



**Department Service
Commission
Minutes**

**Fall Conference
2nd DEC Meeting
March 13, 2022**

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

DSC Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2022

1. **Meeting Convened:** 3:00 P.M. at Delta Marriott, Chesapeake, 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 PDSC Chair, Bob Bent (48).
 - C. Chairman, John King, went over the basic etiquettes and administrative instructions for the meeting as follows:
 - a) This meeting is primarily for Commissioners and Service Committee Chairs and Programs.
 - b) Request everyone either shut off Cell phones or put them on vibrate.
 - c) All attendees may ask questions but only Commissioners and Committee Chairs may vote.
 - d) The proceedings are being recorded.
 - e) It is absolutely essential for a speaker to identify himself /herself BEFORE speaking.
 - f) Speakers **must speak up** in order that the recorder clearly picks up their reports, comments, etc
 - g) Try to stay on the subject matter. Let the speaker finish his or her presentation. Do not interrupt.
 - h) Wait until the Chair recognizes you to interject a related comment.
 - i) Commissioners are expected to have reviewed the contents of the prior minutes before the DSC meeting is convened and be prepared to vote as appropriate on the prior minutes.
2. **The Department Service Commission:** The Department Service Commission (DSC) was established on June 20th, 1987, by the Department of Virginia, Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Bylaws to "have jurisdiction and control over all service related and rehabilitative activities of the Department, subject to the general supervision of the Department Convention and the Department Executive Committee." The mission, directed by the Department Bylaws, is accomplished by:

- A. Developing, organizing, and perpetuating a Department Service Program to aid and assist worthy veterans, their dependents, and survivors throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Exercising control and coordination, and general supervision over all service and rehabilitative activities within the Department.
- B. Developing rules, regulations, policies, and such other procedural practices necessary to effectively carry out its duties and responsibilities.

3. DSC Publications:

- A. Policy and Procedures (P&P): As directed by the preceding Bylaws task, the DSC Policy and Procedures describes how the DSC provides services to disabled veterans and their families here in Virginia. This document is an excellent "living document," and will be updated as required, based upon realistic "lessons learned." The P&P is available on the Department Web Site (www.virginiadav.org), at each Chapter, the Department Headquarters, and the DSC. However, this policy and procedure will be changed for the benefit of the program.
- B. Employee Handbook: The "Employee Handbook" sets forth the terms and conditions of employment of all DSC employees. The document establishes the official policy for all DSC employees. Employees of the Department of Virginia DAV who have entered into separate contracts are not covered by the terms of the DSC "Employee Handbook." The "Employee Handbook" is available on the Department Web Site (www.virginiadav.org). This document will also be updated for the betterment of the program.

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.

4. Distinguished Visitors(s)/Attendees:

- A. National Guest, Scott Hope.
- B. Deputy National Legislative Director, Shane Liermann.
- C. Department Commander, Francis Mitchell.
- D. PDC, Cynthia Mitchell
- E. NSO, Will Bible

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

| | |
|---|---|
| Commission Chairman, John W King, II (2), (Term expires Convention 2022) | P |
| Department Service Director (DSD), Oscar Olguin (60), NSO Supervisor | E |
| Deputy DSD, Assistant NSO Supervisor, Vacant / Fill In, Will Bible | P |

| | |
|---|--------|
| Commissioner/Director Projects and Special Programs, Bob Bent (48) (Term expires Convention 2023) | P |
| Commissioner, Terry Bohlinger (13) (Term expires at Convention 2024) | P |
| Commissioner, Joseph R. Olivier (50) (Term expires at Convention 2024) | P |
| Commissioner, Tanya Canty (21) (Term expires at Convention at 2023) | E |
| Commissioner, Chris Cheney (60) (Term expires at Convention at 2023) | P |
| Commissioner, Vacant (Term expires at Convention at 2021) | Vacant |
| State VAVS Chairman, Chris Cheney (60) | P |
| Homeless Veterans Committee Chair, Lisa Gregory (7) | P |
| Employment Committee Chair, Shawn Ware (7)/Fill In, LaJuanda Gray-Parks | P |
| Women's Committee Chair, Tyrelle Felder (50) | P |
| Emergency Relief Committee Chair, Kassandra Benson (6) | P |
| Incarcerated Veterans Assistance Committee Chair, Jeff Ogilvie (7) | P |
| Finance Committee Chair, David Cuff (60) (without vote) | E |
| Department Commander, Ex Officio member, Cynthia Bailey (20) (without vote) | P |
| Department Adjutant, Bob Cox (60), Ex-Officio (without vote) | E |
| DSC Secretary, Debbie Wood, LVAP Coordinator (without vote) | P |

