

## OPEN MINUTES

### 2nd Quarter Meeting of the Missouri Veterans Commission

April 28, 2025 — 10:00 AM

Harry S Truman State Office Building

301 W. High Street, Room 492 - 4th Floor Auditorium

Jefferson City, MO 65101

WebEx Conference Call was established for public to join.

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#### I. CALL TO ORDER

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
  - A. Commissioners in attendance in person or via WebEx Conference Call:
    - i. Chair Kelly McClelland; Vice Chair Meredith Knopp; Commissioner Steve Maples; Commissioner Steve Roberts; Commissioner David Griffith; Commissioner Will Jobe; Commissioner Joe Nicola; Commissioner Randy Alewel
  - B. Chair Opening Comments

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. 1st Quarter Commission Meeting Open Minutes from February 3, 2025
- B. 1st Quarter Commission Meeting Closed Minutes: February 3, 2025
- C. Minutes approved unanimously

#### II. COMMISSION OFFICER ELECTIONS

1. Discussion
2. Nominations
3. Voting
  - A. Commission Chair:
    - i. Commissioner McClelland nominated by Commissioner Alewel for a 1 year term as Chair of MVC Commission
    - ii. Commissioner Knopp Seconded the nomination
    - iii. Commissioner McClelland voted unanimously for 1 year
  - B. Commission Vice Chair:
    - i. Commissioner Roberts nominated by Commissioner Alewel for a 1 year term as Vice Chair of MVC Commission
    - ii. Commissioner Griffith Seconded the nomination
    - iii. Commissioner Roberts voted unanimously for 1 year

#### III. COMMISSION TRAINING

- Melissa Skinner, Director of Operations
  - A. HIPAA Awareness Training: Annual Training Requirement
    - i. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996
    - ii. Privacy Rule
    - iii. Security Rule
    - iv. Breach Rule
    - v. How to report HIPAA breaches
      - Director of Operations/Privacy Officer
        - Melissa Skinner
        - [Melissa.skinner@mvc.dps.mo.gov](mailto:Melissa.skinner@mvc.dps.mo.gov) | 573-522-4222
      - General Counsel
        - Scotty Allen
        - [Scotty.allen@mvc.dps.mo.gov](mailto:Scotty.allen@mvc.dps.mo.gov) | 573-522-4224

- OA Office of Cyber Security
  - [Cyber.security@oa.mo.gov](mailto:Cyber.security@oa.mo.gov)
  - ITSD Help Desk | 573-751-4941
- 2. Executive Director – Federal Level Issues
  - A. Increased costs in caring for Missouri’s Veterans
  - B. Need for clarity on VA Regulatory Responsibility
  - C. Mandated Sharing Agreements
  - D. VA stance on Claim Sharks
- 3. Legal
  - A. Clinics Held This Quarter
  - B. Future Clinics Scheduled
  - C. Clients Served
  - D. Documents Drafted
  - E. Estimated Cost Savings to Veterans
- 4. Facilities
  - A. St. Louis Veterans Home Renovation
    - i. C Unit construction on hold - litigation
    - ii. A Unit construction on hold
    - iii. Project over budget
  - B. COVID19 – VA Construction Grant
    - i. Flooring projects at Cameron and Warrensburg are completed. Mexico is in construction and Mt. Vernon (2nd phase) is in design.
    - ii. HVAC improvement for Isolation and Quarantine areas in Mexico is in construction. Cape Girardeau, St. James, and St. Louis are ready for bid (tied to facility renovation). Cameron, Warrensburg, and Mt. Vernon are in design.
    - iii. Wi-Fi upgrades at Cameron, Mt. Vernon and Warrensburg are in construction. Mexico, St. Louis, St. James, and Cape Girardeau are in design.
    - iv. Access Control upgrades at Mt. Vernon is completed. Cameron is in construction, and Warrensburg, St. James, Mexico and Cape Girardeau are pending FMDC notice to proceed.
    - v. COVID19 grant projects must be completed by 9/17/26
  - C. St. James Water & Sewer FAI 29-053, U230901
    - In construction phase, new service lines are in use and project is near completion
  - D. Cape Girardeau Renovation FAI 29-043, U180501 & St. James Renovation FAI 29-044, U150301
    - Design complete, pending bid document completion
  - E. Higginsville Cemetery FAI MO22-16, U240601
    - In construction phase
    - Completion date 8/15/25
- 5. Human Resources
  - A. RECRUITMENT & RETENTION INITIATIVES
    - i. Investment: \$100,000
    - ii. Timeframe: January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025
    - iii. Focus: Cameron, Mt. Vernon, St. James, and Warrensburg CNA, LPN, RN, and Trainees
    - iv. Desired Outcome: Fill vacancies with qualified candidates, build on culture momentum
  - B. Governor’s Proposed Retention Pay Plan
- 6. Veterans Suicide Prevention Program
  - A. Executive Summary
    - Final report will be filed on schedule by July 1, 2025

