

**Board of Trustees**  
**Meeting held via Zoom video/phone**  
**11 August 2021**  
**1000 hours**

**Present:**

Colonel Joseph Krawczyk, President  
 Colonel Gary DeGasta, Vice President  
 Michael Klopchin, Secretary  
 Kent Butterfield  
 Jennifer Carmichael  
 Arthur Charron

Tom Costello  
 CPT Brenda Cruickshank  
 Charly Dickerson  
 BMCS Michael diMonda  
 LTC David Fabricius  
 Robert Hooper

Dr. Jacqueline Kelly  
 CAPT Peter Niles  
 Jamie Percey  
 Joyce Scribner  
 Robert E. Burke, Director, Vermont Office  
 of Veterans Affairs

**Excused:**

**Guests:** Asa Morin, COO  
 Jon Endres, Environmental  
 Shannyn MacVicar, Cardinal Unit Mgr  
 Dr. Peter King, Provider  
 Robyn Boland, Executive Assistant

Jean Cody, QA Nurse  
 Tonya Goodell, HR  
 Lisa Sloan, DAV  
 Patricia Crossman, DNS

Melinda Crawl, Marketing  
 Steve McClafferty, Finance  
 Christina Cosgrove, Social Services  
 Representative. Mary Morrissey

The meeting was called to order by President Krawczyk at 1000.

Roll call was taken by Secretary Klopchin and a quorum was announced.

Motion made by Ms. Jennifer Carmichael to accept the 9 June 2021 minutes as written, second by Mrs. Joyce Scribner. Motion carried.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<b>PRESIDENT WELCOME</b>	President welcomed the Board, members of the staff and Lisa Sloan of the DAV to the meeting.	<b>INFO</b>
TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<b>COMMITTEE REPORTS BUDGET AND FINANCE</b>	Thanked the Executive Committee for the meeting template as very helpful and reviewed their two reports submitted. The Actin Items from the Strategic Plan provided as a guide for the Committee are also very helpful with the meetings. Committee will establish guidelines that will be flexible as to focus of direction going and develop a base plan for the Committee on a revenue and expense criteria. One meeting was held in person in Clarendon Springs. Organizing the meeting went well.	<b>INFO</b>
<b>BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS</b>	Chairperson reported he had an on-site visit to VVH with Jon Endres and Asa Morin and found it to	

	<p>be extremely beneficial to get a good overview of both inside and outside of the facility. Unfortunately, was unaware of the limits to communicate with the other two members of the committee so was unable to inform them of the on-site meeting in time. Spoke of the deep concern and genuine care shown by Asa, Jon, and other staff for the residents. Reviewed topics brought up in the two reports submitted. To Capitalize on the Bennington Asset is their committee goal. Mentioned that some various sources of funding can only be used for direct patient care. Would like to research other avenues for funding. Also try to use the renovation on American as a selling tool to attract new employees, and keep current ones, as it being a state-of-the-art facility to work at. Need to review Emergency Preparedness and see if there is a plan in case there was a mass casualty event either at VVH or the High School, where would a helicopter be able to land? Plan for the worse and hope for the best. National Guard will be moving to another site eventually.</p>	
<p><b>OUTREACH AND MARKETING</b></p>	<p>Reported on importance of improving communication through social media. Looking into possibility of having a financial calculator on the VVH website regarding cost of staying at VVH. Having input provided by staff member, Melinda Crowl, was very helpful. Will be collaborating with groups and businesses to get the word out about VVH, including attending the Rutland Fair.</p>	
<p><b>QUALITY ASSURANCE</b></p>	<p>Chairperson had a telephone meeting with LTC Fabricius to review the QAPI (Quality Assurance &amp; Performance Improvement) meeting agenda, how the program works, abbreviations and medical terminology. Also reported they discussed their role with Strategic Plan goals 7 and 8, Enhance Leadership and Cultivate an Excellent Team.</p>	
<p><b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b></p>	<p>Functional areas of the Executive Committee were discussed in their meeting: Operations- Current committee structure and expectations; Education and Training- To be held October 26-27. Provided a brief summary of plans thus far. That committee will be meeting August 24 with the presenter, Dan Vogt, to work on the agenda further. Once the agenda is set, will invite the Governor and/or Susanne Young as guest speakers for Tuesday dinner and David Borsykowsky to present on Wednesday on the Open Meeting Law; Ombudsman Program- New forms distributed. No concerns have been submitted. An issue that is being monitored regarding Congress considering pulling funds from State Nursing Homes and directing it to home care programs, which could have an impact on State Veteran Homes.</p>	
<p><b>STRATEGIC COMMITTEE</b></p>	<p>Mr. Dickerson reported has not yet received written clarification from Mr. Borsykowsky, Attorney</p>	

