



**Minutes**  
**HCCVMF Commission Meeting held 5 May 2022**

**Role Call of Commissioners:**

Greg Jolissaint, Chair (P)	Michael Griggs (P-V)
Jonathan Branch, Co-Chair (P)	Cherron "Lula" Blakely (P)
Jerry Wykoff (P)	Steve Bolen (Ex)
Kelly Kesler (Ex)	Paul Rivers (P-V)
Mike Blum (P)	Reg Avery (P)
Bob Lowe (Ex)	Nafrettifi Griffin (Ex)
Keith McGuire (P)	

(P) – Present                      (Ex) – Excused  
(P-V) – Present Virtually

1. **The Chair confirmed a quorum was present for the meeting.**
2. **Howard County Government Officials in Attendance:**  
**Lisa Terry** (Manager, Howard County Office of Veterans and Military Families)
3. **Special Guest(s): Jesse Sieff**, Sheffield Institute for the Recording Arts, Phoenix, MD
4. **Others in Attendance: Terry Taylor**, CE Nominee for vacant Commission Seat.
5. **The Commission Chair welcomed all attendees, then led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.**
6. **The Chair then reminded attendees of both in-person and virtual meeting rules of etiquette.**
7. **Guest Speaker(s): Jesse Sieff, Sheffield Institute for the Recording Arts, Phoenix, MD**
  - a. Jesse is a USMC Band Veteran.
  - b. Jesse presented to the council an overview of the Sheffield Institute. This is a program designed for "creative people" in various areas.
  - c. A video and handouts were shared with participants
  - d. The program lasts 6 months and there are 4 classes/year; Veterans can use their GI Bill benefit to pay for the tuition.
  - e. Tuition is ~\$15,000 for the program.

- f. He commented that this may also be a possible VA Vocational Rehabilitation funded opportunity as well – those interested should contact the VA directly.

## **8. Consideration of the April 2022 Meeting Minutes**

- a. Chair asked whether there were any corrections to the April Commission meeting minutes; he also requested a clarification of attendance/non-attendance (Commissioner McGuire had an excused absence for the April Meeting).
- b. April minutes approved with the notation noted in 8.a.

## **9. Opening Comments by Commission Chair**

- a. The Chair thanked those Commissioners who attended the April Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Ellicott City VFW Post.
- b. The Chair provided advanced thanks to those Commissioners planning to attend Howard Community College Veteran Cording ceremony
- c. The Chair thanked Steve Bolen for his years of service to the Commission. On behalf of the entire Commission, the Chair wished him well in his new role in the Coast Guard Auxiliary.
- d. Finally, the Chair thanked Commissioner McGuire for conducting Mock Interviews with high school students

## **10. Reoccurring Business**

- a. Veterans Peer Support Group Update  
Commissioner Rivers provided an update about the Support Group
- b. Howard County Veterans Foundation Update.  
The county operation budget includes \$110 of Pay-as-you-Go (PayGo) funds. \$10K of this amount is earmarked for the Veterans Day Parade, and the remainder is designed to be used for the Veterans and Families statue at Millie Bailey Park.
- c. Status of Honor Cords for Graduating Seniors enlisting in the military post-graduation  
Commissioner Avery provided an update about Honor Cords for graduating seniors. It will not be possible for the 2022 graduating class, but the discussions will continue for 2023.
- d. Update on VA Mental Health Council and Potential Members  
Commissioner Rivers submitted his nominee information to serve on the commission. He then provided an update regarding this new Council. One primary goal is to ascertain the mental health gaps in Maryland communities served by the VA.
- e. Update on HoCo Public Schools Simulated Congressional Hearings (May 6-June 9) (Reg Avery).  
Commissioner Avery reminded the council of remaining slots for serving on the Howard County Public Schools SCHs for this academic year. Council members asked Commissioner Avery to share the email sign-up for participating in a SCH session(s).

- f. Update on Veterans Day Presentations in HCPSS and Identifying which schools will want speakers for in-person events.  
Commissioner Avery iterated that we are waiting for the publication of the Howard County Public Schools 2022-2023 Academic Calendar before any forward progress can be made on scheduling presentations in schools. The Chair suggested that the addition of American Legion poster competitions or American Legion patriotic speeches could also be incorporated into the Veterans Day school activities (this recommendation seemed favorable to the commission as an addition to the presentations).
- g. Update on HoCo Fallen Heroes Tribute page.  
Lisa Terry reported she met with a DCRS IT employee who is creating the web-based Tribute page(s). Lisa thanked those commission members who assisted with the editing of Veteran biographies for the Howard County Fallen Heroes website. Lisa shared examples of hard copy biographies developed for the Tribute page, and she discussed the status of page preparation.
- h. Update on Health Improvement Coalition website.  
Commissioner Kessler will provide an update during the June Commission Meeting.
- i. “No Struggle No Success - Recidivism, Entrepreneurship” – Howard County Veterans Treatment Court Initiative.  
Update postponed until June Commission meeting. Interested leaders continue to see an interested Howard County Judge who should also be a Veteran.
- j. May 25 USNA graduation at Annapolis. The USNA is seeking a “group of Veterans” to attend graduation Wednesday 1000-1500hrs.  
Commissioner Blum presented a flyer about this upcoming event in Annapolis. Commissioners were encouraged to attend.
- k. Howard County Proposed Operating Budget.  
In addition to the discussion in item 10.b., \$50K was recommended for VFW Post 7472 – if approved, these funds will be used for refurbishment of the entry way cannons  
-- Jennifer Jones also discussed a \$110K recommendation for the HCVF to include \$10K for the parade

