

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT – VAB ACTIVITIES 2002 – 2008

The following is a supplemental report which covers the operations of the VAB from 2002 through and including 2008. During this period, the VAB was not required to submit annual reports to the Mayor and the City Council. The report covers salient activities and discussions and is submitted as background to existing annual reports of the VAB.

2002:

The first meeting of the re-activated VAB was held on July 17, 2002. It is unknown whether a previous VAB existed, nor when meetings took place, if ever.

Discussed development of a VAB agenda, which will include advocacy for employment, housing, aging veterans issues, education issues and commemorations.

Discussed Intro 216-A, which would expand the VAB from five to nine members.

Discussed draft guidelines for VAB operations.

Discussed the October, 2002 start-up of HRA's Veterans Job Center located on Chapel Street in Brooklyn.

2003:

Discussed advocating that the Mayor to include "wartime and disabled veterans" within Executive Order 36, which expanded business opportunities and technical assistance for the city's minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBE).

Discussed advocating that the Governor include "wartime and disabled veterans" within Executive Order 21, which expanded business opportunities and technical assistance for the state's M/WBE's.

Heard remarks from Deputy Mayor Carol Robles-Roman regarding the VAB's request to establish a NYC Korean War Veterans 50th Anniversary Commemoration Commission.

Discussed enhancing opportunities for recently discharged veterans, including readjustment counseling, employment/economic opportunities and education benefits.

Discussed VACARES, a US VA utilization study of existing medical care infrastructure, and possible impacts to the City of New York's veterans.

Welcomed Clarice Joynes as the new Director of MOVA. Clarice takes the MOVA helm after the untimely passing of MOVA Director Michael J. Handy, a Vietnam veteran.

Discussed needed changes to the city's Veterans Pension Buy-Back program.

2004:

Discussed airport screener jobs for veterans. Motion passed to draft letter to US Transportation Security Administration.

Discussed progress of planning a job fair on the Intrepid, which takes place on Veterans Day.

Discussed veteran housing needs. MOVA to work with HPD to re-establish veterans' preference.

Discussed developing a city-wide list of local "mom and pop" veteran support groups. At present, there is no central listing of these groups, which operate out of their home Boroughs.

Discussed Home Depot initiative to hire veterans and spouses.

Discussed advocacy efforts to keep VA medical centers operating in Brooklyn and Manhattan.

Follow-up discussion on advocating that the Mayor to include "wartime and disabled veterans" within Executive Order 36, which expanded business opportunities and technical assistance for the city's minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBE).

Discussed Council Speaker Miller's creation of a Select Veterans Committee. Previously, only a sub-committee existed.

Discussed advocating to the Mayor that MOVA should become a "full-fledged" city agency, and a commissioner should be appointed, rather than a director. A motion was passed to draft a letter to the Mayor.

2005:

Discussed HR 4939, which would allow veterans to use Medicare to pay for VA healthcare.

Discussed Intro 688, which would establish a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the VAB, as well as requiring quarterly meetings and submission of annual reports to the Mayor and City Council.

Discussed Dept. of Finance issues with informing veterans of how their real-estate tax exemption changes if their disability rating changes. Motion passed to recommend to Mayor that a letter from DOF go out to existing exemption recipients advising them to contact DOF if their disability rating has changed.

Discussed MOVA visit to East 119th Street Veterans SRO.

Discussed (Federal) Executive Order 13363, which establishes campaign medals for service in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Continued planning discussions for the upcoming 30th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. The ceremonies will take place at the NYC Vietnam Memorial.

Discussed the Mayor's establishment of a Commission on Construction Opportunity, which will set goals and strategies for all New Yorkers, including returning veterans to gain access to good jobs. The program will work with the Construction Board of Trade.

2006:

Discussed Councilman Tony Avella's Veterans Real Property Tax Exemption Reso, which would eliminate the "School Tax Add Back." The add-back had been reducing the value of the veterans property tax exemption annually.

Discussed City efforts to recover salary from over 1,500 cops, firefighters, sanit workers and other employees activated for military duty post-9/11.

Discussed Councilmember Monserrate's Intro, which would create Veterans Resource Centers in the five Boroughs. It was noted that US VA Vet Centers already exist in the five Boroughs. The possibility of co-location or out-stationing was also considered.

Discussed "Serving Those Who Serve," a volunteer effort to provide modifications to homes of severely disabled OEF/OIF returnees.

Discussed Intro 233, which would expand the VAB from five to nine members. Five would be appointed by the Mayor, and four by the Speaker of the City Council.

2007:

In July, 2007, MOVA was designated as a Mayoral Agency. Roger K. Newman was appointed as the first Commissioner. He previously served a Commissioner of DHS.

Reviewed the College of Staten Island's Vet Resource Center brochure. Approximately 300 veterans are now attending the college on the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Received update on Borden Avenue Veterans Residence renovations. Smaller individual units and a female veterans section are being constructed.

Reviewed the outcome of the Fleet Week Jobs and Education Fair, where 400 veterans participated along with over 60 government agencies, private businesses and community-based organizations.

Discussed the \$1M City Council allocation for development of five Borough Veteran Resource Centers.

Discussed US SBA Patriot Express Pilot Loan initiative and NY Business Development Corporation Loan program.

Received update on HPD/HUD Housing Partnership. One-third of units will be designated for veterans.

Received update on SONYMA Homes for Veterans program.

Discussed Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act.

Discussed development and implementation of a MOVA Website on nyc.gov.

Discussed DHS/VA Initiative to End Veterans Homelessness in NYC.

Received update on St. Albans VA site and discussed healthcare for veterans in Queens.

Heard presentation from James Rogers, Ambassador for the US Army Reserves. He discussed the restructuring of the Reserves, which includes closing 176 outdated facilities in NY state and opening new ones. There will be four Readiness Commands, with Ft. Dix as the lead Command for our region.

2008:

Discussed the Warrior Transition Program for returning Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) veterans.

Reviewed the DHS Annual Homeless Survey. Discussed the possibility that veterans be identified during subsequent annual surveys.

Discussed the Veterans of Modern Warfare, a new, chartered nation-wide advocacy organization for OEF/OIF veterans.

Reviewed Executive Order 110, which directs city agency heads to select senior staff as "Agency Coordinators for Veterans Services."

Discussed dignified burial of indigent veterans. MOVA to work with HRA "Organizational Friend" program, which recruits community organizations to act on behalf of deceased by making funeral arrangements.

Discussed MOVA obtaining lists of recently discharged city vets, so that local resources may be shared with them.