

SD MI 250: M 668/2005/Apr. 12-13



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
PUBLICATION

JUN 2005

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE LIBRARY
300 GOVERNORS DRIVE
PIERRE SD 57501-2294

Minutes

**South Dakota Veterans Commission Meeting
April 12-13, 2005 TREA Club Home
1981 Centre Street, Rapid City, SD 57703**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Chairman Gene Murphy. He led the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for a word of blessing from Jim Foster. Following that were a welcome to all attending, a thank you to TREA for hosting this Commission Meeting, and introductions around the room.

The first order of business was approval of the meeting agenda. It was moved by Locken, seconded by Evenson to approve the agenda, motion carried. It was then moved that the minutes of the February 78, 2005 Meeting be approved as published by Locken, seconded by Loudner, motion carried.

MG Mike Gorman was then asked for his report on the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

- The SDNG has about 22 soldiers in Iraq at this time and 75 in Afghanistan and this last group should be home in the end of April or beginning of May.
- Welcome Home celebrations have been held for the 2^o Battalion, 147th FA Brigade and the 153rd Engineers since the last meeting.
- Thank you to all for the Demob Station work with these two groups and for the carry over work with the Family Support Groups.
- Thank you to the American Legion, C/TVSO's and the Staff of Division of Veterans Affairs for all the work with the Veterans Forums, a great many veterans and families have been touched by these outreach efforts.
- The Claims Office workload is up! The message is out to veterans and families to make contact with the Veterans Affairs network.
- Approximately \$1.2 million has been paid out for the new bonus program. The average bonus payment is \$442.66.
- The concern about the VA Budget on the federal level must be voiced by the local veterans and groups as they contact their Congressional Delegates.
- Approximately 90% of the personnel of the SDNG have attained "veteran status". Now we need to be sure they receive all benefits to which they are entitled.
- TAP Workshops at Ellsworth especially for the SDNG are being held, especially for unemployed or those looking for a job. MG Gorman will ensure NG people have the opportunity for these TAP workshops, if they wish to attend. Mobile TAP's can also be offered by Todd Kolden of SD DOL.
- Future of SDNG is being considered because for the Air National Guard the F-16's will be "wornout" in 10 more years and will new fighters be introduced - what will the SDANG look like in 10 years? Also for the Army Guard, change is coming and the SDARNG must keep up and on top of change in order to have relevant units needed by the Army and still usable for the State Mission.

Comments for MG Gorman came from Jerry Lolley, who had a thank you from C/TVSO's for allowing them to be part of the demob teams. Another comment from Warren Aas was also a thank you for the opportunity to be part of the Demob Team. Dennis Foell added that these teams had been able to travel to the demob sites by plane (Governor's plane), and there were no complaints about that travel-as opposed to travel by car. Loren Murren also added a thank you for "bringing our service people home."

The VA Director reports were led off by Peter Henry from the Black Hills Health Care System. He introduced Steve DiStasio, the new Associate Director, recently retired from the US Air Force. (See attachment.)

Questions on 1) Beneficiary Travel-answer has been requested (See page 3.); 2) American Indian Awareness Training initiated here; 3) Urology backlog due to a physician on sabbatical; 4) CT Scanner-mobile, in the process of making agreements especially with IHS for greater use; 5) The Mission Clinic has been contracted out; 6) concern about IHS requiring a refusal letter from VA health care before he can be seen at IHS: is there something that can be done about this?; Budget and balancing the budget for Black Hills Health Care System; 8) the result of the CARES process-a. reduced surgery options at Hot Springs, they are working to be outpatient surgery and b. retained the critical care (ICU) for short term care at Hot Springs. State of Nebraska is also very important influence to maintain this health care for the veterans in all of Western Nebraska.

Gary Million had a handout and report on the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center. He is the Associate Director at that facility. (See attachment.)

