



UNITED VETERANS COMMITTEE MINUTES

**14 November, 2017
GENERAL MEETING
09:00**

UNITEDVETERANSCOMMITTEE.COM

Meetings at VFW Post 9644
2680 W Hampden Ave
Englewood, CO 80110-1906
303-789-9733



1. Call to order – United Veterans Committee – President — Jim Craig
2. Invocation and Moment of Silence for Pow's and Mia's — 1st VP, Dennis Orr
3. Pledge of Allegiance – 2nd Vice President — Leanne Wheeler
4. Welcome – seven first-time attendees and visitors
5. Guest Speaker — Holly Hall, Volunteers of America — She would like vets to utilize their Center (including the mock interview/computer classes starting in February.) She is doing outreach to try to get veteran mentors for the 2nd Judicial District Veteran Treatment Court Program at the Lindsey-Flanigan Courthouse. She would like, at least, 15 vets to sign up.

Mark Lilevjen — Chairman, ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve) — Spoke about the Freedom Award Presentation and a handout was given to everyone in attendance which gave a history of ESGR and spoke about the Freedom Award being the highest award given by the U.S. Government to civilian employers. He introduced Jeff Wenaas, President and CEO of Hensel Phelps, a world renown construction company which has developed military hiring practices and was one of two Colorado recipients of the Freedom Award.

6. Roll Call and report— Membership Chair Gary Force — We welcomed yeo new members.
7. Secretary Report — Lori Derby — Minutes from the October meeting were posted on the UVC website, and they were passed.
8. Treasurer Report — Bernie Rogoff — After all expenses the UVC budget balance is \$15,950.00
9. Bylaw revision name change — The name of the UVC has been discussed and there is concern because it is confusing to have a committee of a committee. A name change was proposed to rename UVC to United Veterans Council. A motion was made to change the name and Steve Rylant agreed that United Veterans Committee is confusing. Ralph Bozella disagreed and stated that history would be lost if the name is

changed because, it is the "Committee" that speaks before the legislature. He believes that changing the name from "Committee" to "Council" creates more confusion. Bernie Rogoff agreed with Ralph Bozella and that it would be a miscalculation to change the name. Marvin Meyers agreed with Ralph's position and said that he has never found any confusion with United Veterans Committee since he has been the chair of the legislative committee. Dick Young said that the name has meant a lot but, he does not know of a committee of committees — organizations brought together as council of organizations.

There was much opposition to the name change. Steve Rylant suggested "Coalition" instead of "Council." The motion to change UVC's name was overwhelmingly defeated. Steve Rylant suggested a committee be appointed to evaluate the value of a name change.

UVC COMMITTEE REPORTS

10. State Legislative Committee — Dick Young — Introduced the new UVC legislative liaison, Alexandra Garza, who spoke about her major role to line up those to testify on issues. She spoke about legislative goals and priorities for 2018.

Steve Rylant — The Federal Legislative Committee met two weeks prior to the general meeting. Urged anyone who wants to add to the Federal legislative goals to come to the next meeting on November 30, 2017.

Ralph Bozella — Noted No. 15 on the draft for 2018 Federal Goals which talks about direct exposure to herbicide (Agent Orange) and the Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans who were exposed while serving in Vietnam.

James Gillespie, Community Impact and Government Relations representative for Mile High Behavioral Healthcare — Asked for UVC's support of HR4099: a bill to help support the dependent children of homeless veterans be extended. Mentioned that women veterans with children have a harder time finding housing. He urged UVC to write a letter of support to the Colorado Delegation regarding this matter. A motion was made and seconded that UVC will support the Veterans Care Improvement Act.

Wes Carter spoke about the Veteran-Directed Home and Community Based Services Program and everyone in attendance received a handout talking about how it works, how to apply and their goal.

11. UVC Banquet — Karen Hone — Nothing to report. Urged members to collect items for the silent auction.
12. Membership report — Gary Force

13. Area reps — Shelly, Phil, Lou, Tim —

Shelly — Announced that there will be a Veterans Day ceremony in Loveland and Greely. Shelly has also reached out to the State for contributions to vets.

Phil — Spoke about the vet's caucus in Colorado Springs and 5 sessions in January as part of the veteran's caucus.

14. Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs — Robbie Robinson — Application period opens on December 1st. Applications must be turned in by March 1st. Application for grants is to be brought into line with federal guidelines.

John Urquhart — Marine Trial Lawyer, Iraq War Fund — Urged everyone to join their fight against international terrorism for the benefit of our wounded veterans and Gold Star families.

Roslyn Beall, Program Coordinator, Peak Military Care Network — This organization connects the military, military families and vets to resources in the community to help with challenging circumstances. Their calls have more than doubled year-to-date. Their name and services are getting out in the community and service members and families are reaching out and getting the help they need.

15. Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs — Ben Mestas — Nothing announced.

VSOs, ASSOCIATES AND AFFILIATES

16. Department of Veterans Affairs — There are job fairs across the state and everything pertaining to jobs available to vets can be seen on jobsdav.org. A virtual job fair will be held on December 13th.

17. GOVERNOR AND CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS

a. Rep. Jared Polis — District Advocate — Stuart Feinhor

i. Jared introduced the 21st Century Veterans Conservation Corps Act, a bill that would put veterans back to work restoring and protecting American public lands and waters. Colorado sponsored legislation to help veterans access medical marijuana from VA. This could help many vets get off opioids. There have been 43 applications for service academies this year. First round of interviews will be Saturday, November 18th.

b. Rep. Mike Coffman — Constituent Advocate — Bert Potwin

i. HR-918, introduced by Rep. Coffman "Veteran Urgent Access to Mental Healthcare Act," passed the House on November 8, 2017. Now at Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.

18. State Veterans CLC Administration — Aaron Termain — \$13 million towards care.

19. State Veterans CLC Commission — Not in attendance.

20. VISN 19, VA Regional Office, VA Cemetery, ECHCH — VISN — Nothing to report.

VA Regional Office — New program RAMP (Rapid Appeals Modernization Program.)

Finding a way for appeals to be processed faster on UVC website.

Steve Best — Executive Director, NCA Continental District, Dept of Veterans Affairs — Contract was awarded in September 2017 to build Pikes Peak National Cemetery, Colorado Springs.

Construction to begin soon. Early turnover Fall 2018, when internments will begin.

Completion of cemetery in Fall 2019.

Joe Turnbach — Director, Ft. Logan National Cemetery — In October there were 354 internments — 133 caskets, 221 cremations. Flags are being placed on gravesites. Every family can place flags if they volunteer to pick them up.

21. Old Business — No old Business.

22. New Business — No new business.

23. UVC President's Comments and Announcements — Review legislative and federal goals and don't forget the Banquet.

24. Benediction — UVC 2nd Vice President — Leanne Wheeler

25. Adjourn — Next meeting date — December 12, 2017