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

6. Meeting Goals:

A. Review Specific Goals during the course of the quarter:

- a. Significant activities during FY 2022/2023
- b. Service activities planned for FY 2022/2023.
- c. Recommendations to improve service to veterans.

7. DSC Business Matters:

A. Approval of June 16, 2022 Convention DSC Meeting Minutes: The minutes for the DSC meeting held on June 16, 2022 can be found on the Department website. Commissioner, Terry Bohlinger (13) made a motion to accept the minutes with a second from Tom Wendel, (10). There being no questions or discussion, the motion was unanimously approved by the DSC members present.

B. Recognitions:

- a. During the quarter PDC Lisa Gregory was a great asset to the Service Commission in assisting the newly elected committee chairs understanding procedures of the DSC. This allowed the DSC Chairman to be relieved of stressful issues. Thank you.
- b. Recognition to Shawn Ware for a wonderful job putting out job information and developing a website specifically pertaining to employment.
- c. Kudos to Tyrelle for stepping up to chair the WWC. Thank you.
- d. Lastly, Kass Benson who has displayed her multitasking ability

C. Reminders:

- a. In the Hampton Roads area there will be a free Medicare Event at the Hampton Public Library located at 4207 Victoria Blvd. Hampton, VA. There are two dates and times, they are as follows: 10/19 and 11/9 at 10 a.m. and at 2:00 p.m. the same dates. To reserve seating call (833)795-4125. For more meeting options, visit: anthem.com/advantage.
- b. S. 2950—The Veterans Burn Pit Exposure Recognition Act of 2019
- c. H.R. 4993/S. 2692, the Veterans Emergency Care Reimbursement Act, would limit the amount veterans who are authorized to receive emergency care from the VA are required to pay to health plans and other third parties. Veterans who regularly use the VA are authorized to receive emergency care at a non-VA facility if they reasonably believe that a delay in seeking care would impose a serious threat to life or health. H.R. 4993/S. 2692 would limit veterans' cost sharing to no more than \$100. DAV Resolution No. 148 calls upon Congress to improve the VA's emergency and urgent care benefits to ensure that veterans are not discouraged from seeking such care by barriers such as high out-of-pocket costs or complex rules.
- d. Please use the prepared letters to urge your elected officials to support the Veterans Emergency Reimbursement Act. If you have not registered or the Commander's Action Network, please do.
- e. Note: The Department of Veterans Affairs relaunched an improved Access to Care website to provide a simplified, user-friendly experience to help veterans and their caregivers make better-informed decisions when scheduling health care appointments. The VA has been required to publish wait times due to the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, which mandated the agency offer timelier and more convenient care to veterans. See your VA medical center for the newest updated website.

Let's not forget Disaster Relief Ivan. Florida is having a difficult time "weather the storm" so to speak.

8. DSC Chairman John King stated some of his Issues/Concerns:

- A. The Department Transportation Network Program is still shut down due to COVID protocol for our vans. We are working on getting the vehicles modified to meet the COVID guidelines.
The VA hospitals are still not open to volunteers, as of now
- B. Chapter Assistance Program: There is a chapter assistance program within the department that some chapters/individuals are not aware of. This program was designed to help some of the chapters that can't afford to send someone to represent their chapter at the conferences/conventions. We need to reach out to the

chapters that have not had representation at the conferences and see if they need assistance. A big thank you goes out to the chapters that assisted in getting other chapters to this conference.

