

MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON

Multnomah County Veteran Services Taskforce

February 7, 2011



9:00am – 11:00am

Multnomah Building Room #635

501 SE Hawthorne Blvd

Portland, Oregon 97214

MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA TOPIC / PRESENTER	NOTES
Welcome and Introductions	
Community Covenant Progress Andrew Olsen, Greg Lamb	<p>Community Covenant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We have begun outreach to electeds in east county- Greg has talked to Gresham Ford and some business owners in East County- We need to partner with local businesses, community colleges- We want to make a big deal of the signing ceremony.- Initially it was going to be on Memorial day, but will now likely be one day in April, as part of National Counties Recognition Week, which is focused on Veteran Services Officers this year.- It can be as simple as giving a discount to Vets on their oil changes.- Seth: How rigid is the community covenant membership?- Not rigid. We hope people will continue to be signing up, and we will have a website with a list of partners and benefits. We will also link to their websites.- Seth: Maybe we should do a monthly email blast that includes new members and any updates to the group. A letter from Commissioner McKeel to the new signatories would also be a good part.- We want to give people the opportunity to take credit for helping veterans.- We also know that the need for help will be more than the VA will be able to provide.
Community College Outreach Andrew Olsen, Greg Lamb, Jerri Ellis – Mt.	<p>Community College Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Greg initially contacted the community colleges to get a work-study intern at their office.- Went to PSU Vets Group to get one.

Hood Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 140 Students on the listserve - Last semester got a work study. Would like to have one that can stay longer and work more hours. - Alan, who is the VSO for the community colleges, had a homeless female vet come into his office looking for help. - The biggest asset we have at a community college is a veteran who is getting benefits. Then they can go to one another and get them to share. - There was a vet at PSU who had been paying 100% of his tuition, when he qualified for the New GI Bill that would have covered it. - We want to build a link to Mt. Hood CC, so how can we do that? - They don't want to disclose, want to be civilians, not veterans. - Jerri Ellis - MHCC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I do all I can to get them to admit that they are service members, and get them to apply for services. - Many have serious hearing or other issues that are service related. Many are Sgts. and are not willing to admit that they have issues. - We have issues with some vets that come in wanting certain things, sometimes that aren't service related. - Can we work to get some of these vets together to talk and work with us? -Jerri: Yes, I'm working on this. I'm going to work on getting them together by giving free pizza. - Is there anything we can help you out with? -Printed material. They don't read it initially, but they bring it with them and read it later. <p>Greg: There are a couple pieces that I can think of that are good. NEG grant is a good one. There are only 2 vets using it. We need to get them to use it.</p> <p>Jerri: 89% are looking for bachelor degrees minimums, and don't want this.</p> <p>The NEG jobs are labor intensive, and they don't want that. They like forestry, fishing, environmental, or business to start their own small business.</p> <p>They want community level jobs that don't necessarily apply to the NEG grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What other printed material? -Jerri: Something that tells them what we can provide for them. What benefits can we get them? It can be brief. Just send an electronic copy, and I can print it out. Handouts for military families are good too. There are some families that have a vet and his wife going to school together. Among our veterans, the VA in Portland has very bad reputation.
Other Updates – Bridal Veil, YWCA, Assessment and Taxation, Team Clackamas, Gresham	<p>Outreach Slip in Assessment and Taxation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greg got his fishing license in the mail from the ODVA, and got a slip in mail with that included a flyer with contact info for services and help.

