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## *Alachua County Veteran Services Advisory Board*

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### Annual Work Plan and Accomplishments Report: 2024-2025

Chair: John Murdoch

Board Liaison: Olajuwon White

#### *Brief History of Board/Committee*

The Veteran Services Advisory Board was established by Resolution 83-50 on July 12, 1983.

#### *Responsibilities and Duties*

1. Prepare and update an Annual Work Plan and Report of Accomplishments.
2. Review provisions for the operation of the Advisory Board.
3. Make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding the Veterans Community in Alachua County.
4. Receive reports from Alachua County Veteran Services.
5. Assist and advise the County on future policies and directions concerning Veterans.
6. Promote community awareness of the Alachua County Veteran Service Office, and Veterans organizations.
7. Carry out the responsibilities of a Community Veteran Engagement Board, to work with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

#### *Prior Year Accomplishments*

- Supported Alachua County Veteran Services for Veterans Day Celebration, through individual organizations coming together in harmony and successfully assisting in “Veterans Row”, Parking assistance and other supporting roles. The event drew over 600 visitors and provided a backdrop for the Ribbon Cutting ceremony for the new children’s park and the dedication of the Gold Star Families memorial.
- Promoted the PACT ACT legislation throughout the Alachua County Veteran Services community, creating a greater understanding of VA benefits and how they relate to Alachua County Veterans thereby helping to encourage Veterans and dependents to come to Alachua County Veteran Services.
- Promoted and participated as individual organizations at the Veterans Resource Fair and Homeless Veteran Stand Down. This event assisted Veterans in accessing resources such as Veteran services, housing, employment, counseling, medical benefits, etc.

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- Promoted the Alachua County Memorial Day Ceremony put on by Alachua County Veteran Services with assistance from the City of Gainesville and area organizations. This meaningful and solemn event drew well over 100 people and provided support and comfort to our community.

### *Goals for the Upcoming Year*

- Make recommendations to the BoCC about items of interest to the Veterans community.
- Continue to promote and support Alachua County Veteran Services.
- Assist in dissemination of information for the Veteran community throughout Alachua County.
- Provide information and feedback to the VA Hospital about Veterans care and services.
- Continue to support Veterans events as planned and presented by Alachua County Veteran Services.
- To support and encourage BoCC support for the Alachua County Veteran Service Office, their staff and program.
- Strengthen ties with Veteran Services and Veteran Success Offices at the University of Florida and Santa Fe College to better assist veteran students who are not residents of Alachua County.
- Expand Veteran Service presence outreach to the individual cities in the County.
- Reinvigorate Veteran Service Office work-study and volunteer programs to enhance veteran presence and military service literacy in the County.