

Jul 14, 2026

July 14th Maryland Veterans Commission Meeting, Frederick, MD

Invited [John Kerley -DVMF-](#) [Tiffany Young -DVMF-](#) [Samantha Wolfley -DVMF-](#) [td1808@aol.com](#)
[chris.alley@gimv.org](#) [Jay Spiegel](#) [Jimmy Anderson -DVMF-](#) [james.childsjr@comcast.net](#)
[cynthia.macri.md@gmail.com](#) [jackfcurran46@gmail.com](#) [Elaine May-Stem](#)
[thistleman@verizon.net](#) [Jennifer Ross -DVMF-](#) [Dana Burl -DVMF-](#) [Scott Schlesinger](#)
[candace.wheeler@taps.org](#) [robert hartman](#) [Morgan Murphy -DVMF-](#) [Penny Collins](#)
[jddavis14@aol.com](#) [Bob michael good](#) [Josiah Guthland](#) [leroythorn@aol.com](#) [Mike Bowers](#)
[Franklin Killebrew](#) [lorinzofoxworth@gmail.com](#) [Mike Moses](#) [Jennifer Moffit](#)
[debjeet.sarkar78@gmail.com](#) [mdveteranscommissionmdetmer@gmail.com](#)
[joansabreej@aol.com](#) [Todd Walter](#) [Michael Moore](#) [dlmc824@gmail.com](#) [Lindsay Livingston -](#)
[DVMF-](#) [michelle.viramontes@gmail.com](#) [joseph.pruden@mail.house.gov](#) [Roslyn Jones -DVMF-](#)
[Anissa Walker -DVMF-](#) [jdprudenjr@gmail.com](#) [Jim Shiffrin](#) [Thomas Ottenwaelder](#)

Attachments [July 14th Maryland Veterans Commission Meeting, Frederick, MD](#)

Meeting records [Transcript](#)

Summary

The commission established a unified legislative advocacy model while reviewing statewide veteran support initiatives and administrative organizational updates.

Unified Legislative Advocacy Model

The commission adopted a coordinated model for state-level legislative advocacy to strengthen the voice of veterans. This approach mirrors successful federal efforts to effectively influence policy and legislative outcomes.

Legislative and Operational Updates

Recent legislative sessions yielded 93 tracked bills, including successful enhancements to military family benefits and civil relief. Discussions highlighted persistent challenges regarding rural transportation gaps and educational scholarship funding shortfalls.

Administrative Modernization Efforts

The commission transitioned to centralized digital record keeping to professionalize history and improve commissioner communication. Official guidance documentation now mandates increased board engagement and clarifies lobbying boundaries for members.

Details

- **Commission Purpose and Logistics:** Chair, Mike Bowers and Vice-Chair, Mike Moore, opened the meeting with an invocation and provided logistical updates, noting that excused absences were granted for the month due to schedule changes. Chair emphasized the commission's two primary roles: disseminating information regarding Maryland veterans' services and gathering feedback from the community to inform the secretary and the governor. They urged members to treat the commission's website and newsletters as their "daily battle" to stay informed and to identify service gaps.
- **Legislative Advocacy and Unified Voice:** Commission highlighted the importance of a unified legislative voice for veterans, citing the success of Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) at the federal level in blocking unfavorable disability rating legislation. They urged the commission to adopt a similar collaborative model in Maryland, arguing that coordinated advocacy is essential for addressing state-level issues such as tax exemptions for retirees and active-duty members, as well as overcoming legislative hurdles.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs Updates:** Jimmy Anderson and Dana Burl provided operational updates, noting the success of the July 4th event at Government House, which focused on patriotism and the 250th anniversary ([00:12:16](#)). They highlighted the high attendance at recent conventions in Ocean City and the impactful work of the communications and outreach team, specifically referencing a recent convening for women veterans in Baltimore City ([00:13:23](#)).
- **Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Achievement:** Jimmy Anderson reported that the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home achieved a five-star rating in June. Anderson stated this success marks a significant accomplishment for the department and their partner, Blue

Health, and underscores the department's ongoing commitment to ensuring veterans age with dignity and proper care ([00:14:21](#)).

