



# MULTNOMAH COUNTY VETERANS TASK FORCE

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 9:00am – 11:00am

Multnomah Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Room 126, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, Oregon 97214

## Meeting Focus: Housing

<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
Task Force meeting attended by: Diane McKeel, Sean Files, Jessica Chapman, Brittany Wright, Michelle Aguilar, Evan Hessel, Daphne Nesbitt, Alex Glover, Pete Pringle, Don Weber, Kim Douthit, Lee Girard, Shane Maher, Elizabeth Estabrooks, Kai Batalona, Chris Aiosa, Meloni Beauchamp, Estanislado Quinones, Shelah Johnson, Erin Pidot, Sally Erickson, Eric Ensley, Andy Smith, Katie Burgard, Felita Singleton, Nathaniel Boehme	
<b>TOPIC / PRESENTER</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Aging, Disability &amp; Veterans Services Division 2017-2020 Area Plan</b>  Lee Girard <i>Multnomah County Aging, Disability and Veterans Services Division</i>	<p>Lee provided an overview of the Area Plan, which is a federal requirement for Multnomah County as the designated area agency on aging. Plan is for four years and goes into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, though it is reviewed annually. The County’s plan, which is very comprehensive and totals 98 pages long plus appendices, covers ten different topic areas including a section on Veterans Services. This isn’t a federal requirement but was added since it is an important part of the County’s work. Lee distributed a handout that is posted to the VTF meeting materials website. The Veterans portion of the Area Plan includes a profile of the issue, problem and need statement, and goals.</p> <p>Discussion about outreach efforts in the community to LGBTQ veterans, at independent living facilities for aging adults, and work with VISTA volunteers to conduct programming with diverse communities. Also plan to integrate the <i>Home for Everyone</i> housing efforts into this plan to capture housing efforts for veterans. The VISTA grant is for three years, and by the fourth year the plan is to have sustainability volunteer capacity to continue this work.</p>
<b>Veteran Housing Update</b>  Sally Erickson <i>Joint Office of Homelessness Services</i>	<p>The plan to end homelessness among veterans is nested within the larger plan through Home for Everyone. Sally reviewed the vision and values of the plan as well as the structure and shared goals of this initiative. Goals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End veterans homelessness by the end of 2016</li> <li>• Decrease by half the unmet housing need among people experiencing homelessness by June 2017</li> <li>• Prioritize options so that no women, children or disabled adults have to sleep on the streets in January 2017</li> <li>• Engage health care providers and funders in ending homelessness</li> <li>• Increase the alignment of employment and housing support</li> </ul>

	<p>Currently working with the federal interagency on homelessness to identify efforts we've made, review data, and certify Portland/Multnomah County for ending veteran homelessness. Data suggests that close to 80% of people who get into permanent housing are still there a year later. Group discussion about inflow into the housing system, as well as struggles with the tight housing market, rising rents, and increasing rate of evictions. Will continue to track inflow closely, using data in next year's point in time count.</p> <p>Overview of the veteran registry, which has helped identify more veterans in a targeted manner than the point in time count. This data can be used to make the case for more HUD-VASH housing voucher allocation in future years. For the veteran registry, the HUD definition of homelessness is used, which includes street, shelter, car and camping. Homeless veterans get added to the registry regardless of eligibility for VA services. After the point in time count the housing team will be able to pull data from the registry to better understand veteran demographics in the homeless population. The housing team has provider meetings regularly to coordinate resources and connect veterans with services.</p> <p>Discussion about at-risk veterans who aren't homeless yet. There are some prevention resources through the SSVF program but not enough to meet the need. The county has also funded prevention resources for veterans and the general population but in this housing environment those are going quickly also.</p> <p>Presented overview of the landlord recruitment and retention team, increased shelter capacity, and development of permanent housing. Recent updates include 200 beds at the Hansen shelter that prioritize veterans, Do Good Multnomah's low-barrier shelter for veterans who have pets, recently allocation of 60 new HUD-VASH vouchers, and Home Forward's commitment of 50 housing choice vouchers for chronically homeless veterans who are ineligible for HUD-VASH. More information is available at <a href="http://HomeForEveryone.net">HomeForEveryone.net</a></p>
<p><b>VA Award of \$6.8 Billion for Medical Disability Examinations: Impact on Veterans in Multnomah Co.</b></p> <p>Eric Ensley  <i>Multnomah County Veterans Service Office</i></p>	<p>Eric presented an overview of the claims process, which begins with a veteran submitting a claim to the VA or through a County Veteran Service Officer. That starts a triage process and then to predetermination stage where most of the compensation and pension exams take place. A lot of these exams aren't totally complete and end up denied, which prompts the appeals process. There are different vendors around the country who do these exams, and this region is fortunate that claims typically move quickly and they do good exams. This award will improve capacity to provide better exams across the system in a quicker manner.</p> <p>For Multnomah County, claims go pending within an average of 84 days, and average of 134 days to completion.  For more information, contact Eric at 503-988-VETS (8387).</p>

