Veterans, visitors, and employees will be utilized.

**Congressional Delegate Update from Senator Thune's Office:** Jessie Ewing covered the following.

- SB 106 /141 /185/216/326
- 118<sup>th</sup> Congress has a slow to start

**Congressional Delegate Update from Senator Rounds' Office:** GP Carmichael covered the following.

- Senator Rounds is on five Committees
- 60 new bills
- Co-sponsor on SB 495
- EHMR – supports stopping the effort and giving the control back to the Directors at the VA until they are ready

**Congressional Delegate Update from Representative Johnson's Office:** David Forsythe covered the following.

- Purple Heart Ceremony
- Benefits for WW II Veterans
- Defense Symposium

#### **8. ENDOWMENT UPDATE:**

Endowment Fund Balance Update – President Johnson provided an updated endowment fund summary (attached).

#### **9. RECOGNITION OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS:**

President Johnson recognized Vice President Hempel for his Service to the Council and his upcoming retirement. The Council gave recognition of applause for his outstanding work. Thank you, Kevin, for your many years of Service to this State and this Nation.

#### **10. UPDATES FROM EACH VSO:**

**VFW:** Anna Arnold

- \$10,000.00 raffle to VHI
- VA Travel Reimbursement System is not Well Received by VFW Members
- 100.04% Membership
- February 2023 – Legislative Reception
- State Convention – June 15-18 in Mitchell – 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm for Outside Commanders to Speak
- Declining Membership is a Concern

**TAL:** Doug Feltman

- Chartered a New Post – 329 in Standing Rock
- Two Posts entered into the HOF
- Department Convention – June 8-11 in Oacoma
- TAL National Commander will be in SD 1-3 May
- Request SDVC Facebook to Remain Neutral
- Concerns of Fort Meade and Hot Springs Losing Services
- Hypertension AO Claims being Denied/Lessened is a Big Issue with Members

**DAV: Dan Francis**

- Currently the DAV is working with DAV National Communications and The SFVAHCS PAO to develop a media campaign to recruit drivers.
- The DAV has increased its membership steadily the past year.
- The DAV has 9 chartered Chapters in SD.
- Gulf War Veterans Day Event – March 6
- Vietnam War Veterans Day – March 29
- Conventions - Midwinter Conference - Feb 28-March 1
- CSI/DSO Training – May 3-4 and June 8-9
- DAV Dept of SD 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention – May 5-6 – New Leadership
- Fundraising – DAV Convention Raffle
- Development of a new SD DAV Challenge Coin
- One new vehicle in Lake Andes. One new vehicle on order for Winner.
- Claim issues – 1 of 2 NSO in Sioux Falls
- SD State Fair – On the first day of the State Fair, each organization of the South Dakota Veterans Council will be allowed one table and two chairs at the DAV building. After this day, each organization will be allowed to stay at their table with a fee of \$300.00 and will need to notify the DAV of their intent by July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

**VVA:**

959 – Terry Mayer

- State Event April 20-22 in Rapid City at the Ramkota

1054 – Bob Frink

- A video preceded the SDVC that the VVA is Showing in School in the NE Part of SD. Purchase thru the VVA.
- 3,000.00 Scholarships
- Given 25K of Gift Cards to Needy Veterans in Nine Counties

**MOPH: Connie Johnson**

- Bruce and Volga are MOPH Communities
- Declining Involvement – Hard to get Quorum
- August 5<sup>th</sup> – Commander Picnic
- August 7<sup>th</sup> – Purple Heart Day

**PVA: Mike Olson**

- April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, SFVAHCS – Joint Pizza Day to the CLC with the DAV
- PVA fishing event to be held in Chamberlain in May 2023
- May 9<sup>th</sup> – National Convention
- June 21<sup>st</sup> – Annual Picnic

**11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Legislative 2023 Discussion:** None. 2024 Legislation for 2024 due to the Council at the next SDVC Meeting in July.

**Adding NACVSO to SDVC:**

January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023

On a motion by (VVA) Phil Braeger and seconded by (VFW) Anna Arnold to add the National Association of County Veterans Service Officer Association (NACVSOA) to the membership for the SDVC. Discussion.

On a motion by (TAL) Fred Nelson and seconded by (DAV) Dan Francis to table the discussion until the next meeting to determine if the NACVSOA meets all the requirements of being in the SDVC. Motion passed.

April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Discussion included if the NACVSO meets all requirements to be a member. Aaron Walberg produced a website to the Vice President indicating it in fact does meet the federally charter requirements.

On a roll vote, after department caucus, the following was the vote on the motion by (VVA) Terry Mayer and seconded by (PVA) Mike Olson;

VFW – No / TAL – No / DAV – No / VVA – Yes / MOPH – Yes / PVA – Yes

Motion Failed.

**12. NEW BUSINESS:****Proposed Future SDVC Meetings:**

July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Sisseton 11a-2p

September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Rapid City

November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Sioux Falls

January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, TAL – Post 8 – 2-5p - Pierre - Legislative Reception 5:30p-7:30p

**2023-2025 Officer Elections:**

2023-2024 Membership Dues Form Handed Out – Due July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Dues must be paid by July 19<sup>th</sup>, for elections.

**13. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

On a motion by (VFW) Anna Arnold and seconded by (TAL) Fred Nelson to hold the next meeting on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, from 11a to 2:00p (CT), in Sisseton. Motion carried.

**14. GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Nominations for the Chet Sorenson 2023 Award will be due and voted on at the July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting.

**15. CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT:**

With no other business before the council, Vice President Kevin Hempel led the council in the benediction followed by a salute to the colors from President Connie Johnson.

On a motion by (VFW) Anna Arnold and seconded by (DAV) Dan Francis to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:58pm.

*Marty Pennock, Secretary-Treasurer*      **4/22/23**