- **Maryland Veterans Trust Fund Leadership:** Dana Burl introduced Anessa Walker as the new director for the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, highlighting Walker's extensive background in grant management. Burl confirmed that the department currently maintains a zero-application backlog for the fund ([00:15:17](#)).
- **"Sticky" State Initiative:** Dana Burl outlined the department's focus on the governor's commitment to making Maryland a "sticky" state for military families, meaning a location where service members choose to retire and remain ([00:16:21](#)). Planned initiatives include a comprehensive welcome guide for transitioning service members to be published by May 2027 and monthly spotlights on military family resources, such as spouse employment and education .
- **Strategic Priorities for Military Families:** Dana Burl discussed key priorities for supporting military families, specifically improving expedited licensing processes for military spouses through the Department of Labor and enhancing access to childcare . These initiatives are considered vital for retaining military talent within the state .
- **TAPS Mission Overview:** Candace Wheeler from the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) provided an overview of their mission to offer comfort, care, and resources to grieving military and veteran survivors ([00:21:57](#)). Wheeler reported that in 2025, nearly 10,000 newly bereaved survivors connected with TAPS, with a significant percentage experiencing loss due to illness, suicide, or hostile action ([00:23:26](#)).
- **Gold Star Families Compact:** Candace Wheeler introduced the "Gold Star Families Compact," a roadmap for states to implement legislation supporting survivors . The compact focuses on five pillars, including adopting a broad, respectful definition of Gold Star families, increasing tuition waiver access, and offering state tax relief .
- **Policy Recommendations for Maryland:** Candace Wheeler commended Maryland's current support for survivors but proposed specific improvements: creating a universal Gold Star family license plate, allowing Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) as eligibility criteria for education benefits, and enabling surviving spouses to transfer property tax exemptions to new primary residences . Additionally, Wheeler shared a recommendation from the Elizabeth Dole Foundation to extend property tax relief to parents and grandparents serving as caregivers .
- **Federal Legislative Priorities:** Candace Wheeler discussed TAPS's federal advocacy, including the "Love Lives on Act" to eliminate the remarriage penalty, increasing DIC from 43% to 55% of relevant federal agency rates, and expanding TRICARE and

CHAMPVA coverage for young adults . TAPS is also advocating for the presumption of service connection for deaths related to suicide, modeled after the PACT Act for toxic exposure ([00:37:40](#)).

- **TAPS Support Resources:** Candace Wheeler emphasized that TAPS acts as a force multiplier and urged the commission to connect survivors with the organization as early as possible in their grief journey. TAPS provides a 24/7 helpline, peer-based emotional support, and various regional programs, all delivered at no cost to survivors ([00:24:44](#)) ([00:39:54](#)).
- **Clarification on Education Benefits:** Following a question from an attendee regarding tuition benefits, Candace Wheeler clarified that benefits for veterans and survivors in Maryland have not been discontinued . She explained that while Maryland maintains strong programs, there is potential to expand eligibility criteria for tuition waivers beyond families of 100% disabled veterans or those who died on active duty ([00:46:19](#)).
- **One Maryland Model Committee:** Jimmy Anderson described the "One Maryland Model" committee, which was established to convene county veteran commissions and state department stakeholders to standardize service delivery . The initiative aims to leverage best practices across jurisdictions to serve veterans effectively at the municipal level, regardless of how individual county commissions are organized .
- **Goals for the One Maryland Model:** Jimmy Anderson outlined the three strategic goals for the committee: improving information sharing (creating a common operating picture), better integration of service mapping across counties to address service gaps, and driving measurable impact through holistic advocacy . The committee plans to discuss these insights at the upcoming Maryland Association of Counties (MACO) conference ([00:55:27](#)).
- **Data Collection and Integration Challenges:** Jimmy Anderson and the team addressed the need for improved data collection and integration, noting that current methods are disparate and hinder the department's ability to track services effectively ([00:53:16](#)) ([00:56:25](#)). The team aims to move away from isolated Excel or Google sheets toward a system where staff can holistically view a veteran's interactions and eligibility when they call, ensuring better-coordinated support .
- **Data Measurement and Success Metrics:** Commission discussed the challenge of measuring the success of various outreach activities, such as resource fairs and sales processing services, emphasizing the goal of utilizing rich data to ensure veterans receive necessary services. They highlighted the importance of tracking veterans

through these services to ensure they receive support, sharing an example of how data access allowed for immediate assistance regarding a veteran's family status ([00:59:18](#)).

