 **ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**April 6, 2023**

Attendees Pam Sagness, BG Jackie Huber, LTC Ann Willoughby, Joyal Meyer, Brian Watters, Dr. Jeff Rondeau, David Becker, Michelle Panos. (All virtual)

Absent: Shelly Sizer, Cindy Whitesell, Lonnie Wangen, David Becker, Dr. Weintraub

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

**2. Minutes.** Minutes from the February 2, 2023 meeting were accepted as written.

**3. New Business**

* **Executive Committee Updates**
  + **VA, Fargo:** Dr. Jeff Rondeau, filled in for Dr. Weintraub and reported that the VA is streamlining hiring and the process is going well but slow. They are providing lots of virtual care. Associate Chief of Staff for mental health Dr. Emholt is doing an excellent job identifying the need for additional resources and services. Some veterans have already taken advantage of the COMPACT act and getting the word out is important, but he has not seen much publicity about it. April 26 is Denim Day to bring awareness to sexual assault prevention.
  + **NDNG**: LTC Willoughby reported that the Race to Zero (5K&10K run) to bring awareness to sexual assault prevention is on April 15. For Purple Day at the Capitol to celebrate military kids, youth from both Minot and Grand Forks AFBs, have been invited so it should be a large turnout. They expect 40 kids each from Minot and Grand Forks. The Fish Camp for military kids will be June 11 which fills up the same day registration is open. Adventure and STEAM camps are also coming up. The Ninja Academy, where kids learn how to be resilient will be in Fargo. In partnership with NSU extension, there will also be a gardening class in April. There will be three Yellow Ribbon events, one for the Cyber Protection Team and two for a couple of Aviation Units. Also gave an update on the NG My Prime program for substance use education. Lastly there will be an ASIST suicide prevention training at Camp Grafton o April 13-14 and in Bismarck and RJB May 10-11.
  + **NDNG:** BG Jackie Huber reported that the number one priority for the Guard right now is recruiting and retention. The Guard did make their recruiting numbers last year an on track not to reach the goal again this year. This is true across the country for all branches of service. There are legislative initiatives that may help such as emergency duty pay equity with surrounding states and using state tuition assistance for online or schools not in North Dakota. They are also prepping for some state activity due to the weather in the Wahpeton area.
  + **NDDHS:** Joyal Meyer reported that the department has some preliminary data from the NDVDRS system. In 2021 there was a total of 163 deaths in North Dakota, and in 2022 there was 177 and that was preliminary, and so far for 2023 we have 13. This is for all suicides not just veterans. She also mentioned that the Suicide Prevention Coalition is still planning a September Conference and they are looking for a media person who can set the conference as a live and virtual event.
  + **NDDHS:** Pam Sagness reported on current the status of current legislation pertaining to the suicide fatality review commission and the 988 Crisis Line funding moving from a .30 tax being rolled in the Behavioral Health division appropriation bill 2012. The funding would also cover expanded mobile crisis unit services and adding a GPS system that allows the units to respond to more than one call if nearby. They have asked for a total of $3.86M for 988 and the expanded crisis units. There is another bill to contract with Avel eCare to put telehealth capability in all law enforcement vehicles so the company can go to do an assessment of the individual in crisis. The company claims that 80% of the of the triaging that they do results in the individual staying in the community. This changes the response from a law enforcement response to a healthcare response. Lastly, they are asking for funding to convert three Human Service Centers into Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic, but the funding may be reduced to just one – but it’s a start.

**4. Old Business**

* Michelle reported that the number of NDCares Communities and Businesses and communities have not changed since last month. She also reported on a legislation concerning the successful funding of $500,000 for the Fisher House, the access to the death records of military related suicide victims, the Hidden Wounds of War Memorial Bridge. The updated version of the ND Military Databook is complete and ready to be sent to Central Printing. She reviewed several pages and pointed out changes in data from the 2020 stats, including a new section explaining the benefits of hiring a member of the Guard or Reserve or a veteran. Regarding the Governor’s Challenge, Michelle explained that a few initiatives are underway such as CALM and S.A.V.E training, gun lock distribution and the access to death records. She also discussed the stakeholder engagement plans for other initiatives. There will be an Innovation Conference in May and Implementation Academy in June, both in Washington DC.

**5. UPCOMING EVENTS** Michelle discusses some of the following:

* 1. [**ND 2023 Legislative Calendar of Deadlines**](https://www.ndlegis.gov/files/resource/68-2023/legislative-deadlines/23.9036.02000.pdf)
  2. **ACOVA Meeting:** May 11-12 Camp Grafton
  3. **Grand Forks Military Affairs Committee:** Feb 15
  4. **Fargo/Moorhead Military Affairs Committee:** Mar 9
  5. **Devils Lake Military Affairs Committee:** Feb 23
  6. **Minot Military Affairs Committee:** Mar 2
  7. **Williston Military Affairs Committee:** Mar 3
  8. [**FirstLink: In-Person Mental Health First Aid (Older Adults):** Apr 26, Minot](https://myfirstlink.org/event/mental-health-first-aid-minot/)
  9. [**FirstLink: Suicide Risk Assessment Training Webinar:** May 10](https://myfirstlink.org/event/suicide-risk-assessment-live-one-hour-webinar-16/)
  10. [**FirstLink: In-Person ASIST Training:** May 16-17, Fargo](https://myfirstlink.org/event/asist-fargo-nd-11/)

1. **NEXT MEETING DATES**

The next ND Cares Coalition Meeting is scheduled for June1, 2023 from 1:00 pm-4:00 pm and the  
 next Executive Committee meeting will be May 4, 2023 from 10:30 to Noon.