

**Southwestern Veterans' Center**  
**Advisory Council Meeting**  
**January 16, 2026**

**Advisory Council Members Present:**

James Lamison, AMVETS  
Matthew Zamosky, PASACDV  
Edward Hanke, Disabled American Veterans (online)  
Thomas Tallon, Military Officers Assoc. of America  
Paul Kennedy, TAL  
Ken Vybiral, American Legion  
Tim Sager, Secretary, Keystone Paralyzed Veterans (online)  
Cassie Betzler, Commandant  
Dr. Blinn, Medical Director(online)  
Cheri McAfee, Assistant to the Commandant  
Barbara Raymond, Director of State Homes  
Maureen Weigl, Adjunct General  
Travis Davis, Executive Director of State Homes  
Julia Myers, Admissions Coordinator  
Michael Reinmund, Representing  
    Senator Devlin Robinson(online)

**Advisory Council Members Excused**

Rommel Dacanay, BVA  
Traci Nuzzo-Land, Director of Nursing  
Erin Rakow, Deputy Commandant  
William Roland, Vice President, VFW  
Kenneth Stubbs, Resident Representative  
Gary Anspach, Marine Corp League

**Advisory Council Members Absent**

None

**Others Present**

**Others Excused**

*John R. Pippy, Major General, PAARNG*  
*Adjunct General*  
Representative LaTasha Mayes

**Visitors**

- Barbara McMillan

- Mark Ellis, Resident
- Diane Glass, Resident relative
- Lamont Pierce, resident

#### **CALL TO ORDER:**

- *Meeting was called to order by Mr. Tallon at 10:00 AM.*
- *A Moment of Silence was held*
- *Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

#### **ROLL CALL:**

- *Roll call was taken*

#### **SWEARING IN CEREMONY**

- Thomas Tallon, Military Officers Assoc. of America
- Matthew Zamosky, PASACDV
- Paul Kennedy, TAL
- Ken Vybiral, American Legion
- James Lamison, AMVETS

#### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

- *Accepted as read*

#### **REMARKS FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR:**

- *Starting Christmas Eve we had a bit of an outbreak of the flu and covid/6 residents confirmed to have as well as 7 staff*
- *Flu – 8 residents/5 staff members*
- *Covid residents moved to red unit/12/24 to 1/12*
- *Required masking 12/29 through 1/15 – optional beginning today*
- *Vaccines – 156 flu vax 88%/covid 126 residents vax 71%/RSV 152 85%*
- *Vaccines are always optional*

#### **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL MEMBER STATUS**

- *Terms reviewed*

#### **ADMISSIONS & MARKETING UPDATE:**

- *15 admissions since October*
- *5 more in January*
- *10 for February*
- *Looking to schedule into March*
- *Attended 14 marketing events*

### **REMARKS FROM THE DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL:**

- *General Pippy was unavailable today*
- *Our outreach center has been open and have had numerous walk ins*
- *New look to our vet connect page starting next week – more user friendly*
- *Travis will speak about the new report we will be doing*
- *You have not had any representatives attend in the 5 years I have been here, we will be working on that to get attendance*
- *Mr. Kennedy spoke about the farm show – are you aware of the outdoor show, the VFW and American Legion set up booths at that show/ we have service officers there to answer questions – would be nice to have the state show up*