<p>Outlook, Veterans Courts etc.</p> <p>All</p>	<p>Project healing waters is part of the wounded warrior project.</p> <p>Jerri – Is this part of Oregon Adaptive? They take people rafting. The guy who runs it is Kevin Pannell.</p> <p>WYCA is starting to look at what they can do to help veteran women. They rarely self identify, and</p> <p>Bobbi – Why has the military assigned an acronym to Sexual Assault?</p> <p>Greg – I don't know. I don't know if it is assigned by the military.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems like a way to hide what it actually is. • In my experience in the military, we called it what it was, but that doesn't mean the other services did. • We have found that there are more men who have had military sexual trauma (MST), but a higher percentage of women. It comes down to politics. It goes to what benefits are accessible to those who have been through this. When I'm at a forum with VA people (who seem to use "MST" the most) I can bring it up. The VA seems to be too politically correct. <p>Greg – What is the status of the Hire Oregon Vets grant? About to run out</p> <p>Re: Gresham incident</p> <p>-Greg – this was a mental health issue, but this doesn't seem like the Mental health folks were notified.</p> <p>-Bobbi – there was no prompt to the mental health system or de-escalation tactics, but those systems were not tapped. It is hard to trigger those systems when there is a weapon involved. The men and women who are dealing with this are trained to protect themselves first. There is one project response call in Portland that deals with these sorts of calls.</p> <p>Seth – There are a number of levels for which the car is called, but as soon as a weapon comes out, then the police are called in and the mental health folks are pulled back. We're also trying to get CIT training to as many officers. It will be interesting to see how the study will show the officers respond.</p> <p>Drew: This brings me back to the Community Academy Training. Is this something we should bring to Gresham PB?</p> <p>Greg: The problem is that we don't know if that actually would help.</p> <p>Bobbi – My experience is that we need more money for mental health. We need to stop the disinvestment in mental health. For me, what we have created as a nation is a public health crisis. Our intentions were good when we started deinstitutionalization, but our practices since then have been woefully inadequate. We are now forced to solve that crisis with a law enforcement solution.</p>
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	<p>Seth – It is a horrible position for the Police to be in. They now must live with that. Your thoughts on the mental health system are correct. The problem is that it is focused on the severely mentally ill.</p> <p>Bobbi – We are now at about where we were at the turn of the 20th century. People used to be in the jails when they had mental health issues, then there was a movement to de-institutionalize them which ended with Reagan, and now they're back in the jails.</p>
<p>Open Discussion</p> <p>All</p>	<p>Bobbi – Last week we had our 2nd meeting of a loosely formed group of people who have an interest in reaching out to veterans in the criminal justice system. Greg Lamb, Linda Maddy from the VA, Elan Lambert from Partnership for Veterans in Crisis was there.</p> <p>October 2010, MCSO started asking everyone who is booked if they had served in the military. Many people had talked about the great job that Washington County had been doing. They are asking the same questions that we are at intake, but when they respond “yes” then that information is sent directly to a veterans services officer, which comes to the jail(s) one or two times a week. They also have an internal person who holds a class once a week for those people who have identified themselves as vets to let them know what is available to them.</p> <p>Diversion and transition into the community is of utmost importance. The key is to have the person who can do the “in reach” into the jail. One on one communication is necessary.</p> <p>We now have efficient resources in the program unit to do the initial follow up. We also talked about having some supplemental questions that could be asked if they responded “yes” to the first one. The difficulty is a lack of staff in the VSO Office. We also know that is a bad budget year. However, the budget office has \$13 million one-time-only money.</p> <p>Perhaps, as the VSTF we could ask for a half-time VSO to go to the jails.</p> <p>What is happening in Washington County is making people feel good, but we haven't seen numbers reflecting that it actually helps.</p> <p>We know there isn't a lot of one-time only money to go around, but we could use this one time only to get the statistical info that we need to determine if it's worth it.</p> <p>The number that really matters is “do they stop coming back into the system”</p>

	<p>Linda Maddy said that it is very difficult to get grant funding for startup. It is far easier to get money for sustaining and helping increase. If we could get a part time person that is specifically trained to work with those in the criminal justice system. What we bring to the table is time from Linda Maddy, Greg Lamb, and time from the programs team in MCSO.</p> <p>There are also opportunities in the courts. My thoughts are that we have all the specialty courts we need in Multco. We need to find a judge who can take them on.</p> <p>Full cost of a VSO is about 90,000 per year for a full time VSO – 45,000-50,000 for part time.</p> <p>It will have incredible cost savings down the road, and it will hopefully set the stage for more money down the road. We know it will work, but we need proof.</p> <p>Jerri – I know the Community colleges would like to help too.</p> <p>Greg – Last April or May, I got an email invite from Linda's office/ODVA who were seeking volunteer veterans who wanted to be peer councilors. I got the email because I'm a veteran, not because of my job. They want someone who has gotten over some hardships and can council some guys on what can be done.</p> <p>Bobbi – Peer mentors are used for some drug re-integration folks.</p> <p>Jerri – The Community College kids aren't ready for that peer mentoring yet but the PSU kids who are juniors or seniors (and in psychology) might be very good and interested in helping out.</p>
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Next meeting scheduled for ...

March 21, 2011

9:00am - 11:00am

501 SE Hawthorne Blvd - Conference room #635 Portland, OR 97214

**** Meetings normally take place 1st Monday of every month 9:00am - 11:00am ****

"The taskforce is comprised of members from various departments throughout Multnomah County who are committed and focused on responding to the needs of veterans while assuring the equitable and effective delivery of services to them and their families."