- **Eastern Shore Mental Health Credentialing:** Jennifer Ross -DVMF- addressed a question from Chad Baker of the Military Order of the Purple Heart regarding the process for helping mental health facilities on the Eastern Shore obtain the proper credentials to see veterans through Department of Veterans Affairs insurance. Jennifer Ross -DVMF- acknowledged that access to mental health services is the primary concern for veterans in the region and committed to returning with a comprehensive answer regarding the credentialing issue ([01:01:42](#)).
- **Cross-Agency Resource Integration:** Jimmy Anderson outlined the "One Maryland" concept, which seeks to centralize information and integrate resources from various government partners, including the Department of Labor, the Department of Health, and Housing and Community Development ([01:02:52](#)). The team is currently working on website updates, led by Tiffany, to better consolidate these resources for veteran families ([01:04:01](#)).
- **Small County Government Participation:** Michael Detmer raised concerns about how smaller, less resource-rich counties, such as Caroline County, can participate in the "One Maryland" initiative given their limited capacity ([01:06:24](#)). DVMF acknowledged this concern, confirming that the topic is central to the commission's convening and noting that they are exploring collaborative strategies to avoid imposing mandates on counties ([01:08:04](#)).
- **Legislative Session Update:** Morgan Murphy -DVMF- provided an overview of the recent legislative session, reporting that they tracked 93 bills, drafted 46 letters of support, and participated in 15 hearings ([01:09:10](#)). Key accomplishments included the passage of the Military Family Inclusion Act, which added a veteran caregiver to the advisory board and a military-connected student to the governor's youth council, as well as legislative fixes implemented by Senator Simonaire ([01:10:45](#)).
- **Financial and Educational Legislative Advancements:** Morgan Murphy -DVMF- highlighted that new financial relief legislation authorizes local governments to provide benefits from their own coffers if they choose. Additionally, they noted progress in education access, including enhancements to the "Purple Star" schools program and the removal of the expiration date for the JJ Peters scholarship ([01:12:01](#)).
- **Modernization of Legal Definitions and Civil Relief:** Morgan Murphy -DVMF- detailed efforts to align state terminology with federal standards, such as using "uniformed services" instead of "armed forces" to ensure broad inclusivity ([01:13:23](#)). They also

highlighted the passage of Senate Bill 242, which modernizes civil relief to align with the federal Service Member Civil Relief Act and reorganizes statutes for better accessibility, alongside the Uniform Spouses Act which extends certain higher education benefits to spouses ([01:14:34](#)).

- **Occupational Compacts and Healthcare Planning:** Morgan Murphy -DVMF- reported that 11 occupational compacts have now been signed in Maryland. Furthermore, they discussed the "Longevity Ready Maryland Act," which incorporates veteran representation into long-term care planning committees, ensuring that future-looking retirement models account for the needs of veterans and military families ([01:15:47](#)).
- **Benefits Eligibility Matrix and Regulatory Updates:** Morgan Murphy -DVMF- introduced a benefits eligibility matrix designed to clarify which state and county benefits are available based on discharge status and beneficiary type ([01:18:29](#)) ([01:20:59](#)). They also noted that current efforts are focused on updating the Code of Maryland Regulations (KOMAR) to ensure that the regulatory framework aligns with newly passed statutes ([01:19:50](#)).
- **Legislative Advocacy Acknowledgment:** Mike Bowers commended Morgan Murphy and the department for their diligent work in tracking legislation and keeping stakeholders informed, noting the positive shift in state-level engagement compared to previous years ([01:23:25](#)).
- **Community Partnership and Lunch Recognition:** Dana Burl recognized Elorno Pizzeria for donating lunch for the commission meeting and presented them with a citation from Secretary Ed Rossi ([01:24:36](#)). The representative from Elorno Pizzeria expressed a strong commitment to supporting veterans, noting their "Helping for the Holidays" program, which provides meals and gifts to families in need, and invited veterans to reach out if they require assistance ([01:27:24](#)).
- **Handbook Development and VSO Collaboration:** Jennifer Ross -DVMF- discussed the creation of a new handbook intended to clarify the commission's role as a governor's commission ([01:05:14](#)) ([01:28:13](#)). They expressed a desire for Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) to increase collaboration on legislative lobbying and emphasized the need to focus on retention strategies, such as tax exemptions, to maintain the veteran population in Maryland ([01:29:42](#)).
- **Commissioner Introductions and Feedback:** Mike Bowers initiated a roundtable for commissioners to share feedback and updates ([01:54:23](#)). Todd Walter, the Veterans of Foreign Wars state commander, introduced himself and presented Tiffany Daniel as a new commissioner, as well as Patrick Pearson as an alternate ([01:55:29](#)). Patrick Pearson

observed that while message delivery methods vary, most veterans are successfully receiving communications and suggested that the commission continue current efforts while remaining prepared to address gaps as they arise ([01:57:48](#)).

