



Virtual Meeting via Webex

**MINUTES
03 March 2022**

Meeting Opened: 1900 hours
 Meeting Closed: 2011 hours
 Meeting Location: Virtual (WebEx); due to COVID-19 pandemic

MEETING SUMMARY:

J. Greg Jolissaint, Chair, presiding, brought the meeting to order at 1901 hrs.

1. Roll Call of Commission Members to Establish a Quorum

The roll was taken; twelve commission members were present. The Chair declared the Commission was in a quorum.

Commissioner	Present	Excused	Absent
J. Greg Jolissaint (Chair)	✓		
Jonathan Branch (Co-Chair)	✓		
Reginald Avery	✓		
Cherron Blakely	✓		
Michael Blum	✓		
Steven M. Bolen	✓		
Nafrettifi Griffin		✓	
Michael Griggs	✓		
Kelly Kesler	✓		
Robert Lowell	✓		
Keith McGuire	✓		
Paul Rivers	✓		
Jerry Wykoff	✓		

2. Acknowledgement of Howard County Government Officials in Attendance: Lisa Terry (Manager, Howard County Office of Veterans and Military Families), Jennifer Jones (Deputy

Chief of Staff, County Executive), and Sandra Price (Chair, Howard County Consumer Advisory Board).

3. Special Guest(s): Chris Anthony, CEO Teamworx Security.

4. Others in Attendance: Robert Pelletier (A.L. Post 156/VFW Post 7472), , and Vikki Garcia (Community Outreach for U.S. Representative John Sarbanes).

5. Welcome by the Commission Chair: Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence

- The Chair led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- The Chair asked for a moment of silence to honor those serving in the Ukrainian armed service, NATO, American servicemembers in Europe, refugees in Ukraine, and those who have lost their lives in the conflict.

6. Reminders of Virtual Meeting Etiquette

- The Chair stated the meeting rules of etiquette.

7. Guest Speaker(s):

Chris Anthony

- Teamworx Security is a commercial company that supports U.S. Cybercommand; its core technology helps people and teams work together. The company has 1,300 - 1,400 users worldwide. They have four different technologies under contract.
- TeamWorx Security is a certified Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) company.
- Their office is located in Columbia Gateway Park.
- Chris is retired U.S. Army - Ranger Battalion and Special Forces.
- The company focuses on hiring veterans. Its workforce is 45% veteran. 32% minority, and 45% female.
- Commissioner McGuire asked how the company recruits veterans. The Chair asked how much it costs to engage veterans. They work with "DoD SkillBridge," "Hiring Our Heroes," and other companies to find qualified veterans and spouses. It costs the company about \$60-\$70K per year for these types of services.
- For more information about Teamworx Security:
<https://www.teamworxsecurity.com/about/#mission>.

8. Consideration of the February 2022 Meeting Minutes

- Commissioner Avery moved to approve the February meeting minutes without amendments; Commissioner Branch seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

9. Opening Comments by Commission Chair

- The Chair thanked those who attended the Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Ellicott City VFW Post on Saturday 29 January.
- The Chair thanked those who were able to attend the Dignified Burial Ceremony for seven unclaimed veterans at the Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery in Owings Mills on 04 February. The Chair estimated that over 300 people participated.

10. Old or Reoccurring Business

- a. Veterans Peer Support Group Update (Commissioner Rivers):
 - The next meeting will be held on 07 March.
 - The group is considering going back to in person meetings in May.
 - The Chair suggested handing out free gunlocks to participants.
 - For more information and to register for the group:
<https://namihowardcounty.org/support-and-education/veteran-support-group/>,
<https://namihowardcounty.org/support-and-education/support-groups/>.

- b. Commission Branded Polo Shirts (Commissioner Wykoff and Lisa Terry):
 - Commissioner Wykoff briefed the Commission on a design for the polo shirts. He is working on the logistics for ordering. We may be able to order as a group or individually.
 - The long-sleeve shirts are cotton.
 - The design on the shirts will be embroidered.
 - The options are black or navy blue; long or short sleeve shirt.
 - Commissioner Wykoff will send out more information to the Commission.

- c. Honor Cords for Graduating Seniors Enlisting in the Military Post-Graduation (Commissioner Kessler):
 - The Chair stated that at the last meeting the Commission favored recognizing graduating seniors with cords. Two issues were discussed: identifying graduating seniors and working with the school system to present the cords.
 - Commissioner Kessler said Commissioner Avery and Lisa Terry have been helping her.
 - Commissioner Kessler contacted Caroline Walker, Director of Student Wellness and Wellbeing at HCPSS. Ms. Walker said that cords are only issued to students for in-school activities. Ms. Walker will take it to the Graduation Committee to consider giving cords to graduating students enlisting in the military.
 - Commissioner Avery said the he talked to the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent of HCPSS. They will investigate issuing cords to graduating students.

- d. New Commission Recorder:
 - The Chair announced that Commissioner Bolen will be stepping down as the Commission Recorder and that Commissioner Kessler has volunteered to take over as the recorder. She will start recording the minutes for the April meeting.