- C. **DSC Committee Chairs:** All DSC chairpersons have been informed of the requirements in accordance with the bylaws and DSC guidelines. Most importantly, all DSC chairs, via the by-laws, must check your website page and your email address and submit them to the Social Media Committee (SMC) and the department adjutant.
- a. 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. Each committee has an email address that needs to be checked regularly. Any emails pertaining to the committee will be sent to the committee email address, not your personal email address so please get in the habit of checking the committee email. All passwords for emails must be given to the department adjutant
- D. **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 Cynthia Bailey.
- E. **Service Awards:** Please know that anyone can submit a nomination for an award for an individual. 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
If you are going to submit a nomination for someone make sure you follow the criteria for that category.
- F. **LVAP:** The LVAP program is a great way for our members to get credit for the volunteer hours they are doing to help our veterans. We need to make sure we are aware of the hours that we are submitting. Virginia has won the National LVAP award 9 times so we need to stay credible with the hours we turn in each month. Chapters should be reporting hours monthly using the new LVAP form 60. If you have any questions about how to report your hours contact Debbie Wood at davlvapva@gmail.com
- G. **HSC Coordinators:** The HSC Coordinators are responsible for keeping track of the transportation vehicles and coordinating with the VA medical centers.
- H. **Hampton VA Medical Center:** Mr. Keith Davis and Ms. Mary Wilson oversee the Hampton Roads Area. Currently, the HSC has notified eleven (11) volunteer drivers who are willing and ready to return as volunteer drivers; there are eight (8) vehicles prepared for dispatching with the adequate PPE need for transporting veterans; only one (1) vehicle is in an inoperative status at this time and currently in the maintenance department; Nevertheless, there are always pros and cons in all situations. In this case, the VA Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE) formerly VA Veterans Services (VAVS) and VA Medical Center Hampton are the leads in returning volunteer drivers back to the VAMC. The VA Medical Center Hampton, as of to date, has not scheduled verification class for volunteers, nor physicals, PPD or orientations. July is an anticipated start date.
Washington DC VA Medical Center: Washington D.C. has a new HSC, replacing Harriette St. John who has dedicated a number of years to this program.

The replacement is Jacqueline Jackson. Ms. Jackson has been a volunteer as a driver and understands the program. Due to the pandemic, she has to start from scratch with computers, internet access, background check, etc. Expecting great things from her.

Richmond VA Medical Center: Currently, vehicle action is unexpedted to occur in several months. However, approval claim permission for DSO has been granted. Fredericksburg is still in need of volunteer drivers. HSC (waiting to hire) Patricia Morgan at McGuire Medical Center, Richmond, Virginia will begin working as soon as matters at the medical center are okayed by the hospital director. This medical center assists veterans in the Frederick area as well as Richmond, Petersburg, Hopewell, Charlottesville, and other surrounding areas.

Salem VA Medical Center: Thus far, no HSC is available. Commissioner Cheney is soliciting for support in this area. DSO Cuff is the claims officer for the Salem — Roanoke area.

9. Commissioner and Committee Reports:

A. National Service Office, Will Bible () Report:

Numbers are for the period of April 2022 – May 2022

Emails – 1,548

Claims – 527

In Person Interviews – 61

Phone Calls – 388

Appeals – Still working on the old appeals process – Legacy

New Service Connections Applied for – 3341

Increased Compensation – 271

Increased compensation will change with the PACT Act coming through. The VA has asked us to start submitting the PACT Act claims so they can get an idea of how they are going to handle them. They want us to take in these claims now so they can start them at the beginning of the year. This is going to create a backlog. If you need to have anything expedited, contact us directly. There is now a form for expiditing claims. A lot of our abilities have now been shifted because we now have a Natioanl work que. This means we have lost the capability to walk upstairs and ask them to take care of an issue. We now have to see who has jurisdiction over a claim at that moment and then communicate with that Regional office. This has hindered our ability to some extent.