Questions on 1) growth-are we looking to the future in order to be prepared?-There is on-going planning; the question is more realistically will the money be sufficient? 2) Hiring practice questions at Sioux Falls VA raised by Loudner which Million will probe. 3) Loudner also said a veteran due for surgery was given an incorrect medication which the local doctor discovered. 4) Service-Connected Veteran was told he couldn't be seen because he's Category 8 -but as service-connected, he is to be seen. 5) A new prosthetics doctor is presently finishing his training and will be soon coming on board at Sioux Falls. 6) With the work of Sue Haden from Black Hills the Sioux Falls VA is presently exceeding their former MCCF collections. 7) The number of veterans from Sioux Falls VA which are contracted out to Sioux Falls hospitals-imperative due to shortage of critical care beds at Minneapolis or Omaha in our Network-a request from Bill Locken. This information is provided by VAMC in Sioux Falls-Diverted Patients, FY 03-54; FY 04-38; FY 05 (as of June 1)-33. 8) MCCF collections are part of the "local" VA budget, but it seems a Center is penalized sometimes for doing a good job.

Dr. Randy Petzel from Network 23 presented next. Three things first: 1) Thank you for the opportunity to be at and report to the SD Veterans Commission. He's learned so much about SD; and the VA Leadership Management teams are top quality (Peter Henry/Joe DiStasio and Joe Dalpiaz/Gary Million) for they have created a good environment for veterans and employees; 2) Thank you for mobilizing people to meet the demobilizing soldiers. He credits Dennis and Staff for the State's success; 3) South Dakota has led the nation in outreach to the Native Americans, but that is not to say there's not still LOTS to do.

- Dr Petzel in the overall view said that "we will make it through, partly by making use of capital funds to meet operating budget items.
- The FY06 Budget (\$30.7 Billion) is an increase of 2.5% over this year which is actually less money when the normal cost increases are considered. This budget will include maintaining the suspension of Category 8; an annual enrollment fee; pharmacy co-pay; an unspoken hold on CBOC's; some long-term care proposals.
- For those involved in OIF/OEF whether Guard units or regular active duty service personnel, 15% of those involved in "fire fight" are expected to develop some trauma. People dealing with mental issues are often trying to stay in Guard or in the military-that is their job, however if treated for PTSD or other mental issues, they may face a mandatory discharge. The VA is trying to find ways to identify these persons, make contact with them, and "treat" them early so it doesn't disrupt their lives/careers.

Questions and comments: 1) LTC Michels stated that MG Gorman is committed to work to support National Guard personnel who need treatment for mental health issues and doing so on a very confidential basis, so they are not "penalized". The one problem that can still remain is the "security clearance" issue. 2) Geographical Means test (loophole between incomes, assets for Category 7 and 8, from Locken, which Dr. Petzel will research); 3) thank you to Dr. Petzel for his support of outreach efforts in South Dakota, Dalpiaz and Henry are the ones making it happen and deserve the thanks; however there is still lots to do; 4) VA Veterans Homes would be in jeopardy, if the FY06 Budget passes as it is and it will impact State Veterans Homes significantly; 5) with the high incidence of Diabetes, shouldn't the VA facilities consider bringing an endocrinologist on staff. There is telemedicine in South Dakota that deals with this issue; however with the increase of obesity and the high incidence rate of diabetes among the Native American population is there more that can be done? The hardest problem to deal with in Diabetes is diet.

The earlier question regarding "Beneficiary Travel" had an answer. There are only three (3) criteria used to determine all cases, these are also used then for the 2 years of service veteran. The Guards people, if hospitalized, are also so covered.

John Smith from the Dakota's Regional Office had a presentation. (See handout.)

Questions concerned 1) his staffing which is based on a model. If he has a unique need, he can present that need to his higher headquarters and a decision will be made to either hire or not hire. 2) Goals for his office are set by Washington, DC office and they may well be "stretch" goals, since the Dakota's Regional Office has been aggressive and meeting goals. 3) Fid-Bens or Fiduciary Benefits must have a protected receipt of retro funds and designated dollars. The spouse could be an automatic payee for veteran benefits unless there is any documentation that would indicate incapability as such. They are in the process of trying to double check those fid-bens already being paid out. 4) The present staff should be sufficient for the present workload especially with the sharing capability with North Dakota (Fargo) office-load balancing.

Vanette Lopez represented Doug Voorhees, Director of the Black Hills National Cemetery.

