

**Minutes of the Southern Utah Veterans Home-Ivins,  
Advisory Board Meeting (via Zoom),  
April 8, 2021**

In Attendance: Barbara Holck (Chairman), David Houston (Vice Chairman), Janet Warner (Board Member), Gary Stolz (Board Member), Willem Van der Elst (Board Member), Terry Dunne (Board Member), Ira Amargo (Board Member), Art Davis (Board Member), Darrell Holck (Board Member), Joe McKillop (Resident Council Representative), Gary Harter (UDVMA Executive Director), Tony Moore (State Officer), Jerry Olson (Nursing Home Administrator).

Zoom Meeting called to order by Chairman Holck at 4:00 pm and all present were welcomed. Chairman Holck then led the Advisory Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and Board Member Darrell Holck offered an opening prayer.

1. Board Chairman Holck introduced new board members Darrell Holck, Art Davis, and Joe McKillop (Resident Council Member) and gave each a little time to introduce themselves. She then asked if all the members had reviewed the meeting minutes from the 14 January, 2021 meeting and if there were any needed corrections or additions. Board Member Dunne made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Board Member Stolz, minutes approved.
2. UDVMA Department Update:
  - a. Director Harter started by stating that it is great to have the veteran homes starting to open up a bit and mentioned that so far, things are going well. He then stated that the department was in the middle of a refresh at the Ogden facility, which was opened in 2008. He then stated that the Military retiree tax exemption was approved, noting that it's going to work as a tax credit. He also talked about those veterans throughout the state who have passed during the pandemic and the state is going to have a special ceremony to recognize all of them on Memorial Day at the Capital. Lastly he briefly discussed that, during the pandemic, normal surveys were not occurring, but they are starting again and the Ogden facility was the first SNF (Skilled Nursing Facility) to be inspected with a survey. The survey at the Ogden home went very well. Chairman Holck stated that she was very excited about the Military tax exemption and thanked Administrator Olson for the regular COVID updates via email that are sent out at least weekly. Board Member Houston asked when the tax exemption would be available, to which Executive Director Harter replied that it will be in effect starting in Tax Year 2021.
3. Open Items:
  - a. COVID-19 Update – Administrator Olson started by sharing some numbers, to date our facility has had 40 COVID cases, which includes 39 staff and contractor cases and 1 resident case. The resident recovered nicely and was only out of the

facility for a short time. He stated that we currently have one active COVID case which puts the facility in Outbreak mode. Outbreak mode means the facility has additional restrictions and increased testing frequency until no additional cases are discovered for 14 days from the date of the positive test. He then briefly discussed our vaccination status. We currently have 105 residents, 100 are vaccinated. We have 219 staff, 179 are vaccinated. Avalon is not mandating that employees get vaccinated, but we do encourage everyone to get the vaccine. He stated that he has personally talked to many of the 40 who declined the vaccine. The vaccine serum is available enough that we can administer the vaccine on-site with our Nurses and some have received the vaccine this way after declining the initial vaccine clinic back in January and February. He stated that we are about 3 weeks into the new allowed visitation guidelines. There are many rules regarding visitation depending on vaccination status, these include screening, education, and monitoring. We assigned additional staff to visitation in order to accommodate as many visits as possible. We also conducted a survey with the families to get feedback on the new visitation process. Executive Director Harter asked Jerry to talk about the Pinnacle reports to which Administrator Olson replied that we use a company called Pinnacle to survey residents and family members. These surveys are conducted monthly and include about 10% of the target audience. The survey asks questions in 16 different categories (i.e. quality of nursing care, quality of food, housekeeping, maintenance, etc.) and we have and continue to perform very well. Executive Director mentioned how impressed he and Deputy Director Hanson are with how high the scores have been throughout the pandemic. The pay particular attention to communication and the question “would you recommend this facility to others”. He congratulated Administrator Olson on how well the facility has performed overall and during the pandemic.