Our supervisor, Oscar Olguin, is moving on to bigger and better things. He has taken on the roll of Assistant National Volunatary Service Director. His last day was yesterday, Oct. 12th. He will be starting his new position on Oct. 24th. We wish him the best of luck. Oscar leaving our office, leaves myself and Lewis Ramsey taking on the workload so please bare with us while we are short handed. The best way to reach us is through email.

A new assistant manager has been assigned to our office. His name is Andrew Dilbeck, he is from Cleveland and is in the process of moving to Roanoke. We are hoping to have him in the office by Mid November.

Because we are short handed all CSO/DSO training has been put on hold for now. We are looking at some different options for training. This may not happen until next year but we are considering I-track and online training programs.

B. Incarcerated Veteran Assistance Committee (IVAC) Chair, Jeff Ogilvie (7)

Report:

Conley and Deborah Saunders. We have one open position, if you are interested in being part of the Incarcerated Veteran's Assistance Committee, please see me after the meeting. We have still not been able to get into the local, state or federal facilities due to COVID. Chaplains and family members are the only ones they are allowing in at this time. If you are a Chaplain and have been able to get into a facility please let me know so we can talk. We are working on putting pamphlets together so when we are able to get into the facilities we will have information letting the veteran know what is available for them when they get out.

I have a virtual meeting every other month with my team. We are trying to figure out how we can get in to help the veterans. We also have an upcoming seminar on November 8th. We will be meeting with the program managers, sheriffs and veterans to help them understand what we do

C. Employee Committee Chair, Shawn Ware, (7) Report:

The Employment Committee Report is online for all to review.

I am Lajuanda Gray-Parks and I will be reporting in place of Shawn Ware who could not be here today. I have an addendum to the report that is online. This addendum is for the period of October 6th – October 16th. On Wednesday, October 12th the Employment Committee held a hiring fair on behalf of the DAV Department of Virginia. There was great employer presentation. The Virginia Employment Committee and the Department of Veteran Services were both present to assist veterans with employment opportunities and available state resources. In attendance there were 10 employers, 33 candidates, 4 employee committees, 4 employment committee members, 4 VEC staff, 1 DVS staff, 16 DAV members. There was a total of 72 in attendance. From my personal observation and feedback from those present, the event went well. On behalf of the VEC staff and DVS staff and people present, we are showing signs of improvement.

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

The homeless veterans committee report is online for all to review.

I want to follow up on what Kassandra Benson said. There is a crisis and it is getting worse. Local Resources are drying up. We started out talking about the fundraisers that the chapters do. If your chapter makes a little money and Kass or I reach out, please try to assist us. Kass is has been given extra time for her presentation tomorrow because this is so important. If your chapter has a person that helps out with ER or Homelessness, please have that person attend the ER meeting tomorrow. Bring paper and a pen and take notes. We all need to make sure we are all on the same page and that you are getting all of the needed information so when we get it at the department level we don't have to do more investigation and call the veteran again seeking more information. Please know that there is a hotline for

homelessness and they are referring people back to us so they know who we are and right now we are one of the only DSO's that are willing to help. We know what the chapter needs are so let's try to work together and spread our funds out and help the best we can. I'd like to introduce the people that help me out – Francine James (6), Sam Watkins (28), Walter Mosley (2), and Chapter 3 commander, Shawn O'Neal (3). Thanks for all of your help.

E. Emergency Relief (ER) Committee Chair, Kassandra Benson, (6) Report:

The ER report is online for all to review.

I received reports from chapters 6, 7, 2, 13, 20 and 22 for a grand total of \$13,390.00. Thank You to the chapters that reported. I am currently working on getting the reports from the remaining chapters that have assisted with veterans. With these funds we were able to assist veterans with housing, hotel room stays, utilities, food and car payments for widows that needed assistance, as they are part of our mission statement. I want to thank Tanya Canty and Ron Cobb, former ER chair persons, for all of their assistance as I am learning this job. I have worked closely with Lisa Gregory, the Homeless Committee Chair, and want to thank her for all of her help.

