

OPEN M I N U T E S
1st Quarter Meeting of the
Missouri Veterans Commission
February 2, 2025 — 10:00 AM
Harry S Truman State Office Building
301 W. High Street, Room 492
Jefferson City, MO

WebEx Conference Call was established for public to join.

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

A. Commissioners in attendance in person or via WebEx Conference Call:

- i. Chair Kelly McClelland; Vice Chair Steve Roberts; Commissioner Meredith Knopp; Commissioner Steve Maples; Commissioner Will Jobe; Commissioner Joe Nicola; Commissioner David Griffith; Commissioner Randy Alewel**

- ii. Absent: None**

B. Chair Opening Comments

• Recognition:

- DPS Team Member of the Month: Latisha Koetting, Warrensburg Veterans Home**

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Open Meeting Minutes from October 27, 2025, 4th Quarter Commission Meeting

B. Closed Meeting Minutes from October 27, 2025: NA

C. Open Meeting Minutes from January 5, 2026, Special Commission Meeting

D. Closed Meeting Minutes from January 5, 2026, Special Commission Meeting

E. All Minutes approved unanimously

II. COMMISSION UPDATES

1. Guest Speakers

A. Tianna Brooks: Communication Director, Missouri State Treasurer's Office:

- MO ABLE**

B. (Was not present) Susan Roemer: Executive Director, Independent Living Resource Center

C. Judy M. Carney: St. James Veterans Home – Helicopter project

2. Executive Director

3. Legal

A. Clinics Held This Quarter

- i. St. Louis, 11/14/25**
ii. St. Louis, 11/18/25
iii. Columbia, 11/24/25
iv. Mount Vernon, 12/5/25
v. Moberly, 12/17/25
vi. Columbia, 12/29/25
vii. Springfield, 1/8/26
viii. Kansas City, 1/13/26
ix. Columbia, 1/26/26

B. Future Clinics Scheduled

- i. Columbia, 2/23/26**
ii. Columbia, 3/30/26
iii. Arnold, 4/2/26
iv. St. Louis, 4/23/26
v. Columbia, 4/27/26

- C. Clients Served: 2,759
 - D. Documents Drafted: 10,003
 - E. Estimated Cost Savings to Veterans: \$5,001,500.00
 - F. Developing Legal Issue:
 - Guardian/Conservatorships for Residents of Veterans Homes
4. Facilities
- A. In Progress Construction Projects
 - i. St. Louis Veterans Home Renovation
 - A Unit construction awarded to Aspire Construction Services 9/30/25
 - Completion date 9/11/26
 - C Unit construction is pending design
 - Project remains over budget
 - ii. COVID19 – VA Construction Grant
 - Mexico flooring is in construction
 - HVAC Improvement for Isolation and Quarantine areas in Cape Girardeau and St. Louis are in construction, Mt. Vernon and Warrensburg are pending bid. St. James and Cameron are in design.
 - Wi-Fi upgrades at Cameron, Cape Girardeau, Mt. Vernon and Warrensburg are FMDC completed, pending ITSD activation. St. James and Mexico are in construction, and St. Louis is pending bid.
 - Access Control upgrades at Mt Vernon are completed. Cameron is in construction, and all other Homes will follow as construction is completed.
 - COVID19 grant projects must be completed by 9/17/26
 - iii. Cape Girardeau Facility Renovation FAI 29-043, U180501
 - Awarded Brockmiller Construction 8/25/25
 - Completion date 2/22/27
 - B. St. James Facility Improvements
 - i. Renovation Project FAI 29-044, U150301 exceeded designer estimated cost, MVC rejected bid
 - ii. New projects to be completed with existing funding
 - New pavilion construction
 - Replace roofing, flooring, and painting
 - Replace fire alarm system
 - Install addition surveillance cameras to existing system
 - C. Higginsville Cemetery FAI MO22-16, U240601
 - In project closeout phase
 - Substantially completed 12/19/25
 - D. Springfield Cemetery FAI 22-17, U241901
 - Columbarium Wall Expansion
 - VA grant opportunity accepted by MVC, grant award possible in 9/26
 - Pending FMDC design selection/award
5. Human Resources
- RECRUITMENT & RETENTION INITIATIVES
 - i. Recruitment Campaign Ended
 - Investment: \$100,000
 - Timeframe: January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025
 - Focus: Cameron, Mt. Vernon, St. James, and Warrensburg CNA, LPN, RN, and Trainees
 - Desired Outcome: Fill vacancies with qualified candidates, build on culture momentum
 - ii. New Recruitment Campaign
 - Investment: \$273,000
 - Timeframe: January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026