- e. VA Maryland Health Care System VSO and Congressional Stakeholder Meeting (Commissioner Bolen):
 - The Clinic has resumed baseline operations.
 - The volunteer transportation programs at Baltimore and Loch Raven have resumed operations. The service runs from 0800 to 1400 hours, Monday through Friday.

- An overview briefing on the Care and Community program was presented. For more information, contact Eryl H. Quilao, Acting Nurse Manager, Care in the Community at 410.207.0965.
 - The VBA is open, but requires masking in their offices.
 - The Baltimore National Cemetery is undergoing a facility upgrade but will continue to remain open to the public.
- f. VA Mental Health Council (Commissioner Blakely):
- Commissioner Blakely has attended two meetings.
 - The VA Mental Health Council is being relaunched. It will consist of eleven members with representation from veterans or family members who are consumers of mental healthcare.
 - This is a grassroots effort. The bylaws are being drafted and objectives are being set for 2022 and beyond.
 - The Chair asked Commissioner Rivers if he could help find veterans who might be interested in serving on the Council.

11. New Business

- f. Veterans Day Committee Planning Meeting (Commissioner Jolissaint/Lisa Terry):
- The Committee has started planning for the veteran's day events. The next meeting is Tuesday, 08 March.
 - The Chair asked if anyone was interested in serving as the fundraising chair for the Veterans Day Parade.
- g. No Struggle No Success - Recidivism, Entrepreneurship – Recordings of Commissioners to inspire Troubled Teens (Commissioner Wykoff/Lisa Terry):
- Commissioner Wykoff and Lisa Terry met with the President, Janette Graham.
 - Commissioner Wykoff contacted the judge at the Baltimore Veterans Treatment Court; the judge contacted Janette.
 - The program helps anyone coming out of prison - not just juveniles. There is a facility/half-way house for veterans.
 - The Executive Director is looking for volunteers to help provide mentorship.
 - Commissioner Wykoff will work with Janette to setup guest speakers for the Commission.
 - The Chair suggested contacting tonight's guest speaker to see if he can help with job placement.
 - For more information about the program: <https://nostrugglenosuccess.org/>.
- h. Howard County Schools Simulated Congressional Hearings (Commissioner Avery):
- Commissioner Avery said that 47 schools will need judges this year.
 - The program will run from 06 May to 09 June.
 - Commissioner Avery will send out information to the Commissioners.
 - For more information and to sign up: <http://sch.hcpss.org/>.

- i. Veterans Day Presentations at HCPSS (Commissioner Avery):
- HCPSS schools will be in session on Veterans Day and they are anticipating in-person presentations.
 - Commissioner Avery will work with HCPSS to determine a list of schools that will want a Veterans Day presentation.
- e. Howard County Joint Military Council (JMC):
- The Chair and Co-Chair will be attending JMC meetings.
- f. Adaptive Hike, Patapsco Valley State Park:
- The Grist Mill Hike at Lost Lake (Near Halethorpe) will take place Saturday, 12 March from 0915 to 1130 hours.
- g. Dates of Significance:
- March is Brain Injury Awareness Month. It brings attention to the prevention of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and to promote strategies to improve the quality of life for persons living with TBI (as well as their families).
 - On 06 March 1931, President Herbert Hoover signed a congressional resolution officially making “The Star-Spangled Banner” the national anthem of the United States of America.
 - 29 March is National Vietnam Veterans Day.
 - April is the month of the military child.
 - 05 April is Gold Star Spouses Day.
- h. Other Business:
- Commissioner Kessler: the Health Improvement Coalition will be adding a veteran’s resource center on their website.
 - Commissioner Griggs: Howard Community College will be hosting a cording ceremony for graduating seniors enlisting into the military on Thursday, 12 May at 1000 hours.
 - The Chair commented about Lisa Terry’s emails to provide gunlocks to veterans.
 - The Chair said that drop-off boxes for Bailey’s Bundles will be placed at the local VFW post.
 - The Chair asked the Commissioners to look at Lisa’s email about the polo shirts. Commissioner Wykoff will send more information about the shirts.
 - The Chair said that Blue Star Families will be hosting a virtual Mental Health First Aid class on 25 March.
 - Lisa Terry asked if anyone has any mental health resources - books, audio tapes, etc. and to send them to her so that she can donate them to the library system.
 - Lisa Terry said that the annual report has been submitted to the County and will be put on the website soon.
 - Lisa Terry asked if the Commission wanted to sponsor a resource table at the Blue Star Families Welcome Week on 01 October.

- Lisa Terry asked if funds in the amount of \$400 allocated for the Spring resource fair could be repurposed for the Blue Star Families Welcome Week tabling. The Chair will make this an agenda item for the next meeting.
- The Chair asked for volunteers to speak at the upcoming Memorial Day events.

12. Next Commission Meeting Dates

- The Commission will meet on 07 April, 05 May, and 02 June.

13. Adjournment:

- The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2011 hours.

The Commission stands in adjournment until:
07 April 2022.

Minutes were taken by Steven M. Bolen.

J. Greg Jolissaint
Presiding
Chair, HCCVMF