



Veterans Empowerment Team

Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 2, 2018

12:00 – 13:00

Rose Room, City Hall

1. Will Morita spoke about Rebuilding Day on April 28, 2018. A prep day is scheduled for April 20 or 21 to get the materials and home ready for the work day. Volunteers still needed.
2. Henry Quach mentioned that former VET team member Rick Best's son Ed Best is currently an intern with the City of Portland (Bureau of Development Services) and expressed interest in attending Rebuilding Day as a way to honor his father's memory.
3. Christopher Sun expressed interest in a few changes to the VET group:
 - a. Expanding the Mission Statement to include friends and family of military veterans to strengthen the membership.
 - b. Being more inclusive to all veterans, including women and LGBTQI veterans.
 - c. Establishing VET as a non-partisan/apolitical group, focused on veterans' issues and advocacy as opposed to political agendas.
 - d. Introducing the concept of "Four Pillars" to organize the group:
 - i. Veterans Advocacy (Issues & Causes)
 - ii. Community Service
 - iii. Leadership Development
 - iv. Cultural Education
 - e. 243 city employees are self-identified as veterans, out of a total workforce population of more than 9,000 employees with the City of Portland. How do we increase membership for the group? Provide value to the membership?
 - f. Consider re-organizing as a cell organization
 - i. Primary membership organized into smaller teams/groups based on geographic and time restraints. Meets as needed (at least once a month).

- ii. Secondary staff of representatives from each bureau/office provides support and guidance to the teams. Meets monthly for 30 minutes (“Battle Rhythm”), and an additional 30 minutes quarterly (“Battle Focus”).
 - 1. Responsible for communicating up-and-down/in-and-out.
 - 2. Coordinates activities for the organization.
 - 3. Sub-committees are established to develop the organizational strategy and programs.
 - g. First Action: Identify individuals to represent the different bureaus/offices to establish the staff.
 - h. 2 kinds of meetings:
 - i. Battle Rhythm: Monthly staff meeting of 30 minutes duration focused on updates and tactical decision making (~1 month out).
 - ii. Battle Focus: Quarterly meeting, includes Battle Rhythm plus topics for long term planning and team building.
 - i. Develop a mentorship program that is separate from the City of Portland’s Mentor Program for the purposes of professional, personal, and social development of veterans.
 - j. External strategies for VET:
 - i. Build relationships with the other DEEP Affinity Groups and draft ordinance to allocate city paid time and possible budget bump to support organizations and membership.
 - ii. Establish a city chartered Veterans Advisory Committee by partnering with external veterans’ groups, i.e. VA, DAV, Vetworks PDX, NW Women Veterans Connection, etc....
 - iii. Find more opportunities for community service and event participation.
 - iv. Build up the cultural education component of VET.
 - k. Draft and adopt rules/bylaws for the organization.
- 4. Nicholas Carroll gave update about the USS Portland commissioning on April 20 – 21, 2018. Contact in Mayor’s office has not responded to two attempts. Actual commissioning event is closed to spectators after distributing the limited tickets. Possibility of touring the ship as a group the week prior to commissioning if VET members are interested. Contact Nicholas if interested.
- 5. Nicholas Carroll briefed group on the recent DEEP Leadership Team meeting.
 - a. Other groups have similar difficulty in meeting participation and numbers.
 - b. Other groups have used a theme for their awareness events, which would be a great idea for VET to have this year in honor of the 100th Anniversary of the End of World War I and the creation of Armistice Day/Veterans Day.
 - c. The Slavic Empowerment Team had success with fundraising last year, adding to the money distributed by DEEP (\$400 each year for each group).
- 6. Ideas for Memorial Day:
 - a. Flag placement at gravesites of veterans at Willamette National Cemetery.
 - b. Will Morita mentioned that Memorial Day activities/participation had received the lowest interest in a recent survey among city veterans.

- c. Due to the short timeframe, consider providing information on Memorial Day events for people to participate in on their own initiative via the VET website.
 - d. Request City Council to offer a moment of silence to military members who lost their lives and tribute to honorary VET member Rick Best around Memorial Day.
 - e. Develop and record a message for Memorial Day to educate the public about the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day.
 - f. Organize a Drill Ceremony in Council Chambers for Memorial Day.
 - g. Request from Mayor Wheeler a City Proclamation for Memorial Day.
7. Create a 6 foot banner with the VET logo to be used at all VET events, including Rebuilding Day and the Veterans Day Parade in Hollywood District.

In attendance:

Nicholas Carroll
Joey Sato
Christopher Sun
Henry Quach
Will Morita
Justin Lindley
Humberto Piedra-Ruiz
Jeff Selby

Statistical data:

Branch of Service

6 USA
1 USMC
1 USN
0 USAF
0 USCG
0 Veterans Advocates (CIV)

City Bureaus & Offices

0 Mayor & Commissioners Offices
0 City Attorney's Office
0 City Auditor's Office
0 City Budget Office
4 Bureau of Development Services
0 Bureau of Emergency Communications
0 Portland Bureau of Emergency Management
0 Bureau of Environmental Services
1 Office of Equity & Human Rights
0 Portland Fire & Rescue
0 Fire & Police Disability & Retirement
0 Office of Government Relations
0 Portland Housing Bureau
1 Office of Neighborhood Involvement
0 Office of Management & Finance
1 Portland Parks & Recreation
0 Bureau of Planning & Sustainability
0 Portland Police Bureau
1 Portland Bureau of Transportation
0 Portland Water Bureau