- Focus: All 7 Homes
 - Desired Outcome: Create awareness and increase applications from qualified candidates to assist MVC with filling 80% of CNAs and 90% Licensed Nurse vacancies
 - Strategy: Paid Search, Facebook, Instagram, Connected TV, Programmatic Audio, Indeed
- iii. Team Member Fill Rates
6. Veterans Suicide Prevention & Women Veterans Program
- A. SUICIDE PREVENTION
- i. Rural and mid-metro Left of Boom radio campaign
 - ii. Statewide peer navigation network development underway
 - iii. Military cultural competency training for team members is drafted
 - iv. Development of annual LEFT OF BOOM report on schedule
 - v. Assumed duties of co-lead for MO Governor's Challenge team effective 1/20/2026
- B. WOMEN VETERANS
- i. Statewide promotion of Military Women's Memorial registration
 - ii. Coordination with other states' Women Veterans programs
7. Veteran Cemeteries Program
- A. Recent Events
- i. Wreaths Across America Dec 13, 2025
 - Attendance 2,100
 - Wreaths Set 17,100
 - ii. Bloomfield Land Acquisition/Transfer (23.12 Acres) Jan 16, 2026
- B. Future Projects
- i. Higginsville Concrete Road Surface Replacement Funded – Scheduling TBA
 - ii. Springfield Columbarium Wall (Up to 100% reimbursable)
- C. Upcoming Events:
- i. Ft Wood Peer Review Feb 4-5, 2026
 - ii. Higginsville Peer Review Feb 23-24, 2026
 - iii. Ft Wood NCA Compliance Review Mar 30-Apr 1, 2026
 - iv. Higginsville NCA Compliance Review Apr 28-30, 2026
 - v. Bloomfield NCA Compliance Review Sep 15-16, 2026
 - vi. Springfield NCA Operational Excellence Award Presentation – TBA
- D. Total MVC Cemetery Interments
- E. Missouri State Customer Satisfaction Report (August 2025)
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 FY25 - \$198: \$1
 - ii. Missouri Veteran Population: 392,041 (-1.6% from 2021)
 - iii. Ratio of VSOs to Veterans: 1:3,087
 - iv. Chair McClelland asked for an update at next meeting
 - What are current wait times are for a Veteran to see a VSO
- C. 2026 Annual VSP Training Conference – 21 - 24 April 2026
- University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center
333 S John Q Hammons Pkwy
Springfield, MO 65806
9. Veteran Homes Program
- A. Satisfaction Survey Results

- B. Goals:
 - i. Monthly Resignations <3.5% - Current December 2025 = 4.2%
 - ii. Increase Nursing Position Fill Rates - C.N.A – 80%; CMT – 85%; Nurse – 90%; Nurse Supervisor -95%
 - iii. Increase Census to 75% of Capacity – Current December 2025 = 65.7%
 - C. HOW TO GET THERE
 - i. Target deadline December 31, 2026
 - Barrier: Active construction/renovation projects in Cape, Cameron, St. Louis and Mt. Vernon
 - Cameron and Mt. Vernon projects expected to finish June 2026
 - ii. Retention workgroup was created
 - Includes a retention manager in each home
 - iii. Staff Climate Survey Drafted
 - First Home - February
 - iv. Conducted Staff Interviews -Retention Activity Ideas
 - Idea sharing amongst the workgroup
 - Putting ideas into practice
 - v. Monthly Tracking/Follow Up from Homes Team
 - D. CONTINUED PRACTICES
 - i. Staff Exit Interviews
 - ii. New Staff Check In's – 30 days post orientation
 - iii. Monthly Engage Meetings
 - iv. Recruitment Campaign
 - v. Statewide Workforce Engagement Surveys (Twice Yearly)
 - vi. Onboarding/Mentoring New Staff
 - E. Program Update
 - i. Electronic Health Record Implementation
 - Design/Build underway
 - 1st Go Live (CG & MTV) – July 2026
 - 2nd Go Live (CM, MX, STJ, STL, WARR) – September 2026
 - Project Completion – 25%
 - ii. Specialty Pharmacy Contract
 - With OA for bids
 - iii. Skilled Therapy
 - Awaiting award for new contract
 - iv. Mobile Radiology & Labs
 - Draft process with MVC Clinical Quality Measures
 - v. Clinical Quality Measures
 - vi. Staffing Measures
10. Budget and Finance
- A. BUDGET TIMELINE
 - i. January – July 2025 – Begin preparing the budgetary needs for FY27
 - ii. July 2025 – Present FY26 Supplemental and FY27 requests to DPS Director's Office
 - iii. July – October 2025 – Gather details and fine tune budgetary requests
 - iv. October 1, 2025 – All department requests submitted into the budget systems
 - v. Early October 2025 – Present FY26 Supplemental and FY27 requests to OA Budget and Planning
 - vi. October – December 2025 – Gather details and respond to queries for OA Budget and Planning and DPS
 - vii. December 2025 – Prefile of legislation begins
 - viii. January 2026 – Governor's Recommendations released (typically released immediately following the State of the State)

