

MINUTES
UNITED TENNESSEE VETERANS ASSOCIATION (UTVA)
Legislative Plaza, Room 31 Nashville, Tennessee **Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015**

Please view video stream
VIDEO NOT YET POSTED

Speakers	
John Patrick	VISN-9 Director
General Dennis Cavin	Congressional Medal of Honor Character Development Program
Barry Rice	Vietnam Veterans of America Agent Orange and Post Traumatic Stress Town Hall Meetings

UTVA Members Present	
Fred M. Poe	Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)
Mary Lee Fielder	American Ex- Prisoners of War
Frank Forbes	DAV
Dean Tuttle	American Legion
John Krenson	Operation Stand Down Tennessee
Vicki Stinnett	WAVES National
W. Shawn Poston	Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)
Ron Bottomley	AMVETS
Barry Rice	TN State Council on Vietnam Veterans
George "Mike" Scott	TN County Veterans Service Officer Association and VFW

TDVA Members Present	
Many-Bears Grinder	Commissioner
Wendell Cheek	Deputy Commissioner
Yvette Martinez	Assistant Commissioner – Outreach & Communications

I. Call To Order

At 1:00 p.m., Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder took roll call and confirmed that a quorum was present. Commissioner Grinder called the meeting to order with a welcome to all attendees.

II. Invocation

Assistant Commissioner Mark Breece gave the invocation.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Grinder led the Pledge of Allegiance for the meeting.

IV. Presentation of Agenda

Commissioner Grinder reviewed the meeting agenda.

V. Approval of Minutes – April 16, 2015

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from the previous meeting.

VI. Briefings:

Commissioner Grinder started the meeting by inviting **Director John Patrick** to deliver his presentation.

Director John Patrick accepted the floor delivering a presentation regarding the current state of VISN-9. Director Patrick took a moment to address the far reaching impact that the VA has on the lives of Veterans; Specifically noting the medical advances that have been made due to medical training at VA centers. According to Director Patrick the need for Veterans care is increasing as the age of the Veteran population increase. This in turn causes a dramatic increase in the number of Veterans claims as well as a rise in the average disability rating. Director Patrick's presentation provided data regarding the structure the Federal system and its ability to meet the medical needs of Veterans. The presentation is available in its entirety on the Tennessee Department of Veteran Services website for review.

Commissioner Grinder allowed several short questions following the presentation. **Shawn Poston** with Wounded Warrior Project asked the Director if there were plans for a DBQ clinic. **Director Patrick** responded stating that he was not aware of plans within the VISN-9 system but he would check into it. **Barry Rice** with Vietnam Veterans addressed the Director to see what was being done to address the perception of the VA. Director Patrick broadly responded stating in general, that by providing good care the perception would address itself; as well as encouraging transparency with the medical system.

Commissioner Grinder thanked Director Patrick for his presentation and turned the floor over to **General Cavin**, Congressional Medal of Honor Character Development Program. LTG. (Ret) Cavin addressed the meeting regarding his affiliation with Nashville Salutes, an organization that pays tribute to Medal of Honor Recipients. The organization will be in Nashville August 6th through the 8th of 2015; stressing that it is a unique opportunity to have 79 living recipients in Nashville. General Cavin would like to use this opportunity to have recipients educate about the sacrifices that are given for this distinguished award, conduct town hall meetings, as well as fundraising for the organizations Character Development Program, a specific education curriculum that teaches the values of Medal of Honor recipients. A specific literary was covered regarding the organizations visit. A website was provided for further information <http://www.cmohfoundation.org/#!nashville-salutes-gala/c8ph>

General Cavin opened the floor for questions. **Commissioner Grinder** inquired as to if the Development program was available for home school students. General Galvin clarified that it is available at no cost to all students in a downloadable format. Commissioner Grinder thanked the General for his commitment and praised the importance of the program.

Commissioner Grinder turned the floor over to **Barry Rice**, Vietnam Veterans of America Agent Orange and Post Traumatic Stress Town Hall Meetings.

Mr. Rice briefed on several issues addressed by the Vietnam Veterans Organization and presented information regarding town hall meetings mission of educating about Agent Orange

exposure, PTSD, and suicide prevention. The presentation is available in its entirety on the Tennessee Department of Veteran Services website for review.

Commissioner Grinder thanked Mr. Rice for his commitment and participation. Recent events and their success regarding the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services as well as Upcoming events were briefly discussed. The commissioner addressed the new Montgomery County State Veterans Home and the design of the new facility. A date was not given for the official ribbon cutting. One will be announced at a later date.

Veteran's education was addressed including the existence of criteria required to be considered a Veterans campus. Austin Peay as well as Pellissippi state have met the criteria and have been added to the list of Veteran approved campuses. The first Veterans Student summit was a success and the details of the event were provided. The education event to be held on Jul 21st 2015 was announced and the purpose of the event was covered. It was specifically noted that no booths would be allowed but the Veterans service organizations could provide literature to be handed out. Hours would be from 10am to 2pm.

Commissioner Grinder provided an update on our cemetery facilities. Issues addressed were headstone alignment, Parkers Crossroads design and approval, expansion of the Memphis facility, and kiosk for visitors of all of the cemeteries.

It was noted that appointments for representatives for UTVA are due August of each year. Commissioner Grinder reiterated the criteria for the submissions. Dates for subsequent meetings were announced.

Assistant Commissioner of Communications Yvette Martinez accepted the floor to address General Huber's participation in education initiatives and the availability of connecting with Veterans Service organizations. Mrs. Martinez noted that our website will be temporarily disabled and if information is required from prior UTVA meetings our department can be contacted directly.

VII. Unfinished Business:

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

VIII. New Business:

There was no new business to discuss.

IX. Future Meetings: September 9, in Room 31 in Legislative Plaza from 1-3pm

X. Announcements:

John Krenson, Director of Operation Stand Down, accepted the floor to communicate success regarding their spring Stand Down event. It was noted that OSD has also received CARF certification.

Frank Forbes, DAV, made a brief announcement regarding reports submitted to UTVA as well as upcoming meetings and conventions.

George "Mike" Scott announced the convention for VFW that will take place June 18 through the 20th.

XI. Adjournment:

Commissioner Grinder adjourned the meeting.

United Tennessee Veteran Association
Sign-in Sheet
Tuesday, June 2, 2015

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>E-mail</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
1) SHAWN POSTON	Wounded Warrior Project	sposton@woundedwarriorproject.org	904-673-4758
2) Ron Bottomley	AmVets	rbottomley@outlook.com	615-649-8892
3) Fred M Poe	AFSIZ		615-641-6249
4) BARRY RICE	TN STATE COUNCIL VIETNAM VETS	barryrice.tsc@gmail.com	615-479-8619
5) Vicki Stinnett	WAVES Unit #94 Mil Women Across the Nation	Vmstinnett@aol.com	301/502-2639
6) George "Mike" Scott	TN County Veteran Service Officers Association	Macovet@nctc.com	615 666-4480
7) George "Mike" Scott	VFW	Macovet@nctc.com	615 666-4480
8) MARYLEE FIELDER	AM. Ex-POW	marylee@BellSouth.net	615-889-5689
9) JOHN RAENSHAW	OSDTN	JOHN@OSDTN.ORG	615-275-1981
10) FRANK FORBES	DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS DEPT. OF TN	ssforbes1@bellsouth.net	615-834-4077

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Sign-in Sheet
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<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>E-mail</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
11) DEAN TUTTLE	AMERICAN LEGION	Adjutant@TNlegion.org	615-391-5088
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