

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE READJUSTMENT OF VETERANS**

**February 07-09, 2024 Tampa, Florida
(In-Person) 8:00AM – 5:00PM (EST)
MINUTES**

Wednesday, November 07, 2024:

Tampa Vet Center, 9206 King Palm Drive, Tampa, FL 33619

Attendees:

Committee Members Present:

Joseph Anderson
Viviana Marcotte
Khamkay Chitaphong
Cheryl Jacobs
Terry Schow Heather
Nystrom Gregg Orto

Department of Veterans Affairs Staff Present:

Richard Barbato, Designated Federal Officer
Matthew Newman, Assistant Designated Federal Officer
Jeff Moragne, Director, VA Advisory Committee Management Office
Michael Evans, Director, Tampa Vet Center
Stan Tucker, Director, Pasco County Vet Center
Matthew Eaton, Director, Clearwater Vet Center
Robert MoNreland, Deputy District Director, District 2

Public Attendees:

one.

Opening Remarks:

At 08:00AM EST, Designated Federal Officer Richard Barbato welcomed the Committee members, initiated with housekeeping items for the building and Conference Room Space (Tampa Vet Center, Tampa FL). DFO Barbato spoke to the fact that normally meetings are open to the public, but as the Committee is conducting tours of

VA facilities and participating in off-site events, tours of VA facilities are closed to protect Veterans' privacy and personal information. Meetings are closed in accordance with 5 U.S.C Sec. 552b(c)(6). Finally, DFO Barbato spoke to the fact that instructions were provided in the Federal Registry in the published Notice of Meeting. No members of the public were present (closed meeting to protect Vet Center client privacy). At 09:00AM EST Committee Chair Joseph Anderson called the Committee to order, and provided an overview of the meeting, took roll call to establish quorum, recapped the November 2023 meeting, and set expectations for the meeting in Tampa.

Presentation:

At 09:10AM DFO Barbato led the Committee in a review of the Agenda, Committee Objectives and Charter. He also provided an overview of the Committee Report process moving forward. Committee members then introduced themselves and provided some background and biographical information.

*The committee then adjourned for a fifteen-minute break.
The committee re-convened after the fifteen-minute break.*

Tour:

At 09:45AM the Committee received a tour of the Tampa Vet Center led by the Vet Center Director my Michael Evans who showed the committee the reception area, Office Manager space, Outreach Specialist space, several examples of Counseling space and group rooms.

Presentation:

At 10:00AM the Committee received a presentation from the Tampa Vet Center staff, which included an overview of the Tampa Vet Center Vet Center to include populations served, best practices and highlights. The Vet Center Director then went on to introduce members of his staff and provided additional insight into the Readjustment Counseling process.

Presentation:

At 11:00AM the Committee received a presentation from Tampa Vicinity Vet Center Directors, to include Stan Tucker from the Pasco County Vet Center, Matthew Eaton from the Clearwater Vet Center and Michael Evans from the Tampa Vet Center.

*The committee then adjourned for lunch.
The committee re-convened after lunch.*

Presentation:

At 1:00PM EST the Committee received a Presentation from Robert Moreland, Deputy District Director, RCS District 2 who provided an overview of the District 2 area of operation, trends they have seen, and provided specifics on the Tampa vicinity for situational awareness.

Presentation:

At 1:30PM EST the Committee received a presentation from Mr. Duncan Ratliff the Florida State Veterans Office who provided an overview on the Florida Veterans Office, areas they cover, trends they have seen and how they work collaboratively with the Vet Center program.

Presentation:

At 2:30PM EST the Committee participated in a question-and-answer block with Vet Center clients from the Tampa Vet Center. The panel of Veterans who are consumers of services then introduced themselves in turn and shared their experiences. DFO Barbato then opened-up for a Question-and-Answer block following the Veteran panel members sharing their experiences.

*The committee then adjourned for a fifteen-minute break.
The committee re-convened after the fifteen-minute break.*

Committee Discussion:

At 3:30PM EST the Committee then conducted discussion of each of the morning's presentations by category, key take-aways were identified, and Committee 24th report recommendations began to emerge and take shape.

Committee Chair Joseph Anderson re-capped the days presentations and covered what would be heard from the next day.

The Committee adjourned at 4:00PM EST.

