 **ND Cares Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**November 2, 2023**

Attendees: Shelly Sizer, Cindy Whitesell, Dr. Weintraub, LTC Ann Willoughby, Michelle Panos, Brian Watters, David Becker, BG Jackie Huber, Melissa Markegard (All virtual)

Absent: Pam Sagness, Lonnie Wangen, Joyal Meyer

**1. Opening.** Chairman Shelly Sizer briefly opened the meeting.

**2. Minutes.** The minutes from the Oct 5th meeting were accepted as written.

**3. New Business**

* **Executive Committee Updates**
  + **Co-Chairman:** Cindy Whitesell reported that Minot AFB will now have more activity in their prevention programming because now they have one person in charge of it instead of all the helping agencies on base who don't work for the same person trying to organize.
  + **ND National Guard:** BG Huber reported that the 112th Aviation Battalion has completed their assignment at the southwest border the 817th Engineer Company just left for the border. The Veterans Day event at the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery on Saturday is at 3:00 with the columbarium ribbon cutting ceremony. LTC Willoughby reported on the huge success of the various Halloween events for kids despite the bad weather. Upcoming events will focus on gardening and succulent care. Christmas events will also occur throughout the state and resiliency events are planned for January. She also reviewed services by Military OneSource. Lastly, she mentioned the Post Yellow Ribbon Event for the 112th and that is going to be on February 3rd at the Bismarck State College Energy Center.
  + **ND Dept of Veterans Affairs**: Brian Watters, filing in for Lonnie Wangan, asked if the deployed National Guardsmen could be the recipient of items from various church groups and veterans’ auxiliary organizations that have contacted Brian recently. LTC Willoughby provided him with a phone number to call to make arrangements.
  + **NDHHS**: Melissa Markegard, the new ND Suicide Prevention Administrator, is filling in for Pam Sagness. She is located in Fargo. Melissa reported 988 signage for Hidden Wounds Bridge in Jamestown arrived but will not be put up until shortly before the dedication event in the Spring. Melissa also explained that she also coordinates the new Suicide Mortality Review Commission and explained that the members have been appointed and the first meeting already occurred. Sarah Kemp Tabbut of the Fargo VA was appointed to the Commission.
  + **Regional VA, Fargo**: Dr. Weintraub reported that the Fargo VA finished the year with good metrics on patient experience, quality, and satisfaction. The budget this fiscal year is significantly tighter than in previous years. It has to do with factors such as the number of enrollees, the costs of our purchase care program, inflation, staffing costs. They would not by affected in the event of a government shutdown because they have already received their appropriation for the year. The new lease for the CBOC in Grand Forks was awarded and will move a couple of miles down the road from the current location. Construction should take approx.18 months. Lastly, COVID and RSV shots are available.

**4. Old Business**

* Michelle stated the Minot Lodge Senior Living presentations is coming up later this month and the Northrup Grumman partner presentation is on hold until a suitable time and place can be determined. The video for the COMPACT Act is nearly done. The radio campaign for the standdown in Minot was successful as the second most common way that veterans heard about the stand down was radio. For the Governor’s Challenge update Michelle reported that Tammy Monsebroten from the VA made a presentation to 14 healthcare systems during the ND Hospital Association Conference. Topics covered were COMPACT Act, Ask the Question, provider toolkit, military culture training and suicide prevention. We also met with Paul Weckman, Sanford’s Veteran Services Coordinator, who explained that providers were already utilizing PsychArmor’s portal for military culture training – on a voluntary basis. We will schedule another meeting to determine areas of collaboration. Sarah Kemp Tabbut from the VA provided a presentation about lethal means safety at the ND Behavioral Health Conference in October. The presentation was well received. The Governor’s Challenge also has a table at the conference as well as Recovery Reinvented, and handed out brochures for Star Behavioral Health Training, Lethal Means Safety Training and the Provider Toolkit. She also reported that 333 people completed CALM training in 2023. Over 5000 gunlocks have been distributed through various agencies and organizations. ND Hopes attempted to distribute lethal means safety information at the Williston Gun show, but the show turned out to be more of a political rally than a gun show. They will attempt to distribute information at other shows on the western side of the state. For peer support we are recruiting veterans from the various service organizations and already have a list of veterans interested in a presentation that Heather Brandt will conduct. Michelle showed the flyer Heather created. Michelle also presented some of the stats that are on the draft Governor’s Challenge dashboard. The state of North Dakota also applied for Fatality Review technical assistance from the VA/SAMHSA via the Governor’s Challenge. We hope hear if we were selected shortly, but in the meantime we have a meeting with Maryland and Arizona to learn about their efforts. Lastly Michelle talked more about the stand down in Minot.

**5. UPCOMING EVENTS**

Michelle highlighted some of the following events and stated that the next Coalition meeting will  
 be held virtually as well as in-person at the RJB Armory in Bismarck.

1. **Military Family Appreciation Month:** November
2. **ND State Historical Society Veterans Program:** Nov 7, 9am-11am, Heritage Ctr. Bismarck
3. [**Star Behavioral Health Provider Training:**](https://starproviders.org/providers-tier-training/#search) Tier One Training Nov 8
4. **Fargo Vet Center Open House:** Nov 8. 11 am-2pm
5. **Veterans Day**: Nov. 11
6. **ND Veterans Cemetery Columbarium Cutting**: 3:00 PM, Nov. 11, Mandan
7. [**Native American Veterans Virtual Symposium**](https://www.va.gov/outreach-and-events/events/62382/): 1-3 PM, Nov. 15
8. **Governor’s Challenge Team Mtg**: Nov 8, Virtual
9. **ACOVA:** Nov 16-17, American Legion Post 29, Watford City
10. [**International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day:**](https://afsp.org/international-survivors-of-suicide-loss-day/?utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=campaign) Nov. 18
11. [**FirstLink Trainings**](https://myfirstlink.org/trainings/)**:** Nov-Dec
12. **Wreaths Across America:** Dec.16, Mandan, Fargo

1. **NEXT MEETING DATES**

The next Coalition meeting date is December 7,2023, and the next Executive Committee meeting date is November 2, 2023.