



Department of Veteran Services
 294 Main Street • Greenfield, MA 01301
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Timothy Niejadlik, Director
Laura Thorne, Assistant
Mark Fitzpatrick, VSO
Brian Brooks, VSO

UPPER PIONEER VALLEY VETERANS' SERVICES DISTRICT

Veteran Resource and Referral Center located in Greenfield, satellite locations throughout the district

Member Towns

- Ashfield
- Bernardston
- Buckland
- Charlemont
- Colrain
- Conway
- Deerfield
- Erving
- Gill
- Greenfield
- Hawley
- Heath
- Leverett
- Leyden
- Monroe
- Montague
- New Salem
- Northfield
- Plainfield
- Rowe
- Shelburne
- Shutesbury
- Sunderland
- Warwick
- Wendell
- Whately

Meeting Notice
Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District
Wednesday April 25th 2018
6:00 P.M.

Location: District Office
294 Main Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes
3. Old Business
 - FY18 district Report
4. New Business
 - Nomination and election of officers for FY19
 - Upcoming events/outreach for district
 - Set next meeting date / time (Oct 2018) and location
5. Executive Session, if desired

***Please note that the list of topics in this notice was comprehensive at the time of posting, however the public body may consider and take action on unforeseen matters not specifically named in this notice.**

S Drive: UPPVSD/District Mtg & Notices

Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes, October 18, 2017

- Meeting called to order at 1800 by Board President Dave Gendron.
- Motion by Bill Shores to accept previous meetings minutes, second by Leo parent. Motion carried.
- Discussion by Tim Niejadlik on future assessments. FY 19 will be increased by less than 2% for cost of living only, as there are no increases in operating expenses expected.
- In FY 17 the office facilitated approximately 115 VA benefits claims, 35 of which were the direct result of the "Agent Orange Town Hall" event at GCC.
- The van mileage increased by approximately 12,000. Its lifespan projects out for many more years.
- Mark Fitzpatrick will fully retire as of December 2017. Tim presented Chris Demars as Mark's replacement at 15 hours per week as a temp with no benefits, which does not require advertisement. Motion by Leo Parent and seconded by Mike Hastings to hire Chris. No one opposed, motion passed.
- The continuance of our "Inter-Municipal District Agreement" will be presented to the member towns soon. Select Boards and Administrators will have the opportunity to review and sign accordingly.
- Discussion by Tim regarding the "Veteran Tax Work-off Program" that individual towns are encouraged to adopt. Each town would establish the amount that will be available as a whole as well as per individual Veteran. Tim is available to help the towns with their proposals.
- Discussion regarding future outreach. There will be small events at GSB to gauge interest and topics leading up to a large event at GCC in June.
- Reminder for the "Rolling Thunder" event on December 7th at Noon, on the French King Bridge.
- Mark Fitzpatrick thanked the Board and his Co-workers for a positive overall experience since 2011, as well as how rewarding it has been to work closely with Veterans and their families.
- Spring meeting date set at 25 April 2018, 1800. Dave Gendron may not be able to attend due to a prior engagement.
- Motion to adjourn by Leo parent, seconded by Bill Shores. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1825.

Respectfully submitted,

Denis Brennan, Secretary



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District Annual Report

FY18 is the third year our district has been in existence. We continue to be the largest district by community count and square miles covered in the state. Below are just some of the programs and services we help veterans' and their dependents with:

- M.G.L. Ch 115 benefit – Needs based program of financial and medical assistance to eligible veterans and their dependents
- Assistance to veterans and dependents to help file for health care, pensions, and service-connected disabilities
- Homeless prevention assistance to veterans and their families
- Employment help with job searches, resumes, and job interview skills
- Burial assistance to include government markers, flag holders, internment, and VA burial reimbursement
- Massachusetts annuities and tax abatement assistance
- Veterans records retrieval and storage
- Referral to other public and private agencies to include housing, fuel assistance, employment, training, education
- Attend area outreach events(fairs, festivals, health care expos)

We have continued to work hard helping veterans and dependents file for VA benefits due them. Our awarded claims have kept pace with FY17, bringing in close to \$423,000.00 in new claim money for our clients. Overall the district has over \$1,923,000.00 in VA awards flowing into our towns on a monthly basis.

We forecast this caseload to remain flat for the foreseeable future for our towns. Although reimbursed back to the towns at 75%, this takes over a year to get back from the state, so reducing payouts up front has freed up funds for the member towns.

For the coming year we will continue to assist veterans, and will emphasize programs for the dependents of veterans, particularly the elderly population. Our major projects for the future involve veterans' gravesites locations and conditions with district towns help.

Timothy Niejadlik, Director
 Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District