- b. Resident Council Update – Resident Board Member McKillop briefly discussed what he does to stay in touch with the other residents. He also talked about the visits that he’s been able to have since the recent CMS rule changes allowing more visitation. Chairman Holck asked him if he had noticed any difference in the morale of residents since this change to which he replied oh yes, and many people are happy with these changes. Vice Chairman Houston welcomed Resident Board Member McKillop and briefly discuss the similarities between his father and Board Member McKillop.
4. New Business Items:
- a. Administrator Olson started by discussing some common confusion with the public about the State’s mask mandate and the federal CMS and VA rules that we need to remain compliant with. The State’s mask mandate will end on 10 April, 2021, but our facility will still require masks. Board Member Dunne asked about the visitor policy published on 18 March, 2021, specifically, will visitors be required to sign a copy of the policy each time they come to the facility to which Administrator Olson replied yes, and noted that many people are unhappy with

that, but it's still important and frankly some people are just not wanting to comply with our policies.

- b. Administrator Olson then discussed a book entitled "Saving Dr. Warren, a True Patriot". The book is a historical novel about Dr. Warren who was instrumental in the early days of the American Revolution, and is targeted at 5<sup>th</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to help promote patriotism. The author, Jeff McKenna, was a former board member of this body and is a local attorney. He also started a non-profit organization called "Help Patriotism Fail" and are offering an essay contest with prizes (1<sup>st</sup> - \$500, 2<sup>nd</sup> - \$250, 3<sup>rd</sup> - \$100) with matching amounts for the student and the teacher of the student. Our facility is funding the prize money this year and also are helping to promote the program that will announce the winners and be available on You-Tube starting on April 19<sup>th</sup>, which was the start of action for the Revolutionary War.
- c. Administrator Olson then introduced another event that we are planning. Jack Reber, who is a longtime resident here in the Southern Utah Veterans Home as well as one of the original settling families in Ivins. He recalls coming from Santa Clara in a horse drawn wagon at the age of 4 when there was nothing but desert here. Additionally, Jack was the Mayor of Ivins (10 Acres) in the late 1970's thru the mid-1980's and is the person who obtained the land for the city of Ivins, it was intended to be for a public project and eventually that land was used for this facility. Jack's birthday is June 16<sup>th</sup> and he is turning 100 years old this year and we are working with the City of Ivins to hold "Jack Reber Day" on June 16<sup>th</sup>.
- d. Administrator Olson then briefly mentioned that we are still progressing with the Southern Utah Veterans Home Scholarship Program. We have been working with a few attorneys and we have a path that will work, which we will present in more detail at a later meeting.
- e. Administrator Olson then mentioned that we will be doing some advertising on the local talk radio station (KDXU). He also stated that at some point we may reach out to some board members to participate in this advertising initiative.
- f. Board Member Dunne asked if Executive Director Harter if he could elaborate on the \$100M dollar grant that the VA will be distributing to State Veterans Homes, to which Executive Director Harter replied that it will be based on Census (which is the total number of veterans in the homes) and will be used to make improvements, upgrades, or other projects.
- g. Board Member Dunne asked Executive Director Harter when we would be displaying the U.S. Space Force flag, to which Executive Director Harter replied that the State of Utah recently passed legislation officially recognizing the U.S. Space Force and that the veterans homes will be displaying them soon, and he said that we are targeting the initial display for Armed Forces Day. Chairman Holck asked if there are forms and such that will need to be updated for this new branch of the military, to which Executive Director replied that yes, eventually, the entire supply chain will catch up.

5. Chairman Holck adjourned the meeting at 4:53 pm. Next Meetings tentatively to be held at 4:00 pm on:
  - a. 8 July, 2021
  - b. 14 October, 2021
  - c. 13 January, 2022
  
6. FYI, the next board members whose terms are expiring are:
  - a. Barbara Holck – 7/15/2021 (1<sup>st</sup> Term)
  - b. Gary Stolz – 3/31/2022 (1<sup>st</sup> Term)
  - c. David Houston – 3/31/2022 (1<sup>st</sup> Term)