

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

Present Ms. Takosha Swan, Vice-Chair
 Mr. Joshua Kopsie, Secretary
 Mr. John Kubinec, Member
 Mr. Tim Paslawski, Member
 Mr. Pete Peterson, Member
 Ms. Patricia Ross, Commissioner

Visitors: Mr. George Canavaggio, Executive Director, Field Operations & Appeals, GDVS
Present Mr. Mark Bannister, Executive Dir., Health, Memorials, Finance & Development, GDVS
 Mr. Kerry Dyer, Chief Operations Officer, GDVS
 Mr. Matthew O'Brien, Assistant Attorney General, Attorney General's Office
 Ms. Monisha Rallapalli, Office of Planning and Budget
 Mr. Lou Zayas, Jr. Vice Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart
 Mr. Mark Gelhardt, American Legion Post 50
 Mr. Leigh Blood, American Legion Post 50
 Mr. Lee Norman, American Legion Post 50
 Mr. Wayne Leichai, VFW 9949
 Ms. Raven Holstick, GDVS, American Legion Service Officer
 Ms. Tonjala Moton-Williams, GDVS, American Legion Assistant Service Officer
 Mr. Ken Childre, Director, Veterans Benefits North Region, GDVS
 Ms. Sherri Whitfield, South Region District Manager, GDVS
 Ms. Ramona Roper, Director, Training and Professional Development, GDVS
 Ms. Charlotte May, Director, Public Information and External Affairs, GDVS
 Ms. Shelly Ann Simpson, Director, Appeals Division, GDVS
 Mr. Russell Feagin, Director, Health & Memorials Division, GDVS
 Ms. Tonya Jarrett, Clinical Director, GWVH, Milledgeville, GA
 Ms. Veda Brooks, Coordinator, Women & Minority Veterans, GDVS
 Ms. Calandra Ferguson, Coordinator, Suicide Prevention & Outreach, GDVS
 Mr. Bobby Davis, Director, Veterans Education & Training, GDVS
 Mr. Carlton Deese, Executive Director GWVH, Milledgeville, GA
 Ms. Debbie Gregory, Administrative Specialist, GDVS
 Ms. Julie Hammond, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner, GDVS

On Wednesday, July 20, 2022, the Veterans Service Board meeting was held in person and by video/tele-conference.

Ms. Swan called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m. Mr. Peterson gave the invocation. Mr. Kopsie led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Kopsie made a motion to approve the June Agenda. Mr. Kubinec seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

Mr. Kopsie made a motion to approve the June minutes, which were previously distributed for members to review. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Raven Holstick, GDVS, American Legion Service Officer

- The Assistant Department Service Officer (Ed Kent) assisted 25 veterans with VA benefits related inquiries this month.
- The Department Service Officer along with future DSO/ADSO (Raven Holstick and Tonjala Moton-Williams) attended the American Legion Department of Georgia Convention on June 24-26, 2022, at the Sonesta Gwinnett Place, 1775 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth, Georgia. Assisted with introduction of Veterans Administration speakers and presentation of awards.
- Upcoming event: American Legion National Convention on August 26, 2022 through September 1, 2022 in Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Upcoming event: Visit to the Atlanta VA Medical Center on September 27, 2022 @0900.
- Upcoming event: Visit to the Atlanta VA Regional office on September 27, 2022 @1300.

Mr. Lee Norman, American Legion Post 50

The American Legion Post 50 is in a new facility. We were renting a building, but the city of Peachtree City has given us space in a city building. We have doubled in size and activities. We have started an American Legion Riders Club. Peachtree City has been named a Purple Heart City. We are working to get veterans parking spaces at businesses throughout the city.

Ms. Belinda Boldoe, VFW

- The Department Service Officer attended the Department of Georgia VFW and Auxiliary State Convention on June 23-26, 2022, held at the Macon Marriott City Center, 240 Coliseum Dr., Macon, GA 31217. Commissioner Ross was a guest speaker during the business session. The VFW Department of GA installed the new State Commander and Staff for 2022–2023, Commander Jim Willis.

Mr. Lou Zayas, Jr. Vice Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart

Our annual golf tournament will be on August 8 in Tucker Georgia.

