

UNITED VETERANS COMMITTEE OF COLORADO (UVC)

<http://unitedveteranscommittee.com>



UVC
P.O. Box 31261
Aurora, CO 80041-1261

Minutes

(9 December 2008)

MEETINGS AT VFW POST 9644
0900 hours
2680 W Hampden Ave
Englewood, CO 80110-1906
303-789-9733

West of Sante Fe on highway 285. First traffic light, turn right (Brady Court) and follow curving road to top of hill. VFW Post on left OR Turn North on Federal, and then right on Hampden and VFW Post will be on your right.

NEW WEB ADDRESS:

<http://unitedveteranscommittee.com>

Email: uvcorg@comcast.net

1. CALL TO ORDER 0917
2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
3. MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR POW/MIA's.
4. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION
No first-time attendees
5. ROLL CALL – quorum present
6. REPORTS:
 - a) Secretary – minutes approved as corrected. Revised minutes to be posted to website
 - b) Treasurer – Report accepted
7. ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:
 - American Guaranty Reverse Mortgage** – John Mansch & Patty McElhinney announced that they can provide educational presentations on the benefits and misconceptions of reverse mortgages.
 - American Legion** – Ralph Bozella announced the annual mid-year conference will be Jan 23-25 2009 at the Radisson Hotel, Stapleton Plaza. Approximately 110 new recruits to the US military will be sworn in at the conference on Saturday. Friday evening will feature an Expo with American Legion programs on display. Saturday evening will be the annual Jefferson P. Luginbuel Media Awards banquet. All are welcome. Call 303-366-5201 for more information.
 - Associated Veterans of Colorado** – Warren Tellgren announced that the 1st planning meeting for Memorial Day, '09 will be at Ft Logan Nat'l Cemetery on Monday, Jan 12 2009.
8. UVC COMMITTEES
 - Legislative Committee –
 - Marvin Meyers announced the nomination of General (ret) Eric Shinseki to be the new VA Secretary and reviewed our State and Federal legislative goals.
 - 505 funds are monies excess to the State Veterans Homes after expenses. These 505 funds are used at Trinidad to fund the state's non-veteran nursing home. Wayne Thompson introduced a new goal to be numbered A.9 to remove Trinidad from 505 funding.
 - Ralph Bozella introduced a new goal (A.10) to put a Veteran's wing in the new Colorado History Museum to be built.
 - New goals as amended approved and accepted
 - Jay Bobick commented regarding goal B.1 that UVC continues to push for a standalone VA hospital. Ralph added additional comments and Marvin added that we want the VA to meet with ALL the veterans representatives, not just one or two selected reps.
 - Banquet Committee – Ken Melcher asked members to start thinking about budgeting for ads and table attendees. Banquet will be April 26, same place as in years past but now called Red Lion.
 - Membership Committee – no update
9. COLORADO BOARD OF VETERANS AFFAIRS – Ralph reported that the board is scheduled to meet later in the day – 1300 hrs @ DMVA
10. VETERANS NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATION –
 - Brad Honl reported that the Fitzsimmons census is strong at 170 of 180 beds, and the facility is waiting for the survey team to arrive for the annual visit. They are in the 15th month of a 9-15 month

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survey window. Staffing is good, with only one RN position open, and recruiting for 35 nurse aides in process. Ryan Hoffert, Director of Marketing and Admissions has resigned and recruiting will soon begin for that position.

11. FITZSIMMONS ADVISORY BOARD – Ken Melcher reported that since August 08, spousal admissions have been limited to maintain the minimum 75% veteran population. Also, staffing is being viewed as possibly coming under the State hiring freeze. General discussion ensued about exceptions to the freeze. Ken also reported that Fitzsimmons has repaid approximately 50% of what it had received from the 505 fund.. Ralph commented on the lack of DHS representation at meetings. (Later in the day at the CBVA meeting, Vicki Manley commented that Brad Honl is supposed to also represent DHS at our meetings).

12. CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS

Senator Allard's Office –

Senator Salazar's Office –

Congressional Dist. 1 – DeGette –

Congressional Dist. 2 (Senator elect) – Udall – Carolyn Boller announced that they are in transition from the House to the senate, and they are working with a group that has been given a grant to help veterans with mental health issues who get into legal trouble.

