

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes
Macomb Community Action Training Room
21885 Dunham Clinton Township, MI 48038
Monday, January 07, 2019

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:05 am.

Attendees:

John Babock, Veteran Boot Camp
Madeline Habib, MCCMH/HSCB
Crystal Bersche, WD Vet Employment
Gerald Fisher – Curley, VAMC
Dean Shunk, VA Voc Rehab
Darryle Johnson, Vet Services
Stephen Boegehold, DHHS
Susan Casadei, Harbor Health
Sharon Urban, Vet Services
Jennifer Georgievski, MI Veteran Employ
Lynn Karnes, Womans Life Chapter 911
Jennifer Kimm, MI Works!
Adrienne Gasperoni, CARE
Doug Cann, Vet Services
Katie Carrolle, Veteran Services

Mark Meadows, VAMC
Shaun Taft, Macomb Family Services
Rodney Tolbert, Strategy for Effective Living, LLC
Mark Kilgore, CARE
Joshua Puraven, Free Star Financial
Laura Rios (Co-Chair), Macomb Veteran Services
Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards, Macomb Veteran Services
Franklin Newman, AFSA
Charlene Myers, NCOA/DAV
Chad Fornwall, New Horizons
Deanne Honeycutt, Macomb Homless Coalition
Mike Dexter, MYCare Health Ctr
Eric Jackson, Buddy 2 Buddy
Nicole Gauthier, Veteran Navigator
David Hannum, Vet Services

II. **INTRODUCTIONS**

The committee members went around the table and introduced themselves and the service organization to which they worked.

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The December 03, 2018 minutes were approved as a matter of record with the changes to correct the spelling of Chris Franklin's last name.

IV. **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

The 2019 MVAC dates were approved by the committee. Mark Meadows made the motion and Crystal Bersche seconded the motion. Nicole Gauthier accepted the position of co-chair of the MVAC. The Bark A Bout funder raiser for Prevention Concepts Solutions raised over \$5,000. The MVAA grant that Macomb County Veteran Services applied for was approved. Gabriella Barthlow (Financial Counseling) and the Vita Tax Site Coordinator were approved. The Vita Tax Coordinator will start in January 2019 and Gabriella will be under the Macomb County umbrella at the end of March 2019. The Veteran Services department were also approved for an advertising grant. Part of the tax grant approval was to seek additional ways to process

veteran's taxes. Laura is working with Selfridge to set up a date during a drill weekend for veterans to have their taxes prepared.

V. SPECIAL SPEAKER: Madeline Habib, Using Existing Service Networks in Macomb County
Madeline provided a booklet handout that outlined the different resources throughout the county. This information is also located on the Macomb County Human Services Coordinating Body website. The benefit of going to the web site for resource information is that each link directly takes you to the resource page. The web site address was listed on the bottom of the first page in the handout. She spoke briefly about each resource in the booklet and answered questions.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Benefits/Communication: Laura stated the tax program begins and there are many changes in the tax laws. This could affect how much money people get back from taxes. The call center is open with volunteer staff from 9:00 until 12:00 Monday through Friday. The Vita Tax Program services the entire public in all counties of Michigan. Non-veterans are subject to a 55K and below income threshold to file through this program. There is no income threshold for veterans. No business returns, day trading or rental properties taxes are filed through this program. The annual veteran tax day will be held at the VFW Post in Shelby Township (24 mile and Van Dyke) on March 13th. Along with tax preparation, Michigan Works! will be there as well as a financial coach and the veteran service office will have a table for benefit questions and resources. Appointments for this day can also be made through the call center at: 586-463-2537. Laura provided the 2019 Volunteer Tax information sheet flyer for members to pick up as a reference. Due to the Government shut down e-filing could be delayed. E-filing is typically open between January 20 – 25th. But Laura is unsure if it will be open at that time, and even if it is possible to e-file, it could possibly just "sit there" until the government re-opens. The 2018 software does not come out until January 15th; however, the software is managed by a 3rd party and should still be coming out around January 15th, as usual.