## **11. New Business**

- a. Millie Bailey’s Remembrances:  
The Chair reminded the Commission that this week Ms. Vivian C. “Millie” Bailey, WWII Veteran, died at the age of 104yrs young. After a distinguished career as one of the first African American officers in the Women’s Army Corps, LT Millie Bailey separated from the Army; she supported the Howard County community for many years as a volunteer and advocate, collecting and preparing “Millie’s Bundles” care packages for deployed service members. Her legacy will live on in her namesake, Bailey Neighborhood Park on the Columbia Lakefront, the site of the future Howard County Veterans monument.

b. Memorial Day Weekend Events:

- 1) **Saturday May 28<sup>th</sup>**, 1:00 pm, Ellicott City Courthouse Memorial Day Ceremony and Wreath Laying (VFW has the lead). POC: John Spain; **Speaker: Commissioner Jolissaint**
- 2) **Sunday May 29<sup>th</sup>**, 12:00pm, Saint Johns Episcopal Church, Ellicott City (American Legion has the lead) POC: Ismael Veguilla-Cruz, **Speaker: Commissioner Wykoff**
- 3) **Monday May 30<sup>th</sup>**, 08:30 am, Harriet Tubman High School (Marine Corps League has the lead) POC: Bill Swain; **Speaker: Commissioner Griffin**

c. Howard County Joint Military Council Items of Interest

- 1) JMC Vice Chair Bob Pelletier stated the next Flag Retirement Ceremony would occur on July 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Ellicott City VFW Post.
- 2) Vice Chair Pelletier also voiced his appreciation for any Commissioners attending the 3 Memorial Day events discussed by the Chair in item 11.b. above

d. Terri Taylor nomination to serve as a HCCVMF Commissioner

The County Executive accepted the Commission's recommendation to nominate Terri Taylor to fill the Commission vacancy created by Commissioner Bolen's resignation effective May 5, 2022. The County Council will be following their normal process to review the CE's recommendation.

e. New Business from HCCVMF Commissioners

No new business was submitted by Commissioners in attendance.

f. Additional Dates of Significance: The Chair reminded meeting attendees of the following dates and their military significance:

1) Military Appreciation Month (May). Officially designated by Congress in 1999, Military Appreciation Month takes place every year throughout the entire month of May. Each year, the president issues an annual proclamation reminding Americans to celebrate this patriotic month that pays tribute to those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom.

2) VE Day – May 8. Marking the end of a long, deadly war, VE Day, short for "Victory in Europe Day," celebrated the end of World War II on the European front. Since this momentous occasion in 1945, much of the world has continued to celebrate VE Day on May 8 every year. It is now an official recognition day during Military Appreciation Month.

- 3) Military Spouse Appreciation Day – May 6. Military Spouse Appreciation Day honors the military spouses who sacrifice so much in support of their service member's mission. President Ronald Regan first proclaimed "Military Spouse Day" a holiday in 1984 before Congress declared it part of Military Appreciation Month in 1999. Lisa Terry state Fort Meade would be hosting a Military Spouse Appreciation Drive-by.

- 4) Armed Forces Day -- May 16. The day Americans celebrate their currently serving military forces.
- 5) Memorial Day – May 30. A national and state holiday for remembering and honoring the military personnel who have **died while serving in the United States armed forces**. Over the years, our country has also informally honored those who served honorably and subsequently died following their military service.
- 5) July 4<sup>th</sup> Clarksville Parade. To be discuss at the June Commission Meeting
- 6) Howard County Fair. August 6 and August 7. To be further discussed at the June Commission Meeting.
- 7) Veterans Day Parade and Lakefront Ceremony. Scheduled for Sunday November 13. Theme: Honor Through Service. The Chair requested Commissioners to begin considered nominees for the Grand Marshall of the Parade (i.e. a Howard County citizen who emulates “Honor through Service”). Detailed discussions will begin at the August Commission Meeting.

#### **11. Other Miscellaneous Items**

- Commissioner Shirts (Lisa)
  - HCCMVF Commissioners were provided branded shirts and pins procured by the Howard County Office of Veterans and Military Families

#### **12. Next Commission Meeting Dates**

- June 9
- no meetings in July or August

**13.** Having no further business to conduct, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:15pm.