 **ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**July 7, 2022**

Attendees Shelly Sizer, Cindy Whitesell, Lonnie Wangen,

Dr. Weintraub, BG Jackie Huber, Joyal Meyer, Michelle Panos. (All virtual)

Absent Pam Sagness, LTC Ann Willoughby, David Becker

**1. Opening.** Chairman Shelly Sizer briefly opened the meeting.

**2. Minutes.** Minutes from the June 2, 2022 meeting were accepted as written.

**3. New Business**

* **Executive Committee Updates**
  + **Co-Chair:** Cindy Whitesell reported there was a fairly good turnout at the PTSD walk and we have the Minot Military Affairs Committee (MAC) today and tomorrow is the Williston MAC. She and Kelli with get in touch with the new the Community Support Coordinator for an update soon. There will also be an ND Cares table near the food at military appreciation day at the state fair.
  + **ND Dept. of Veterans Affairs:** Lonnie Wangen reported that the Legislative Council met and reviewed all the legislative items he proposed, and I gave a preliminary OK. The Veteran’s Court has been pushed back to September or October to make sure everything is in place and the first veteran we have gets the fair treatment and we're not short any resources. Lonnie further explained that any district can set one up and a procedural manual has been completed. The one in Grand Forks will be able to service veterans in other districts so they can remain in their community. They are also looking for a Veteran’s Mentor. The Fisher House fundraising is going well, and a federal property acquisition agent will be assigned soon. As for facilities Lonnie hopes that the VA agrees with the [findings](https://www.va.gov/AIRCOMMISSIONREPORT/docs/VISN23-Market-Recommendation.pdf) of the Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission for VISN 23 which would greatly enhance services. Some states didn’t fair as well.
  + **ND Dept. of Health:** Joyal Meyer reported that they now have a men’s health coordinator, Hannah Hanson, and posted a recording of a recent conference. She also reported that the ND Suicide Prevention Coalition Conference will start the planning phase for next year is looking for agenda items. Michelle suggested offering CALM training next year.
  + **Fargo VA:** Dr. Weintraub stated that the VA was approved for expansion of their mental health department adding approximately 19 FTE for department of that already has 70+ FTEs. One of their strategic initiatives is home-based mental health care for those with a serious psychiatric diagnosis living on their own. This program will require additional staff. He is concerned about having enough people to fill the positions. Right now, there only enough staff to provide services within a 50-mile radius.
  + **NDNG: BG** Huber started by saying that the Guard is right in the middle of youth came season. The Fish and Steam camps are over and coming up is the Military Youth Camp. The 835th Engineer detachment out of Devils Lake serving in Kuwait had a welcome home event right before the holiday, the ADA will start their demob from the Capitol Region in a couple of weeks, and in October the 957 Engineers will be coming back. The 112th Aviation Battalion out of Bismarck will be leaving in October for the southwest border for a year-long deployment. And the 191 Military Policy Company out of Fargo will be deploying overseas. The Remembrance Weekend for the family members of the fallen is coming up. It is a time for families to bond. Also coming up is the 30th Anniversary of the ND Veterans Cemetery in Mandan event. Gen. Huber also mentioned that Dr. Kirby Schmidtgall, Director of Psychological Health is now with the Bismarck Vet Center and the application period for his job closes tomorrow.

**4. Old Business**

* + Michelle reported that ND Cares will have 21 business partnerships with the addition of the Healing Center and will have 22 after the presentation to Vision West on July 21st in Williston. ND Cares communities will increase from 51-55 will with the additions of McKenzie County and the cities of Alexander, Arnegard, and Dickinson over the next months.
  + Governor’s Challenge teams continue to work on logic models before the SAMSHA visit in August. She also relayed information from Nephi Cole of the Shooting Sports Foundation about the recent red flag gun law currently in Congress. The law states that red flags can be disputed in front of a civil judge with in 48 hours of the red flag designation. In addition, law enforcement many look at juvenile records from when the child was 16 years old forward, to determine of there was any instance of a serious behavioral problem or violence. This is important because the Governor Challenge must message gun lock events carefully to prevent negative narratives. She also talked about some of the strategies the teams are working on. Joyal offered to help Lonnie with language for changes to Century Code concerning better access to vital records. Lonnie stated that we need to require some minimum standard for coroner reports. Joyal talked about how the Catholic Church no longer believes that those who died by suicide should not receive a religious burial. In the past coroners had an incentive to mislabel suicides for the benefit of the family.
  + On the Tricare issue there will be one more meeting with Tricare representatives at the regional level before we contact the Defense Health Agency directly. Based on the outcome of the meeting we will update the request for waiver white paper as needed. Michelle also mentioned the Behavioral Health division has announced that the substance abuse voucher program has been approved for those that live in border states. The vouchers are for people with no insurance or who’s existing insurance is inadequate (TRICARE).
  + Lastly, Michelle stated that the NDDOT does not have a naming protocol for bridges and legislation would be required to designate a bridge through the Bridges for the Fallen program. Joyal thought that perhaps the ND Suicide Prevention Coalition could help sponsor the work by asking for donations.

**5. Upcoming Events** Michelle discusses some of the following:

1. **Medora Musical Military Appreciation Day**: July 10, Medora
2. **Grand Forks Military Affairs Committee:** July 20
3. **Fargo/Moorhead Military Affairs Committee:** 11 a.m. July 22
4. **Brain Injury Network Monthly Virtual Support Group:** July 25
5. **Devils Lake Military Affairs Committee:** July 28
6. **VA S.A.V.E. Training**: Aug 3, Fargo
7. **Minot Military Affairs Committee:** Aug 4
8. **Williston Military Affairs Committee:** Aug. 5
9. **Governor’s Challenge Post-Academy Site**: Aug 9-10 Bismarck/Fargo
10. **Veterans Information Fair**:Aug 9, Stanley
11. **TAPS Peer Mentor Virtual Training**: Aug 16 - 17
12. **First Link safeTalk:** Aug 18, Fargo
13. **Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall**: Aug 18-22, Dickinson Memorial Park
14. **Bismarck Stand Down** - Aug 25. Amvets Club
15. **ACOVA Meeting:** Sept. 15-16 Quality Inn, Bismarck
16. **First Link Suicide Risk Assessment Webinar (C-SSRS):** Sept. 29
17. **ND Behavioral Health & Children and Family Conference**: Oct. 11-13, Fargo
18. **NEXT MEETING DATES**

* The next Executive Committee meeting date is Sept. 8 or 10:30 – Noon, and the next Coalition meeting date is Nov 3, 2021, 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.