

New York City Veterans Advisory Board

Minutes for April 29, 2019 meeting held at:

Queens Borough Hall
120-55 Queens Blvd
Kew Gardens, NY 11424

Members

Present:

Todd Haskins (Manhattan)	John Rowan (Queens)
Joe Bello (Bronx)	Tiffany Daugherty (Manhattan)
Wendy McClinton (Brooklyn)	Annette Osborne (Brooklyn)
Peter Kauffman (Queens)	James Hendon (Bronx)

Absent:

Charles Greinsky (Staten Island) Charles Hernandez (Bronx)

Note: Awaiting final board member to be appointed by Speaker's Office.

Minutes

- Todd Haskins (Chair) commenced the meeting at 6:30 PM. The chair gives greetings and talked about what the VAB does.
- All VAB members introduced themselves to the audience. Chair Haskins goes over the agenda.

Presentation:

DVS Commissioner Sutton welcomed everyone in attendance and discusses the Executive budget for DVS. Commissioner Sutton states that they are waiting to see where DVS shakes out come July and what OMB is looking at. She states three years ago they were an office of 4 people and today they have 40 people.

The Commissioner then discusses Fleet Week and the Parade of Ships (May 22). She refers to the link with this year's events (<http://militarynews.com/app/fleetweeknewyork/events.html>) and the hashtag #SelfiewithaSailor. She also discusses Memorial Day and states that we must remember our Gold Star Mothers and families. The Commissioner asks if there are any questions. She recognizes Molly Levi of the PLG Fund. Molly asks a question about VA benefits and that the co-op provision as law has sunset. The Commissioner states that she will

talk to her. Rahman Telfair, a Corrections Officer asks a question about Military/Reserve running out of days and that the city only gives 30 days of time. He states they need more days. The Commissioner states someone from DVS will speak with him to get further information.

New Business: The chair (Todd) talks about Fleet Week and how the event supports the city's economy and that it's a great experience for our military, veterans and the public in general. The chair also discusses the VetConnectNYC rollout from last fall and asks everyone to help get the word out.

The Chair makes a motion to accept the March VAB minutes. The board approved the minutes.

Public Comments: Board member Peter Kauffman hosted this part of the meeting. The following individual(s) gave public comments to the board:

Keith Rivera: Mr. Rivera works at the Queens Vet Center. He discussed what the VA does, what the Vet Center is, what it does and how it provides services to veterans and family members without charging. Mr. Rivera also talk about the readjustment services that Vet Centers provide.

Molly Levi: Ms. Levi talked about Pat Gualtieri and who he was. She shared how she started the PLG Veterans Assistance Fund in 2015 to provide Educational scholarships and working with disabled veterans. Ms. Levi stated she produces a newsletter for the community and that she gets news from many different sources.

Kenneth Barr: Mr. Barr is an Army veteran who served from 1979-1989. Mr. Barr discussed the privatization of the VA. He talked about how he was taken to the Manhattan VA for medical issue and how they did surgery and took his gall bladder and saved him. He stated that no hospital would have done that, particularly that fast. He stated that the hospital staff respected that he was veteran. He stated that he was accosted by someone at the VA over the Mission Act and that the Mission Act will drive away resources. Finally, he stated that universal health care is vital to National Security.

Mike Munoz: Represented the NYC Veterans Alliance. Mr. Munoz asked a question about the VAB site on DVS's webpage and that information needs to be updated. The Secretary stated they are working with DVS to update the site. Mr. Munoz talked about what they are and what they are do. He briefly talked about their policy agenda and the Town-Hall meeting with Rep. Ocasio-Cortez.

Queens Borough President representative Dan Brown spoke and thanked everyone for attending. He briefly talked about Tanya Thomas, DVS's Engagement & Community Services Coordinator and her work at the Borough President's Office. He stated the DVS office was down the hall and open to any veterans that need help. Mr. Brown once again thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting Adjourned.

Next Meeting: June 2019

Submitted by: Joe Bello, Secretary