

There were 90+ participants on the call.

**United Veterans Coalition of Colorado  
General Meeting by ZOOM  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021  
9:00am**

**MINUTES**

Call to Order – President Dennis Orr called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

**Invocation** – Dr. Diane Ricci, Chaplain, Jefferson County VSO

**Pledge of Allegiance** – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Dick Young

**1<sup>st</sup> Time Guests**

Fletcher Brown, Director, Regis University Military and Veterans Services (new Associate member)

Jacob Varela, Pueblo Veterans Council

Chris Anderson, Chair of Pueblo Veterans Council

**Introduction of Jason Strickland**, new Public Affairs Officer for VA Eastern Colorado Healthcare System

**Roll Call** – Dick Wilson - Ten primary organizations were represented.

**ECHS Report** – Teresa diBella reported for Director Kilmer. Current cases are looking a little better. Vaccinations are going well, with over 5,000 getting the first dose, and 550 getting the second dose. She announced that veterans 70 and older, plus a qualified caregiver can get the Vaccine if they are enrolled in the VA system. She said to call 888-336-8262 to make an appointment. Sen. Larry Crowder cautioned not to shortchange rural areas in getting vaccinations out.

**VARO** – Chris Holly – The three new presumptive conditions for Blue Water Navy veterans have not had as many claims filed as they expected. They have received 123,000 claims, and have successfully processed about 44,000. He encouraged anyone qualified to apply as soon as possible.

**Treasurer's Report** – Paul Gremse reported that the checking account balance as of January 31 is \$42,112.80.

**State Legislative** – Robby Robinson reviewed the committees' legislative goals one by one. The disappointing news from the VCLC needs assessment project was that the state had enough beds in nursing homes, and did not approve of creating a facility in El Paso County. The problem is that there are vacant nursing home beds, but they are not in the geographic locations where they are needed the most. Kate Hatten noted that they will be holding town hall meetings to discuss the needs assessment.

**Federal Legislative** – Dennis Churgovich reviewed the status of some of the bills that UVC was interested in.

**Regional Vice President Bob McLaughlin** – They are working on getting multiple permanent locations for vaccinations. He encouraged everyone to read the needs assessment in depth; it touches on needs in behavioral health, suicide, and access to workforce centers among other issues.

**Communications Committee** – Geri Adams noted that this committee was currently focused on the new website design.

**Banquet** – Karen Hone reminded the group that it's scheduled for June 27, 2021 at the Renaissance Denver Hotel. She congratulated Geri Adams on bringing in two new sponsors: R/W specialties at \$250, and J. M. Thomas Forest Products at \$750.

**Regional Vice President Pat Hammon** – The mobile vaccination unit is going well. There is an increased need for mental health services, which is concerning.

**Regional Vice President Richard Nagley** – They are working with 4 to 5 homeless individuals every day to get them some benefits. The report on suicide prevention has been send to the committee for review.

**DMVA** – Dave Callahan noted that they have a vacancy on their board, and encouraged UVC members to apply.

**CDVA** – Joanne Iglesias is the Interim Director. They are undergoing an organizational change, and have assembled a "Tiger Team" to do a holistic assessment, and SWOT assessment. She posted a list of team members in the "Chat".

**CBVA** – Pat Hammon noted that the grant deadline is March 1, and applicants are required to watch a webinar before applying.

**Gov. Polis' Office – Adam Zarrin** – cases are slightly trending town, but it's still not great news. He mentioned there are a lot of municipal boards seeking members, and encouraged UVC members to review and apply. They are working to keep the Space Command in Colorado Springs.

### **Congressional Representatives**

**Emily Amador – Rep. Crow** – He's on the readiness and cyber investigation committees

**Jack Murphy – Rep. DeGette**

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**Jeff Small, Chief of Staff, Rep. Lauren Boebert,**

[Tabitha.rosenthal@mail.house.gov](mailto:Tabitha.rosenthal@mail.house.gov) 303-940-5103 Legislative Aide

**State VCLC** – Rose Campbell mentioned that she and her staff would like to make a presentation on the needs assessment. President Orr invited them to present next month at the general meeting.

Karen A. Hone  
Secretary

