

**Minutes of the Southern Utah Veterans Home-Ivins,
Advisory Board Meeting (via Zoom),
January 13, 2022**

In Attendance: David Houston (Chairman), Gary Stolz (Vice Chairman), Janet Warner (Board Member), Willem Van der Elst (Board Member), Terry Dunne (Board Member), Joe McKillop (Resident Council Representative), Gary Harter (UDVMA Executive Director), Jeff Hanson (UDVMA Deputy Director), Tony Moore (State Officer).

Zoom Meeting called to order by Chairman Houston at 4:00 pm and all present were welcomed. Terry Dunne then led the Advisory Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and Gary Stolz offered an opening prayer. Chairman Houston then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October meeting if there were no corrections needed. Board Member Warner made the motion to approve, seconded by Board Member Dunne, minutes approved.

1. UDVMA Department Update:
 - a. Deputy Director Hanson started by thanking the board members for their willingness to serve on the board. He then gave a brief update on the status of the pandemic across the 4 facilities noting that the Omicron variant of COVID-19 was much more contagious, but seemed to have less severe outcomes. He then discussed that the Department keeps a legislative tracker for items affecting veterans and said that he would make this tracker available to all of the board members.

2. Open Items:
 - a. COVID-19 Update – State Officer Moore started by briefly discussed the Nurse Scholarship Program. The facility now has a Taxable Nurse Grant Program for Nurses and CNAs to further their education. We received a \$25,000 grant from the VA to pay for up to 50% of the program. In November 2021, we awarded 5 grants and will have another round of applications in the spring of 2022. Our goal is to continue awarding grants 2 times per year. The funds are paid directly to the institution of higher learning.
 - b. Staffing Challenges – Our number one focus is and has been hiring and retention of staff. We continue to run a large deficit of CNAs and Nurses, and there are some other departments that are challenged for staffing as well. Board Member Dunne then asked if the Recreation Director had been replaced yet to which State Officer Moore responded that yes, Charity Payne has been hired and is currently working as the Recreation Director. Board Member Amargo asked if there were pandemic requirements for new hires like vaccination, to which State Officer Moore responded that yes, vaccination is required, but that Avalon does have vaccination requirement with a few exemptions for religious or medical reasons. Board Member Amargo also asked if visitors were able to enter the facility with the same requirements to which State Officer Moore responded that visitors do

not have the same requirements as Staff Members. Visitors are encouraged to be vaccinated and that it was a requirement to enter the facility for a while, but it is no longer required, however, they do screen visitors for signs and symptoms of COVID and if present are not allowed into the building. Additionally, Board Member Amargo asked about contact tracing for staff to which State Officer Moore responded that yes, we do conduct contact tracing for staff as well.

- c. Resident Council Update – Resident Board Member McKillop briefly discussed the current status of activities stating that they are occurring, but the staff needs additional help and volunteers are currently not allowed, however, he noted that things are going well given the situation and that he recently celebrated his 5th anniversary being in the facility and is and has been very happy with the care he receives here at the Southern Utah Veterans Home.
3. New Items:
- a. The Management Contract – State Officer Moore noted that the Management Contract for the Southern Utah Veterans Home will expire in April 2023 and that the new bidding process will begin late Summer or early Fall 2022. Deputy Director Hanson stated that we would probably ask for help on the Selection Committee. Board Member Dunne briefly discussed the process.
 - b. Veterans Golf Tournament – State Officer Moore briefly mentioned that the Eagles Landing LLC group holds an annual Veterans Golf Tournament from which the SUVH receives a generous annual donation from.
 - c. Board Membership – Chairman Houston asked about the status of Board Membership for Gary Stolz and himself whose terms were expiring March 2022 to which State Officer Moore responded that Gary Stolz had agreed to another term of service on the board and that Chairman Houston had a number of options regarding his membership. Chairman Houston then expressed his appreciation for the Advisory Board and the SUVH and also agreed to serve another term.
4. Chairman Houston adjourned the meeting at 4:38 pm. Next Meetings tentatively to be held at 4:00 pm on:
- a. 14 April, 2022
 - b. 14 July, 2022
 - c. 13 October, 2022
5. FYI, the next board members whose terms are expiring are:
- a. Willem Van der Elst – 4/30/2023 (1st Term)
 - b. Terry Dunne – 10/31/2024 (1st Term)
 - c. Ira Amargo – 4/30/2025 (1st Term)