

KNOXVILLE REGIONAL VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL



TNVHC
.ORG

Council Minutes

January 8, 2015 – 11:00 a.m.

Elmcroft of West Knoxville Sunroom

8024 Gleason Drive

Knoxville, TN 37919

- 1) Call to Order by Ed Junod
- 2) Prayer by Ron Morton & Pledge of Allegiance by Dennis Lovin
- 3) Roll Call
 - a) Present: Ed Junod, Fred Owens, Frank Vollmer, Ron Morton, Henry Cleveland, Jesse Rivera, Howard Jenkins, Dennis Lovin, Randy Scott, Robert Hatley, Excused: Randy Baxter, Robert Cooter, Charles Dabbs.
 - b) December's Council meeting was cancelled and no elections were held. The current officers agreed to stand for re-election for one year. There were no other nominations for officer positions. Three new members were nominated to Council seats, presented themselves and gave a short bio. Unanimously elected are: Robert Hatley, Dennis Lovin and Randy Scott.
 - c) A review of Council By-laws will discuss procedures for office rotation and terms.
 - d) Thanks to all council members for their dedication and commitment to helping veterans.
- 4) Welcome/Opening Remarks by Ed Junod. He announced that the Council Officers and VA Liaisons conducted a telephone conference call to review agenda items in an effort to have all parties better prepared for the full Council meeting. Both sides feel it was very productive and agreed to add Rob Campbell to the future calls.
- 5) Previous Council meeting minutes: November 13, 2014, Accepted as presented
- 6) Guests
 - a) VISN 9
 - i) Robert Campbell, Deputy Mental Health Officer VISN 9
 - b) VA Liaisons
 - i) Mountain Home VAMC ACOS Mental Health Dr. Heidi Vermette
 - ii) Mountain Home VAMC Deputy ACOS Mental Health Dr. Patrick Sloan
 - c) VA Guest
 - i) Mountain Home VAMC Homeless Programs Coordinator Joan LePage
 - ii) Knoxville Outpatient Clinic Local Recovery Coordinator Jonathan Hartsell
 - d) Dandridge Veteran
 - i) Johnny Shultz – is a former Army Captain.
- 7) “Recovery & Resiliency (R&R) Support Group” 3rd meeting with Dr. Richardson 12-01-14
 - i) Lexington VAMC Psychiatric inpatient services four (3-4) week delay
 - ii) Need to modify slow process from KOPC
 - iii) Extensive discussion regarding local vet referred by KOPC Clinician to Mountain Home VAMC for in-house treatment at Lexington facility. No action was taken for

Council Minutes
January 8, 2015 – 11:00 a.m.

3-4 weeks. On a request from the Council, Dr. Vermette identified the problem at VAMC and corrected the block. Sometime later, the veteran was told he would not

be accepted at Lexington and that other programs were available to him. He was not informed of what and where the “other programs” were, and no communication was sent to the referring clinician. VISN9 and VAMC will review policies and procedures with Lexington to prevent repeat events. The Council was informed that the POC for residential treatment at Mountain Home is Dean Huber.

8) Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) discussion

On November 13, 2014 the council requested a small roundtable/workgroup meeting be held as soon as possible. The Veterans Treatment Court and Mentors need to work with the VA to establish a policy and procedure to communicate with each other, the clinicians and the KOPC and VAMC. The Council understands and respects the concern over privacy and confidentiality, but the inability to communicate in some fashion is detrimental to the care and recovery of our veterans. The request for a meeting was repeated. The Council recognizes the efforts of Torrie Dorschug and Joan LePage to serve specific veterans that are referred to them and extends our appreciation.

9) Local Recovery Coordinator (LRC) introduction

Mr. Jonathan Hartsell was introduced and acknowledged he will be working with KOPC. He was welcomed as a needed and necessary addition to our area veterans.

Items 10 and 11 were not addressed due to time constraints and will be carried over.

10) Veterans Choice Card Temporary Program

11) Unresolved issues:

- a) Peer Support
- b) Travel pay

12) VA Steps House

- a) The Knox County Veterans Treatment Court Judge Cerny and Court Director Ron Hanaver requested help with dealing with the VA Steps House. Steps’ management is not cooperative and have not provided service or support to the VTC Court judicial members.
- b) The Knox County VTC mentors have heard of numerous negative comments from current and previous justice involved veterans (JIVs). The JIV has no way to receive or accept telephone calls with their mentors. Steps is very restrictive about participant outside communication. One of the fundamental components of the VTC are the mentors. Currently the mentors are unable to speak with the JIV.
- c) Steps is a private, non-profit organization that has a VA grant to provide housing and supportive services to Veterans. Ms. LePage is the Homeless Coordinator for Mt Home VA Medical Center Ms. Joan LePage will look into the issues raised by the Court and mentors.

13) Adjournment at 12:40 on a motion by Ron Morton and seconded by Henry Cleveland.