

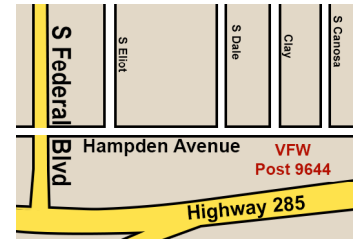


**UNITED VETERANS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**10 October, 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 — Dennis Orr
4. Welcome – six first-time attendees and visitors
5. Alannah Rice — Survivor Outreach Services Coordinator (SOS) — an Army program designed to provide long-term support to surviving families of fallen soldiers. SOS provides dedicated outreach and support, including financial counseling support for as long as the survivor desires. SOSS' goal is to host, at least, two events a year that are pertinent to survivors.

In December, SOS is hosting a holiday event for survivors at the DTC Double Tree. She asked for financial donations and gifts for children and youth survivors. The next event will be in June, 2018. Community resources that can help survivors in areas of finance, legal support, counseling, etc. will be invited to the June event.

6. Roll Call and report— Membership Chair Gary Force — We welcomed one new member.
7. Secretary Report — Lori Derby — Minutes from the September meeting were posted on the UVC website, and they were passed.
8. Treasurer Report — Bernie Rogoff — Not in attendance

UVC COMMITTEE REPORTS

9. State Legislative Committee — Bill Hanna — Addressed proposed 2018 State legislative goals and talked about a bill to strengthen the resource and information clearing house created by HB09-1209 but never funded by the legislature.
10. UVC Banquet — Karen Hone — mentioned the April banquet registration form and asked for volunteers to help with the silent auction. No one seemed interested in volunteering. Karen asked members to try and get donations for the silent auction.
11. Membership report — Gary Force
12. Student Veterans Committee — Not in attendance.

13. Area reps — Shelly, Phil, Lou, Tim — No one had anything to speak about.
14. Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs — Robbie Robinson — Not in attendance.
15. Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs — Ben Mestas — Announced meeting at Wings Over the Rockies on November 1 at 9a.m..

VSOs, ASSOCIATES AND AFFILIATES

16. Josh Kuchl — President — Task Force: ISO — Will be conducting an intro to photography course on October 28 at VFW Post 1. They are always available to photograph activities and events of other VSOs.

Shelley Poland — co-founder Healing Warriors Program — Have provided over 10,000 sessions in healing touch, acupuncture and craniosacral therapy. The Star Spangled Gala will be on October 14th.

Jessica LaBudda — Outreach Program Specialist — Denver Veterans Center, Dept of VA Veterans centers are counseling and resource centers located throughout the nation that provide free, confidential counseling to vets and family members who have deployed to a combat theater, as well as, MST survivors. They also provide bereavement counseling to loved ones of service members who died while serving. Trick or Treat open house at the Veterans Center 2-4-port.m. October 31. 7465 E 1st Ave, Suite B, Denver, CO.

17. State Veterans CLC Commission — Karen Kowalski — Vice Chair — No report.

GOVERNOR AND CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS

a. Sen. Michael Bennet — Constituent Advocate, Alisha Andrews

- i. Issued a statement to the announcement that the Dept of Veterans Affairs has awarded a construction contract for the new Pikes Peak National Cemetery in Colorado Springs. "Construction is a welcome step in the long wait that veterans and their families have endured to lay their loved ones to rest closer to home." The 374-acre cemetery will serve roughly 95,000 veterans.
- ii. Bennet secured four amendments and two provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2018 that passed in the Senate. These additions will benefit Colorado, from supporting veterans to bolstering innovation to addressing environmental contamination. The following are the amendments included in the NDAA for 2018: Clean Energy-Ready Veterans Pilot Program; World War II aviation Museum; Multi-Use SCIFs; National Space Defense Center. The language backed by Bennet included: Small Business Contracting and Water Containment.
- iii. Academy nominations applications will be closing October 2nd. If anyone has any questions on this, please feel free to contact Alisha Andrews at 303-455-7600.

18. State Veterans CLC Administration — Aaron Termain — Not in attendance

VISN 19, VA Regional Office, VA Cemetery, ECHCH — Renaye Murphy — Director — VBA Regional Office — Denver ROO, FY '17 — Completed 23,989 claims, 3,233 appeals, 7,300 interviews in Denver benefits counseling and 15,000 interviews in Colorado Springs. Fifteen outreach events were held in Rural Colorado and Denver. Homeless stand down date is November 2, 2017. National backlog is down to 77,515.

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.

Awaiting completion of phase II Environmental Assessment before beginning negotiations with the state of Colorado for purchase of approximately 50 acres to expand Ft. Logan National Cemetery.

Jim Ziruolo — VR&E Officer, Dept. of Veterans Affairs — Thanked everyone for allowing him to review the new Roadmap to Employment, a handout which was given to all members.

19. Joe Turnbach — Director, Ft. Logan National Cemetery — 4,302 interments in FY '17;

1,565 caskets, 1,961 cremations in the ground. Gravesite expansion is about finished by December. Joe also announced his retirement in December.

20. Old Business — No old Business.

21. New Business — No new business.

22. UVC President's Comments and Announcements

23. Benediction — UVC 1st Vice President — Dennis Orr

24. Adjourn — Next meeting date — November 14, 2017