

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN  
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION COMMITTEE  
5 FEBRUARY 2021

ZOOM meeting of the Department of Michigan, VA&R Committee was called to order by, Don Howard, Chairman, at 1:01 P.M.

Present were Standing Committee members; Don Howard, Vice Chairman, Tony Licari, Secretary, Thomas Sheppard, other committee members present Alfonse Van Hese, Gary Bordeau, Bob Gillette, Steve Mango, Alternates, Bob Wallin, John Perry  
Absent, Steve Mango Ex-  
Officio - Department Adjutant Ronald Runyan Wood  
Ex-Officio - Department VA & R Director Gary Easterling

VAVS/VHVS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, Gerald Dennis

HEROES to HOMETOWN SUBCOMMITTEE, Eddie Brown

Invited to the meeting;

Deborah Bohanon, Chairman Veterans Employment & Education  
Elizabeth Cuddington, Department Service Officer

Legionnaires present, 14.

Is there a quorum? YES

Special guest Deborah Bohanon was introduced as the new Chairman of the Veterans Employment & Education Committee. She is excited with her new assignment and wants to have a close working relationship the VA&R Committee. Deborah's daytime job is very close to the guidance within the RULES OF PROCEDURE or her committee assignment.

Reports:

VA&R Chair, Don Howard: Governor's Project, Food Security Task Force with supplying food relief to veterans, especially in rural Michigan and, ask for input from all present as to the status of COVID-19 immunizations from VA facilities where they volunteer.

VA&R Director, Gary Easterling, The VA&R Office has deposit for Post Service Officer School at Higgins Lake next fall. At this

time, the DNR, McMullen Training Center is closed due to COVID-19 till May.

The Department Veterans Service Officers are currently cross training with the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency to be accredited with the MVAA to better assist Veterans in Michigan with expanded ways to help process their needs.

The DVSO's Elizabeth Cuddington, Tripp Cantwell and Gary Easterling developed a new VA&R Workbook to record their daily work that is monitored by the MVAA, that is how the DVSO'S get paid. The MVAA likes the new DSO Workbook, and other accredited state service organizations are requesting the new work book format and want to be trained by our VA&R staff.

Mr. Easterling requested that the Southgate Veterans Center reopen in March.

#### SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

VAVS/VHVS Subcommittee Chairman Gerald Dennis; Due to the current COVID-19, only status minimal volunteer visits by members to VA facilities at the present time. There is a slow reopening of VA facilities and hope to be back too normal soon.

HEROES to HOMETOWN Subcommittee Chairman Eddie Brown; Provided an update on the purpose of Heroes to Hometown, a 501C3 group, and how the funds he is responsible are disbursed.

#### Old Business:

The Post/District Service Officer Workbook has been reviewed by the Director VA&R, Gary Easterling and Department Adjutant Ron Runyan. The workbook will be put on the VA&R website when all necessary publishing requirements are met.

Post Service Officer Reports should be submitted for this fiscal year to District Service Officer N.L.T. end of May, 2021.

Districts Service Officer Reports should be submitted for this fiscal year to VA&R Committee N.L.T. middle of June, 2021.

#### New Business:

Motion by Mr. Licari, second by Mr. VanHese to have the VETERANS & EDUCATION COMMITTEE to be assigned as a Subcommittee of the VA&R Committee. All Yea, Motion pass

Department Adjutant, Ron Runyan, suggested that the VA&R Committee generate a resolution if the VA&R Committee would like to recommend that the Veterans Employment and Education Committee be assigned as a subcommittee.

A request to update the VA&R related information on the Department website moved to [www.mivabenefits.org](http://www.mivabenefits.org) to have better consolidation VA&R related information loaded onto site.

There being no further business to come before this committee, it was moved by Mr. Bordeau and supported by Mr. Gillett that the meeting be adjourned at 2:34 P.M. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULL SUBMITTED

DON HOWARD  
Chairman  
VA&R Committee