

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee Meeting Minutes

Saturday October 5, 2024
2pm Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Agenda

The Department of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee meeting was called to order at 2pm by David Cook of the 6th District. David Cook was appointed as secretary from the 6th District. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by David Cook of the 6th District and the invocation was given by Darell Bishop of the 5th District.

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| 1. Call to Order | Chairman |
| 2. Pledge of Allegiance | Chairman |
| 3. Appoint Secretary | Chairman |
| 4. Roll Call of Committee Members | Chairman |

Dist.	Name	Substitute	Present	Absent	Voucher
1	Phillip Cipriani Jr.		X		
2	Mike Homan		X		
3	Mike Blackwell			X	
4	Jerry Perry		X		
5	Darell Bishop		X		
6	David Cook, Chairman		X		
7	Vacant				
8	Vacant				
9	William Ditterbrand		X		
10	Bob Rhodes		X		
11	Steve Wainwright			X	
12	George Mussi		X		
13	Leroy Brinkhoff		X		
14	Bob Carson		X		
Total			10	2	

5. Introduction of Guest: VBA Coordinator William Genochio

6. Reading of previous minutes: Motion by Darell Bishop of the 5th District, seconded by William Ditterbrand of the 9th. Motion passed.

7. District Reports:

1st No Report

2nd No Report

3rd No Report

4th Jerry Perry gave overview on the VAVS meeting attended at Cincinnati VAMC

5th Darell Bishop reported on the need to take photos with dignitary's you are meeting with and note what you talked about and their stand on it.

6th No Report

7th Vacant

8th Vacant

9th William Ditterbrand, held veterans' appreciation events and held Bingo at the VA.

10th Bob Rhodes, Getting food for the needy and coats for kids.

11th No Report

12th George Mussi, will hold a stand down September 10th,

13th Leroy Brinkhoff, VAVS no report, will be going to the hospital on Friday October 11th.

14th Bob Carson held stand down September 10th. Approximately 418 veterans attended. Best on held for some time.

8. Unfinished Business

a. Veterans Treatment Court: None reported at this time.

b. Update on various Bills:

Genochio went over the following: HB 69 is still in committee. HR 1282 Major Star Act. Still in Committee. HR 303 bill to allow retired veteran to receive both VA and retired pay. With no off set. Still in committee.

Update on HB 69: Currently in the House Committee.

a. Revise membership of the County Veterans Service Commissions

Update H.R. 1282: – Major Richard Star Act: Introduced and placed on the Union Calendar No. 117.

a. To amend title 10, United States Code, to expand eligibility to certain military retirees for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation, and for other purposes.

Update H. R. 303: Introduced 2/8/2023 referred to Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs

a. This bill allows the receipt of both military retired pay and veterans' disability compensation with respect to any service-connected disability. Under current law, only individuals with service-connected disabilities rated at 50% or more receive both without offset.

b. Individuals who were retired or separated after at least 20 years of military service due to a service-connected disability shall be eligible for the full concurrent receipt of both veterans' disability compensation and either military retired pay or combat-related special pay.

9. New Business

Genochio gave up date on DSO in Cincinnati have hired one Lauren Champion. She is trained and working with DSO Gary Felver on further training. Waiting on her accreditation to be finalized before she occupies the Cincinnati Office. There will not be a DSO at Columbus Medical. Looking for a DSO for Chillicothe VAMC.

He then gave overview on H.R. 333 Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act. Is in sub-committee. This is to modify military retired pay. To allow those with less than 50% to receive both retired pay and VA pay.

Project 25: Just touched on this, as VA looking at restructuring the Disability rating system.

- a. **DSO Report:** was given by VBA Coordinator William Genochio, whom reported about new hire DSO Lauren Champion and the current issues revolving around the Cincinnati VA Medical Center VSO Suite.
- b. **Cincinnati VAMC:** We have hired a new DSO for the Cincinnati VA Medical Center Lauren Champion a Army National Guard. She has been trained and further working with DSO Gary Felver left seat right seat training. We are waiting on her VA accreditation to finalize before she can occupy the Cincinnati VA Medical Center Office.
- c. **H.R. 333 Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act:** Introduced 1/12/2023 referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs
 - a. This bill modifies provisions related to military retired pay. Specifically, the bill authorizes veterans with a service-connected disability of less than 50% to concurrently receive both retired pay and disability compensation. The bill also makes qualified disability retirees with less than 20 years of retirement-creditable service eligible for concurrent receipt, subject to specified reductions in retired pay. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/333/text>
- d. **S. 344 Major Richard Star Act:** Introduced 2/09/2023 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Forces.
 - a. This bill allows a veteran with a combat-related disability and fewer than 20 years of creditable service to receive retirement pay, without reduction, concurrent with disability compensation. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/344/text>
- e. **Project 25:** For informational purposes at this point but want to make the VA&R Committee aware of this plan. Main issues in restructuring the Veterans Disability Rating system to provide savings to the VA. Revising disability rating awards for future claimants while “preserving them fully or partially for existing claimants.” And establishing a veterans “bill of rights” so vets and VA staff know exactly what benefits veterans are entitled to receive. Embracing the expansion of Community Based Outpatient Clinics without “investing further in obsolete and unaffordable VA health care campuses.” Rescinding all departmental clinical policy directives related to abortion services and gender reassignment surgeries.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2024/07/24/how-would-project-2025-impact-troops-and-veterans/>

- f. Gifts for Yanks Report: Darell Bishop of the 5th stated has not received any report from department yet.
- g. Awards: Genochio gave review on Awards. Was noted that our spring meeting is planned to be in-person, so to make the judging and voting on them a better process. Genochio stated most are National awards.
 - a. **Department Awards:** Veterans Affairs Award, Al Shaefer Award
 - b. **National Awards:** VAVS National Advisory Committee (NAC) Volunteer of the Year, VA Physician of the Year, VA health Care worker of the Year, Certificates of Application to Outstanding VA Officials, William F. Lenker Award.

10. Resolutions: None

11. Good of the Legion: Nothing to Report

12. Closing Prayer: Darell Bishop of the 5th District

13. Salute to the Colors

14. Adjourn, Meeting was adjourned at 2:25pm