



Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, May 4, 2022

Time Scheduled: 4:00 p.m. Started: 4:07 P.M. Ended: 5:17 P.M.

Location: Osceola County Sheriff’s Office Complex
2601 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway
Kissimmee, FL 34744
Training Rooms: B & C

Welcome/Pledge of Allegiance: Chaplain Donald Warren

Invocation: Chaplain Donald Warren

1. INTRODUCTION:

- A. Deputy Coleson introduced the We Salute You program which was developed to recognize local military veterans for their selfless service to our community.
- B. Deputy Coleson and Sheriff Marcos Lopez honored Elderly Service Officer Lisa Heard. She was a motor vehicle instructor in 5ton semi-tractor M52 and M915A1 Semi-Tractors at Ft. Hood Texas, with the 15th Supply and Transportation Battalion, 1st Calvary Division. She started her Law Enforcement career at the Osceola County Sheriff’s Office in 1983 where she currently works in Outreach Services as an Elder Services Officer.
- C. Sheriff Marcos Lopez discussed the We Salute You program and agency’s goal to work together in recognizing all our veterans.

2. CALL TO ORDER:

- A. Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 4:10.

3. ROLL CALL: Completed by: Deputy Ben Coleson

<u>Committee Members Present:</u>
<u>Committee Members Absent:</u>
<u>Speakers and Presenters:</u>

Mr. Hector Rodriguez, Ms. Rosemarie Morales, Mr. Nick Amen, Mr. Gary Spear

Dr. Lewayne Johnson, Mr. Bill Mangan, Mr. Armando Perez

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Chairman Rodriguez asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Mrs. Morales seconded the motion. the board approved the minutes unanimously.

5. HOUSEKEEPING AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A. In the previous meeting the board inquired about the 501c3. Deputy Coleson advised it is still going through the approval process. Once they get the proper documentation it will be provided to the board.
- B. Deputy Coleson sent board alternative meeting dates to choose for the next meetings. Mr. Spear is fine with all dates. Ms. Morales cannot do the 26th, 24th, and 25th.
- C. Chairman Rodriguez will not be available for month of June.
- D. Chairman Rodriguez advised the board will have to circle back for what else is available for month of June. Ms. Morales advised she most likely will not be in attendance for August, but the other dates are fine.
- E. The May meeting was rescheduled for May 24th.
- F. Mr. Spear advised he originally said he would not be available for July 7th but clarified he will be able to if everyone else is.
- G. Chairman Rodriguez asked if there is any other unfinished business to discuss. Deputy Coleson said no there is not.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Deputy Coleson invited Elder Service Officer Lisa Heard to speak about the Road Home program on behalf of her son Ryan.
 - 1. Ryan served 7 years as a Calvary Scout with the 2-14 CAV 25th Infantry Division out of Hawaii and the 3rd Infantry Division out of Georgia from 2007 to 2013 with multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He was awarded a Purple Heart in 2013 for stepping on a pressure plate IED.
 - 2. He wanted to speak about the Wounded Warrior Project, Warrior Care Network and how the Road Home program helped him transition back to civilian life.
 - 3. The program provides veterans living with PTSD, traumatic brain injury, military sexual trauma, and other conditions, with a path to long-term wellness.
 - 4. It is a 2–3-week intensive outpatient program where veterans can receive mental healthcare from one of four academic medical centers.
 - 5. Warriors including himself have seen significant improvement in PTSD and depression symptoms.
 - 6. Warriors who participate gain 50 hours of treatment as well as additional complimentary alternative therapies.
 - 7. The Warrior Care Network is for service members who served or were deployed after 9/11. Discharge status does not matter. Veterans can travel and attend the program for 2 weeks and all costs are covered by the Warrior Care Network.
 - 8. Before attending the program, he had a difficult time with PTSD symptoms. After receiving treatment, he now can work and live a productive life.
- B. Deputy Coleson turned the floor over to Chairman Rodriguez to discuss topics included in the agenda.
- C. Chairman Rodriguez discussed choosing a person to attend and speak on veteran related topics. Chairman Rodriguez asked for suggestions from board to select a person and recognize them for their service to the community. Ms. Morales motioned for someone from the Camaraderie

Foundation to speak at next meeting on May 24th. They provide free counseling to veterans and families regardless of separation status.