- **Introductions and Board Composition:** Commission Chair introduced the meeting and facilitated introductions, noting the new composition of the board. JD PrudenJr introduced himself as a candidate for the 4th Congressional District seat and the Veterans and Military Affairs liaison for Congressman Ivy. They expressed enthusiasm for the new board's energy and discussed their experience with the Department of Veterans and Military Affairs ([01:58:52](#)).
- **Prince George's County Veterans Initiatives:** JD PrudenJr described the veterans commission and the Office of Veterans Affairs in Prince George's County, noting that they work closely with Dr. Doula. They highlighted that a significant challenge in the county is identifying and locating homeless veterans to provide assistance. They mentioned that local nonprofits in Laurel and Clinton are currently helping to house veterans, but the difficulty remains in finding those who are unhoused ([02:01:15](#)).
- **Rural Veteran Challenges and Legislative Representation:** Michael Detmer expressed support for the ongoing efforts to align services across the state. Serving as a county councilman in Dorchester County, they noted the geographical challenges for veterans in rural areas, such as the distance between Pocomoke and Perry Point. Michael Detmer advocated for greater county-level participation and expressed interest in forming a three-county commission on the Lower Shore, involving Queen Anne's, Cecil, and Baltimore counties ([02:02:26](#)).
- **Importance of Service Records:** Michael Detmer highlighted a recurring issue where veterans lack necessary documentation, such as a DD214 or service records, when they require assistance. They emphasized that many veterans, including those with next of kin attempting to make arrangements, often struggle because they have not begun the process of securing these essential documents prior to needing them ([02:04:46](#)).
- **Engagement with Younger Veterans:** Debyeet Sarkar discussed their role as an Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Commissioner and noted that they do not have a specific county affiliation. They shared that a primary challenge is addressing the skepticism younger veterans (in their 20s and 30s) have toward institutional entities. Debyeet Sarkar emphasized the need to overcome this skepticism to help younger veterans engage with available services ([02:05:47](#)).
- **Highway Rededication Requests:** Debyeet Sarkar reported submitting three forms for highway rededication to honor Medal of Honor recipients: Navy Seal Thomas Norris

(Silver Spring, Montgomery County), Captain Florent Groberg (Montgomery County), and Major James Caper (Baltimore County). They requested advice on expediting these requests in time for Veterans Day ([02:06:46](#)).

- **Engagement with Younger Veterans Organizations:** Debyeet Sarkar expressed a desire to connect with smaller Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) that focus on Global War on Terrorism veterans, such as the Travis Manion Foundation and Patrol Base Abbate, to expand engagement efforts ([02:07:50](#)).
- **Burial at Sea Experience:** Robert Reyder shared their recent experience attending a burial at sea ceremony on June 26th. They noted the long drive of 335 miles but emphasized that the ceremony was moving and encouraged others to participate in such ceremonies if given the opportunity ([02:09:18](#)).
- **Carroll County Outreach and CAPS Program:** John (Jack) introduced themselves as a member of the Carroll County Veterans Council for over nine years. They discussed the difficulty of raising awareness about the organization's existence, noting that many people in the county are unaware of it. They also shared that they have been conducting outreach regarding the CAPS program to veteran friends in Baltimore and other counties ([02:10:39](#)).
- **Transition Assistance and Credentialing:** Michael Good, representing the 3rd Congressional District, discussed their work with transition assistance programs at Fort Meade, the Naval Academy, the Annapolis Yard, and Fort Belvoir. They identified a significant gap in translating military skills into civilian terminology, particularly for non-cyber roles. They noted that many transitioning service members lack awareness of available programs or funding to obtain necessary civilian certifications ([02:11:55](#)).
- **Spousal Certification Challenges:** Michael Good highlighted that spouses of service members also face barriers when transitioning to Maryland, as professional certifications earned in other states—such as in dental care—are often not recognized in Maryland without further testing and funding ([02:13:29](#)).
- **Outreach to Younger Generations:** Mike Moses, representing the National Association of Black Veterans, discussed the challenge of reaching younger veterans, noting they are often lost if not engaged within seconds via digital platforms. They shared their experience using the nickname "OT" and their efforts to bridge generational gaps, including using their son's military experience to communicate effectively with younger veterans ([02:14:31](#)).
- **Unified Legislative Approach:** Mike Moses emphasized the importance of unified advocacy, stating that the board must work together to approach Capitol Hill effectively.

They advocated for using digital tools like Zoom and artificial intelligence to reach lawmakers and streamline efforts ([02:17:08](#)).