<p><b>Work Plan Discussion, Continued from September</b></p> <p>Sean Files <i>Multnomah County</i></p>	<p>Commissioner McKeel reviewed last month’s executive team work session to update the Veterans Task Force work plan. The past few years, the VTF has had each meeting focused on one of the ten issues identified in the 2013 Community Covenant. To enable the VTF to go into more depth on policy or action items, at the September 12 meeting the committee identified three priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Instability</li> <li>• Comprehensive Veteran Wellness</li> <li>• Economic Development and Financial Sustainment</li> </ul> <p>Sean presented summary of these three areas, and noted that each of them includes the importance of accessing benefits. The group did not have any additional comments or edits so the revised work plan will be integrated into the 2016 Year in Review document and presented to the VTF at an upcoming meeting.</p>
<p><b>Updates</b></p> <p>All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pete discussed his trip to Washington DC on Honor Flight as a guardian. Great experience with lifelong memories. Some veterans told stories during the trip while around other veterans, especially when they got to the memorials, that they hadn’t told anyone before. Strongly recommended others being involved and becoming a guardian on future flights. The reception at the airport was also a very emotional event, like the recognition they received everywhere they went.</li> <li>• The Portland Veteran Stand Down on 9/9 was the most organized it has been and went really well. Saw 354 veterans, only 13 of whom reported being homeless and weren’t on the registry and connected to services already. Judge Allen dismissed 181 cases in exchange for community service, 11 veterans walked out with a job offer, the Banfield Pet Hospital treated about 45 animals, and Bishops Barbershop volunteers were busy all day. Next year the Portland Stand Down will be on Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>• East County Stand Down is October 22<sup>nd</sup>. There will be a priority table to get homeless veterans on the registry. Contact Pete if you want to volunteer or have a table at the event.</li> <li>• Nathaniel is working on an event November 10<sup>th</sup> for the 5 year anniversary of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell getting repealed. Also coordinating a two-day conference in August 2017 for issues pertaining to LGBT veterans. More information will be presented as details get figured out.</li> <li>• Liz is putting on an educational summit on November 1<sup>st</sup> targeting physical, behavioral, and mental health care providers. The She Also Served Summit will be 8-5pm at the Ambridge Center. Flyer is attached with the VTF meeting materials. This summit is not about the VA, but about community providers who want to support veterans who don’t go to the VA, and how to get paid for it.</li> <li>• Liz announced that the Oregon Women’s Health Study will be released in a few weeks.</li> <li>• Chris reported that Do Good Multnomah has a fundraiser on Monday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, from 5:30-8:30pm at the Lagunitas Community Room, at 237 NE Broadway St. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: <a href="http://www.dogoodmultnomah.org/fundraiser">www.dogoodmultnomah.org/fundraiser</a></li> <li>• Kim announced that PCC is a PAVE (Peer Advisors for Veteran Education) school, only one of four community colleges and 40+ schools in the country. Also having a resource fair on November 18<sup>th</sup> – contact Kim for more details.</li> </ul>

**Updates**

All

- Felita shared that the office remodel is complete and encouraged anyone who is interested to come to their Veteran Student Services office at Smith 401 at Portland State. Also having a resource fair on October 19<sup>th</sup> from 12-2pm, Veterans Day celebration on November 8<sup>th</sup>, and in December will host a veterans-specific orientation on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Andy noted that we are on the verge of the 2017 legislative session in Oregon, which begins February 1<sup>st</sup>. Described the concept of Ballot Measure 96, which would allocated a portion of lottery proceeds to veterans services, and invited anyone who would like to testify about any legislation or advocate for services to contact the committee administrator or attend a committee meeting. He is available for any questions or for more information.
- Eric reported that VISTA volunteers in the County Veterans Service Office are seeking feedback on how to best engage in different communities to better connect with veterans. Participated in the Gay and Grey expo this weekend and will continue to have strong presence in the community.
- Providence is hosting a Career Fair for veterans on November 5<sup>th</sup> from 9am-12pm, at 4400 NE Halsey St in Building 2. For questions, email [veterans@providence.org](mailto:veterans@providence.org) or to RSVP go to <http://bit.ly/ProvidenceVeterans>