B. Employment: Mark Meadows stated the December employment went well. Ford is laying off current temporary help but will be hiring veterans for temporary employment soon. Locally, Ford is scaling back their transmission plant on 18 Mile Road. GM is hiring for I.T. salary positions. Chrysler is also hiring for I.T. salary positions and are locally scaling back. Suppliers are still hiring for production. Hospital systems are hiring, especially for RNs, CNAs, patient transporters, food service, and social workers. The next Hire Our Heros event (which is the largest veteran hiring event in the state) will be held at the VAMC on Saturday March 9th. The Warriors to Work events, which is geared toward homeless veterans, are held at the VAMC at the end of every month. The vendors at this event sit down with the veterans and talk. There will be free hair cut services, employers, VA staff, and other agencies on hand to provide additional services. Contact Mark for more information or look at the monthly newsletter for updates.

C. Services: Madeline Habib stated the 2019 Traveling Tour dates are scheduled for Wednesday May 22 and Thursday May 23rd. She is updating the Utilities Flowchart and hopefully have it available next month.

D. Membership: Shaun Taft welcomed the first timers and briefly mentioned how to sign in when coming to the meeting. She also mentioned how to get on the MVAC roster and get a name plate made. She suggested to have the MVAC web site included on the agendas.

E. Faith Based: Rodney Tolbert stated there was an additional 100 boxes of food delivered in December. This food was for both veterans and nonveterans. His pastor services are now in Oakland County so he is receiving many phone calls from that county as well. He received his LLC license and is waiting for the 501c3. He is looking for a building so he can start having deliveries made throughout the county.

F. Higher Education: Kara was not in attendance.

VII. ROUND ROBIN

The VVA Chapter 154 Operation Christmas event serviced over 285 veteran families (over 500 children) with food and toys in December 2018.

Laura stated there were many openings available for a special speaker for the MVAC meetings this year. If you have a suggestion, please let her know.

She also suggested for members to look at the MVAC website because the flowcharts are located there as well as many links to different services/resources.

Nicole Gauthier stated she had business cards available. She is working with CMH to have flyers available that will summarize her program.

John Babcock talked briefly about their clothing closet and how the Veteran Boot Camp works. The #57 boot camp starts January 14th, there are around 17 veterans signed up so far.

Jennifer Georgievski spoke regarding how veterans are referred to her program for help. A veteran has to go through Michigan Works! identify as a veteran and fill out a form. If the veteran fits the criteria for her program, she can meet with them on a case management level or provide intensive services to help eliminate or reduce employment barriers.

Dean Shunk stated the Macomb County office of Voc Rehab is doing well. Retraining and employment is good.

Stephen Boegehold stated one of the benefits that took place last year is the time limited food assistance program. If you have any single veterans from the ages of 18 and 49 and are able to work, they will need to work at least 20 hours a week or do volunteer work to continue to qualify for food benefits. If they are able to work and will not, or if they do not receive disability money, they will only be eligible for 3 months of food benefits every 3 years. Please contact Stephen for additional information regarding this or any other DHHS program.

Chad Fornwell from New Horizons, the world's largest I.T. training facility, mentioned he had pamphlets available regarding their programs "designed to prepared veterans for a career."

Josh from Free Star Financial Credit Union located on Selfridge Air Base stated they had two \$1,000 education scholarships for children of active duty or reserve military. They have to be a member of the credit union to apply. He had flyers available for additional information.

Lynn Karnes has business cards available. Please contact her for information on how Women's Life Chapter 911 can help your veteran.

Crystal Bersche states the State of Michigan will be looking for an Employment Rep for Team 4 which covers Macomb and Oakland counties, Port Huron and the city of Detroit. It will be posted within the next couple of weeks on Michigan.gov. It will be called an Employment Services Analyst. She will let the collaborative know when the posting comes up. This position is for veterans only.

Mark Kilgore stated the annual Sober Bowl will be held on February 3, 2019 at the East Side Club 9 Mile and Hoover. The event starts at 5:00 and dinner will be served between 5:30 – 6:00. He is looking for food donations to feed up to 300 people. CARE is a 501c3 so any donations will be tax deductible.

Adrienne Gasperoni states there are Anger Management, parenting groups, and Health and Wellness classes starting soon. Please contact her or the CARE office for additional information.

Shaun Taft is working with the National Kidney Foundation. She brought flyers regarding how obesity and hypertension are related to kidney disease.

VIII. NEXT MEETING

Monday, February 04, 2019 starting at 9:00 A.M. at:

Macomb Community Action Training Room, 21885 Dunham Road, Clinton Township

Special Speaker: DIA

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 A.M.