



GEORGE E. WAHLEN OGDEN VETERANS HOME Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2021 3:00 PM
Virtual & Call-In Meeting

Attendance

Curt Oda, Tex Crawford, Jory Wahlen, Paula Stephenson, Lacy Bizios, Steven Steed, Tressa Quayle, Beth Topa, Jacqueline Peterson, Gary Harter, Jeff Hanson, Carl Hugie

Welcome

Chairman Curt Oda welcomed everyone to the meeting. Tex gave an opening prayer, and Beth led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of March 18, 2021 minutes

A motion was made by Paula and seconded to approve the minutes. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Advisory Board

Curt stated that Paula was selected to be the Vice Chair for this Advisory Board, which was approved by the Department of Utah Veteran and Military Affairs leadership.

Resident Council Update

Tex reported on activities through the months of April, May, June 2021, with calendars distributed to Board members. Recreation is doing a wonderful job of keeping up the spirits of the residents. We are enjoying the opportunity to go out with families now. We are now allowed to roam around the facility and attend activities in the multipurpose room. During the month of June we were allowed to go to Wendover. We had a wonderful Memorial Day Program and all the residents were very happy to attend.

Administrator's Report (Avalon)

Carl reported that in the past three months we have had no positive COVID cases including residents and staff. Last positive resident was January 29. During the pandemic we had 12 positive residents in memory care but all have recuperated. We had 50 staff members test positive but all have returned to work. 94% of residents and 70% of staff members have received the COVID vaccine. New admissions are either vaccinated or are offered the COVID vaccine. Staff members who are not vaccine are offered it weekly. We continue to test our unvaccinated staff weekly for COVID. The county positivity rate is staying around 7%. The state is pushing the 70% vaccination throughout the state including the county. Carl stated that he has mandated that all volunteers who come into our facility be vaccinated. He cannot mandate employees but spreading the word and educating all employees should help with the decision to be vaccinated. Visitation with family members have changed drastically. They are now allowed to visit any day of the week for 30 minutes. We can only allow 10 family members in one community at a time. If the communities do not have family members

waiting to visit we do not push the 30 minute rule. Family members are not allowed to mingle with other residents or visit during meal time. Family members must wear a mask at all times. The only time they can take their mask off is in the resident's room if both are vaccinated. If family members travel outside of the state they must be tested. Visitation continues to expand and hopefully in the future it changes even more. Staffing continues to be a problem due to the high employability in the community. For example: Del Taco is hiring individuals starting out at \$20.00 an hour and we pay our CNA's starting wage is \$14.00. We are currently having a hard time competing with these companies. Carl asked board members to spread the word that Avalon is hiring all positions. He also encouraged board members to visit with the residents and he would send out a biweekly update.

State Officer's Report

Jacquee reported on the storage units for A, B & C communities have now been completed. They are 20X30 in size and have numerous shelves for medical supplies and other items needed in that specific community. The salt water aquariums have been install in both the main lobby and D community. Landscaping throughout the facility has been refreshed and the resident's communities have new furniture and flowers planted. Residents love to go outside and help water the plants. Governor Cox sent out an Executive Order to all state facilities to water two days a week. Jeff stated this only applies to grass areas and not trees, shrubs and flowers. Department of Facility Maintenance (DFCM) has hired the architect to design the remodeling of the kitchens in A, B, C & D communities. Funding was approved through capital improvements in the amount of \$700,000.00. Still waiting on the memorial park landscaping design. Jacquee stated that Avalon and I have been working with the VA hospital on referring out our service connected Veterans for specialty care. The VA hospital stated that Dr. Robert Mohr our medical director could refer a veteran out in the community but all requests must be approved through community care at the VA hospital. We are very exciting about this change and we will test it sometime this month.

UDVMA Executive Director's Report

Jeff stated that he was able to attend the Memorial Day Program and everyone did an amazing job. Occupancy at the veteran's home throughout the state is slowly start to creep back to normal. We are currently at 94% occupancy rate. Jeff communicated about the current contract for the veteran's home in both Salt Lake and Ogden expires in September 30. We went through the process of an RFP and 5 providers applied for that contract. It was very competitive but in the end Avalon Healthcare received the contract for another five years for both facilities. At the Utah Veterans Cemetery in Bluffdale construction is almost complete with the install of an additional 2,000 graveyard crips. The landscaping is beautiful and should be completed soon. The northern cemetery is currently pending transfer of title of the land to the state. There will be approximate 100 acres but not all is usable space. Once this has been completed we will be able to move forward with the grants.

Gary thanked the staff and board members for all they do for veterans. Our department is looking forward this upcoming year to move forward with applying for grants for both Northern Cemetery and a new Salt Lake Veterans home. He will be traveling down to Southern Utah Veterans Home-Ivins next week. He will be visiting all the veterans groups along the way. He reported on the "Governors Challenge" that our

department is involved in for suicide prevention for veterans and current military members. The key members of this committee is federal VA, department of human services, federal health and human services. Had the opportunity to attend the memorial ceremony for Theodore Jensen who was killed at Pearl Harbor. His remains were laid to rest at Delta city cemetery.

Old Business

Tressa Quayle's meetings have been resolved and she will continue on as a board member. No date changes to our board meetings.

New Business

Upcoming board meeting will be in person at the Veterans home.

Upcoming Board Meetings

September 16, 2021 at 3:00pm

December 16, 2021 at 3:00pm

March 17, 2022 at 3:00pm

June 16, 2022 at 3:00pm

Adjourn Chairman Curt Oda adjourned the meeting at 4:01 PM.