F. Womens Veterans Committee Chair, Tyrelle Felder, (50) Report:

The Women's Veterans report is online for all to review.

Due to an unforeseen change in staff the WVC didn't get rolling until Mid Septmeber but make no mistake, we are rocking and rolling. We have assigned each committee member multiple chapters to represent so that each chapter will have a direct contact at the department level. The Chapter representatives are as follows:

- a) LaShawn Boyer: Hampton Roads Peninsula (Ch 2, 6, 13, 34, 58, plus Suffolk Ch 5)
- b) Michelle Bradshaw: Hampton Roads Southside (Ch 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 61)
- c) Shamala Capizzi: Northern VA (Ch 9, 10, 11, 15, 48)
- d) Shaun Harrison: Central VA (Ch 7, 17, 28, 47, 50)
- e) M.Tyrelle Felder: SW Region (Ch 3, 19, 23, 24, 30, 31, 33, 35, 40, 45, 52, 56, 57, 60).

We want to make sure that the gentlemen know that the Women Veterans have some gender specific issues that have not been addressed by policy or procedures in our hospitals or anywhere else. Even though we focus on women's veteran's issues, that doesn't mean we are excluding our gentlemen from joining us. You might have wives and sisters that are veterans and have the focus and desire to honor those women veterans. We still have one vacancy and would love to see a man fill that position.

To aid in communication and collaboration, we will host a quarterly WVC-wide Zoom Roundtable allowing all chapters to join us and share their successes and struggles, ask questions of us, and hopefully get some answers. Currently, the tentative date for our first WVC-wide Zoom is the 3rd Friday of each quarter beginning 18 Nov 2022 at 1800. We look forward to your participation.

SVC Will King included me on two of his Zoom meetings as a guest speaker while he traveled to the SW Region and spoke with the collective group. About three of those chapters report having only one woman in their ranks who are older and non-participatory. This Committee hopes to aid them in recruiting more women and getting information out to them, so they remain included and current on events/activities in their areas or within the state.

On 6 Oct 2022, I attended a legislative roundtable event hosted by Delegates Kathleen Murphy and Jackie Glass in Northern Virginia. Delegate Murphy is looking to have some kind of legislation that she can present to the General Assembly. Women's healthcare and employment were the main topics of the meeting. We need the chapters to help us with a resolution that will help us build our numbers and fill the gaps.

G. Commissioner, Terry Bohlinger (13) Report:

Financials:

At the State Convention we made \$483.00 from the sale of Patches and Pins.

Items currently available:

Completely sold out of the large patches.

Completely sold out of all small patches.

Colored DAV and DAVA pins \$3.50 each or 3 for \$10.00

New Gold Pin – Working on price

Brand New Velcro Patch \$5.00 each. Only 4 available at this time.

H. State VAVS Chairman, Chris Cheney (60) Report:

No Report at this time.

10. 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 everyone again this year for all that you are doing to help out our veterans. Virginia won the award again for the 2021/2022 fiscal year. We have now won the award 9 times. Congrats to all of you for volunteering your time and for reporting your hours to me.

B. National Guest – Scott Hope:

I sympathize with the Roanoke Office at this time because they are so short handed. We hope to have Andrew Dilbeck in the office soon. He is a go getter and a great guy.

We will figure out a way to get the CSO/DSO training in so none of the certifications expire. We were able to do online certifications during the pandemic so we can do that again or we will have other offices take on this task so don't worry about losing your certification.

C. Closing Remarks – Chairman John King:

I would like to thank the CSO's for the work they do and the committee chairs for taking on these positions. I want everyone to realize that if you want to take on a committee chair position, it is a job that has to be taken seriously and cannot be taken lightly.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Debbie Wood for the job she does with the LVAP Program.

11. Good of the Order:

12. Closing Prayer: Given by Chaplin Patricia Coker-Bell (22).

13. Final Salute to the National Flag: Led by PDSC Chair Bob Bent (48).

14. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned around 4:20 P.M.