



**Department Service
Commission
Minutes**

**Spring Conference
3rd DEC Meeting
March 2023**



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT SERVICE COMMISSION (DSC)

DSC Meeting Minutes March 16, 2023

1. **Meeting Convened:** 3:29 P.M. at Bayfront Suites by Marriott, Virginia Beach, VA by Chairman, John W. King (2).
 - A. Opening Prayer given by Chaplain, Patricia Coker-Bell (22).
 - B. Salute our nation's flag led by Commissioner, Bob Bent (48).
 - C. Chairman, John King, went over the basic etiquettes and administrative instructions for the meeting as follows:
 - 1) This meeting is primarily for Commissioners and Service Committee Chairs and Programs.
 - 2) Request everyone either shut off Cell phones or put them on vibrate.
 - 3) All attendees may ask questions but only Commissioners and Committee Chairs may vote.
 - 4) The proceedings are being recorded.
 - 5) It is absolutely **essential for a speaker to identify** himself /herself **BEFORE speaking**.
 - 6) Speakers **must speak up** in order that the recorder clearly picks up their reports, comments, etc.
 - 7) Try to **stay on the subject matter**. Let the speaker finish his or her presentation. Do not interrupt.
 - 8) Wait until the Chair recognizes you to interject a related comment.
 - 9) Commissioners are expected to review the contents of the handout packet before the DSC meeting is convened and be prepared to vote as appropriate on the prior minutes.

Note: All information for the DSC is now found on the Department Website at www.virginiadav.org. All of the Forms can be found here along with most of the information you will need about Conferences/Conventions, Meeting Minutes, Archived Reports and much more. Everyone needs to get familiar with this website.

2. **Distinguished Visitors(s)/Attendees:**

- A. National 3rd Junior Vice, John Donovan
- B. National 4th Junior Vice, Cynthia Madison
- C. National Legislative Director, Shane Liermann
- D. Department Commander, Francis Mitchell
- E. National Service Officer, Will Bible

3. **Roll Call of Commissioners (by DSC Secretary Debbie Wood):**

- Commission Chairman, John W King, II (2), (Term expires Convention 2022)
- Department Service Director (DSD), Acting NSO Supervisor, Andrew Dilbeck (Excused)
- Deputy DSD, Assistant NSO Supervisor, Vacant (Report presented by Will Bible)
- Commissioner/Director Projects and Special Programs, Bob Bent (48) (Term expires Convention 2023)
- Commissioner - Terry Bohlinger (13) (Term expires at Convention 2024)
- Commissioner – Joseph Richard Olivier (50) (Term expires at Convention 2024)(Excused)
- Commissioner – Tanya Canty (21) (Term expires at Convention at 2023)
- Commissioner – **Vacant** (Term expires at Convention at 2025)
- Commissioner – **Vacant** (Term expires at Convention at 2025)
- State VAVS Chairman, Chris Cheney (60)
- Homeless Veterans Committee Chair, Lisa Gregory (7)
- Employment Committee Chair, Shawn Ware (7)
- Women’s Committee Chair, Tyrelle Felder (50)
- Emergency Relief Committee Chair, Kassandra Benson (6)
- Incarcerated Veterans Assistance Committee Chair, Jeff Ogilvie (7)
- Finance Committee Chair, David Cuff (60) (without vote)(Excused)
- Department Commander, Ex Officio member, Francis Mitchell (6) (without vote)
- Department Adjutant, Bob Cox (60), Ex-Officio (without vote) (Excused)
- DSC Secretary, Debbie Wood, LVAP Coordinator (without vote)

DSC Secretary Debbie Wood reported “**Chairman, we have a quorum.**”

4. **Meeting Goals:**

- A. **Review Specific Goals during the course of the quarter:**
 - 1) Significant activities during FY 2022/2023.
 - 2) Service activities planned for FY 2022/2023.
 - 3) Recommendations to improve service to veterans.

5. DSC Business Matters:

A. **Approval of DSC, October 13, 2022 Fall Conference, Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes for the DSC meeting held on October 13, 2023 can be found on the Department website. Commissioner, Terry Bohlinger (13) made a motion to accept with a second from Commissioner, Chris Cheney (60). There being no questions or discussion, the motion was unanimously approved by the DSC members present.

B. **Department Appointees recognition:**

Chairman King recognized and thanked all past and present Department Commanders/Committee members.

C. **Transportation System**

Bob Bent commented on the effects that COVID had on the DAV transportation system, 3 of the 4 medical centers have no transportation program in place. Keith Davis has been running the facility in Hampton and it has been running effectively. The DAV transportation program is working on getting the other 3 facilities up and running. In order to make this happen we need volunteer drivers and hospital service coordinators (HSC's). All chapters need to reach out to their members and let them know that we need volunteer drivers. Anyone can volunteer, you don't have to be a member of the DAV to volunteer to drive for our transportation system. The volunteer does need to have a valid driver's license, a good driving record and pass a physical. Any vehicle that veterans are transported in is donated to the VA so that is why these requirements must be met.