- They are working on the National Shrine Standards (bumping, aligning, washing the headstones).
- The budget is about the same as last year but with 3.5% raise for cost of living and one additional FTE for two summer employees.
- There were 483 burials in FY04 including four KIA from Operation Iraqi Freedom and one from Ellsworth. They are expecting up to 400 burials for FY 05, there were 69 in March. There have been 19,000 burials at the Cemetery and there are 15,000 headstones.
- The staff at the National Cemetery appreciates the invitations to participate in outreach venues such as Veterans Forums and Health Fairs. They have an active outreach program with letters and packets of information and e-mails to Veteran Service (Organizations or Officers) in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana as well as to the funeral homes and assisted living centers and nursing homes. They are available to make a presentation on burial services and that veterans are eligible. The focus of their outreach is initially West River.
- There is some problem with the Presidential Memorial Certificates for the families that should be automatic with an e-mail to the Washington, DC Office. It is improving.
- There are sensitive cases and often great effort to get a veteran verified with Register of Deeds, VSO's, Camp Rapid, St Louis, MO. They are grateful for the assistance of the many VSO's and others in this usually brief window.
- One significant change (January 1, 2000) is that a remarried spouse may opt to be buried with first husband-family name on headstone will be the name of that veteran.
- Ms. Lopez also wished to thank the SD Cemetery Support Council for all the help they offer.

There was one question regarding expansion of the Cemetery. It will be possible if they can appropriate BLM land to the north of the present cemetery. Discussion is ongoing with BLM officials with this in mind.

The Congressional Delegates were represented. Darrell Shoemaker was there from Senator Johnson's office. He talked about the Code Talker's Bill. This bill is for a commemorative coin, but that does not indicate the debt we have to these men. Senator Johnson is looking at possibly reintroducing a Code Talker's Bill. He is also supporting Mandatory funding of Health Care. There are 7 co-sponsors at this time. It would set aside the VA health care to be fully funded. He is also supporting Concurrent Receipt. The original bill omitted the 100% disabled due to unemployability and a letter has been written to President Bush asking him to correct this.

Mark Haugen is from Senator Thune's office. Sandy Massey is the veteran specialist but was not able to attend this meeting. Mr. Haugen first read a short letter from Senator Thune and then was asked to relay to Senator Thune that the Veterans Commission is encouraging him to get behind a number of veteran and funding issues: Full concurrent receipt, mandatory funding.

Present for Representative Herseth was Ira Taken Alive. He talked about HB 1343 dealing with TRI-Care and a new timeline for those activated after September 11, 2001. All would be eligible for TRI-Care. She had voted against President's Budget proposal because it was opposed to Veterans' issues as well as opposed to Agricultural issues.

Earl Schultz, US DOL Veterans Employment and Training Service, spoke next.

- He has some concern that the VA is presently hiring new staff to help with training/voc rehab for the returning service members, an area that has been handled by Voc Rehab and Employment (VR&E) personnel in DOL.
- He would encourage the Veteran Service Organizations to begin pushing for a job training or employment act for the returning veterans, similar to SMOCTA.
- He mentioned that he has funds for Stand Downs. The amount is going from \$5,000 to \$8,000 after July 1, 2005; they just need to remember to include the employment service.
- Mr. Schultz also talked about DTAP which is a Transition Assistance Program for Disabled veterans. This program is headed up by Beverly Blackwell and is a 3 1/2 day workshop for DTAP, while the TAP is only 2 1/2 days. For the SDNG the contact person is LTC Marshall Michels.
- USERRA - Benefits issues was also mentioned. Posters have been supplied by DOL to all businesses/employers to be put up-mandatory posting-to meet requirement of federal law to notify employees of their rights under USERRA.

The meeting was adjourned to be reconvened at 8:00 AM April 13, 2005.

Chairman Gene Murphy reconvened the meeting at 8:00 and led the Pledge of Allegiance and had Jim Foster offer a word of prayer. Announcements were made: 1) Senator Patty Murray's amendment to the \$80 billion military spending package to allow \$1.98 billion to be earmarked for Veterans Health Care went down to defeat, voting was along party lines. 2) At noon today at TREA there is a chili luncheon, a regular Wednesday activity. All are invited.