<p><b>OVERALL IMPRESSIONS</b></p>	<p>General's office, on the Open Meeting Law as it pertains to the number of members (8) on the Strategic Planning Committee and warning of committee meetings. Committee will wait to meet until they receive further guidelines (in writing).</p> <p>President Krawczyk called on each Board member to give their opinion of how the Committee meetings went. Comments included: Looks promising, good committee structure and input, kept on task, looked at pro's and con's to items in the Strategic Plan where may have difficulties and discussed how to overcome them, worked good together, very productive, staff will be beneficial and are very knowledgeable, will work well, working on communication methods with members, comfortable working with staff, amenable, efficient, good framework, good progress made, appreciates new format, learning curve and will grow into it, this process forced committees to look at their functional areas, and pulls committees together working on the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Going forward, will have the Chairpersons submit their reports to both President Krawczyk and Secretary to the Board, Robyn Boland.</p> <p>For the next meeting, will use this same time-frame format and then will adjust from there.</p>	
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION</b></p>
<p><b>MENTORSHIP PROGRAM</b></p>	<p>President Krawczyk asked each of the new Board members how their mentorship has been going. Mr. Costello reported his mentor has been very helpful; CAPT Niles reported that it is evolving, is trying to go into it with a fresh set of perspectives and has a good relationship with his mentor; Ms. Carmichael reported hasn't had to reach out to her mentor for quite some time as was very informative and helpful early on; and LTC Fabricius feels he will get more out of it once he can tour the facility and meet everyone. Will schedule Orientation with the 3 new Board members once not in outbreak status.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION</b></p>
<p><b>OTHER BUSINESS</b></p>	<p>Had hoped to hold this meeting at the American Legion but found room would only fit the Board members with social distancing, so would not have room for staff and guests/visitors. It was suggested to possibly check into the Elks as a possible site for future meetings as larger in size.</p> <p>Mr. Hooper reported the House has passed the Joint Nurses' Compact which could be a plus and a minus for us as will impact where we will/can advertise and could affect/impact Vermont nurses going to neighboring states (better pay) and them coming here. Mr. Hooper also reported there is a Summer Study Committee working on the change in the Retirement Plan which could also affect recruiting and retaining staff. Will look into whether could have the CEO testify on the impact this would have on us.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RECESS</b></p>	<p>Mrs. Scribner commented on Board should be thankful to the CEO in her role as President of NASVH (National Association of State Veterans Homes) for being able to share information we would otherwise not have. President Krawczyk said that he just received an email from the CEO this morning stating that she has been assigned by NASVH to be the Correspondent to the United States Congress so will be doing testimony on issues that affect State Veteran Homes with Congress and that the CEO's role as President of NASVH has not affected her performance at VVH.</p> <p>President Krawczyk called recess at 1103 until 1300.</p>	
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION</b></p>
<p><b>PRESIDENT</b></p>	<p>President Krawczyk called the meeting back to order at 1300. Welcomed Representative Mary Morrissey to the meeting, and Lisa Sloan, DAV.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION</b></p>
<p><b>CHARLY DICKERSON ELECTION</b></p>	<p>As Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, Mr. Dickerson announced he made an executive decision to not have the committee meet since there were no other Board members who expressed a desire to be nominated to an office, and none of the existing incumbents expressed a desire not to continue.</p> <p>On behalf of the Nominating Committee/process, Mr. Dickerson made a motion to nominate Joseph Krawczyk for President, seconded by Mr. diMonda. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, moved to vote. None opposed. The motion carried.</p> <p>On behalf of the Nominating Committee/process, Mr. Dickerson made a motion to nominate Gary DeGasta for Vice President, seconded by Ms. Carmichael. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, moved to vote. None opposed. The motion carried.</p> <p>On behalf of the Nominating Committee/process, Mr. Dickerson made a motion to nominate Michael Klopchin for Secretary/Treasurer, seconded by Mr. Butterfield. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, moved to vote. None opposed. The motion carried.</p> <p>On behalf of the Nominating Committee/process, Mr. Dickerson made a motion to nominate Brenda Cruickshank as a member of the Executive Committee, seconded by Mr. Percey. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, moved to vote. None opposed. The motion carried.</p> <p>After Mr. Dickerson recused himself for the other position on the Executive Committee, President Krawczyk made a nomination for the second member at large on the Executive Committee to be Charly Dickerson. Mr. Klopchin concurred, seconded by Ms. Carmichael. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, moved to vote. None opposed. The motion carried.</p>	<p><b>CLOSED</b></p>

