



Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser

John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 300 | Washington, DC 20004

## **DC Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs April 2025 Board Meeting Minutes**

- I. Call to order by Nachee Miller
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Roll Call
  - a. Board members present:
    - i. Alton Cheaves Army
    - ii. Howard Frost Navy
    - iii. Milton Hardy Army
    - iv. Brandon McClain
    - v. Nachee Miller Army
    - vi. Bria Patterson Army
    - vii. Eric Rudberg Army
    - viii. James Sydnor Marines
    - ix. Tracey D. Turner Navy
    - x. Matthew Philip Marines
    - xi. Richard White Army
  - b. Board members not present:
    - i. Curtis Addleman
    - ii. Carrie Bachner Mullins
    - iii. Lillian Dixon
    - iv. Vanessa Grant
    - v. Dominic Ju
    - vi. Jamaal Lampkin
    - vii. Lejuan Strickland
  - c. Nonvoting members present:
    - i. Robert Vincent Brannum
- IV. Introduction: The Advisory Committee introduced themselves to each other followed by Director Woodard introducing herself and MOVA staff. During the staff

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introductions Director Woodard gave a brief description of our office and shared that the office serves nearly 27,000 veterans in DC.

- a. Staff present:
  - i. Director Charlette K Woodard
  - ii. Director of Operations Joseph Koroma
  - iii. Intake and Outreach Specialist Monica Waters
  - iv. Veteran Service Officer Fallon Williams
  - v. Veteran Service Officer Ariel Weeks
  - vi. LGBTQ+ Coordinator Pip Baitinger
  - vii. Public Information Officer Laura Abubekr

V. Director's report:

- a. Our programs, resources, events, align with Mayor Bowser's initiatives of Downtown, Public Safety, Education and East of the River.
- b. DC Mayor's Office is a community hub with over 30 partnerships to serve veterans.
- c. Our office is nested with Mayor Bowser's initiatives.
- d. Our partnerships are located across all 8 Wards and the DMV area. Some examples shared were Hattie Homes and Armed Forces Retirement Home. MOVA has recurring events at both locations.
- e. Director Woodard shared that it is vital to continue to share personal stories about the veteran experience within the community because this is how community is built.
  - i. VA Compensation: over 14 million dollars have been generated through claims in DC.
  - ii. Homestead exemptions: during FY24 78 applications were approved, 37 applications were denied, 1 application was on hold. For FY25 so

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far 32 applications were approved, 24 applications were denied, 32 applications were on hold.

- iii. Pathways has been updated.
- iv. VetsRide: Director Woodard shared that this is the most utilized program our office offers veterans that make less than 45k. An increase in budget was necessary during FY25.
- v. Outreach: Director Woodard explained that our office is in the community busy with a purpose and invites the board members to be as active in the community. Advisory lapel pins will be available in the near future to wear during community outreach.
- vi. World Pride: our office will be participating in events and have scheduled a Military Pride weekend. LGBTQ+ Coordinator Pip is overseeing and spearheading the events. She has put a coalition of 20 individuals together for World Pride planning.
- vii. Partnerships: our office has more than 30 partnerships and that number is growing. As a result, from a partnership MOVA will have an impactful role in the Namesake of USSDC. This is the first time that a Namesake is named after a city. Mayor Bowser and Congresswoman Holmes are sponsors. DC Central Kitchen has launched a collaboration with our office to address food insecurity in the veteran community, along with Produce Plus.
- viii. Computer Lab: our office computer lab is open and available for veterans. It has been open for about 2 months. During lab hours veterans can use the space for various reasons including legal services.

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- ix. License Plates: Director Woodard placed emphasis on DC veteran license plates because a portion of the revenue is returned to our office.
  - x. Social media: please follow our office on all platforms and sign up for MOVA's newsletter.
- VI. Old Business: Nachee Miller explained that committees are necessary and impactful for a successful board. The Advisory Board passed around a committee signup sheet. Each committee will advocate in that area on Mayor Bowser's behalf and our office. During the descriptions an emphasis was placed on the committee's support and is in conjunction with Mayor Bowser's initiatives.
- a. Government Affairs and Policy: Brandon McClain, Darwain Frost, Matthew Philip Wee
  - b. Community Engagement: Tracey Turne, Milton Hardy, Eric Rudberg
  - c. Events and Volunteerism: Richard White, Matthew Philip Wee, Bria Patterson
  - d. Veteran Business Development and Employment: Nachee Miller, Tracey Turner, Milton Hardy, Alton Cheaves
  - e. Veterans Benefits and Programs: Darwain Frost, Alton Cheaves
- VII. New business: Director Woodard has invited the Advisory Board to be active for upcoming events.
- a. Emancipation Parade takes place on April 13.
  - b. Budget hearing: the Advisory Boards participation during the hearing is crucial. It was highlighted that the Advisory Board is the driving force behind our office programs.
  - c. Community Health Summit April 5 is open to DC Veterans taking place at the Masonic Lodge from 10am-3pm located at 1000 U ST.

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- d. It was discussed that federal cuts and the impact that will have on the veteran community is one of the examples of why the Advisory Board participation is so critical.

### **VIII. Open floor:**

- a. Guest member Robert Vincent shared that A Veteran Townhall is in the planning stages with Council members Janeese Lewis George, Zachary Parker and Christina Henderson. The projected timeframe is the middle of June or July.

[MOVA April Advisory Board Meeting Slides.pdf](#)

[Copy of MABVA Committee Redesign v2.xlsx](#)

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