

## Meeting Minutes

Meeting Project Name	Florida Women Veteran's Advisory Council (FWVAC)		
Date of Meeting	April 21, 2023	Time:	11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Minutes Prepared By:	Dr. Deanna Hall	Location	St. Augustine, FL

### 1. Meeting Objectives

- Introductions of the Women Veterans at Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Home
- Last minutes meetings
- Guest Speaker—MG, Ret. Rita Broadway, Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Ambassadors
- Committee Reports (Updates): Nursing Homes, Communications, Homelessness
- Regional Advisors Update
- Resource Database for Women Veterans
- Veteran Organization Functions
- Rural Area Discussion
- Women Veterans Day, June 12, 2023
- Best Practices

### 2. Attendees

Council Members: Chai: Dee Quaranta, Co-Chair, Vanessa Thomas, Secretary, Deanna Hall, Bob Asztalos, Kay Watkins, Betsy Nolan, Alicia Renner, Kelly Dobson, Kathy Contreras, Laceria Whitcett, Christina Rugule, Ms. Watson, Joanne Devine, Alnita Whitt, Lynn Geiser, Susan Aungst, Dottie Deerwester, Lisa "BB" Browne Banic, Stella Toker (conference call), Lida Dean (conference call), Lorraine Holland, (conference call).

### 3. Agenda, Notes, Discussion, and Actions

Topic	Discussion
Opening and last meetings' minutes	The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Dee Quaranta at 11:00 with the prayer by Alicia Renner and the pledge of allegiance. The members in the group introduced themselves. The Chair Dee Quaranta introduced two brave women who live at the Clyde E. Lassen State Veteran Home and one female Veteran who works there. Co-Chair Vanessa Willams presented these women veterans will medals deserving of their honor, courage, and commitment. One of the female veterans who lived at the facility was 100 years old, what a privilege,

	<p>to meet such an amazing example of our legacy. After the ladies were honored and left, Chair Quaranta asked the Secretary to go over the minutes. Secretary Hall stated that the minutes were emailed to everyone twice and does anyone have any questions, with none; Dottie Deerwester moved to accept the minutes as read, and the motion was seconded by Jo Jo Devine, motion passed.</p>
<p>Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Ambassadors</p>	<p>MG Rita Broadway stated that the Women in Military Service For America Memorial (WMSFAM), also known as Military Women’s Memorial is a memorial established by the U.S. federal government which honors women who gave served in the United States Armed Forces. MG Broadway is an ambassador, and along with other ambassadors who travel and will educate communities about the Military Women’s Memorial. MG Broadway especially expressed how they want to reach more women veterans to register and tell their stories. MG Broadway stated she is available to speak at events, please call her and if she is busy, she will contact another ambassador in the area.</p>
<p>Committee Reports (Updates): Nursing Homes, Communications, Homelessness</p>	<p><b>NURSING HOMES</b></p> <p>Bob Asztalos stated that there are 54 women veterans housed throughout the state veteran homes in Florida. He continued to state that there are still open beds, and the nursing homes will accommodate female veterans.</p> <p>Bob stated to be considered eligible and be admitted into a VA state home you need the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Honorable discharge</li> <li>2. Resident of Florida</li> <li>3. VA doctor or civilian doctor need to certify that you need to be in a nursing facility.</li> </ol> <p>Bob also stated that you do not need to register at the VA, although this would speed up the process.</p> <p>If the Veteran has a disability rating of 70%-100% the VA pays. If the Veteran has a disability rating under 70% there is a co-pay the Veteran will have to pay.</p> <p>Certain state nursing homes care for dementia and PTSD. The Veteran has a choice of which VA state home they would like to live in; however, the VA state home must meet the patient’s needs.</p> <p>There is also an assisted living facility in Lake City. Bob stated the FDVA is looking in an Adult Day Care pilot at Port St. Lucie.</p>

Also, currently there is Hospital Bill 139 to expand these services to spouses.

Finally, Bob stated, I did not realize I was the chair. (Laughter) So, the committee decided to take over and now the committee is as follows:

Kay Watson, Co-Chair, Betsy Nolan, Co-Chair, Kathy Contreras, Kelly Dobson, Alicia Renner.

---

## COMMUNICATIONS

Stella Toker is the Chair, however, she is on the conference call and referred to Jo Jo Devine.

Jo Jo stated that when the committee met they realized that they could break down into sub-commitments to dig deeper and bring back better information.