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

Commissioner Patricia Ross

On Monday, June 27, 2022, Commissioner Ross met with Shauna Greene of the AMBFO (Arthur M. Blank Family of Businesses) and Marcus Ruzek with the Marcus Foundation. They were excited about GDVS standing up the Transition Support Unit as their organizations fund out-patient programs and know there is a need for in-patient services for those with PTSD/TBI, etc. Commissioner Ross then held a weekly Director's Meeting. The afternoon was spent interviewing four candidates for the position of Executive Director, Field Offices and Appeals. Ms. Shelly-Ann Simpson was selected as the incoming Executive Director.

On Tuesday, June 28, 2022, Commissioner Ross attended a Returning Veterans Task Force Meeting. She then attended the Veterans Service Board Meeting and the Veterans Service Foundation Board Meeting. Commissioner Ross ended the day with a meeting with the Sub Acute Program Development Workgroup.

On Wednesday, June 29, 2022, Commissioner Ross hosted a group from the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs. Also, in attendance from GDVS were Charlotte May, Lily Snyder, Kerry Dyer, Mark Bannister, Russell Feagin, George Canavaggio, Ramona Roper, and Shelly-Ann Simpson. In-person attendees from Kentucky were Commissioner Whitney Allen and Legal Representative Tamara Reid-McIntosh. Most of the Kentucky VA employees attended via MS Teams. Commissioner Ross and Commissioner Allen also had an all-conference call with NASDVA in the afternoon. Takeaways from Kentucky were their establishment of a trust fund through license plate sales and a homeless program.

On Thursday, June 30, 2022, Commissioner Ross attended a Unite Us Pre-Implementation Meeting. She then had a meeting regarding the Veterans Health Promotion Program headed by Dr. James Tsai from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Their aim is to develop a program that will improve and enhance physical health, mental well-being, and quality of life for veterans and their family caregivers. The proposed program consists of (1) veterans' engagement in the design, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of the program; (2) technology-based, personalized physical activity interventions (e.g., walking, Tai Chi, resistance exercise, laughter yoga, etc.); (3) comprehensive health assessments using eye tracking technology, machine learning, and various advanced sensors to personalize and optimize the physical activity interventions; (4) safety and mobility assessments for indoor and outdoor physical activity interventions, including sidewalk mobility and indoor environment assessments using innovative technology. The expected outcomes of this proposed program will have positive impacts on the health, wellness, and quality of life that will ultimately develop a systemic approach to scale up the impact to a large population of veterans and their family caregivers in Georgia and nationwide.

On Friday, July 1, 2022, Commissioner Ross met individually with Mark Bannister, Charlotte May, George Canavaggio and Julie Hammond to go over their performance reviews.

On Tuesday, July 5, 2022, Commissioner Ross held a weekly Director's Meeting.

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

On Wednesday, July 6, 2022, Commissioner Ross attended the Planning Meeting for Veterans Women's Benefits Symposium. She then had a lunch meeting with John Butler (Principal Consultant with Aslan Group) and Larry Robert (veteran, chaplain, US Navy Reserve, Accredited Claims Agent with the VA, and the Bereavement Services Manager/Veteran Liaison with VITAS [the largest Hospice and Palliative Care Company in Georgia and the U.S.]). Later in the day, Commissioner Ross met with Joe and Carol LaBranche from AboutFace-USA. AboutFace-USA pairs students and special needs individuals with military veterans to grow produce together, giving them social interaction, education, and an opportunity to succeed. Veterans learn the benefit of Aeroponic Tower Gardening. A Tower Garden is a state-of-the-art vertical, aeroponic, garden-growing system that uses sunlight (or plant lights), electricity, nutrients and water to grow vegetables, herbs, fruits or flowers in a three square foot area, indoors or outdoors. This project is meant to allow veterans to be role models and to take a leadership role in the education of others regarding gardening, marketing, business finances and the value of community involvement. They also have a "Bagels, Backpacks and Mats" program. They have a line-item appropriation in the FY23 budget.

On Thursday, July 7, 2022, Commissioner Ross had a meet and greet with Jacqueline Johnson, Assistant Director with the Department of Labor-Veterans' Employment Training Service (DOL-VETS). She then held interviews for the Grant Program Implementation Manager position. Mark Demers was selected for this new position. Later in the afternoon, Commissioner Ross attended the Unite US/GDVS Weekly Implementation Meeting.