- D. Chairman Rodriguez nominated Don Smith for the August 24th meeting.
- E. Chairman Rodriguez discussed Veteran's Court. The Veteran's Court is designated specifically for veterans.
- F. Chairman Rodriguez suggested the board meet with the Judge of Veterans court and become a regular attendee at court. He opened a discussion on how they can help veterans. Mrs. Morales advised they are short on mentors and always looking, however, it is a commitment. She is for meeting with them. Mr. Amen motioned to table this discussion until next meeting and suggested a rotating schedule for court attendance.
- G. Mrs. Morales asked to discuss alternative meeting dates with other board members next meeting.
- H. Chairman Rodriguez asked if Deputy Coleson can get dates for Veterans Court. Mr. Amen said he will see if he can get info. Court is held virtually at the V.A. where they have a courtroom set aside to bring patient in room to go through court procedure. However, attending court proceedings may be difficult because of HIPPA.
- I. Mrs. Morales asked if they cover Orange and Osceola County. Chairman Rodriguez and Mr. Amen advised they cover both counties.
- J. Mrs. Morales motioned to table the discussion until next meeting. Mr. Spear and Mr. Amen seconded the motion.
- K. Chairman Rodriguez discussed getting business partners in community to network specifically to help veterans in need who may need financial assistance, home repairs, plumbing, etc. and are willing to do work pro bono or at reduced cost.
- L. Mr. Amen asked if the Sheriff's Office has a list of anyone in the community. Deputy Coleson advised they have a contact from the Osceola Council on Aging. Chairman Rodriguez advised that according to the contact who presented in the last meeting, they have a waiting list.
- M. Mrs. Morales advised she has experience from business in which she helped the elderly. She built a network and had a contract with businesses. She advised she thinks the board should not do any business until the 501c3 is approved and thinks they should have a contract and speak to the Sheriff's Office's legal team. She advised she can provide contacts and list of business she previously worked with.
- N. Mr. Amen advised they should get on the agenda of the Osceola Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Morales advised that is how she got a majority of her vendors and noted you can go to their events, but they charge a one-time fee.
- O. Sergeant Nicholson advised they can start collecting donations under a temporary 501c3 for up to 14 months. It typically takes 8 weeks for approval, but the website states it can take up to 24 months. The 501c3 is not going to be specifically for V.I.C.T.O.R. It will be the Osceola County Sheriff's Office Charity Fund and include the Outreach Programs.
- P. Chairman Rodriguez advised they should get dates from Chamber of Commerce and send an email. There is a Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce.
- Q. Mrs. Morales advised there are many Chambers of Commerce, and they must figure out which one we would focus on. In her experience she has seen many businesses do want to help veterans. It is just about finding those that are reputable and will commit.
- R. Mrs. Morales advised she has done work with the Sheriff's Office and added that Pastor Ortega has a good network.

- S. Mr. Amen clarified he did not mean the board should join a Chamber of Commerce, but they should get on the agenda to speak at the meeting. Mrs. Morales advised their situation is different. Speakers usually sponsor the event to get speaking time, however since they are a Sheriff's Office nonprofit, maybe they will not charge.
- T. Chairman Rodriguez advised they should figure out dates for meetings and who is willing to volunteer. Mr. Amen advised he can go with Chairman Rodriguez and present. Chairman Rodriguez made a motion to find out the dates.
- U. Mr. Amen asked who is going to reach out. Chairman Rodriguez said he is. Mrs. Morales asked which chamber he will reach out to. Chairman Rodriguez advised he would contact the Osceola Chamber of Commerce.
- V. Mrs. Morales asked if she could email the list of businesses or does she need to bring it to the meeting. Chairman Rodriguez said she can send it to Deputy Coleson. Mrs. Morales confirmed she can.
- W. Chairman Rodriguez discussed inviting a Veterans Administration representative to hold a workshop regarding how to file a claim, benefits, etc. Something open to the public. Asked the board how they can promote. Could be the first major event in community. Could have vendors attend. Could be held at the Sheriff's Office. (All ideas for future event set up)
- X. Mr. Amen advised he can reach out to the VA Outreach Director. Maybe a lot of people involved. Asked about a date and time so he can get representatives, pamphlets, and brochures. Also advised they can enroll people on the spot.
- Y. Mrs. Morales advised in first meeting they said they would have a VSO from the Sheriff's Office. That person can be at the event.
- Z. Mr. Amen advised Bill Mangan is going through the process to be a VSO. Mrs. Morales asked if he is going to be the one to file claims. Mr. Amen advised he must finish training first. Mrs. Morales advised she wants to ensure she can refer veterans to someone reliable. Mr. Amen advised there are VSOs at the VA.
- AA. Chairman Rodriguez suggested they call the event veteran Standdown with the Sheriff's Office. Would like to plan within 190 days out. By the next meeting they should discuss what dates are available to start planning. Do not know if they should aim for November or December. Sergeant Nicholson advised everything must be discussed in an open forum due to Florida Sunshine Laws.
- BB. Sergeant Nicholson advised that Kurt Fisher is a certified VSO. They have discussed having him present to the board. He has worked with the Sheriff's Office and is a resource.
- CC. Mrs. Morales advised they should have VA there for enrollment etc. They should also have at least one VSO there for filing claims and she prefers it is someone they are going to work with in the future.
- DD. Sergeant Nicholson advised he will see if Mr. Fisher is available for next meeting.
- EE. Chairman Rodriguez discussed potentially holding the event either November or December. Deputy Coleson advised they are already holding a Veteran's Appreciation Day event.
- FF. Chairman Rodriguez advised he does not know if VA staff will already have commitments on that day. Being that it is a holiday, and many people are committed to other events, he is not sure that day is right. Maybe December so they have 180 days to plan and coordinate with the VA. They must figure out what days are available for the Sheriff's Office.
- GG. Mrs. Morales advised they should speak to Mr. Fisher to see when he is available. Also, since Dr. Johnson has experience planning a Standdown event, his input may be valuable. Suggested the discussion should be tabled for the next meeting.