Thursday, February 08, 2024:

James A. Haley VAMC 13000 Bruce B. Downs Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33612-4745

Attendees:

Committee Members Present:

Joseph Anderson
Viviana Marcotte
Khamkay Chitaphong
Cheryl Jacobs
Terry Schow Heather
Nystrom Gregg Orto

Department of Veterans Affairs Staff Present:

Richard Barbato, Designated Federal Officer
Matthew Newman, Assistant Designated Federal Officer
Jeff Moragne, Director, VA Advisory Committee Management Office
David Dunning, Executive Director, Tampa VAMC
Colleen Jakey, Chief Of Staff
Kathy Hendrix, Associate Director, Patient Care, Tampa VAMC
Melissa Sundin, Associate Director, Tampa VAMC
Anthony Moorhead, Tampa VAMC

Public Attendees:

None.

Opening Remarks:

At 08:00AM EST Designated Federal Officer Richard Barbato welcomed the Committee members, initiated with housekeeping items. He invited members of the public to introduce themselves for the record. No members of the public were present.

At 08:10AM EST Committee Chair Joseph Anderson called the Committee to order, and provided an overview of the meeting, took roll call to establish quorum. Committee Chair Joseph Anderson then provided a re-cap of the previous days presentations and reviewed the agenda for the day with the committee.

Presentation:

At 08:30AM EST DFO Barbato provided a review of the Committee Annual Operations Plan and Annual Assessment, there was no discussion.

Tour:

At 09:00AM EST the Committee toured the Post Deployment Rehabilitation and Evaluation Program. (PREP), this included patient rooms, common areas, recreation and therapeutic spaces, and further provided opportunity for the committee members to interface with staff and patients going through the program.

*The committee then adjourned for a fifteen-minute break.
The committee re-convened after the fifteen-minute break.*

Presentation:

At 10:15AM EST The Committee received a presentation from the Tampa VAMC leadership team, led by David Dunning, Executive Director, Tampa VAMC. The presentation included trends the VAMC is seeing, highlights of programming at the medical center, areas of improvement, and collaborative opportunities with RCS.

Presentation:

At 11:10AM EST Committee Chair Joseph Anderson led the Committee in reviewing the concept for the remainder of the day, in crafting the 24th Committee Report. Committee Chair Joseph Anderson determined that the focal area would be one recommendation (initially) and that the Committee member present would focus their efforts on that main recommendation. During the group meeting robust discussion ensued in preparation of the afternoon spent crafting the FY24 Committee report and associated recommendations.

*The committee then adjourned for Lunch.
The committee re-convened after Lunch.*

Committee Discussion:

At 1:00PM EST the Committee re-convened and conducted re-cap discussion of each of the morning's presentations by category, key take-aways were identified, and Committee 24th report recommendation were formulated.

*The committee then adjourned for a fifteen-minute break.
The committee re-convened after the fifteen-minute break.*

3:00PM EST Committee Chair Joseph Anderson re-capped the days presentations and covered what would be heard from the next day.

The Committee adjourned at 4:00PM EST.

Friday, February 09, 2024:

Residence Inn, Tampa West Shore, 4312 W Boy Scout Blvd, Tampa, FL 33607_

Attendees:

Committee Members Present:

Joseph Anderson
Viviana Marcotte
Khamkay Chitaphong
Cheryl Jacobs
Terry Schow Heather
Nystrom Gregg Orto

Department of Veterans Affairs Staff Present:

Richard Barbato, Designated Federal Officer
Matthew Newman, Assistant Designated Federal Officer
Jeff Moragne, Director, VA Advisory Committee Management Office

Public Attendees:

None.

08:00AM EST Committee Chair Joseph Anderson initiated the meeting, took roll call to establish quorum facilitated a brainstorming session to determine if there were other areas the Committee wanted to bring forward. Three members of the committee brought forward an additional recommendation, discussion ensued.

Committee Discussion:

08:30AM EST Committee Chair Joseph Anderson then reviewed the 24th Report with the Committee. Committee Chair Joseph Anderson discussed the Committee Administrative meeting to be held March 2024 to Vote on submission of the Committee Report. The 24th Committee Report contained the two following focal areas:

Group 1 – 1. Improve Readjustment Counseling Services (RCS) Recruitment and Retention.

Group 2 – 2. Improve Women’s Health Care Access, Safety, and privacy.

Committee Chair Joseph Anderson adjourned the meeting at 11:00AM EST.

/s/
Joseph Anderson, Committee Chair

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Date