On Friday, July 8, 2022, Commissioner Ross held an Open Forum with the field offices.

On Monday, July 11, 2022, Commissioner Ross held a weekly Director's Meeting. She also submitted the FY 23-27 Strategic Plan, the most comprehensive plan to date. Mark Demers and Kerry Dyer were the key contributors.

On Tuesday, July 12, 2022, Commissioner Ross met with the Sub Acute Program Development Workgroup and worked the placement of a disabled veteran being discharged.

On Wednesday, July 13, 2022, Commissioner Ross attended the National State Home Per Diem Quarterly Call and the Unite Us/GDVS Weekly Implementation Meeting. Later during the day, she met with the AMES Center and Dr. Brian Moore on conducting research to determine the need and location for future War Veterans Homes.

On Thursday, July 14, 2022, Commissioner Ross met with the Commissioner, Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs in an exchange of best practices.

Highlights:

- Research funds to determine need and location for new War Veterans Homes
- New Foundation Board member – Shon Barnwell

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

On the horizon:

- 20 July, Press conference with Governor Kemp and MG Carden on partnership with SK Batteries
- SECVA Visit 21 – 22 July (still pending)
- Grand opening of the Robert S. Poydasheff VA Clinic on 22 July

Executive Director George Canavaggio, Field Operations and Appeals

GENERAL

- On July 17 through 21, 2021, The Department will be conducting its Annual Training in Peachtree City.
- DD 214's and Welcome Home Letters:
 - 1,494 Welcome Home Letters were mailed out in June 2022.
- Department Electronic Claim's Assistance Processing System (Vetra Spec) currently 313,766 entries, this is an increase of 576 from June 28, 2022.

PROJECTED POSITIONS

- Current openings in, Waycross, Decatur CBOC, Columbus, and Balcony

Veda Brooks, Women Veterans Coordinator (WVC)

- June 25, 2022, Women Veteran Office hosted a Women's Conference sponsored by Kaiser Permanente.
- July 4, 2022, Ms. Brooks participated in Coweta County 4th of July parade.
- July 8, 2022, Ms. Brooks participated in the planning meeting for a November 4, 2023, Women Conference.
- July 14, 2022, Ms. Brooks participated in the Food Insecurity MHAB Action Committee Meeting.
- Will be attending the August Conference for the National Association of Women Veterans State Coordinators. Suicide prevention and legislation is the focus this year.
- Next year's Women Veterans Conference will be on June 12, 2023, along with a We Care Fair. Ms. Swan will be singing at the conference.

Current committees

- Women's Veterans Health Committee (monthly meetings and joint outreach events)

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

- Georgia State VFW Homeless Committee
- VA/SAMHSA Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families Georgia Team
- Atlanta Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans
- The Birdwell Foundation Board Member
- Coweta County Race, Equity, and Justice Committee
- Unite Georgia Community Advisory Committee

Ramona Roper, Training and Professional Development Division:

- June 25, 2022, Ramona Roper attended the GDVS Women's Conference.
- June 29, 2022, Ramona Roper attended the meeting with the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs.
- July 1-15, 2022, Members of the Training and Professional Development Division prepared and finalized the annual training program.
- July 8-21, 2022, Conducted the 2022 GDVS Annual Training event.

Upcoming Events:

- Daily continued ongoing support to the Regional Directors and Veteran Field Service Offices.

Shelly-Ann Simpson, Director of Appeals Division:

- The total number of actual hearings conducted by the Appeals Division for June 2022 was **78**.
- The total number of pre-hearing actions for June 2022 was **239**. Post-hearing actions was **69**.
- The total number of correspondence conducted by the Appeals Division (with veterans, BVA/VA employees, and VSO field offices) for the month of June was **1,430**.
- As of July 1, 2022, the Atlanta VA Regional Office completed the following claims for the Service Organizations represented by GDVS:

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

Types of Claims	Number of Awards	Benefits paid out
Compensation	100,984	\$186,797,515
DIC	3242	\$4,959,007
Survivor Pension	830	\$701,244
Veteran Pension	1727	\$1,896,522
Grand Total	106,783	\$194,354,288