- B. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Training and Technical Assistance team is scheduled to conduct an on-site Environmental Scan and Assessment to survey
  - This supports both the efforts of Missouri Veterans Commission and the Missouri Governor's Challenge Team
- C. Lindsey Ward will serve as the new team co-lead for the Missouri Governor's Challenge Team beginning in 2026
- D. Web content for "Left of Boom," media campaign set for release
  - May 1, 2025
- 7. Veteran Cemeteries Program
  - A. Recent Events
    - i. Springfield NCA Compliance Review: April 8-10, 2025
  - B. Current Projects
    - Higginsville – Columbarium Wall (Est. completion August 2025)
  - C. Future Projects
    - Springfield - Columbarium Wall (Up to 100% Reimbursable)
  - D. Upcoming Events:
    - i. Jacksonville NCA Compliance Review May 13-14, 2025
    - ii. Memorial Day Ceremonies: May 26, 2025
      - Jacksonville 9 am
      - Bloomfield 1 pm
      - Ft Wood 1 pm
      - Higginsville 1 pm
      - Springfield 1:30 pm
  - E. Interments
  - F. Other state comparisons to Missouri reference VA Ratios
  - G. Annual Veterans Service Program Conference
- 8. Veteran Services Program
  - A. Direct Cost for MVC VSO Program
  - B. Benefits Awarded to Missouri Veterans by MVC Service Officers in Current and all Previous Fiscal Years Combined
    - i. Return on Investment Ratio FY24 - \$129: \$1
    - ii. Missouri Veteran Population: 392,041 (-1.6% from 2021)
    - iii. Ratio of VSOs to Veterans: 1:3,087
  - C. 2025 Annual Veterans Service Program Conference
- 9. Veteran Homes Program
  - A. Satisfaction Survey Results
  - B. 2025 Annual VA Certifications (Survey)
  - C. Full Certification
    - St. James
  - D. Awaiting Survey Results
    - Mexico
  - E. Awaiting Survey
    - Cameron
    - Cape Girardeau
    - St. Louis
    - Mt. Vernon
    - Warrensburg
  - F. Program Update
    - i. Challenge – Medication costs/specialty medications
    - ii. Welcome to Cameron's new Assistant Administrator, Darci Henry
    - iii. Celebrated Mexico's 40th anniversary
    - iv. Cape Girardeau Honor Flight Participation

