

# New York City Veterans Advisory Board

Minutes for June 12, 2018 meeting held at:

**American Legion Post 483**  
240-08 135<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Rosedale, NY 11422

## Members

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### Present:

\*Todd Haskins (Manhattan)                      \*Sam Innocent (Brooklyn)  
Joe Bello (Bronx)                                      \*John Rowan (Queens)

### Absent:

\*Pat Devine (Bronx)                                      \*Charles Hernandez (Bronx)  
Wendy McClinton (Brooklyn)                      \*Charles Greinsky (Staten Island)  
\*Mariel Juarez (Brooklyn)

\*-- Term Expired.

## Minutes

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- Todd Haskins (Chair) commenced the meeting at 6:40 PM.
- All VAB members introduced themselves to the audience.
- Legion Post 483 Commander (Mr. Willie McDonald) gave greetings to the Board members. He also welcomed everyone and stated that he would like to see these meetings held at other posts to share knowledge. The chair thanked Mr. McDonald for hosting the VAB meeting.

**Old Business:** The minutes for the April 2018 VAB meeting in Staten Island were approved.

**New Business:** The chair reviewed what the board is and its mandate: eleven-member body, appointed by the Mayor and Council Speaker. The chair pointed out that nine members terms have expired with some resigning. The chair stated that he has advised the Speaker and Mayor on this issue thru Commissioner Sutton. The chair then briefly discussed the board's **Annual Report** to the Mayor and Speaker of the City Council.

### **Presentations:**

**DVS:** Assistant Commissioner Othman welcomed everyone in attendance and introduced the DVS members with him. AC Othman discussed DVS's relationship with the VAB and how the board is independent of DVS. AC Othman then discussed what DVS does and what his role at DVS is. AC Othman briefly discussed two initiatives: Veterans on Campus and the Mentor a Veteran initiative.

AC Othman then discussed items moving forward which include: Employment outcomes (improving) and Entrepreneurial (Support for Veteran Business Owners).

Commissioner Sutton then spoke about the VAB Process for members. She reiterated what the Chair said by stating that she has reached out to the Mayor and Speaker's Office regarding re-appointments/appointments to the board. She stated that over 35 people applied for the board and individuals were currently being vetted. The Commissioner stated that she hoped we would have notification from the Mayor and Council Speaker within the next couple of weeks.

The chair talked about initiatives from the VAB's Annual Reports (which are online). While there is a total of 20 in the report, the chair focused on six. They are:

- (1) Ending Veteran Homelessness
- (2) Expand Women Owned Businesses
- (3) Veterans on Campus (Fairness)
- (4) Expanding Communications and Outreach
- (5) Veterans economic value to the City (State and City). Doing pilot program in NYC.
- (6) GI Bill BAH for Staten Island that is on par with the rest of the City.

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

**Carlos Carino:** Mr. Carino is the Deputy Director for Community Outreach and was representing the City Council Speaker. He thanked the board for their service and was there to observe and listen.

**Keith Rivera:** Mr. Rivera represented the Queens Vet Center. He shared what the VA does, and what the Vet Center is and does and how it services veterans without charging. Mr. Rivera gave everyone the address for the Queens Vet Center: 75-10 91<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Woodhaven, NY. Lastly, Mr. Rivera explained how they don't just help veterans but families too. He also took a few questions from the audience.

Commissioner Sutton then stood up to talk about NY Serves and how it should be coming online in late summer/early fall. Its being rebranded to VetConnectNYC. The Commissioner stated that there are 75 providers and the coordinating team is being run by Northwell Health. The Commissioner stated that this is necessary and timely to reach out to veterans, families and servicemembers. This began a free flow conversation on what a veteran is / engagement.

**Tyrone Roark:** Representing the VA Regional Office, Mr. Roark talked about the VA Regional Office and how they work to help those with MST/Homelessness, etc. Mr. Roark talked about the need for transportation for veterans.

**Kristen Rouse:** Representing the NYC Veterans Alliance. Ms. Rouse talked about what they are, their calendar and what they are doing. She also stated that if anyone was interested in membership to see her.

**Cheryl Dupris:** Ms. Dupris represented the Native American Community. Ms. Dupris talked about suicides and stated that veterans are not finding employment and having major issues with housing and that city workers have been unprofessional. Ms. Dupris discussed PTSD and how programs like CWT (Compensated Work Therapy) are being cut and how there needs to be training to recognize PTSD and that there is a need for better statistics.

**Tynisia Colon:** Representing Team RWB in Queens, Ms. Colon gave a presentation on what RWB does and the Queens Chapter. Ms. Colon also answered several questions from the audience.

There were no more public speakers.

Board member Sam Innocent briefly talked about the Brooklyn Workforce1 recruitment event coming up.

Board member John Rowan talked about Veteran courts.

**Meeting Adjourned.**

**Next Meeting:** September 2018

Submitted by: Joe Bello, Secretary