Ken Childers, Director Veterans Benefits North Region

June 2022 total retro awards reported by the North Georgia offices: \$1,633,975.90

Included in that amount are single awards reported by:

Christine Collins (Blairsville)
\$118,266.12 (Paquette-2916)

Glenn Massey (Gainesville)
\$237,781.10 (Elrod-0047)

Rico Johnson (Gainesville)
\$105,765.68 (Martin-4736)
\$92,204.45 (Platt-0857)

Director Site Visits/Inspections: 0

June 30-Marie Lundquist (Jasper)

Pickens County Veterans Memorial-27 people in attendance. 16 in attendance were unaware of the new GDVS office at the Jasper VA Clinic. Talked for about 45 minutes on benefits and answered questions. 5 appointments scheduled.

July 11-Glenn Massey (Gainesville)

Selected as 2nd Qtr. Employee of the Quarter-Glenn went above and beyond after a scammer had logged into the Gainesville Office Voicemail system and starting contacting Veterans/Family members and trying to get information, in order to steal their benefits. Glenn contacted all the folks that the scammer had contacted to make sure they had not given any personal information...luckily, they had not.

North Georgia Gains/Losses:

Newnan-Dwight Hackworth-New Hire Effective 5 July

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

Atlanta Balcony Office-Michael Williams-New Hire Effective 5 July

Atlanta Balcony Office-Ronnie Hough-New Hire Effective 5 July

	Average Visits Per VFSO						
	Average Claims Submitted to VA Per VFSO						
	Region:		North				
	Month:		June-22				
A	B	C	D	E	D / E F	G	G / E H
					Average Office Visits Per Day	Total Claims Submitted To VA Monthly	Average Claims Submitted By VFSOS To VA Daily
Office Name	Veterans' Field Service Officer (VFSO) Last Name	#	Total Monthly Office Visits	Work Days In Month			
	Number of VFSOs:	49	13,027	925	14.08	2,136	2.31
Number of Offices:	26		Average Visits/Office:		501.04	Average Claims/Office:	82.1538462

* Total Monthly Office Visits include: 2,675 In-Person Visits and 10,352 phone calls/emails.

Vincent M. Pritchett, Director Veterans Benefits South Region

- On July 8, 2022, Sandra Bennett, Sherri Whitfield, and Chris Parrish (South Region District Managers) submitted training slides and quizzes to the training team for presentation at our 2022 annual training.
- On July 12, 2022, Carol Crawford (Waynesboro field office) attended a veteran's event sponsored by Woodman Life Insurance Company.
- On July 13, 2022, Debbie O'Neal (Lyons field office) participated in a Women Veterans pinning ceremony at the Dublin VA Medical Center auditorium. The event was hosted by Dee Adams, Veterans of Foreign Wars Commander, District 6.
- On July 15, 2022, Sherri Whitfield, and Sandra Bennett (South Region District Managers) conducted interviews to fill the position in the Warner Robins field office coming vacant on July 31. The candidate if selected, will start on August 1, 2022.
- South Region offices reported retroactive payments since the last board meeting totaling \$109,969 with the highest single payment of \$62,824 reported by our Americus field office.
- South Region Gains/Losses: Willie Greene left our Columbus office effective June 30, 2022. Avia Poole left our Columbus office effective July 12, 2022. Mr. Greene's replacement will start on August 1, 2022.

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

- South Georgia Region Veterans Population: 242,136.
- Office Visits for June: South Georgia offices handled 6,040 phone calls and emails.

		Average Visits Per VFSO					
		Average Claims Submitted to VA Per VFSO					
Region:		South Region					
Month:		June-22					
A	B	C	D	E	D / E F	G	G / E H
Office Name	Veterans' Field Service Officer (VFSO) Last Name	#	Total Monthly Office Visits	Work Days In Month	Average Office Visits Per Day	Total Claims Submitted To VA Monthly	Average Claims Submitted By VFSOs To VA Daily
			2,625	814	3.22	1,959	2.41
			Average Visits/Office:		114.13	Average Claims/Office:	
			23			85.17	
Number of Offices:		23	Average Visits/Office:		114.13	Average Claims/Office:	

Ms. Calandra Ferguson, Coordinator, Suicide Prevention & Outreach

Will be attending a conference in Virginia. The focus is on lethal means. We will brief on what we are doing. I led my first Governor's Challenge meeting yesterday. I continue to get out into the community for education, prevention, and training.

