

Veteran's Committee meeting notes, July 28, 2021

In attendance:

Debbie Jones, Samish

Nate Tyler, Makah

Dan Delavan, VA Portland Health Care System

Terry Bentley, VA Office of Tribal Government Relations

Sherronne Blasi, Oregon Department of VA

Amanda Gaston, staff

Veronica Smith, contractor

Candice Jimenez, staff

Dondi Head, staff

Minutes from the April 2021 meeting were read.

Amanda Gaston asked to conduct a poll amongst the committee members for the short code that will be used to enroll in the Veterans Caring Messages text service that is due to roll out on November 11, 2021. The choices for the short code were VET, VETERANS, or HONOR. Committee members offered their opinions on which short code would work best to reach out to veterans.

Amanda then opened a browser window for the Padlet application, and offered the Veteran's Committee members an opportunity to add their own caring messages, song suggestions, and humorous videos. The Project is offering \$30 gift cards for veterans who would like to create messages and content through this application.

Terry Bentley offered a legislative update for recent legislation. It was noted that while a VA Tribal Advisory Committee was created, a number of Areas had not submitted nominations to the selection committee, and so the date for this committee meeting was moved back. Moving forward, the VA expects the selection committee to announce the 12 members from the Areas, along with the 3 At-Large members, and the first meeting of the VA Tribal Advisory Committee to occur the week of October 18, 2021.

Daniel Delevan and Veronica Smith are working with data regarding the VA Reimbursement Agreements that Tribes in the Northwest have entered into, specifically, how some tribes have gotten reimbursements, and why some tribes have not. Working with the tribes that have accessed the Reimbursement Agreements, they are working on streamlining the process, so that more tribes make use of the Reimbursement Agreements that they've entered into with the VA for care of veterans in the tribal communities.

The meeting was then adjourned.