David Cuff made the comment that he is having trouble getting volunteers to pass their physicals because of their age and the medical requirements. The restrictions for the physicals in the Salem area are too rigorous (no high blood pressure, no diabetes even if medications are being taken). John King is the POC for the transportation system. Marcia Stewart said she will put this information out on social media pages to help get the word out.

A member stated that this is a very good opportunity for family members of Veterans to get involved since the volunteers do not have to be members of the DAV in order to volunteer to drive.

D. **Issues/Concerns:**

- 1) **Department Service Commission:** The purpose of the Department Service Commission is to combine our forces so we can better service our veterans. One person cannot possibly do this by him or herself. It takes a group of us that have formed committees, each with a committee chair, to work together in getting the resources together to be able to help the veterans that need assistance. This takes a lot of cooperation from our committee members. We use zoom meetings to discuss things that have been done and things that still need to be done. All of the committees are doing a wonderful job. If you volunteer to be on a committee, please know that you need to be able to work well with others. We want to keep the committees on the track of solving problems and getting resources to help veterans. We want to avoid

volunteers who are not willing to work together as a team as this tends to hold up progress.

- 2) **Expense Vouchers:** All DSC chairpersons that give a presentation are entitled to 3 nights' hotel accommodations and 50 cents/mile for travel to and from the conference/conventions. A voucher must be filled out and given to Chairman King to approve and sign in order to get reimbursed. If a person waits longer than 30 days to turn in the voucher, it may get denied.
- 3) **Review of Committee Description on Department Website:** All DSC Committee chairs must check their committee website page and your email address and submit them to the Social Media Committee (SMC) and the Department Adjutant, Bob Cox. DSC John King and Commissioner Bob Bent should be cc'd in order to validate that it was sent. This will help in case the SMC says they did not receive it, there will be proof from another party that it was sent. Committee chairs should not have to be reminded to submit their information to the SMC. Calendars should be marked to submit your information on the first day of the month of a conference/convention.
- 4) **Committee Correspondence:** Each committee has an email address that needs to be checked regularly. E-mails pertaining to the committee will be sent to the committee email address, not to your personal email address so please get in the habit of checking the committee email.
- 5) **Committee Resolutions:** There are committees that need to submit resolutions each year. If you are not sure how to do this, you can ask the resolutions committee or Department Commander, Francis Mitchell.
- 6) **Service Awards:** Please know that anyone can submit a nomination for an award for an individual. If you are going to submit a nomination for someone, make sure you follow the criteria for that category. Some of the categories for awards that can be submitted are:
 - Employee of the year
 - LVER/DVOP Nomination
 - Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year
 - DAV/DAVA George Seal Award
 - Jessie Brown Youth Scholarship Award

6. **Commissioner and Committee Reports:**

A. **NSO Officer, Will Bible (60) Report:**

Roanoke NSO Office Workload Report:

Roanoke NSO Office is located at 210 Franklin Road, SW, Room 808, Roanoke, VA 24011. Contact phone numbers remain 540-597-1731 and Fax 540-597-1734.

1) **Staffing:**

National Service Officers (NSO's):

Vacant: Supervisor, Deputy Department Service Director

Andrew Dilbeck: Assistant Supervisor, Deputy Department Service Director

Lewis Ramsey: National Service Officer (NSO)

William S. Bible: National Service Officer (NSO)

Morgan Bowles: NSO Trainee

Secretaries:

Amy King: NSO Secretary
Shannon Riley: NSO Secretary
Transition Service Officers (TSO's):
Brenda Lamb
Sandra Almonds

2) **Roanoke NSO Office Statistics from July 1, 2022 – Feb. 1, 2023:**

VA Files Reviewed:	13,237
Emails Responded to:	4,859
Total POA's:	750
Interviews-In Person/Phone Calls:	2,616
Claims Submitted:	16,005
Direct Mail Uploads	829
Rating Board Appearances	139

The purpose of my report is to update the DSC on what is happening at the NSO Office. Claims are taking longer due to the office being short staffed. I want to thank the TSOs and the CSO's for all of their hard work. CSO's will no longer be doing BDD claims. Those claims will be referred to the TSO office due to the speciality training that goes along with this process.

We are working on getting more CSO training scheduled including Level 2 training and some virtual training. New laws will be introduced during these training sessions. Jody Kaughman is the new National Area Supervisor. As of March 6th 2023 phone calls have been reduced and transitioned into emails. Everything is being uploaded at this point. The submittal letters are not being resent to the individual and Form 9s are no longer done. The Pact Act has taken in 1,000,000 claims since February so the VA is doing massive hiring.