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>HOME REPORTS COO</b></p>	<p>Reported the overall vaccination rate is 71%. LNA/direct care staff 56%. Nurses/RN's/LPNs at 43%. We continue to make the vaccine available, discuss benefits and clear up misconceptions. We offer the vaccine in a timely manner to any new admissions. The new press release that the Governor is going to mandate the vaccine does not affect us as we already do weekly testing for any unvaccinated staff.</p> <p>Have a steady flow of referrals and bringing in several new admissions a week without overloading staff. Many referrals have behavioral issues. Being mindful of staffing issues.</p> <p>Call out rates are about the same as last year.</p> <p>Received one bid for the feasibility study and have passed that onto the Executive Committee to complete the scoring and see if suitable for the needs of the Board.</p> <p>As stated earlier, the CEO is at the NASVH convention. She will be assuming the role of Liaison Committee Chair for NASVH so will continue to have input and ability to advocate for policy changes.</p> <p>Pinnacle reports continue to come in monthly, generally positive. We are trying to implement a separate survey for new admissions to obtain feedback from residents and their family.</p> <p>Was necessary to cancel the Re-Creation event due to the current outbreak. Hope to have a car show in September for the resident. That will not be open to the public. Trying to arrange a unit-based fishing derby as can't have all visitors and public come together at the same time. Timing will depend upon our outbreak and visit status. Requested to have the Activities Director contact the Elks to coordinate this.</p> <p>Staff are coming back positive for covid even though vaccinated and this is partly due to the delta variant circulating, as it will affect 1 out of 1,000 vaccinated people. The goal of the vaccine is to prevent death or serious illness.</p> <p>President Krawczyk requested to present a Board coin to the young man that donated back his portion of the 50/50 raffle at the American Legion Post 13 event. The COO reported that we did present him with a CEO coin and will make arrangements for this as well.</p> <p>There are no known issues of the teams using the sports fields (and roaming onto our grounds).</p> <p>The Farmer's Market is going well and some of the residents have even been able to go over to it.</p> <p>Mr. Costello inquired if VVH has a position on any mandate to vaccinate. Dr. King has had regular communication both with the Governor's office and Dr. Levine regarding our position on vaccination of our staff. Guidance must come from the State as we are a state facility with state employees and state employees are represented by the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Changes would have to be made in that agreement before any mandate could come down from the State. One Board member stated that the vaccine is not FDA approved. So far, the Board has not taken a position. If the Board wanted to mandate it, it would have to be a request of administration and negotiated as a change in working conditions through the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Mr. Costello suggested that the issue be</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p> <p><b>OPEN</b></p>

<p><b>PATRICIA CROSSMAN</b> <b>DIRECTOR OF NURSING</b></p>	<p>considered by one of the committees, the Board should take a position on it and take it forthright. The Quality Committee to look into this.</p> <p>Staffing continues to be an issue and utilizing agency staffing due to their availability and have supported us through the whole pandemic to help us to meet our staffing needs. Starting an LNA class soon and will have another this fall. Had 6 resignations in last 2 months. Have had some applications and try to interview them within 24 hours of their application. Two previously retired nurses have returned in a temporary role, which is significant. In contact with Southwestern Vermont Technical Center with their LNA certification class and presenting what it is like to work at VVH, type of caring and empathetic staff we are looking for, meeting, and supporting their program with the hopes of benefiting by getting some of their certified LNA's.</p> <p>It's a big impact if we have a positive covid member of the clinical team (for a minimum of 14 days). Getting LNA's from Agency staffing but requires extra monitoring of them. Conducting the covid PCR testing is a time-consuming process when using Broad. Praised staff for handling the testing.</p> <p>Restorative Nursing Program has started. This helps ensure that residents don't regress after therapy. Currently have 4 residents on one-on-one. Utilizing the Buddy program and continue interviewing for it. Nothing significant with self-reports and staff doing great with identifying issues and having huddles. Staff morale goes up and down with constant changes with outbreaks (wearing PPE's), but continue to do an outstanding job.</p> <p>Continue to provide emails, alert messages, and zoom meetings for the families to keep them updated on the constant changes with visitation. Try to show them the regulations and explain the restrictions.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>
<p><b>DR. PETER KING</b> <b>MEDICAL DIRECTOR</b></p>	<p>The new Pharmacy Consultant Program is doing a great job-interfacing, reviews, and regimens. The dental program had a large back log during covid but trying to work on routine dental care now. Clinical Provider resources will be thin as one is retiring this fall and one will be out on leave. Stacey Whitten has made huge difference and administrative skills helpful. Looking into a Plan B just in case coverage becomes an issue. Will need to re-evaluate as it goes.</p> <p>As stated earlier, the vaccination rate is going up but there is still concern. We want to help protect our staff. President Krawczyk requested Dr. King to meet with the CEO and the Quality Assurance Committee to see if can develop a policy with our position on the vaccination with state employees. VVH has had 32 total covid cases, 7 of those residents (2 passed) and 25 staff.</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>
<p><b>MELINDA CROWL</b> <b>ADMISSION/MARKETING</b></p>	<p>Current census is 97 plus 5 in the DOM, averaging about 2 admissions per week. Waiting list has</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p>

