



Alachua County VSAB Veteran Services Advisory Board
Meeting Location: Alachua County Community Support Services
218 SE 24th ST Gainesville, FL 32641
November 13, 2023 4:00 P.M.

Minutes

Meeting started November 13, 2023 at 4:01PM

Welcome and Call Meeting to Order — Chair, John Murdoch

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence — Chair, John Murdoch

Quorum Call of Members in Attendance — Secretary, Eric Sickler

Board Members in Attendance: James Schindler, Eric Sickler, Nick Klein, Fred Judkins, Wayne Wooten, Sandra Torres-Pinto, John Murdoch, Nick McMillen
Liaison Kim Davis, Staff Assistant Leslie Hennis
Guests John Boreck, Ingrid Rincon

Secretary Eric Sickler stated that we do have a quorum.

Call for Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting(s) — Chair, John Murdoch

September 2023 – Minutes Approved

October 2023 – Minutes Approved with correction of spelling of Sandra Torres- Pintos name.

Veterans Day - After event feedback- Director Veteran Services, Kim Davis

Kim Davis asked about Veterans Day and feedback from the VSAB.

Nick Klein stated that there was good set up and KWVA arrived early to oversee the Veterans Row. He suggested the chairs be not so far into the walkway. Nick said Kim Davis did a good job. Nick had nothing negative to say. Fred Judkins said Skydivers were awesome. Kim Davis said it was “ok” but she is not fully satisfied with this. She indicated that the changes in VA employees at the VA resulted in communication and information challenges there resulting in less VA program participation. Kim Davis has now developed a new contact at VA , Mr. Clay Purdue to get the communication to VA programs clearly disseminated. The VSAB VA Representative has been vacant for a

long time and until VA sends a new representative to this board, this communication challenge may be ongoing. Kim Davis further stated that communication via email to the many organizations who table that was supported by further phone calls was not as effective as there was less time to make the follow up phone calls to encourage attendance. Kim Davis may task a Volunteer to make the personal calls to encourage participation of organizations. She discussed past Veterans Days and the plan to begin planning further in advance.

John Murdoch mentioned that he did not make Veterans Day at the Marine Corps Ball which does not always fall right before Veterans Day. Future Marine Corps Balls may not be just before the Veterans Day Celebration

Alachua County Veteran Services Advisory Board Annual Report — Chair, John Murdoch

John indicated that since they did not have a quorum for the last few months. Nick Klein moved approve the Annual Report as is. Nick McMillen Seconded. It was determined to send up to County Commissions. Discussion on how to get this before the BoCC. Nick Klein moved to have John Murdoch to speak at Citizen Comments. Kim Davis had Claudia place input. Advisory Report is just now approved. The suggestion to have Board Chair present at Citizen Comments. Claudia Tuck stated that she will have this scheduled to be presented the following physical year as an agenda item. John will present the Power Point with written report sent to the BoCC that he is presenting from. The Chair will do the report.

Elections of Board Members -Chair John Murdoch

Election of Board Officers- Nominations for Chair. None- John Murdoch volunteered to serve. Fred moved and Nick Klein seconded. All in favor. John Murdoch again Chair of VSAB.

Vice Chair- Veteran Services Advisory Board. Asked for Volunteers or nominations. Nick Klein nominated Nick McMillen. Nick McMillen declined. Nick Klein then nominated himself and Sandra Torres Pintos seconded. All agreed. Nick Klein is now Vice Chair of the VSAB.

Secretary of VSAB – Eric Sickler and James Schindler both declined this position. Sandra Torres Pintos nominated Fred Judkins and Nick Klein seconded. All agreed. Fred Judkins now Secretary of VSAB.

Old Business asked about- none.

Nick McMillen suggested that the VSAB change from a Veteran Services Advisory Board to another type of group. He suggested that it could be more beneficial to become

a collation. Nick Klein asked what the benefits was of becoming a coalition vs a Veteran Services Advisory Board. Kim Davis advised the Sunshine Law and rules of the VSAB. Nick Klein then asked if anyone had violated the Sunshine Law from the VSAB. Further discussion is that the Veteran Community know each other through many overlapping groups. Nick Klein indicated that this being public record. Nick McMillen stated that no one reads it. Kim Davis indicated that some counties have both advisory boards and coalition. Nick Klein further stated that the charter is through the county, and nothing stops the veterans having a separate coalition. Discussion about attendance and obligations of being on the board. Kim Davis has notified us that the Resolution is in the Legal office to see if the board was to be shrunk. Attendance has been a problem since Covid. Prior to covid, attendance was better. Sandra Torres Pintos said that the location is also the challenge. James Schindler input that a Coalition will allow the meeting to be able to meet over Zoom and have less problems with attendance. Nick McMillen stated that the meetings happen when people at work. Kim Davis said that they can change times or location through their own votes and decisions. Eric Sickler stated that with an advisory board giving information to the BoCC they do have to hear and address the concerns. Kim Davis stated that she will provide the Resolution to the VSAB.

Kim Davis again stated that the agenda is to be filled with things for the VSAB to work on like some laws that are upcoming. She further stated that the VSAB has pros and cons. The pros are that the board can make decisions and an impact if they work on things and the cons are that if the meetings are not productive, that man hours are used taking notes for unproductive activities.

Eric Sickler stated that he would like to see the VSAB do more for the Veterans in Alachua County.

New Business- Kim Davis stated that there are focuses on specific day. Kim Davis asked the VSAB if anyone is doing anything for Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremonies. She stated that if anyone is doing anything the Veteran Service Office can support this event or any others.

Ingrid Rincon input that the VetCenter is still available, and that the eligibility has widened to see Active Duty, National Guard, Veteran Students with challenges from the military. She stated that she can help to work with them in connecting to Vet Center resources.

Volunteers of America is taking over the location that was once VetSpace.

Adjournment and Thank You for Coming

Next Meeting will be: December 11, 2023 at 4:00 P.M