

# VETERANS COMMITTEE

Tuesday October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019  
 Wildhorse Casino Resort  
 Pendleton, OR

	Name and Title	Organization	Phone/FAX/E-mail
1	Dore Head	NPAIHB	dhead@npaihb.org
2	Jim Steinruck	Tulalip	jsteinruck@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov
3	Nikolaus Lewis	Lummi	nikolaus@lummi-nsn.gov
4	Stephen Kutz	Coalition	skutz@coalition.org
5	Nate Tyler	Melech	nate.tyler@melech.com
6	Sarah Sullivan	NPAIHB	SSullivan@npaihb.org
7	Sam Spino	CTVIR	samspino@CTVIR.org
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Veteran's Committee Meeting  
October 22, 2019

In attendance:

Jim Steinruck, Tulalip

Nickolaus Lewis, Lummi

Stephen Kutz, Cowlitz

Nate Tyler, Makah

Sam Spino, Umatilla

*Sarah Sullivan, NPAIHB staff*

*Don Head, NPAIHB staff*

The minutes for the April 2019 meeting were read.

Terry Bentley and the Office of the Tribal Government Relations will be deciding the schedule for providing Veteran Summits and Claims Events in December. If any tribe is interested in having an event of this nature in 2020, please let the staff of the Veteran's Committee know, so they can pass that information on to Terry.

Sarah asked about VA priorities for the coming year. Right now, there is a disconnect for veterans between the Vietnam Era and post-911 veterans, so establishing services for the Gulf War Veterans is hard. Currently, veterans experiencing chronic, undiagnosed multi-symptom illnesses are ineligible for services, and is actually covered under presumptive services, but the vagueness of the language makes it harder for Gulf War veterans to receive services.

Nate Tyler and Nickolaus Lewis were part of the National Indian Health Board listening session that the VA provided for. This wasn't really tribal consultation, and should not be considered as such.

Andy Joseph will be testifying before the House VA Committee on October 30, 2019, at 1000a Eastern Time. The issues are the unique barriers that Native Veterans experience when accessing care in the VA system. The meeting will be streamed live, so for more information, please contact the staff of the Veteran's Committee.

The Umatilla Tribe has a MOA with the VA, and that provides for the Tribal Veteran's Representative to train and become a Tribal Veteran Service Officer. The TVSO is better able to connect veterans to services. Warm Springs also has an MOA with the VA, but their TVSO position has not been filled yet. The TVSO position is funded by the tribe, but the training to become a TVSO is provided by the Oregon Department of VA. Because this