The first order of business was Todd Kolden from the South Dakota Department of Labor, dealing with veteran issues among other things. He is on the employment side of Veterans Benefits.

- The exposure of the DOL programs is not what the VA programs have. They want to be sure the veterans get the benefits in spite of who provides the assistance. DOL promotes hiring of veterans, but they work not only with the veteran but also with employers to promote hiring of the veterans.
- The Budget for 2006 will be flat but not cut, overall an extra \$1 million but it will not really be seen in South Dakota. The funding formula for states must be changed in order to be fair in the funding. That will be addressed within the national organization by a committee that Kolden is on.
- The House has passed a bill that could cut Employment Specialists (ES) across the States.
- Todd can provide posters or calendars for offices, one need only to contact him in Aberdeen.
- Under legislation passed this year in South Dakota, the Unemployment Insurance Bill will help employers who hired someone to replace an activated/deployed person. Now this unemployment insurance payment is not owed by the employer but comes from a special fund in the State set up to pay it.
- Real Lifelines-Recovery Employment and Starting training as veterans recover but are still in the hospital. This also includes working with the families, so they are ready to receive the veteran back. Finding suitable employment once they are back in the State/Community; these young disabled veterans want to go to work to support themselves and their families.
- The National Association for Workforce Agencies for Veteran Employment Services: this would be Voc Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E); SD has a good model of cooperation between VA and DOL.
- A new 5-track pilot program is being introduced. It is a VA dollars supported program for purposes of 1) Reemployment; 2) Rapid Access Employment-they are ready; 3) SelfEmployment-own business, contact with SBA; 4) New Employment Training/Voc Rehab; 5) Independent Living, handled directly by the VA. This should be across the States by the end of 2006.
- DOL needs the assistance of the Veteran Service Organizations to help them get their services better known.
- The "Welcome Home" booklet has been very good for telling about what DOL has to offer the returning veteran. They would like the opportunity to participate in one of the demob teams in order to deal with unemployment insurance concerns.
- In South Dakota, there are statutes for Veterans Preference and Veterans Priority. The job counselors also look at need of job seekers. These are statutes however. In SD there is a 24-hour wait (veteran has 24 hours lead on non-veteran job seekers).
- Experience Works-this program requires the person to be impoverished in order to apply.

Wayne Vetter is President of the Association of County and Tribal Veteran Service Officers.

- He talked about the proposed South Dakota Salary Supplement increase. It is to encourage better applicants for the county position. They will begin putting this proposal together to be presented at the August Benefits School in Pierre. They need to be sure the C/TVSO's understand it and will support it.
- They are looking at mandatory licensing; need to set some restrictions or stipulations on hours worked; it would be tied to salary increase; sharing of C/TVSO among counties-quality of work, with the CVSO earning the salary enhanced by the supplement.
- Suggestion that the County Commissioners need to be educated on the value of a qualified Veteran Service Officer. Suggestion also to get on the agenda for the annual State Conference of the County Commissioners with an organized presentation. Be sure to mention the several veteran service organizations and the various programs with which they help the county (i.e. transporting veterans to VA Health Care appointments). Enlist the aid and support of the County Auditors, too.
- He felt the Veterans Forums had been well attended by the local service officers and that there was good response by attendees who are then coming in for more assistance or questions.

- Thank you to MG Gorman and SDNG for allowing C/TVSO's participation in demob teams.

Gary Johnson is the Team Leader at the Rapid City Vet Center.

- There are 206 Vet Centers nationwide and 70% of his time is spent in mental health counseling group, individual, family for a variety of issues and it is personal, intimate, and confidential. 30% of his time is spent with administrative duties and outreach.
- Martin has an Out-Station, opened in 1998, which is part of the Rapid City Vet Center number/budget. It has been successful and reaches out to Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Eagle Butte, and further.
- May 9-13, the 109th Engineers will be returning from Afghanistan and the demob station teams will be set up.
- The family briefings have been so valuable. Combat stress is a great leveler-no one is immune. The Military is trying to do the debriefings right after the "incident". This combat stress has had different names over the years-soldiers' heart; nostalgia; Battle Fatigue, etc.
- There is a Stand Down scheduled in Rosebud in September which is in the planning stages.
- There will be a Welcome Home at Hot Springs, undertaken by Dr. Wire, a PTSD Doctor, in appreciation for Iraqi veterans on the reservation.
- Interestingly there has been an increase in the number of Vietnam and Korean veterans coming into the Vet Center-healing is going on as they persons welcome home these new veterans.
- The Vet Centers are low-profile for a reason. As a storefront they fill a niche between actually going to a mental health institution and just holding it in. There is no stigma attached to going to the Vet Center but they are validated, appreciated, reassured that their issues are not out of the norm.

