Mayor’s Advisory Board on Veterans Affairs

Flash Minutes

1 March 2016

1. Meeting details:
   1. Regular meeting, held in Old Council Chambers, 441 4th Street, NW.
   2. Convened at 1830 hrs, adjourned at 2010 hrs.
   3. No audio recording was made through the DC government system. Director, OVA, recorded the meeting on her phone and we will attempt to transfer it to the government site.
2. Board Members
   1. Voting Members Present (9): Wingo (chair), Locks (Parliamentarian), Dalzell (Secretary), Lampkin, P. Brooks, D. Brooks, Dier, Khan, Mack
   2. Voting Members Absent (5): Pridemore (vice), Perez, Postell, Patterson, Wynn
   3. Ms. Davis has resigned from the board, leaving 14 voting members. A quorum remains eight members.
   4. Ex-oficio members present: Preston, Treadwell (?)
   5. Ex-oficio members absent: Boyd
3. Votes taken (outside of approval of agenda, adjournment, and other routine actions):
   1. Mr. Khan reviewed the resolution he introduced at the February meeting to create a DC Veterans Hall of Fame.
      1. The board proposed the following modifications:
         1. Selection of nominating committee members will be done jointly by the Director and the Advisory Board chair
         2. A majority vote of the advisory board will be necessary for nominations to be sent to the Director for submission to the Mayor
         3. Sections saying the nominating committee “can” take action would be changed to “shall”
      2. With those modifications, the proposal was approved by voice vote.
   2. Proposed change of by-laws to allow voice votes was approved by voice vote. Change reads as follows: “All votes shall be done by voice Vote. Following the voice vote, any member may move for a roll-call vote. If the motion is seconded, a roll-call vote will be conducted.”
   3. Mr. Khan presented a proposed recommendation that the City Council make Selective Service System (SSS) registration a mandatory part of receiving a DC driver’s license or DMV identification card for those required to register for the SSS. By voice vote, the board approved the recommendation.
4. Received updates from MOVA Director
   1. Performance evaluation hearing
   2. There will be a panel discussion for women’s history month with three segments (25 minutes each). The goal is to inform women veterans about programs in the community. The living taping will take place 11 March, 11am-2pm at the “Old BET studios.” Interested parties can contact her office for info.
   3. There will be a Memorial Day observance to acknowledge the mayor’s leadership on veterans affairs, 25 May from 11am-noon in the old Council Chambers
   4. She is supporting the formation of the Capitol Network Veterans Engagement Board, and has appointed several people to this board. This is part of a VA effort to build community engagement boards in every state to highlight issues and bring them to the VA (see <http://www.va.gov/nace/myVA/index.asp> for more info on the national program).
   5. She has also created a Veterans Leadership Coalition, intended to give veterans service organizations a bigger voice. They have 12 people attend their first meeting and 28 at the second. The vision is to make this a 501c3 working group, focused on issues like job opportunities, housing and homelessness, and healthcare. She will host the group, but not manage it.
   6. She attended a meeting of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (<http://www.nasdva.us/About.aspx>). She’ll send more information about the meeting to the board, but one big issue was incarcerated veterans, and the need to begin work six months before their release to reinstate their benefits so they can make a smoother transition.
   7. She wants pictures of veterans in uniform, including the board, for use in her social media programs.
5. Other actions:
   1. Recognition of community members
      1. Eric Hughes, of the Veterans Legal Assistance Project, part of the Neighborhood Legal Services Program.
         1. Created acclaimed program for DD214 upgrades, and has personally worked with more than 110 veterans
         2. He is moving to Florida
         3. More information on the program: <http://www.nlsp.org/services/veterans>
      2. Joyce Green, an advocate within the DC veterans community
         1. She has been actively supporting veterans for years, taking them to hospitals, other appointments, etc. The director told the board how Ms Green had helped one family with a handicapped veteran while they waited for housing.
         2. Ms Green was praised for not only her long history of service, but also her passion and leadership.
   2. Presentations by guests
      1. Milton Goodman, DC Department of Local and Small Business Development (DLSBD) (<http://dslbd.dc.gov/>)
         1. Among responsibilities is the DC Procurement Technical Assistance Center or (PTAC) – details at <http://dslbd.dc.gov/service/dc-procurement-technical-assistance-center-dc-ptac>
         2. PTAC is a program where the Defense Logistics Agency helps small business seek contracts with federal, state, and local governments. The PTAC helps businesses navigate the process, learn the inner workings of the DC government while they are staring up or trying to grow through contracting opportunities.
         3. The PTAC welcomes the chance to work with veterans. This includes helping them go through the VA center for verification and assessment to prepare them to work with the government.
         4. More than 700 small businesses are working with PTAC in DC; Mr. Goodman estimates one-third are veteran-owned.
         5. Contact information: Milton.goodman@dc.gov 202-727-3900
      2. Chris Hluchyj, myVA
         1. Mr Hluchyj gave a review of his work over the past few months, which he described as focusing on breaking down barriers and challenges, finding pockets of excellence, and building relationships within the veterans community.
         2. One example was when he attended a meeting and met with Ms Pridemore (in her capacity as GWU official). She told him about veterans’ issues with vocational rehabilitation programs and schools not getting paid. He looked into the situation and found they had a big staffing shortage; they were able to address it and improve delivery.
         3. This led to a lengthy discussion with the board about a range of veterans issues.
         4. With regard to a question about response times, he said that if a veteran comes to him, he gets a reply within 48 hours. If it reflects a systemic issue in the community, he may need to do the more extensive research, as he doesn’t assume the initial complaint reflects the real issue. The focus is to get down to what people really want and how they want to be treated.
6. Due-outs from board members or committees:
   1. Committees should be meeting and coordinating with the chair and vice-chair for times to report back to the board on their plans and activities.
7. Upcoming meetings and events
   1. Other government hearings as described above
   2. Next monthly board meeting: 5 April, Old City Council Chambers, 1830 hrs. See <http://www.bega-dc.gov/board-commissions-meetings/mayors-advisory-board-veterans-affairs> for agenda.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen R. Dalzell

Secretary