### **REMARKS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF STATE HOMES:**

- *A few notes on Act 20 which has impacted the composition of the Advisory Council Board – the length of the terms has changed – the six homes held special elections – the nominations are in the Governors office at the current time*
- *Act requires the Advisory Council to assess the following areas of the home – care/operations/compliance*
- *This year we are looking to change our Agenda a bit to cover the recommendations and assessments*
- *Tom Tallon – we will have a draft to submit to the general?/ Travis replied that legal is currently reviewing at the moment and it is sitting with the Adjunct General – once approved will be sent out to council members for their review*
- *Deadline is January 30<sup>th</sup> for the report*
- *This report will be sent out electronically – in the future we will build upon the report of this year for next year*
- *Barb commented that that the report will follow the Fiscal year at the current time– report will follow July 1 through June 30, but stated that this could change in the future*
- *Hollidaysburg Advisory Council spoke about forming a subcommittee to help with the assessments*
- *Tom Tallon suggested putting the four points on the agenda so that they can be discussed during meetings*
- *1167 from the census across the six homes/our admissions teams are busy getting new residents*
- *Wait list around 240*
- *Our current head of the personnel office is retiring this year, Mike Hoover, this position should be posted in the next month in order that his replacement can spend time with Mike before retiring*
- *Construction – Hollidaysburg coming along/ ribbon cutting approximately May – moving along trying to get inspections etc*
- *First week of February all 6 Commandants will be attending NSAVH conference which will be in Washington DC*
- *Travis referenced the fire which occurred in the nursing home in Philly caused by a gas leak – we were in touch with the provider to help with any veterans associated with the home if needed – we do a good job with our emergency procedures/we are confident with how are handling now but always look for ways to improve*

### **REMARKS OF THE DIRECTOR OF STATE HOMES:**

- *Active outbreak at SouthEast with 14 covid positive residents/but coming down*
- *Hollidaysburg is in the midst of a flu outbreak/staff wise only 4*
- *Seasonal perspective – we stock anti virals and IV fluids in preparation of the season*
- *One resident hospitalized due to return soon*
- *Marketing events – decrease in events over the holidays/did a lot more holiday fun things/adjunct general visited each home*
- *Gearing up for springtime holidays in the homes at the current time*
- *Menu changes – we did do a fall winter menu change a couple of months ago/have gotten lots of feed back to update for the upcoming spring/summer menu*
- *We are aware of the concerns from residents*
- *We are in the process of reviewing the policies and procedures and the EPP plans*
- *We do proactively act to mitigate as much as we can*
- *we self report a lot of issues to the DOH/so sometimes the DOH will visit us for an inspection to make sure we are doing that we say we are doing*
- *we are preparing for our VA inspection at a few of our homes at the current time, probably in February*
- *governing body meeting – to review what goals on in the facilities for any concerns*
- *Every home will now have their own Facebook page, the are currently under an encompassed page/every home will have one for more diverse posts via the homes*

### **REPORT OF THE COMMANDANT:**

- *178 is our active census*
- *Commandant went over the specifics of the report*
- *Had our vote for additional advisory council members – introduced them as they were present*
- *Construction – biweekly meetings being held – currently waiting for VA grant list to see if we can start*
- *Went over volunteer information*
- *Blue donation bin in parking lot – anything that goes into bin, gets picked up and get money for our welfare fund – looking to put a 3<sup>rd</sup> bin for collection*
- *Dr Blinn inquired whether the facebook pages will have links on the pages for the public to get to a job application/availability*
- *Barb answered that yes, there will be various links for things*
- *Dr. Blinn inquired as to whether other homes utilize red zone; Barb stated yes,—whenever we can yet a little more bed locked at other homes*

### **REPORT OF DEPUTY COMMANDANT**

- *Not present*

**REPORT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- *Mr. Vybril – caveat on what General Weigl mentioned – every year at our post we host a childrens party – each child gets a gift card – we have 10 left over cards for \$25 for target to donate to Southwest*
- *Mr. Kennedy– thank everyone here, the American Legion had their annual tour of Southwest as well as visited all 6 homes/we want to thank you – we did not get one complaint – thank you for your hospitality and all you do for our veterans*
- *Mr. Zamosky – nothing at the current time*
- *Mr. Lamison – nothing at this time*
- *Mr. Sager – nothing to add at this time*
- *Mr. Hanke – nothing to report at this time*
- *MR. Tallon – thank you to the future members for volunteering your time*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- *Nothing at this time*

**NEW BUSINESS**

- *Nothing at this time*

**GOOD OF THE COUNCIL:**

- *Nothing at this time*

**REPORT OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- *Nothing at this time*
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**ADJOURNMENT:**

*A motion was made by Mr. Zamosky and seconded by Mr. Vybiral to adjourn at 10:48*

*The meeting adjourned at 10:48 AM.*

***Next meeting will be held April 17, 2025  
at 10:00 AM***