- **Veteran Service Officer Roles and Documentation:** Penny Collins, a veteran service officer for the Fleet Reserve Association and Disabled American Veterans, discussed the difficulty veterans face in obtaining medical records using the Standard Form 180. They emphasized the challenge of establishing a "nexus" between service and current disabilities, which is often confusing for older veterans attempting to prove service connection ([02:19:20](#)).
- **Spousal and Dependent Benefits:** Penny Collins raised concerns about the confusion surrounding spousal and dependent benefits after a veteran's death. They noted that decision ratings from the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding cause of death and service connection are often difficult for families to understand, particularly regarding income restrictions ([02:20:41](#)).
- **Generational Engagement:** Penny Collins noted that while younger veterans seem more adept at applying for claims, older veterans frequently require hands-on assistance. They also emphasized the need to attract younger veterans to Veterans Service Organizations to ensure the survival and relevance of these groups in the future ([02:22:02](#)).
- **Disabled American Veterans Reappointment:** Derek introduced himself as a newly reappointed representative for the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). They expressed gratitude to the leadership team for hosting the recent convention in Ocean City ([02:24:40](#)).
- **Trust and Application Challenges:** Derek addressed the challenges older veterans face with the Department of Veterans Affairs application process and trust issues. They suggested that if commissioners become more familiar with the internal processes, they would be better equipped to assist veterans in navigating these hurdles ([02:25:59](#)).
- **Joint Veterans Committee Coordination:** Jones introduced himself as a representative for Women Veterans and a DAV state commander. They mentioned serving as the secretary for the Joint Veterans Committee, which allows them to facilitate communication between seven different veteran organizations, including the Purple Heart, Amvets, Marine Corps League, Catholic War Veterans, DAV, VFW, and Jewish War Veterans ([02:27:00](#)).
- **Transportation Challenges and Solutions:** Jones discussed transportation difficulties for veterans traveling from rural areas to healthcare facilities. They noted that the single shuttle van currently serving Perry Point to Martinsburg to Baltimore is insufficient,

often causing long wait times. Jones proposed utilizing two vans to accommodate different appointment times and suggested providing \$25 gas cards to volunteer drivers to help alleviate the shortage ([02:28:09](#)).

- **Legislative Priorities and Education:** Jason discussed the goal of eliminating the tax on uniformed services retirement pay in the upcoming legislative session. They encouraged members to ask legislators to include links to the Department of Veterans and Military Affairs website and the Veterans Trust Fund in community resource emails, which serves as a free educational opportunity for legislators who may not have military backgrounds ([02:31:18](#)).
- **Deployment and Yellow Ribbon Program:** Jason highlighted the upcoming mobilization of the 29th Infantry Division, which will impact several hundred Maryland National Guard members. They urged the department to prioritize the Yellow Ribbon program to ensure families have access to necessary support and resources before deployment ([02:33:01](#)).
- **Howard County Veterans Monument:** Lorenzo Fox reported on the completion of the Howard County Veterans and Families Monument, a project that took approximately 10 years to finalize. They praised the success of the commission in establishing a nonprofit to collect donations for the monument ([02:34:39](#)).
- **Workforce Development and Reporting:** Lorenzo Fox emphasized the need to compel veterans to self-report their status when utilizing workforce centers to ensure they are connected to priority services. They also noted that while policies mandate support for veterans at universities like the University of Maryland, enforcement is sometimes lacking, and more focus is needed on ensuring these veterans successfully enter the job market ([02:35:50](#)).
- **Federal and State Level Synergy:** An unnamed speaker discussed their background as an Air Force veteran and their fellowship on Capitol Hill. They expressed interest in applying lessons learned at the federal level to the state commission, with a specific focus on childcare for women veterans and better understanding their unique needs ([02:38:30](#)).
- **Student Veteran Support:** Josiah Gutlin, the incoming commissioner for the 2nd Congressional District and vice chair for the Maryland Student Veteran Commission, described their work at the University of Baltimore. They focused on supporting student veterans through programs like Vocational Rehabilitation, Chapter 33, and Chapter 35 (Fry Scholarship). They are currently pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership with a dissertation focused on veteran retention in higher education ([02:40:11](#)).

