

Utah Veterans Advisory Council
Minutes of Monthly Meeting
October 16th, 2019

Place: Multipurpose Room at the SLC Veterans Nursing Home

Members Present: Bart Davis, Mark Eddington, Karen Gribben, Gary Harter, Frank Maughan, Bob Pagnani

Excused: Marti Bigbie, Brian Garrett, Jack Kammerer, Dave Phillips, Darryl Root, Paula Stephenson

Secretary: Alan Ferner

Guests: Kimberly Albers, Randy Edwards, Jerry Estes, Jennica Gruver, Alyson Johnson, Mike Kipp, Penny Larsen, Michael Miller, Cory Pearson, Hayes Stromness

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Bob Pagnani. Bob introduced and welcomed those in attendance. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. The minutes of our 18 September meeting were reviewed and approved by the members of the Council.
3. VA Regional Office: Kimberly Albers advised of recent “Blue Water Navy” legislation, and the procedure for filing and processing of claims. She added that hiring continues for the National Call Center. The VARO ended the fiscal year meeting most of its goals. It handled approximately 43,000 Veterans Claims.
4. VA Medical Center: Karen Gribben stated that Shella Stovall is expected to be back in the office on 4 November. Karen addressed the need for more clinics. The new Orem clinic will be opening soon.
5. Utah Dept. Veterans & Military Affairs: Gary Harter introduced Jennica Gruver, the new Executive Assistant for the DVMA. Gary summarized the status of grant applications for both the Bluffdale Veterans Cemetery and the proposed Northern Utah Veterans Cemetery. He advised that indications look favorable for the Northern Utah proposal, but funding remains a challenge. Gary added that all four Utah Veterans Nursing Homes maintain 5-star ratings. Of additional significance, the Ogden home has been awarded the American Health Care Assoc. (AHCA) Gold Award for nursing facilities. Cory Pearson reviewed recent Veteran related events and provided information on events coming up in the next few months. Cory then briefly reviewed the Fall 2019 edition of the “Veterans Voice.” Gary Harter reminded us that the Veterans and Military Affairs Commission (VAMC) will meet at Hill AFB on 22 October. The November VAMC meeting will be on 19 November at the VA Medical Center Campus.

6. Randy Edwards summarized a proposal to designate a national State Funeral for the last WWII Medal of Honor recipient, upon passing. Following discussion, the Council determined that the best course of action would be to proceed with a joint resolution in support of the proposal, to be addressed to the President. Randy Edwards will coordinate with Gary Harter.
7. The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 PM by Bob Pagnani. Our next monthly meeting will be held Wednesday, November 20th, at 4:00 PM, in the Multipurpose Room at the SLC Veterans Nursing Home.