- HH. Mr. Spear advised there is a Veterans Resource fair June 11th at the Civic Center, and they should see who is there that fits with event to get their information.
- II. Chairman Rodriguez motioned to table this discussion for the May 24th meeting.
- JJ. Chairman Rodriguez discussed marketing the V.I.C.T.O.R. board to the community. He suggested they have polo shirts for the board members. Suggested they have a tablecloth and literature with the V.I.C.T.O.R logo. Requested input from the board for the information to be included in the literature.
- KK. Chairman Rodriguez asked what other things would board recommend. He suggested they could mentor veterans in probation in the Veterans Court. The VFW can bring veterans to do minor work in community such as painting, landscaping, and helping seniors in community. Will be a win-win for those veterans and those in our community.
- LL. Ms. Morales agrees they should have marketing materials but not yet because they need to establish what we can provide to the community. Chairman Rodriguez advised they must start somewhere and Veteran's Court and working with businesses will bring attention to V.I.C.T.O.R.
- MM. Mr. Amen asked if they put together a pamphlet would they go through the Sheriff's Office Media Department or use 501c3 funds. Deputy Coleson answered through 501c3 funds.
- NN. Deputy Coleson advised Dr. Johnson is on the board for a Standdown Event on June 11th.
- OO. Sergeant Nicholson advised they can print any minor flyers at the Sheriff's Office. Anything with the agency logo will be budgeted and must be approved via chain of command. However, tablecloths will be through the 501c3. Sergeant Nicholson also advised they will look into shirts for approval.
- PP. Mr. Amen advised they should start with a simple flyer just to get out there. He advised one of his officers created a QR code for resources that veterans can use throughout Central Florida. He discussed with the Sheriff about putting the QR code on agency vehicles. However, the VA cannot endorse for-profit companies, so the list is currently being reviewed.
- QQ. Sergeant Nicholson advised they can include the link on the agency's website under the V.I.C.T.O.R. Board tab. Mr. Amen advised once the list is up, they get it printed with the V.I.C.T.O.R. logo.
- RR. Chairman Rodriguez motioned to table discussion until next meeting to wait for update.
- SS. Mrs. Morales advised it is a good idea and if they have any resources, they can pass them on to Mr. Amen
- TT. Mr. Spear advised he has a lot of people ask about how to get a flag and honor guards for funerals and burials. Mr. Amen advised people can get information from the VA and they do not need to be a patient.
- UU. Mr. Spear advised all you need is DD214 and copy of death certificate. You can go to the Post Office on Oak Street to get a flag. Mrs. Morales advised this information would be good to add on the pamphlet.
- VV. Chairman Rodriguez advised the funeral home usually makes arrangements and the local congressman sometimes supply flags. Mr. Spear does not believe they provide burial flags. Mr. Amen he will reach out to the acting director at the VA for more information.
- WW. Mr. Spear asked about the decision on the shirts and tablecloth. Mrs. Morales advised Sergeant Nicholson already said they can help. Mr. Amen asked if it would have the V.I.C.T.O.R. logo on it. Chairman Rodriguez answered yes, and they can further discuss at next meeting.

XX. Chairman Rodriguez asked the board if they had any other comment. There was no other comment.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- A. No members of the public stepped forward for public comment.
- B. Deputy Miguel Irizarry introduced himself. He has served for 10 years in the U.S. Airforce Reserves as a E6 Technical Sergeant. He was deployed to Afghanistan in 2016. He is currently working as a Recruiter and Background Investigator. He advised the Sheriff's Office is currently hiring and proud to hire veterans.

8. OTHER BUSINESS:

- A. There is no other business to discuss.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

- A. The meeting was adjourned at 5:17.

10. NEXT MEETING:

- A. Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Hector Rodriguez
Chairman

OCSO Staff Member