- **Green Zone Ally Training:** Josiah Gutlin promoted their small business initiative, "Green Zone Ally Training," which educates civilians on the veteran and military family perspective to create a more supportive environment at colleges and businesses ([02:42:31](#)).
- **Conroy Scholarship Funding Issues:** Josiah Gutlin raised the critical issue of changes to the Conroy Scholarship. They explained that while the scholarship was intended to be funded at \$7 million per year, costs grew to nearly \$20 million. The state is now enforcing the \$7 million cap, which is causing significant budget deficits at institutions like the University of Baltimore and Towson University, forcing financial aid departments to reduce support for dependents of dead or disabled veterans. They advocated for the state to take over the administration of this scholarship and provide higher funding levels ([02:43:36](#)).
- **Mental Health Support and Benefits Access:** Robin Pider introduced themselves as a veteran from the 5th Congressional District. They shared personal challenges in navigating benefits for their late father and noted two primary issues: the shortage of mental health providers and the lengthy wait times (up to eight months) for initial consultations ([02:46:12](#)).
- **Vice Chair Mentorship:** Mike Moore, the vice chair, offered to mentor any new commission members. They also highlighted the success of the Green Belt Legion's hosting of an Honor Flight for 73 veterans and noted the University of Maryland's annual scholarship dinner, which raised approximately \$400,000 ([02:48:57](#)).
- **County Website Incentivization:** Chair discussed the need to incentivize counties to allow veterans advisory committees to utilize official county websites, noting that some counties, like Washington County, currently refuse this access. They suggested that a primary goal should be ensuring every county has at least one recognized point of contact for veterans ([02:52:12](#)).
- **Centralized Veteran Service Centers:** Commissioners proposed building centralized veteran service centers in counties, potentially through nonprofit and public partnerships, to house state and federal assets under one roof ([02:55:15](#)).
- **Commission Call to Action:** Mike Bowers- concluded the meeting by emphasizing the board's role as a bridge between the commission and veterans organizations. They urged members to take notes, report back to their respective state-level headquarters, and collaborate to align on legislative goals for the next session rather than working in silos ([02:56:22](#)).

- Commission Engagement and Conduct** L Chair emphasized the importance of commissioners acting as bridges to the veteran community by building trust, being supportive, and responding promptly to communications. Commissioners are encouraged to attend virtual and in-person meetings at both the county and state levels, rather than just attending local post meetings ([02:57:35](#)). Regarding lobbying, Jennifer Ross -DVMF- clarified that commissioners must not lobby on behalf of the Veterans Commission, though they retain the right to lobby as private citizens. Furthermore, Jennifer Ross -DVMF- stated that the commission seeks members with energy rather than prioritizing a specific age demographic, as the objective is to remain relevant and challenge the status quo ([02:59:01](#)).
- Commission Handbook and Resource Distribution:** Jennifer Ross -DVMF- introduced a new commission handbook intended to serve as a living document and reference tool for all commissioners. Commissioners are requested to review the draft and provide feedback regarding useful content or missing information before the end of the week ([03:00:47](#)). The current goal is to have initial copies printed by the next commission meeting. Additionally, Jennifer Ross -DVMF- committed to circulating all meeting minutes, agendas, and briefings presented during the session for future reference ([03:01:48](#)).
- Record Keeping and Digital Communication:** To professionalize the commission's record-keeping and preserve its history, Jennifer Ross -DVMF- announced the transition to using a Google Group ([03:01:48](#)). Instructions for accessing this group will be included in the handbook, and an initial test email will be sent to all commissioners to ensure functionality. This system is intended to capture all initiatives and projects, ensuring they are documented as the commission continues its work ([03:02:58](#)).
- Legislative Updates and Partnership Recognition:** Mike Bowers requested updates on legislative changes, noting that votes were submitted for the departmental legislative session. Recognition was extended to Chris and Jason for their efforts in establishing partnerships and hosting resource fairs at the Veterans Service Center ([03:00:47](#)) ([03:03:57](#)).
- Veterans Trust Fund and Deployment Support:** The Veterans Trust Fund is scheduled to reopen for applications on August 1st ([03:03:57](#)). Dana Burl expressed a desire to coordinate a training demonstration at the next commission meeting to help community partners assist veterans with the application process. Furthermore, the commission is collaborating with the National Guard to organize resource fairs for families of the 29th Infantry Division prior to their upcoming deployment, with the possibility of planning additional support for families during the deployment as well ([03:05:25](#)).

- **Adjournment:** The meeting concluded with a closing prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance ([03:05:25](#)).

You should review Gemini's notes to make sure they're accurate. [Get tips and learn how Gemini takes notes](#)

*How is the quality of **these specific notes**? [Take a short survey](#) to let us know your feedback, including how helpful the notes were for your needs.*