Larry Wilcox, Superintendent of the South Dakota Veterans' Home had a report for the Commission.

- They are doing great-he has learned a lot, the old veterans are good teachers. For example, there are now washers and dryers on the floors where they live, not just in a basement laundry room. There have also been changes made in the dining room.
- The census has dropped to 120 partly because the Evans Hotel has pulled some out with a kitchenette and private bath which cannot be offered at the Home. Now of course they would like to have their meds supplied which is not an option-trade-offs.
- Memorial Day will be celebrated at the Home with MG Gorman and an ensemble from the 147th Army Band. It will begin at 9:00 AM. The Veterans Day program will be hosted by the Hot Springs VA facility.
- The Green House is an exciting venture for the residents, calling attention to the importance of activities-varied and numerous-for these people.
- Canyon Cottage almost finished. The Veterans Commission is invited back to use it for their meeting.
- The 5-year plan-MG Gorman will make a presentation to the Commission when it is ready.
- Wilcox expressed concern that although what had been removed from the VA Budget concerning Veterans Home had been returned, it is still out there.
- His real concern is with the VA ruling on "per diem". There is presently a lobby by National Association of State Veterans Home to increase the per diem to 50% from 30% or 1/3 of the cost.
- One suggested change in the categories to 1-4 plus catastrophic cases being covered would also impact drastically the operating budget of the SD Home. Nothing would be taken away from those already there.
- Medications are now secured through the VA-2 months savings amount is roughly \$28,000.
- Veterans Home Interment (VHI) program has been expanded to include building urns for ashes. There is no charge for the coffin or the urn but as the family is able, a voluntary family donation is

suggested: \$350 for the coffin and \$100 for the urn, the latter is made of mahogany and oak. There will be 3 coffins stored at the VA in Sioux Falls and 3 coffins with SD DVA in Pierre.

- The cemetery at the Veterans Home is a prairie cemetery, because there is no budget for upkeep. However, headstones are there and some do wish to be buried there.
- Clarence Wolf Guts is a resident at the SDVH. He is one of three living Code Talkers. There is one more at Rosebud by the name of Broken Leg.

There were accolades for Larry Wilcox as Superintendent expressed by ALA President Susie Clyde and resident of the community of Hot Springs.

Susie Clyde as American Legion Auxiliary State President had greetings and a thank you to the Veterans Commission for allowing her to attend and the information she had access to by coming to the meetings.

George Summerside of the Veterans Education Program (State Approving Agency) had a presentation.

- As of this date there are 58 schools approved of which 3 are higher education; 1 is a flight school and there are 54 non-degree institutions. There are 120 training establishments. approved. Approval visits are mandated within 30 days. There is no visit required for the high school programs, but the SAA personnel assist with all aspects of this program-application, approval, claims, etc.
- 2005 is the target for implementation of Chapter 1607, which will be retroactive. This is for all education programs (schools and OJT) and established for those Guards people and Reservists activated since 11/2001.
- Another ELR but this one has 25 years of experience, is already known and an excellent and qualified resource. John Streedbeck is in Nebraska and George is going to try to get South Dakota in line with them within the Network 23, so we do not have to change ELR again to someone in Minnesota.
- Outreach continues with letters, Quick-Series guides, etc. The "Welcome Home" brochure is still available. About 6,000 were printed with 4,000 already distributed. Other brochures specifically for OJT and Apprenticeship and other education benefits are available in quantity and can be produced in a short time for distribution. For any that might be needed, you can contact George, Bev, or Lynda.
- Chapter 35 program is an underused program.
- Chapter 31 will soon have a Quick-Series guide available.