Ms. Charlotte May, Director, Public Information & External Affairs

GENERAL

Personnel

- Charlotte May, Director (Speeches, Major News Release Announcements, Digital Media, Websites [External & Internal])
- Monica Dorsey, Communications Specialist (Administrative support in all aspects of the GDVS Public Information mission/function [External & Internal])

INFORMATION OUTREACH

Division Updates

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

1. July GDVS Newsletter – PID published the monthly GDVS newsletter on Wednesday, July 13. The newsletter featured information on the nine new veterans laws signed by President Biden on June 8, the department's upcoming annual training week in Peachtree City, a spotlight on Cartersville office manager Steven Hungarter's community outreach at a kids summer camp, and a story on Dr. Qwynn Galloway-Salazar, who was selected as Georgia's Women Veteran of the Year at the Women Veterans Conference held on June 25 in Sandy Springs. The newsletter is available online at <https://veterans.georgia.gov/press-releases/newsletter>.
2. Veterans Benefits Outreach –
 - a. Airman from WWII Accounted For – the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced the identification of Army Air Forces Staff Sergeant William O. Wood, who was born in Valdosta, Georgia. He will be buried in Tallahassee, Florida.
 - b. Georgia Rental Assistance Program – shared information and flyer from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, as well as a link to their online hub for rental assistance. The Georgia Rental Assistance Program can provide up to 18 months of rent, utilities, and expenses to eligible Georgians.
 - c. Women Veterans Conference – conference was hosted by GDVS and Kaiser Permanente on June 25. Lyons office manager Debbie O'Neal shared photos of the event with PID, which were later posted to our social media as a recap of the event.

Public Information Division Contacts *(Since December 10, 2021)*

- Replies to VA eBenefits Messages = 580
- Replies to General Questions = approximately 440
- Individual Request for the State Certificate of Honor = approximately 85

GOVERNOR'S (VIETNAM VETERAN) CERTIFICATE of HONOR PROGRAM-

- The latest and most accurate totals (since March 2015) –

State Certificates of Honor issued via GDVS – An estimated 29,365
(Honors Ceremonies and Central Office Mail Outs)

DoD Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pins presented via GDVS – An estimated 23,380

Honors Ceremonies supported/coordinated by GDVS – 353

Defense Department's Vietnam Veteran Surviving Spouse CoH – 285

Mr. Bobby Davis, Director, Veterans Education and Training Division (State Approving Agency)

- The approval and compliance surveys of educational institutions, training establishments and training programs approved for veterans training is continuing with no significant problems in any area being noted.
- Approval of new veteran's On-The-Job training sites (OJT) continues to increase. As of this date the State Approving Agency (SAA) has granted approval to 1,797 educational **institutions and training** establishments where Georgia veterans may attend school or job training and utilize their GI Bill® educational benefits.

Item *	Number
Approved Educational Institutions	389
Approved Training Establishments	1,408
Veteran Students Enrolled in Educational Institutions	9,874

* Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration, Education Division, June 2022.

The Team will be at the annual national conference August 21-25 in San Antonio, Texas for training. Had to withdraw House of Prayer locations from the GI Bill.

Mr. Russell Feagin, Director, Health & Memorials Division

Closeout will complete this week. No issues are expected. Thank you to the American Legion for their donation to the GWVH. Two new bonds have been approved and sold. One is for renovations in the Wood and Vinson buildings. The other is to expand the cemetery in Milledgeville.

Tonya Jarrett, Clinical Director, Health & Memorials Division

1. Status of staffing by Pruitt Health for Subacute Unit
 - a. Psychiatrist-two candidates interviewed.
 - b. Neuropsychologist- contracted through Integrated Psych Solutions.
 - c. Substance Abuse Coordinator- partner hired and starting in July 2022.
 - d. Behavioral Specialists- two partners hired and starting in July 2022.
 - e. Admissions Director- partner hired and started 5/31/22.
 - f. Social Services Director- partner hired and started in June 2022.
 - g. LPN/RN- continuing to recruit.

