

# Thurston County Veterans Advisory Board (TCVAB) Veterans Assistance Fund (VAF)



Sean “Smitty” Smith, Chair

Casey Wegner, Vice-Chair

Gary Walker, Past Chair/Secretary

# Thurston County Veterans Advisory Board (TCVAB)

The purpose of the Veterans Advisory Board is to advise the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) on the needs of local indigent veterans, the resources available to local indigent veterans and programs that could benefit the needs of local indigent veterans and their families.

The board is comprised entirely of veterans who are residents of Thurston County. A majority of the advisory board members must be elected officers or members of nationally recognized veterans organizations located in Thurston County (as evidenced by written notice from the nationally recognized veterans organization).

Currently, there are seven (7) members on the TCVAB.

# TCVAB History

## **2012 TCVAB Assessment**

- Found that some veteran service organizations were unaware of other organizations and/or services provided in the surrounding area.
- When services were provided, they were not connected or coordinated.

## **2013 Conference**

- Identified three major issues:  
(coordination of services, crisis management and transportation)

## **2015 Conference**

- Moved from concepts to planning to implementation

## **Lacey Veterans Services Hub**

- The TCVAB / City of Lacey began working together to address these issues, which eventually graduated into the Lacey Veterans Services Hub.

# Current TCVAB Mission

## **Lacey Veterans Services Hub (Support)**

- Meet Monthly with the HUB / City of Lacey
- Provide policy support as needed
- Work together to address issues

## **Regional Resource Guide**

- The Thurston County Veterans Resource Guide is currently being updated

## **Benefit Shopping**

- Some individuals access funds from multiple veteran organizations
- Reduces the availability of funds for other veterans in need
- Prevent this by communicating (effectively) and sharing information (legally)

# Current TCVAB Activities

## **Veterans Stand Down**

- Provide services, such as; haircuts, showers, breakfast, clothing, personal needs, Veteran services, Lunch, resume prep, Job Fair

## **Serving Those Who Served Conference**

- The purpose of the conference was to enhance collaboration and connection of all those who serve veterans and their families.

## **Veterans Rural Area Summit (Quarterly)**

- The intent is to create strategic partnerships with other counties to help maximize the assistance to our veteran community.

- Topics of discussion: Use of the Veterans relief fund, Housing, employment, mental health, medical assistance, VA claims, etc.

# Veterans Assistance Fund (VAF)

- Position associated with the VAF, located at the Lacey Veterans Services HUB.
- Is used for the relief of indigent qualified veterans, their families and the families of deceased veterans.
- VAF is funded by County property taxes. (1 & 1/8 cents per \$1k assessed value)
- VAF are dedicated funds and roll over each year. The funds are never transferred to county general funds.
- The VAF expenditure budget in 2016 was \$332,000 which served 449 veterans.

# Veterans Assistance Fund (cont.)

## **Eligibility**

- Meet the definition of "veteran" as defined by law including but not limited to having received an honorable discharge, general under honorable or a medical reason.
- Resident of Washington State for at least six months immediately prior to application.
- Resident of Thurston County for at least 31 days immediately prior to application.
- Income eligible.
- Able to provide documentation proving eligibility including verification of need. Funds are paid to business or vendor, not directly to the veteran.

## **Purpose**

- Financial Assistance provided primarily for rent/mortgage, utilities, food, burial/cremation.
- \$500 for a veteran, \$800 for a family of two or more and \$800 for burial/cremation (1yr.)

THANK YOU!!!  
Questions???



For more information, go to:

<http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ssveteran/index.html>