Bob Bent stated that just because the VA says that they are doing a mass hiring does not mean that claims will be taken care of in a faster manner. The VA must still train these individuals that are being hired which is a lengthy process and takes time.

Will Bible - Addendum - The VA is clearing 100-120 rating decisions in our RO alone. The hiring is happening now but the training will not occur right away. We will not feel the effects of these individuals being hired for about a year. Even the NSOs that have switched over will not be allowed to do claims on their own for at least a year.

B. **Patches and Pins, Commissioner Terry Bolinger, (13) Report:**

During the fall conference we did \$426 in sales. This money was turned in to Bob Cox at the Department Headquarters.

Items for Sale - Big Patch for DAV and DAVA = \$23.00
Small 4" patch = 3 for \$12.00 or \$5.00 each
DAV/DAVA pins for \$3.50 each or 3 for \$10.00.

We have lost the vendor that we used for our pins and patches therefore we are in search for another vendor. The price for the inventory that the DAV currently has for pins and patches will stay the same for now but we will have a price increase soon because the cost of materials has increased. Bob Bent asked the committee how many attend a national conference or a midwinter conference. The results were half of the

committee. He stated that the Virginia logo is important to see at those conferences and can be shown not only by the pins given but also by the patches that are worn.

C. Richmond Commissioner, Roger Overstreet (50) Report:

No Comment. Report online.

D. Emergency Relief (ER) Committee Chair, Tanya Canty, (21) Report:

No Comment. Report online.

E. VAVS Chairman, Chris Cheney, (60) Report:

No Comment. Report online.

F. Homeless Veterans Committee Chair, Lisa Gregory (7) Report:

No Comment. Report online.

G. Employment Committee Chair, Shawn Ware (7) Report:

No Comment. Report online.

H. Women's Veterans Committee Chair, Tyrelle Felder (50) Report:

My full report can be found on the virginriadav.org website.

The pinning Ceremony for women who have served in the Military will be held this coming week which is Virginia's Women's Veterans Week. It will be held at Arlington's National Women's memorial formerly known as Women Military Service. The official ceremony will take place in the theater following the reception. Everyone will have an opportunity to tell their story. All stories will be posted so that anyone will be able to see them.

I. Incarcerated Veterans Committee Chair, Jeff Ogilvie (7) Report:

No Comment. Report online.

Service Program Reports, DSC Chairman, John W. King, II (2):

A. Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP)/DSC Secretary, Debbie Wood, report:

I want to thank all of the chapters that are sending me their monthly LVAP reports. I also want to give a special thanks to those chapters that get their report to me by the first week of the following month. I have some chapters that are way behind in sending me their reports. These chapters are as follows - 2,3,5,9,10,11,17,19,24,27,28,30,35,40,47,56,60 and 61. If you are the commander, adjutant or the member that is in charge of reporting the LVAP hours for one of these chapters, please call me or email me so I can help get your chapter hours caught up.

I want to give a HUGE Shout Out to ALL of you for helping the State of Virginia win our 9th LVAP Award for the 2021/2022 Fiscal Year. This award was presented at the National Convention in August 2022.

The top 5 chapters reporting LVAP Hours:

1 st place:	Chapter 6	32,689 hours
2 nd place:	Chapter 13	7,180 hours
3 rd place:	Chapter 22	6,958 hours
4 th place:	Chapter 7	5,514 hours
5 th place:	Chapter 57	5,296 hours

Total DAV hours = 90,920

The top 5 units reporting LVAP Hours:

1 st place:	Unit 56	12,348 hours
2 nd place:	Unit 15	6,214 hours
3 rd place:	Unit 50	4,819 hours
4 th place:	Unit 33	3,246 hours
5 th place:	Unit 06	2,267 hours
Total Auxiliary hours =		34,065

The total hours reported so far this fiscal year is 124,985. Our total for the 2021/2022 fiscal year was 247,807 so we have some work to do before the end of June. Please get any reports that you have not reported to me as soon as possible. This concludes my report.

B. Closing Remarks – Commissioner Bob Bent:

The Mission of the DAV is Service. If you add all of the individual parts of each of the service committees and their results, their results are greater than the sum of each individual part because committees all have to work together. They are all inter-related. It is because of the efforts of the committees led by the chairmen that we see the results. We need to be putting more emphasis to make sure we are getting input from the chapter level counterparts. Each committee chair should be getting input from the chapters. Each committee chair should also be sitting in on the other committee seminars to learn what they can do to help each other. There is something to be learned from each committee, whether it is from a new committee chair or a seasoned one. Service is being done and Virginia continues to lead the National Organization for service being done.

John King announced that he will be stepping down as the DSC Chairman effective immediately.

7. **Closing Prayer:** Given by Patricia Coker-Bell (22).
8. **Final Salute to the National Flag:** Led by Commissioner Bent (48).
9. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 4:31 P.M.