Dennis Foell reported on the SD Division of Veterans Affairs.

- He presented the report for Dave Wherry, Supervisor of the SD DVA Claims Office in Sioux Falls, who was unable to attend. (See handout.) In general the Claims Office workload is up!
- Foell also commented on behalf of Larry Person, that the Veteran Field Officers have been extensively utilized this year.
- There will be a second dedication of the Purple Heart Memorial on August 7th, which is National Purple Heart Day. They have 4 individuals in mind as guest speakers, including two from the national leadership of the organization.
- The information regarding the Bonus Program is on a handout, breakdown by county of the bonus payments. From August when it opened, the payments total \$1,214,670 and that is 2,744 claims with an average payment of \$442.66. Foell was quite sure that all of the hold-over applications had been processed-there were about 30 of those. South Dakota is presently the only State paying a Bonus for the soldiers of the War on Terrorism.

- The Demob Teams were limited in size because of the capacity of the airplane that flew the teams to the several demob stations. There have been outreach efforts for reserve units including the 353rd Unit in Sioux Falls and the 452nd in Aberdeen. Individual service personnel from all branches are encouraged to come to family support meetings or any briefings. Staff members are also available to meet with them individually.
- The Veterans Summit is scheduled for July in Sioux Falls at the Sheraton. The SD Veterans Commission will meet on the 20th -with Commissioners and Staff coming in on the 19th for an early start for a one day meeting. The Veterans Summit will then convene on the 21st also at the Sheraton. Our commitment to the Sheraton is rental of 25-40 rooms for persons coming in for the meetings as part of the total package with the Sheraton.
- The Veteran License Plate issue-binders of the information received from many of the States have been sent out for Commissioners and the State Headquarters of Veteran Service Organizations to see and evaluate. The consensus was that the Veterans Council should present a recommendation and the Veterans Commission would act upon that recommendation. Deb Hilmer from Department of Revenue and Regulation will be invited to attend the July Meeting.

The Veteran Service Organizations representatives were invited to address the Commission. From the VFW was State Adjutant Rich Barg who brought greetings from the Commander Cheryl Stahlecker. They have the money in their budget for the education opportunities for the SD DVA Staff Members. They will also be purchasing the books for the C/TVSO's. This organization will be celebrating its 75th Anniversary in 2006. There are "Band Together" wrist bands-red bands saying "Support your troops"-which will be sold and 95% of the funds will go to supporting the troops fund. The millionth band will go to the President. The MAP or Military Assistance Program places VFW personnel at the military bases to reach new veterans as they get out.

Gene Shoemaker addressed the Commission as State Commander of the American Legion-reminding them of his slogan, "teamwork/working together" and thanks to Dennis and his Staff for their support of this especially through the Veterans Forums. There was representation from the VA Hospitals, Service Officers, Commissioners, One-Stop Career (DOL), Vet Center, and other bodies as well. There were good questions asked, it got people moving to go in to see the C/TVSO's with further questions. On the national level the American Legion is supporting concurrent receipt, mandatory funding and the Flag Alliance. These are priorities and they will be watching the Congressional Delegates for their support of these issues.

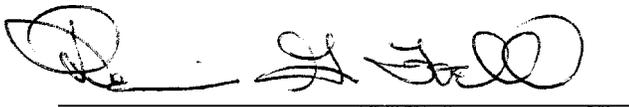
TREA was represented by Dave Jungemann who is now the Treasurer. The new President is Dean Fuelling. This organization has great interest in concurrent receipt, combat related special compensation, survivor benefits, base realignment-Governor Rounds and others are recently back from a DOD meeting regarding the future plans for Ellsworth Air Force Base, and Tri-Care among others. Locally it is a new organization. 10 years of active duty qualify a person for membership in this organization. They are pushing for the Code Talkers Memorial and Tri-care for Guard and Reserves. They raise between \$50,000 and \$60,000 which is used for community involvement-they do lots of work on the reservations as well. They have an excellent scholarship program and not too many applications. Nationally TREA and NCOA work hard together in Washington, DC.

