

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes
Virtual Meeting
Monday, April 04, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:03 A.M.

II. ATTENDEES:

David Hannum
Elizabeth Sergent
Diana Laskey
Gary Purcell
John Babcock
Katie Carroll
Mark Kilgore
Sharon Urban

Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards
Julie Hintz
Leah Simpson
Paulus Obey
Katie Page
Lisa Bowling
Mark Meadows

Laura Rios
Chris Reilly
Gabriella Barthlow
Joe Thayer
Kara Fields
Teena Sawicki
Pazz Colston

III. INTRODUCTIONS/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Laura asked all attendees to enter their name in the chat box.

The February 07, 2022 meeting minutes were approved and recorded as written.

IV. SPECIAL SPEAKER: Timothy Rodreick, Progressive signs of Alzheimer's and Dementia **(canceled)**

V. AGENCY UPDATES/ROUND ROBIN:

Kara Fields stated Macomb Community College has 2 new vocational training/noncredit programs; one is a truck driver training program and the other is a Dental Hygienist training program.

Mark Kilgore gave an update to the Veteran Support Program. He stated they are getting some referrals. They will be planning a Veteran Resource Fair this summer.

Chris Reilly stated they are starting 3 in person workshops this week: Resume in a day; How to find a job online and Interviewing. These workshops are available at all 5 centers. He also mentioned their Clean Slate program for qualifying offenses. Anyone interested in that program must be out of any kind of parole or probation and be a resident of Macomb County. There are other eligibility qualifications for this program so please contact Chris for additional information on this and other programs. There is also an online form that can be filled out for this program.

Gary Purcell stated the Vet Center and the Food Pantry are both running well. The Welcome Home party at the Bruce Post in St. Clair Shores had over 450 veterans in attendance.

Mark Meadows stated the VA is “gearing up their outreaches by trying to get into the communities at different events.” They want to bring their Outreach Taskforce Team which consists of doctors, registration and other “sought after” departments. The Vet Center van will also be there to help veterans/families start the benefit process. Please contact Mark for any additional information on what is going on at the VA and to receive his newsletter.

Paulus Obey stated that the Selfridge Wellness Center wants to set up outreaches to include VA enrollment. He is going to reach out to “certain” helpful groups to have tables at these upcoming events.

Teena Sawicki stated Suicide Prevention at the VA hospital tries to have a presence at outreach events. If you are having an event and would like to have their team present, please contact her. They also have a VA S.A.V.E.D program. This 1 hour Gatekeeper Training prevention program presents an overview of suicide prevalence, risks and warning signs. It also provides guidance on how to intervene if someone is suicidal and unique risks to veterans. She would recommend anyone who works with veterans to take this training.

Liz Sergent stated they are in the process of hiring a case manager. They have been very busy with the homeless veterans as well as homeless prevention. They have been using the CERA funds.

Diane Laskey stated they started the VVA Coffee Hour at the Chapter 154 every Friday from 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. There is a Tri-County Veteran and Family Event in Pontiac on May 21. There will be free food and children events. Diane will send out the flyer to all Collaborative members.

Julie Hintz stated that the Covid Emergency Rental Assistance Program is still open. MISHDA believes the portal that accepts applications for this program will be closing in May. There is a MIHAF program that is separate from CERA for people who need help with mortgage.

Katie Page stated their Battlefield Acupuncture is now available by appointment 2 days a week, Wednesdays and Thursdays. They continue to have weekly Trauma Sensitive Yoga as well as their weekly Meditation Practice Groups, both of these groups are virtual.

Pazz Colston stated they are successfully moving Veterans out of our homes. They just an offer in on a 4 family home which Veteran should be able to use HUDVASH funds. They will continue to do the non-congregate housing as well. The local business network of Sterling Heights is sponsoring their 3rd annual golf outing. It will be June 3rd at Sycamore Hills in Macomb County. This fundraiser is specifically for Heroic Homes for Veterans. Please contact Pazz for additional information.

VI. VCAT UPDATE/MVAA UPDATES:

Kara stated the next VCAT meeting will be June 10, 2022 at 10:00 A.M. It will focus on employment and “digging into career paths and training relating to skilled trades.” This VCAT will not be Veteran specific, but more “career path” specific.

Laura stated on June 10 – 11 is a Women’s Veteran’s (in person) Conference in Lansing. There is also a Leadership Summit on May 11 – 12.

VII. NEXT MEETING: June 6, 2022 – Laura will try to have Timothy Rodreick speak.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 A.M.