ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting



October 1, 2020

**Attendees:** Connie Sprynczynatyk (virtual), Cindy Whitesell (virtual), Joyal Meyer (virtual), Lonnie Wangen (virtual), Brian Watters (Virtual) LTC Shawn Flemmer (virtual), Dale DeKrey (Virtual), BG.Jackie Huber, Michelle Panos

**Absent:** Breton Weintraub, Davina French, Pam Sagness, David Becker,

**1. Opening.** Connie briefly opened the meeting.

**2. Minutes.** Minutes from the September 3, 2020 meeting where accepted as written with one correction.

**3. Old Business**

* Michelle reported the number of ND Cares business/community members remains 19 and 48.
* During the Community Reconnect Update, Michelle reported she attended the Berthold Community Event. She reported that attendance could have been better with more promotion and outreach. Small towns may need more assistance in this regard as opposed to larger ones. The director will make it a point to view promotion plans and offer assistance to strengthen them as needed. One unfortunate factor was that the VA Mobile Clinic did not attend as expected due to a new directive from the VA that the mobile unit cannot travel more than 50 miles from their home base. Reconnected communities are now at 13.
* Michelle reported on the Together with Veterans Program (TWV) and updated the committee that the working group included, the Suicide Prevention Coalition, State Epidemiology, Vet Center in Minot and Bismarck, VA Community Outreach in Fargo and both Military Outreach Representatives and Risk Reduction from Air Guard. Walsh County, City of Minot, and McClean County were discussed as possible program sites. Minot was selected due to their strong combination of veterans/service members, community support and capacity to handle the program. The Minot Vet Center and Kelli Weiand will assist TWV to make the appropriate contacts.
* The Bob Woodruff Foundation Donation was used to buy reusable masks and hand sanitizers that were packaged together and indicated these were provided by ND Cares along with national partners. The remaining funding is in the National Guard Foundation Emergency Relief fund and one disbursement has been made thus far. Michelle reported that the 5/9 recently shared the ND Cares Facebook post and increased the reach by tenfold.
* Michelle also told the committee that an article about TRICARE and the DHS Regional Human Service Centers was published in the Guardian, the quarterly newsletter of the National Guard. A recent survey showed that publication is read by retirees.

**4. New Business**

* The committee discussed the idea that the Coalition meeting in November will be a facilitated discussion on Anti-Stigma communication efforts among members, and to identify gaps that the ND Cares Coalition could possibly work to resolve. Rob Roehrich from the National Guard has agreed to facilitate. To prepare for the meeting, questions regarding anti-stigma efforts will provided head of time.
* Michelle explained that NDANG member Chief Jeff Miller has agreed to record an anti-stigma message for radio and a possible TV spot. The message would encourage service members/veterans to ask for help with a mental health issue – asking for assistance didn’t “hurt” his career, but actually “helped” it. The ND Broadcaster’s Association would rotate that spot with the other spots currently running.
* Committee members gave brief updates about their organizations.

5. **Upcoming Events**

* North Central Veterans Stand Down, Minot October 22, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
* Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt, Camp Grafton, November 16-17

6. **Closing:** Cindy closed the meeting at 11:22 a.m.