Congressional Dist. 3 – Salazar –

Congressional Dist. 4 – Musgrave –

Congressional Dist. 5 – Lamborn –

Congressional Dist. 6 – Tancredo – Terry Van Keuren

- suggested that UVC support active duty tactical and strategic forces against cuts by the new administration.
- suggested promoting UVC-type organizations in other states.
Marvin commented that we get many inquiries and requests from other states, but that without an executive secretary and specific funding, we have neither the manpower, nor the time, nor the budget to actively pursue this admirable effort.
- Thanked UVC for past support of Rep Tancredo and all vets.
- Reported on a meeting with Mike Coffman to rekindle a Veterans advisory board.

Congressional Dist. 7 – Perlmutter – Bill Holen announced

- An open house at the Congressman's local office, 12600 W. Colfax, suite B400 for Sat Dec 13th.
- Rep Perlmutter has invited Gen Shinseki to come to Colorado to visit the Fitzsimmons site and meet with Veterans organizations.

13. VISN 19, VARO, VA National Cemetery NCA, VA ECHCS, VA DALC, Fort Logan

1.) VISN 19 – Lee Logan –

- Amplified that retired Army General Eric Shinseki, from Hawaii, The new VA secretary nominee, is a combat veteran who had a strong career.
- Fitzsimmons
 - VA is working to acquire the Pool parcel of land – expected to complete this month. Small adjacent piece in six months.
 - Expect senate VA committee action for a project hearing, or a decision pending the new administration.
 - Project design work halted pending Central office decisions
 - Demolition and site prep work expected to continue to shorten the timeline when the decision is made.
- Colorado Springs - Property solicitation Dec 1. Driving tour of property with A/E firm has been completed
- Travel reimbursement for veterans increased from \$0.285/mile to \$0.415/mile, with deductibles decreased.
- Reported that two new pieces of legislation: one establishes \$250 of funding for rural health projects across the country and the other establishes a pilot project for five VISNs, including VISN 19, with rural and highly rural veteran populations. A work group was established to review legislation, identify funding sources, and develop plans.

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- 2.) VARO – Rebecca Smith reported that:
 - The Veteran service Center Backlog in October stood at 7522, with an Average Days pending of 108, and staffing at 103.
 - Home loans division received a National award for Home Loan Processing for the 3^d time. They were ranked 2nd for processing of Specially Adaptive Housing grants.
 - 3.) Ft. Logan – Joe Turnbach reported 273 Internments in November, and invited everyone to a Wreaths Across America ceremony on Sat, Dec 13 at 10:00 o'clock
 - 4.) ECHCS – Christine White announced that:
 - Mark Stevenson is the new Assistant Director, and that he was meeting with real estate personnel and architects regarding the Colorado Springs Clinic
 - ECHS has submitted requests for outreach clinics in Salida and Frisco.
 - They continue to meet with community leaders regarding sponsorship and partnership opportunities for the 2010 National Veterans Wheelchair Games.
 - 5.) Rick DeBlasio, VISN 19 Network Homeless Coordinator informed UVC of expanded programs for homeless veterans, and veterans involved with the criminal justice system.
 - Permanent Housing for Homeless Veterans (HUD-VASH)
 - Diversion Program – Colorado is one of six states funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SA&MHA) for the program to divert traumatized Vets from the criminal justice system.
14. OLD BUSINESS – none
15. NEW BUSINESS: - none
16. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS – Another Wreaths Across America wreath-laying ceremony will take place at the US Air Force Academy, also on Saturday. People in the Colorado Springs are encouraged to attend (announcing e-mail had been sent out last week)
17. ADJOURN 1050 hrs.
18. **Next Meeting:** Other events may impact the scheduled Jan 13, 2009 meeting. Watch for e-mail announcements.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Shapiro Secretary UVC (12/30/2008)

James C. Bobick, UVC President, 303-699-1575

George Dale Thomas, 1st VP, 303-751-8252

Ralph Bozella, 2nd VP; 303-776-3890

Warren Tellgren, Immediate Past Commander, 303-912-4927

Michael N. Shapiro, Secretary, 303-619-2276

Glenn Kataoka, Treasurer, 303-795-4343

Marvin Meyers, Legislative Committee Chairman, 303-694-9022;

Nathan M. Gorman, Legislative Liaison, 303-221-2231.

Larry Carrol, Judge Advocate 303-794-2894

Budget Committee – Ken Melcher, 303-341-9170

Nominating Committee – Warren Tellgren, Immediate Past Commander, 303-912-4927

Awards Banquet Committee – Ken Melcher, 303-341-9170

Membership Committee – George Palmateer, 303-279-7593

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