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

- h. OT/PT/SLP- continuing to recruit.
- 2. Biweekly meetings with Pruitt Health
 - a. Subcommittees developed for program development, marketing, evaluation and assessment tools, treatment pathways, and medication management.
 - b. Staff education through trainers, onsite in-services, and computer courses.
- 3. COVID Update

Georgia War Veterans Home - Milledgeville, GA										
Monday, July 11, 2022										
Category	Population	Positive Cases	Positives % of Population	Deaths	Deaths % of Positives	Deaths % of Population	Recovered	Recovered % of Positives	Currently In Isolation	Positive for current month
Patients	336	131	38.99%	28	21.37%	8.33%	100	76.34%	3	3
Staff	542	164	30.26%	0	0.00%	0.00%	161	98.17%	3	3

Cumulative figures since March 1, 2020.

Recovered category - initially patients/staff who tested positive and subsequently tested negative twice.

In December 2021, the CDC changed their time-based criteria again. Patients with no symptoms after 10 days are presumed to have recovered from the virus.

In Isolation category includes either self-quarantined, hospital, or COVID-19 unit at GWVH.

Positive for current month includes the number of veterans/staff who have tested COVID positive for the current month.

There has been an uptick in Covid, with 18 patients and 14 staff testing positive. The counties in the area are also seeing an uptick. We are testing employees twice a week and patients once a week. We are wearing goggles, face shields and N95 masks. There is no communal dining.

Mr. Carlton Deese, Executive Director GWVH, Milledgeville, GA

We have 12 staff and 20 residents who have tested positive for Covid. Mortality rates and hospitalization rates are low. Most are having mild symptoms.

Executive Director Mark Bannister, Health, Memorials, Finance & Development

FINANCE

Accounting

On July 1, 2022, Accounting Shared Services, a division of the State Accounting Office, is now providing our accounting and payment services. The scope of services they are providing is accounts

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

payable, accounts receivable, processing of purchase orders and non-purchase order vouchers, mailing checks/assuring ACH payments are made, process travel vouchers, handling all vendor management requests, managing federal funds, and maintaining general ledger files in accordance with the state's accounting policies. GDVS will continue to submit monthly budget amendments and allotments as required and will analyze the annual operating budget and produce budgetary reports.

Budget

FY 2022

The Department ended the 2022 fiscal year (June 30, 2022) within the budgeted appropriations for the year for each of the four fiscal programs (Administration, Cemetery, Nursing Homes, and Veterans Benefits) to include allowances for any late arriving invoices or reclassifications by the State Accounting Office that may occur during development of the State's Consolidated Accounting and Finance Report (CAFR) that will be published before the end of December 2022. Preliminary reviews of the FY 2022 budget and current spending in each of the four fiscal programs indicate GDVS is within budget and on track for a successful closeout on Friday, July 15, 2022.

The annual FY closeout process has been challenging this fiscal year with the loss of key accounting personnel and their subject matter expertise. However, we have taken on the challenge with success. With Accounting Shared Services taking the lead, and members of our administration, operations, human resources, and procurement teams assisting where needed, they have demonstrated their willingness to go above and beyond their regular duties by assisting in the closeout process. We thank them for their tremendous teamwork efforts.

FY2023

The FY 2023 Annual Operating Budget (AOB) for GDVS was successfully submitted to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) on June 3rd, 2022, for approval and entry into the OPB's tracking system, which is used by the OPB and all state agencies for budget and expenditure monitoring and budget compliance. The AOB is based on the FY 2023 appropriation approved by the General Assembly and the Governor.

Preparations are now underway to develop the department's AFY 2023 and FY 2024 budget request. As of this writing, OPB has not issued the AFY 2023/FY 2024 budget instructions which are the general budget preparation procedures used in preparing agencies amended and proposed budgets for current and upcoming fiscal years. Hopefully we will have the guidance not later than August 1st. The department's AFY 2023 and FY 2024 budget requests are due to OPB on Thursday, September 1, 2022.

Commissioner Ross submitted the GDVS FY 2023-2027 Strategic Plan on July 11, 2022.