Therefore, they agreed on the following sub-committees:

1. The Website
2. Communications
3. Public Policy

Kathy Lathis moved to accept the three sub-committees, seconded by Alicia Renner, motion passed.

These new sub-committees will meet and bring their reports to the next meeting.

---

## HOMELESSNESS

Chair Dee stated the Regional Advisors need to identify shelters and transitional homes for Women Veterans in their area. Women with children is an issue. Dee suggested the Regional Advisors to call 211 in their area or United Way to get resources.

Try getting a SSVF grant to help Veterans with Supportive Services in your area.

Contact your local Coalition on Homelessness and partner with them. How are they finding housing for our Women Veteran? Talk with them to find out what their challenges are.

Go to your local Salvation Army, YWMC, and Veterans' Council.

<p>Regional Advisors Update and Resource Database for Women Veterans</p>	<p>Vanessa stated that the state of Florida will be divided up into 10 regions as follows:</p> <p>Emerald Coast: Regional Advisor: Linette Gomez  Alternate Regional Advisor: Vacant</p> <p>Apalachee: Regional Advisor: Sharon Brooks  Alternate Regional Advisor: Joanne Devine</p> <p>North Central: Regional Advisor: Junnie Watson  Alternate Regional Advisor: Joanne Devine</p> <p>Northeast: Regional Advisor: Sharleen Deary  Alternate Regional Advisor: Lynn Geiser</p> <p>East Central: Regional Advisor: Susan Aungst  Alternate Regional Advisor: Betsy Nolan</p> <p>Tampa Bay: Regional Advisor: Vacant  Alternate Regional Advisor: Vacant</p> <p>Central: Regional Advisor: Alnita Whitt  Alternate Regional Advisor: Lorraine Holland</p> <p>Treasure Coast: Regional Advisor: Lisa Brown  Alternate Regional Advisor: Vacant</p> <p>Southwest: Regional Advisor: Dottie Deerwester  Alternate Regional Advisor: Vacant</p> <p>South Regional Advisor: Stella Tokar  Alternate Regional Advisor: vacant</p> <hr/> <p><b>RESOURCE DATABASE FOR WOMEN VETERANS</b></p> <p>Please forward women veteran events/veteran events to the secretary that are happening in your region. We need to support each other's events.</p> <p>Start compiling a list of resources in your region for the secretary to make a master list. Please vet your resources.</p>
<p>Rural Areas</p>	<p>Dee stated again that the Regional Advisors need to identify their rural areas and have events in those areas. Having a Veteran resource event in those areas is vital because those veterans have a hard time getting access to care and other resources, especially women veterans. Dee stated it is important for Regional Advisors to know where their rural areas are in their region. By the next meeting have a rough idea how many women veterans are in your region. Try to have them divided up by county.</p>

	Locate non-profits that can assist you and don't forget to write them down as a resource.
Women Veterans Day, June 12, 2023	<p>Women Veterans Recognition Day—There will be a lot of Women Veteran activities in June.</p> <p>Chair Dee is having their Women Veterans Week of Recognition from June 4-June 10, 2023.</p> <p>Stewart Scott called Vanessa Thomas about the FAVOB and stated he would like women veterans at certain locations on June 12<sup>th</sup>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Betsy Nolan and Alnita Whitt--Orlando</li> <li>2. Dee Quaranta—Jacksonville</li> <li>3. Vanessa Thomass—Tampa Bay</li> <li>4. Michelle Caldwell—Pensacola</li> <li>5. Karen Gregory--?</li> </ol> <p>The Women Veterans Conference will be held in the Villages, June 23-25.</p> <p>Lisa “BB” is co-hosting an event for women veterans on June-12<sup>th</sup> at Del Ray Beach. It's a great event and program, please contact Lisa if you want the event format.</p>
Best Practices	Vanessa stated to look in your regions and find where they are having women veterans' events and attend.

4. Other information

It is bittersweet that I am saying, “Goodbye,” to the great friends that I just met. I am happy to announce that my husband, Mark, and I have reunited! God is good. I am heading home to Arkansas on Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. It was my absolute pleasure to get to know all of you! Please do not be strangers! Love, Deanna Hall

5. Next Meeting

July 21, 2023  
11:00 am- 4:00 pm  
Indian River State College, Veteran Center of Excellence  
3209 Virginia Avenue  
Fort Pierce, FL 34981