<p><b>STEVE MCCLAFFERTY</b> <b>FINANCE</b></p> <p><b>JON ENDRES</b> <b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b></p>	<p>been reduced significantly. Many new admissions are locals as not many want to go too far from home. A lot are looking for assisted living because not able to get help at home. Majority of payer sources have been Medicaid, but several Medicare and service centered. President Krawczyk presented he feels the Board's position is that being the Vermont State Veterans' Home, if we have vacancies and don't have Vermont veterans waiting to get in, that we accept people from out of state and that we need to look at the payer source of those on other state Medicaids because we are one of the higher rates and feel we should be subsidized from other states in taking care of their veterans if we have Vermonters ready to come in. We are only accepting Vermont Medicaid as a payer source for state services at this time, and are very cautious with people coming from out of state, trying to not bring people in so they can automatically be switched over to Vermont Medicaid. Twenty-five percent of our funding has to come from the Vermont State legislature or could be threatened to close the Home. Many times we have to write off or forgive monies from out of state funding, or lack of it. It costs around \$600 a day to take care of a resident now due to covid, and the daily charge rate is \$315. The VA will pay costs for a resident at VVH if they have a 70% or more service-connected disability.</p> <p>Attending the Rutland Fair next week and then Champlain Valley Fair for a few days. Has shifted the advertising to Vermont (not the Albany area where some media coverage is from). Advertising with the Bennington Banner, Bennington Battle Day program, Garlicfest, fair programs, radio stations, Salute to the Troops, and more.</p> <p>Continue updating Facebook, reworking the website, Look Books and giveaways at the fairs. It was suggested to look into Vermont Veterans Facebook to post on.</p> <p>Requested information on our current demographics: approximate numbers are 12 from WWII, 10 Korean War, a few from the Gulf war and vast majority are from the Vietnam era.</p> <p>Doing well with donations. Had a large anonymous donation requesting the money to be distributed to three specific areas.</p> <p>Updated the Board on current projects. Russell Construction submitted the only bid for the Security Project. BGS (Buildings &amp; General Services) is working on finalizing the contract.</p> <p>Working on finalizing a request for proposals for the American &amp; East Wing Reconstruction Project. Then will go to a design team.</p> <p>Third project is the feasibility study for the boiler plant replacement and hope to get that out in next few months. Looking for best solution for replacing our existing oil-fired boilers with a new system and what will that system be. First step is the feasibility study, then design, and construction. When it is in the construction phase is when we look for VA grant funding. We have been under-budget for heating</p>	<p><b>INFO</b></p> <p><b>INFO</b></p>
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	<p>oil that last few years and hopefully will be this year as well.</p> <p>The RFP is mostly written for the Mobility Trail. Want to make sure have the funds to do the trail before submitting it. Would like to tailor the RFP at a cost per foot or 100 feet for the Mobility Trail and then can do in sections, if need be.</p> <p>Have installed smoking shelters in a couple of the courtyards and some metal awnings for outdoor visits. Also installing a semi-permanent awning on A-wing (sunshade) as previous one got damaged.</p> <p>We have 11 deer, plus 4 fawns, which is an ideal number for the yard as grass is actually growing now. Weather has been an issue for the haying but should be able to get one crop. The price of feed has gone up (more than doubled).</p>	
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>PUBLIC COMMENTS</b>	<p>Representative Mary Morrissey thanked for the comprehensive report today. Also thanked the staff and Board of Trustees for all they do.</p> <p>Lisa Sloan of the DAV also thanked for doing great job. Knows that families are frustrated with the changes but at least the notifications are getting out and are appreciated.</p> <p>Mr. Burke thanked everybody for the good information provided today.</p>	<b>INFO</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SESSION</b>	<p>A motion was made by Mr. Percey to go into Executive Session to discuss the contract with the Chamber of Commerce. The motion was seconded by CPT Cruickshank. The motion carried at 1425.</p> <p>A motion was made to exit Executive Session by Mr. Hooper, seconded by Mr. Percey. The motion carried at 1443.</p>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<p>Requested motion to table the discussion on the contract with the Chamber of Commerce and VVH. Motion made by Mr. Hooper, second by Mr. Charron. Motion carried. The item is tabled.</p>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	<p>With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Col. DeGasta, seconded by CPT Cruickshank. Motion carried and meeting adjourned.</p>	<b>CLOSED</b>

Meeting was adjourned at 1445. Education and Training 26-27 October 2021. Next Board meeting 8 December 2021.