- ix. January 2026 – May 2026 – Regular Session of the General Assembly
- x. February (estimate) – Budget presentations to the House Budget Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee
- xi. March 2026 (week TBD) – Legislative Spring Break – ideally House markups of budget are complete, and Senate is ready to begin
- xii. May 2026 – Appropriations bills must be Truly Agreed and Finally Passed
- xiii. June 30, 2026 – Appropriations bills must be signed/line item vetoed by Governor
- xiv. September 2026 – Veto Session
- B. FY26 Supplemental Requests Dept Priority
 - i. 1 Electronic Health Record System (EHR)
 - ii. Adult Use Marijuana Transfer
- C. FY27 BUDGET - MVC OPERATIONS
 - i. Veterans Housing Assistance Reduction
 - ii. Homes Fund Solvency
 - iii. Homes Staffing Increase
 - iv. Homes Operating Increase
 - v. Veteran Service Officer Increase
 - vi. Adult Use Marijuana Transfer (one-time)
- D. FY27 BUDGET - MVC ITSD
 - i. Electronic Health Record System (EHR)
 - ii. Nurse call System Replacement
- E. FY27 BUDGET - MVC FMDC
 - i. Nurse call System Replacement
 - ii. Cameron Life Safety Security Improvements
 - iii. Mt. Vernon Life Safety Security Improvements
 - iv. Mexico Life Safety Security Improvements
 - v. St. James Life Safety Security Improvements
 - vi. St. Louis Roof Replacement
 - vii. Mexico Roof Replacement
- F. Missouri's Marijuana Programs Tax Revenue
 - i. MVC received \$6.5M Medical Marijuana transfer in November Nurse call System Replacement
 - ii. MVC received \$15.7M Adult Use Marijuana transfer so far in FY26
 - iii. Governor recommended additional \$2.7M Adult Use Marijuana transfer from Veterans Reinvestment Fund to Homes fund in FY26 Supplemental
 - iv. Governor recommended \$20M one-time transfer from Adult Use Marijuana to Homes fund in FY27 Budget

III. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

1. Representative Griffith discussed:
 - A. There are currently 33 bills dealing with Veterans concerns
 - B. 100 % disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption will be main push
 - C. Rep. Griffith is carrying 5 bills this session
 - D. Trying to get Representatives to get together and support just one bill vs multiple on the same topic to better focus on one bill
 - E. Kansas is passing a bill to allow Claim Sharks to operate
2. Representative Will Jobe discussed:
 - A. Property Tax bill will be main push
 - B. Working on a couple of bills with Rep. Griffith
2. Commissioner Steve Roberts discussed:
 - A. Focus on increasing fees to enter Gaming Boats to \$4.00
 - B. Video Gaming Bills moving forward – two are very similar
3. MMPEC Commissioner Harry Roberts discussed:
 - March 10, 2026, will be their next meeting

IV. AGENCY PARTNERS UPDATE

1. Gary Grigsby: American Legion Department of Missouri
 - A. He is on the Governor's Challenge Team for Suicide Prevention
 - B. New Initiative: New Coin with 988 on one side and QR Code on the other
 - C. Wants to fully fund MVC
 - D. Working on bill for 100% Disabled Veterans to receive Tax Exemption
 - E. Claim Sharks bill is another priority
2. Troy Williams: MAVO
 - A. Project: A program to get legislative talking points to the public
 - B. Provide dates and times of legislative meetings
 - C. Need more Veterans to join the program

V. CHAIR COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 2026 Commission Meeting Dates
 - 1st Quarter Meeting:
 - February 2, 2026: Harry S Truman State Office Building
 - 2nd Quarter Meeting:
 - April 20, 2026: Harry S Truman State Office Building
 - 3rd Quarter Meeting:
 - August 10, 2026: Missouri Veterans Home - Mt. Vernon
 - 4th Quarter Meeting:
 - November 23, 2026: Harry S Truman State Office Building

VI. VOTE TO GO TO CLOSED SESSION

1. Commissioner Roberts made a motion go to Closed Session. Commissioner Griffith seconded.
2. By a roll call vote, the motion was passed:
 - A. Chair Kelly McClelland – Aye
 - B. Commissioner Meredith Knopp – Aye
 - C. Commissioner Steve Maples – Aye
 - D. Commissioner David Griffith – Aye
 - E. Commissioner Randy Alewel – Aye
 - F. Commissioner Will Jobe – Aye
 - G. Vice-Chair Steve Roberts – Aye
 - H. Commissioner Joe Nicola – Aye

VII. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

VIII. ADJOURN


Paul Kirchhoff, Secretary