- v. Homes Leadership Conference rescheduled to April 30 -May 2
- G. Upcoming Events
  - i. National Nursing Home Week - May 11-17
  - ii. National Nurses Day - May 6
  - iii. National CNA Day - June 12
- H. Clinical Quality Measures
- I. Staffing Measures
- 10. Budget and Finance
  - A. MVC MAJOR FUNDS REVIEW
    - i. Veterans Commission Capital Improvement Trust Fund (VCCITF)
    - ii. Veterans Homes Fund
    - iii. Veterans Health and Care Fund – Medical Marijuana (not owned by MVC)
    - iv. Veterans Assistance Fund – Medical Marijuana
    - v. Veterans Reinvestment Fund – Adult Use Marijuana
  - B. HOUSE BILL 8 BUDGET PROGRESSION FY26
  - C. HOUSE BILLS 5 AND 18 NDIS FY26
  - D. VETERANS COMMISSION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT TRUST FUND
  - E. VETERANS HOMES FUND
- IV. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:
  - 1. Senator Steve Roberts
    - Discussed budget increases recommended in Senate
  - 2. Representative Griffith
    - A. There are a few bills dealing with Claim Sharks currently in this session
      - i. Does not look like any will pass this session
      - ii. Claim Sharks will not get VSO certified through VA because if they do, they can not charge Veterans to assist with benefits
    - B. Discussed 100% disabled Veterans tax bill
      - i. SJR46: Moving fast and has a chance
      - ii. House and Senate have worked together
    - C. Obelisks for Soldiers Memorial made headway
      - OA recommended \$250,000 to complete
    - D. Working on fully funding MVC
    - E. Need to continue to work with budget team
  - 3. Representative Will Jobe
    - A. Honored to be part of MVC Commission
    - B. His first session and is a learning process
    - C. Looking to move bills HJR6 and SJR46 forward
    - D. Bills are not always assigned to committees that have individuals with specific knowledge of topic at hand
    - E. Hopes to move Claim Sharks bill forward next session
    - F. Need to get Veteran bills moved forward
    - G. Asked if a project starts prior to September 2026, but not finished, will an extension be granted
  - 4. Senator Joe Nicola
    - A. Honored to be on the MVC Commission and on the Senate Veterans Committee
    - B. Wants to move bills early next session
    - C. Hopes to visit our Veterans Homes
- V. AGENCY PARTNERS UPDATE
  - MAVO; Troy Williams provided an update on the following priorities:
    - A. MVC fully funded
    - B. HB9: Lottery Games would bring \$50 million to MVC
    - C. Claim Sharks are not happy with how process when this session
    - D. MAVO will be fighting to get Claim Shark bills passed next session

- E. VFW is sending post cards to Veterans to ensure they know how to get VA benefits

VI. CHAIR COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Chairman McClelland mentioned a need for a projection on projects status and completion dates for the next meeting
2. Commission Meetings for 2025
  - A. August 11, 2025: Missouri Veterans Cemetery-Jacksonville
  - B. October 27, 2025: Harry S Truman State Office Building
2. Executive Director – Decision Brief:
  - A. To obtain a decision from the MVC Commissioners on fiscal conservation measures required in the event the commission does not receive adequate funding to sustain current and future operations.
    - i. Owe the Commission a more detailed plan
    - ii. There were multiple questions reference how would affect budget requests
    - iii. Need to see a detailed plan prior to implementation
    - iv. Bring more detailed plan to Commission for vote

VII. VOTE TO GO TO CLOSED SESSION:

1. To discuss matters relating to legal actions, causes of action or litigation pursuant to Sections 610.021(1), (3), (9) & (14) RSMo
2. Motion made by Commissioner Roberts
3. Seconded by Commissioner Knopp
4. By a roll call vote, the motion was passed:
  - A. Chair Kelly McClelland – Aye
  - B. Vice Chair Meredith Knopp – Aye
  - C. Commissioner Steve Maples – Aye
  - D. Commissioner Steve Roberts – Aye
  - E. Commissioner David Griffith – Aye
  - F. Commissioner Alewel – Aye
  - G. Commissioner Robert Jobe – Aye
  - H. Commissioner Nicola – Absent: Had to depart meeting

VIII. RETURNED TO OPEN SESSION

With no further business, motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

  
Paul Kirchhoff, Secretary

