

# MINUTES

**Quarterly Meeting of the  
Missouri Veterans Commission  
April 26, 2021 — 10:00 AM  
Harry S Truman State Office Building  
301 W. High Street, Room 492  
Jefferson City, MO**

*Portions of this meeting may be closed pursuant to Sections 610.021 (1), (3), (9) & (14)  
RSMo.*

**WebEx Conference Call was established for public to join.**

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## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll Call

Commissioners in attendance in room or via WebEx Conference Call:

Chair Kelly McClelland; Vice Chair Meredith Knopp; Commissioner Randy Alewel; Commissioner Tim Smith; Commissioner Robert Sauls; Commissioner Jill Schupp; Commissioner Chuck Basye; Commissioner Steve Maples

Absent: Commissioner Brattin – Represented by his COS, Tucker Jobes

- Chair Open Comments
- Recognition: Karen Sartain, DPS EOM

## **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Open Quarterly Commission Meeting Minutes from February 1, 2021
- Special Session Open Minutes from March 29, 2021
- Minor corrections on minutes were annotated
- All minutes were unanimously approved as written with corrections

## **III. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE BRIEF**

- Mr. Aaron Willard, Governor's Office
  - Challenged MVC to be the best in Midwest by reviewing other states operations.
  - Requested an August 1, 2021 brief from Commission with priorities outlined

## **IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- The following topics were briefed:
  - Veterans Benefit Portal – Melissa Skinner, Operations Officer
    - Website is a product based on Veterans Innovation Task Force (VITF) research into Missouri Veterans needs and developed by MVC
    - Provided demonstration of purpose, functions, and services provided on the website: <https://veteransbenefits.mo.gov>
- MVC Comprehensive Update – Paul Kirchhoff, Executive Director
  - Human Resources Update
    - Introduction of new HR Director, Paul Imhoff
    - End of Pandemic Stipend – May 31<sup>st</sup>
    - Recruiting and retention initiatives
  - Facilities Update – Current capital improvements planned and under way
  - Veteran Cemeteries Program

- Interments by FY for each Veterans Cemetery
  - Satisfaction surveys remain at nearly 100%
  - Columbarium Wall remaining capacity
- Veteran Services Program
  - Cost of VSOs compared to Generated Income for Veterans
  - Electronic access to Military Services' Official Military Personnel File
  - Signed Memorandum of Understanding between MVC and DOC
  - Resuming Outreach Programs
  - Review of National Veterans Legal Services Program offered to Veterans
- Veteran Homes Program
  - Briefed Clinical Quality Measures and Staffing Measures
  - Veteran Satisfaction Survey Jan 2021 – Mar 2021
  - Infection Control and COVID Precautions
  - Virtual VA Surveys
  - Mock Surveys
  - Continuous Quality Improvement Reviews
  - Ombudsman Program
- Fiscal Update – Terressa Sherlock, Budget & Finance Director
  - Missouri Veterans Commission operates with two major funds
    - Missouri Veterans Commission Capital Improvement Trust Fund (VCCITF)
    - Veterans Homes Fund
  - COVID Impact on MVC Funds
  - MVC funding support from COVID Relief Funding Opportunities
  - Revenues and Expenditures forecast for next 5 years
  - Update on House Bill 8
  - Medical Marijuana funding support projections
  - Budget needs for FY 22
    - \$37 M additional funding for homes operations, capital improvements, maintenance and repair
    - \$28 M additional funding support for COVID response permanent upgrades (Possible 100% VA reimbursable)

## V. OLD BUSINESS

- Sub-Committees (Legislative/Budget, Clinical, and Administrative)
  - Discussion to hold off on establishing subcommittees due to Governor's Office request
    - Will add to Quarterly Commission Meeting at a later date
  - Discussion on the following two items followed:
    - Homes Hardship Admissions – Look at how this is done
    - Memory Care Admissions – Look at possible need to limit
- Veterans Health & Care Fund
  - Status of current appropriations
  - House appropriations
  - Draft MVHCF Grant Process – Scotty Allen; General Counsel
- Discussion was raised as to whether additional monthly meetings would be helpful in order to facilitate idea generation and continued progress with regards to the Midwest Challenge and budget shortfall limitations
  - Decision was made to begin holding monthly meetings as required

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

- Vietnam Veterans Day – Discussed making Missouri day of observation the same as Federal day of observation

## VII. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- MAVO provided update on Veterans legislative interests
- Gaming Commission provided brief on future projections
- Legalizing Marijuana: No progress at this time

## VIII. AGENCY PARTNERS UPDATE

- Harry S Truman VAMC, Columbia, Director briefed:
  - No current COVID cases in hospital
  - Open COVID Vaccinations to all Veterans, Families, Caregivers, etc.
  - Lots of construction
    - Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Sedalia is growing
    - Lake Ozark CBOC is also growing
    - Warrensburg CBOC is expanding ER capabilities
- John J. Pershing VAMC, Poplar Bluff, Associate Director briefed:
  - There is a lot of COVID Vaccine hesitancy
  - CBOC is expanding ER capabilities
  - Many major updates in infrastructure through facilities
- John Cochran VAMC St. Louis, Chief of Staff briefed:
  - St. Louis VA Hospital is mostly open as normal at this time
  - Will be keeping a lot of the telehealth initiatives
  - 21,000 Veterans vaccinated
  - 87% of employees are vaccinated

## IX. CHAIR COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Chair McClelland made closing remarks and announced that the next Quarterly Commission meeting will be held on Monday, July 26, 2021 at 10:00 AM
- Special Monthly Meetings will be announced as they are scheduled via Missouri Veterans Commission website and OA Open Meetings website
- No Closed Session was conducted on April 26, 2020
- With no further business before the Commission, meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.

  
Paul Kirchhoff, Secretary