

New York City Veterans Advisory Board

Minutes for July 13, 2017 meeting held at:

David N. Dinkins Municipal Building
1 Centre Street, Mezzanine Floor
New York, NY 10007

Members

Present:

Todd Haskins (Manhattan)
Charles Hernandez (Bronx)
John Rowan (Queens)

Joe Bello (Bronx)
Jules Martin (Manhattan)
Mariel Juarez (Brooklyn)

Absent:

Charles Greinsky (Staten Island)
Samuel Innocent (Bronx)
Pat Devine (Queens)

Wendy McClinton (Brooklyn)
Anthony "Tony" Odierno (Manhattan)

Minutes

- Todd Haskins (Chair) commenced the meeting at 6:15 PM.
- All VAB members introduced themselves to the audience.

Old Business: Updated VAB by-laws were approved. Minutes from the April VAB meeting were approved.

Presentations:

DVS: Eric Henry welcomed everyone in attendance on behalf of the NYC Department of Veterans Services and Commissioner Sutton. Mr. Henry talked about the Human Rights law recently passed by the NYC Council. He also discussed BAH benefits, as part of the Post 9/11 GI Bill for students attending colleges in Staten Island. Lastly, Mr. Henry talked about DVS hosting a meeting for veteran street vendors.

Dept. of Finance: Representatives from the NYC Department of Finance discussed Veterans Property Tax Exemption and the new law that will take effect at the end of the month. They stated that if anyone had further questions, they would be around to answer them.

Marie Roker-Jones: Ms. Roker-Jones, the VP of Engagement and Co-founder of OweYaa gave a presentation on what OweYaa is and what they do. Ms. Roker-Jones stated that OweYaa tailors military and veteran talent for companies looking to expand their team and business. OweYaa matches the veteran not to a company, but to a project. The company is able to remain productive while learning more about that candidate and helping him/her grow and develop their own skill sets. Ms. Roker-Jones was also asked how they got their name. She said in the Midwest they say “I Owe Ya One.” They put that together to come up with the name to help those who served our nation.

Public Comments: Board member Jules Martin (Manhattan) hosted this part of the meeting. The following individuals gave comments to the board:

Peter Leibman: Mr. Leibman talked about the Troops to Teachers program and how there is a need for veterans to become teachers. He discussed the workshop and admissions fair that will take place at St. Francis College on July 26. If anyone had any questions, please come see him.

Stanley Scriven: Mr. Scriven is from Easter Seals and he talked about a grant they have to help women veterans (HVRP). He also stated they have Employment and housing services for veterans and anyone interested should come see him.

Vince McGowan: Mr. McGowan talked about 55 Water Street (site of the NYC Vietnam Veterans Memorial) and how Post Hurricane Sandy they have been in the process of rebuilding and working with the Parks Department. They are looking at ways to protect the memorial while keeping the space public.

Cheryl Dupries: Ms. Dupries represented the Native American Community. Ms. Dupries stated that veterans are not finding employment and having major issues with housing. She stated that one-shot deals are not working. She also discussed the possibility of moving the VA hospital or the VA Regional Office.

Rosemary Hameed: Ms. Hameed stated that she is running for NYC Mayor. She stated that we need to get rid of Mayor de Blasio and that NYCHA, Bank of America and Meryl Lynch were in bed with each other.

Noah Angeles: Mr. Angeles is a Principal at an Academy in Queens. He talked about the need to find funding for school flags and to advocate for veterans and children. He stated that unless they self identify, there is no way to know who is a child of a veteran.

Olivia Meier: Ms. Meier talked about the NYC Veterans Alliance and what they do. Ms. Meier discussed Intro. 1259.

Helene Van Clief: Ms. Van Clief talked about the need for more discussion on women issues. She stated that there is no mammogram for women at the Bronx VAMC. She also stated that all female veterans who were stationed at Camp Lejuene should get a mammogram because of the water issues at the base.

Tyquin Campbell: Mr. Campbell stated that he cannot find a job and that WorkForce1 has not been helpful.

Herbert Sweat: Mr. Sweat talked about Hart Island and how NPD runs it. He talked about the number of veterans who are buried at Hart Island and how families were unable to visit. He stated that he has been advocating for that to change and how no more veterans should be buried there. He further stated that before you could not memorialize veterans buried there but now you can.

Sara Lowenburg: Ms. Lowenburg represented the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum. She shared what programs they have and how veterans can visit the Museum for free. She also stated that they will be launching a veteran's video chat for vets who cannot visit the Intrepid.

Ray Di Leo: Mr. Di Leo stated that he is having employment issues and that for some jobs he is underemployed and too old. He asked who he could turn to for help.

Boots Whitlock: Mr. Whitlock talked about veteran vendors and handed the board information sheets. He stated that vendors do not like Intro. 614 and that he wanted to sue the city. Mr. Whitlock also talked about Vets4Vets and asked to make vendors a priority. He asked the board if anyone was a vendor. He also said that he could not get legal assistance.

There were no more speakers.

Meeting Adjourned.

Next Meeting: September 2017

Submitted by: Joe Bello, Secretary