HEALTH AND MEMORIALS

State Veterans Homes

State Veterans Homes Census (Through July 8, 2022) +

Current Month	Augusta	Milledgeville	Total
Regular Patients	103	107	210
Service Connected *	22	42	64
Total Patients	125	149	274
Last Month			
Regular Patients	101	107	208
Service Connected *	23	43	66
Total Patients	124	150	274

* One hundred percent of the cost of these services is paid by the VA. No state funds are involved.

+ The report to the VSB are the total numbers from June 17, 2022, through July 8, 2022.

Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home – Augusta

Routine operations are continuing.

Georgia War Veterans Home – Milledgeville

Routine operations are continuing.

State Veterans Cemeteries

Burial Statistics (Through July 8, 2022) +

State Veterans Cemetery	Cumulative Last Month	Cumulative Current Month	Increase
Glennville	2,110	2,114	4
Milledgeville	4,781	4,796	15
Total	6,891	6,910	19

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

+ The report to the VSB are the total numbers from June 17, 2022, through July 8, 2022.

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery – Glennville

Routine operations are continuing.

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Milledgeville

Routine operations are continuing.

Personnel Actions (Gains / Losses)

(July 1, 2022 – July 17, 2022)

Location	Position	Status	Name	Date
Lawrenceville	VFSO 1	New Hire	<i>Ronnie Hough</i>	07/05/2022
Atlanta	Office Manager VFSO 2	New Hire	<i>Michael Williams</i>	07/05/2022
Newnan	VFSO 1	New Hire	<i>Dwight Hackworth</i>	07/05/2022
Central Office	Suicide Prevention & Outreach	New Hire	<i>Calandra Ferguson</i>	07/05/2022
Milledgeville	Grounds Maint Tech 1	New Hire	<i>Aaron Runyon</i>	07/05/2022
Atlanta	Office Manager VFSO 2	Resignation	<i>Gary Jenson</i>	07/08/2022
Columbus	VFSO 1	Resignation	<i>Avis Poole</i>	07/12/2022
Lawrenceville	VFSO 1	Resignation	<i>Otis Bush</i>	07/17/2022

Information Technology

Routine operations are continuing.

Records Management

Routine operations are continuing.

Vehicle Management

Routine service and maintenance are performed as required.

Veterans Service Foundation Board

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.
Minutes of the Veterans Service Board Meeting
Peachtree City, Georgia

The Foundation Board Chairman, Mr. Doug Middleton, will provide his report during the monthly board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

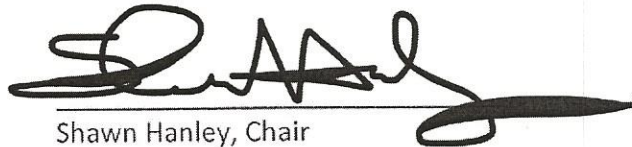
Mr. Matthew O'Brien gave a synopsis of the statute and bylaws for the Veterans Service Foundation Board. The VSB has the power to create and dissolve the Foundation, but has no authority to govern the Foundation Board. They are a separate entity that is to seek funding for various projects. This protects GDVS and the VSB from liability.

NEW BUSINESS:

The August 25 board meeting was scheduled. It will be a combination virtual and in-person meeting, set up at the GDVS. Ms. Swan made a motion for this and there were no objections. The motion passed.

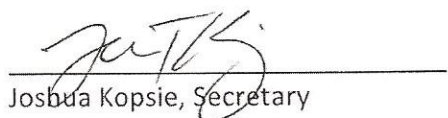
Mr. Kopsie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:33 p.m.

SIGNED:



Shawn Hanley, Chair

ATTEST:



Joshua Kopsie, Secretary

The next Veterans Service Board meeting will be held in person at GDVS but will also be available via video/telephone conference call on Thursday, August 25, 2022, at 12:30 p.m. The Webex link is:
<https://georgiadepartmentofveteransservice.webex.com/georgiadepartmentofveteransservice/j.php?MTID=m15942532b6d8e4705a52328923a6fc4c>

Meeting password: **X4WtPKaf3B6 (94987523 from video systems)**
Or you can call: **1-844-621-3956** Access Code: **2337 177 8106**