The DAV Report was given by Gene Murphy, State Adjutant. SD DAV is on top with membership. Their State convention is May 12-14 at the Deadwood Gulch in Deadwood, SD. Of special interest is the Town Hall Meeting scheduled for 3:00 on that Thursday (May 12). The Congressional Delegates are to be in attendance. Gene had the DAV Newsletter available for people and pointed out several items of interest including their support of mandatory funding and concurrent receipt. The DAV

Mobile Unit Offices were also highlighted. He wanted people to be aware that the Disabled Veterans Association (from Ohio) has a telephone solicitation going on. This is not the DAV but it is a concern to them. There is thought being given to getting a statute in that would require solicited funds to be spent in the State. The new vans through the DAV Transportation Program will go to Aberdeen and Huron, and a replacement in Mitchell. Many diverse organizations including the State of South Dakota with their grant money provide funding to support the transportation program. The DAV has issues and challenges with the healthcare. The partisan politics does not belong in this arena, Gene does not want to hear that "there are no dollars for healthcare," because they have found the dollars to send the soldiers off to war!

For the PVA Jim Foster spoke. He had a handout that listed activities which they sponsor. He brings greetings from Joel Niemeyer, the Executive Director of the North Central Chapter. Bill Locken volunteered to write a letter on behalf of the Veterans Commission to the South Dakota Fire Fighters and their assistance in sponsoring the 3rd Annual SD Firefighters/PVA Fishing Tournament held at Chamberlain. The VFW also sponsors a big steak fry for this tournament and the PVA does lunches for both days.

The summer and fall meetings of the Veterans Commission were mentioned again. The location(s) may change so the Commission will meet on a reservation. Mr. Loudner has been reappointed to serve another term on the SD Veterans Commission. This was actually effective in September of 2004, but Dennis had not had notification of the appointment.



Director, Dennis Foell



Recording Secretary, Beverly Mickelson

5-27-05

Date

Attendees for the April 12-13, 2005 SD Veterans Commission Meeting TREA
Club Home 1981 E Centre Street, Rapid City, SD 57703

Name	Representing/From
Dennis G. Foell	Director, SD DVA
Roland A. Benson	Commissioner, SDDVA, Ft Pierre
Paul A Evenson	Commissioner, SD DVA, Renner
Gene A. Murphy	Chairman, SD DVA, Sioux Falls
Michael A. Gorman	Secretary, DMVA, Rapid City
Don Loudner	Commissioner, SD DVA, Mitchell
Bill Locken	Commissioner, SD DVA, Spearfish
Donald Clarke	Commissioner, SD DVA, Wessington
Steve DiStasio	Associate Director, VA Black Hills
Peter Henry	Director, VA Black Hills
Gary Million	Associate Director, Sioux Falls VAMC
David Purtil	CVSO, Fall River County, Hot Springs
Claud Adkins	DAV, Rapid City
Loren Murren	President, SD Veterans Council, Rapid City
Delbert "Jim" Foster	VP, SD Veterans Council, Sioux Falls VFO,
Dave Stroh	SD DVA, Rapid City SDNG, Rapid City
LTC Marshall Michels	Veterans Education, SD DVA-SAA
George Summerside	TREA, Rapid City
Wayne Cottrell	Program Manager, Veterans' Services, SD DOL, Aberdeen
Todd Kolden	Black Hills National Cemetery, Sturgis
Vanette Lopez	Director, VBA, Sioux Falls
John Smith	PVA, Sioux Falls
Mike Rothenbuehler	Director, Network 23, Minneapolis, MN
Robert Petzel	TREA, Rapid City
Gary Smither	Sec/Treas SD Veterans Council, Rapid City
Hal Weber	Superintendent, MJF SD Veterans' Home, Hot Springs
Larry Wilcox	ALA Department President, Hot Springs
Susie Clyde	Team Leader, Vet Center, Rapid City
Gary Johnson	Adjutant, HQ State VFW, Sioux Falls
Rich W Barg	VETS, Aberdeen
Earl R Schultz	Senator Thune's Office, Rapid City
Mark Haugen	Senator Johnson's Office, Rapid City
Darrell Shoemaker	Representative Herseth's Office, Rapid City
Ira Taken Alive	TREA of Rapid City
Dave Jungemann	