

Idaho Veterans Affairs Commission
 July 23, 2014, 8:30 a.m.
 Idaho State Veterans Home Lewiston – Main Conference Room

Members: Commissioner H. Melvin Napier, Chairman
 Commissioner Leo Dub, Co-Chairman (absent)
 Commissioner Arthur L. Gimpel
 Commissioner John A. Spurny (tele-conference from Boise)
 Commissioner Thomas Prewitt
 Commissioner David E. Brasuell, Executive Secretary; Administrator, IDVS (absent)
 Tamara Mackenthun, Deputy Administrator, IDVS
 Tracy Schaner, Human Resource Officer, IDVS
 Debbie Spence, Financial Manager, IDVS
 James Roberts, Administrator, ISVH – Boise
 Kenneth Shull, Administrator, ISVH – Lewiston
 Josiah Dahlstrom, Administrator, ISVH – Pocatello
 Doug Jacobson, Service Officer, Office of Veterans Advocacy
 James Earp, Director, Veterans Cemetery
 Tom Byrns, Veterans Education Coordinator (absent)
 Kevin Wallior, Administrative Assistant II, IDVS

Guests:

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Meeting commenced at 8:30 AM

The Commissioners welcomed the new Pocatello Administrator, Josiah Dahlstrom. All attendees took turns introducing themselves.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

Topic A.	Minutes of Last Meeting (4-16-14):
Information/Data Discussion:	Minutes were sent electronically to the Commissioners for review prior to this meeting. There were no changes offered.
Action/Decision/ Conclusion:	8:35 AM MST Commissioner Gimpel made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and accept the minutes as written. Commissioner Prewitt seconded. Vote was held and the minutes were unanimously approved as written.
Responsible Party:	Administrative Assistant II, IDVS
Target Completion Date:	N/A
Status:	CLOSED

II. STANDING ITEMS:

Topic A.	Financial Report (Debbie Spence – Financial Manager):
Information/Data Discussion:	1. FY14 Year-End Fiscal Status Preliminary Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Appropriation \$29,366,700 • Expenditures \$27,923,514

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remaining Appropriation \$1,443,186<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Less encumbrance requests \$207,758• Remaining Appropriation \$1,235,4282. FY14 Year-to-Date Nursing Occupancy Rate<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IDVS Average 85.9%<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Boise 91.8%○ Pocatello 72.7%○ Lewiston 87.5%• Other Idaho Facilities Average 63.0%3. FY14 Average Cost per Resident per Day<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nursing \$292.24• Domiciliary/Residential \$73.674. Year-End Closing Packages are being completed.5. FY15 Appropriation \$30,155,400<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Federal Funds VA – \$12,940,179 = 43%○ Medicaid Receipts – \$8,543,440 = 29%○ Receipts – \$5,777,860 = 19%○ Fed Funds Medicare – \$1,286,621 = 4%○ General Funds – \$964,300 = 3%○ Endowment – \$643,000 = 2%○ General Funds percentage of Appropriation has steadily decreased from 12.4% in FY04 to 3.2% in FY15• FY15 Appropriation includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ \$428,900 for Change in Health & Variable Benefits;○ \$205,700 for Medical and Contract Inflationary Increases;○ \$627,900 for Replacement Items;○ \$293,200 for 1% On-Going Salary Increases and 1% One-Time Bonuses;○ \$158,300 for 11.3 FTPs (and transferring \$300,000 from operating);○ \$60,000 for Basic Cable for Residents○ \$401,300 for new equipment;○ \$726,900 for DPW projects;○ \$110,000 for Suicide Crises Prevention Hotline;○ \$50,000 for Veterans Courts;○ \$356,900 for Market Equity – IDVS Compensation Plan.• FY16 Budget Preparation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We are starting the FY 16 budget request process.○ All programs have submitted their budget request to Division.○ Division is reviewing the requests and compiling the Division budget request.○ Division Budget will include:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Veterans Recognition Fund plan; ▪ Our plan for operating if there is a reduction of 10% or more in federal funds that we receive per Governor’s Executive Order #2014-03 <p>Floor opened for questions and/or comments. Commissioner Spurny asked if the Veterans Recognition Fund Plan would reduce IDVS operating funds.</p> <p>Tamara Mackenthun responded that it would not. By statute the Recognition Fund has no bearing on IDVS operational budget.</p>
Action/Decision/Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Financial Manager
Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting.
Status:	INFORMATION
Topic B.	Human Resources (Tracy Schaner – Human Resource Director):
Information/Data Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turnover increased to 30.9% in FY14. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at trend going back to 2005 you see the turnover rate decrease during the economic downturn during FY09 to FY12 period. • With the economy healing turnover has increased in kind. 2. 11.3 new classified positions were approved for FY15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.7 – CNA positions for ISVH-Pocatello <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This 0.7 additional hours were added to an existing 0.3 position to make it a full-time CNA. ○ This will make it easier to recruit for the position as 0.3 position didn't have enough hours to be an attractive position. • 9.0 – CNA positions; 3 to each ISVH • 1.6 – HR Associate positions; 0.8 positions each to ISVH-Pocatello and ISVH-Lewiston • Total Appropriated Positions in FY15 are 328.0 3. CEC Appropriations for FY15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upward adjustment of the compensation schedule by 1% (pay line move effective 6/8/14 – 7/3/14 pay date) • A 1% ongoing salary increase, based on merit • A 1% one-time bonus, based on merit • Encouraged agencies to use FY14 salary savings for one-time or ongoing merit increases. • IDVS was appropriated \$356,900 Market Salary Equity • IDVS discussed closely with DFM and DHR and determined a plan to help address pay issues.

- Low entry salaries/ compa-ratios
- Salary compression
- Market rate issues
- Pay inequities
- Meritorious performance
- Retention
- Ongoing CEC Merit Matrix system looks at three factors:
 - Employees' performance evaluation rating.
 - Employees' pay rate in relation to policy rate (compa-ratio).
 - Employees' number of years in their current job classification.
 - Internal and external market pay equity issues (For example all eligible CNAs in Boise received an additional 2% increase and all eligible CNAs in Pocatello received an additional 3% for low entry salaries and market equity conditions).
 - Pay compression issues – Our dedicated and long-term employees received a slight % increase for those with 10+ years of meritorious service.
 - Lastly, we determined it was important that no eligible employee receive less than \$0.25 per hour as a merit increase.
- Based on those elements, 90.8%, 295 out of 325, of IDVS classified and non-classified employees were determined eligible to receive a merit increase between 1% and 9.9%, with the overall average merit increase being 5.1%

Floor opened for questions and/or comments.

Commissioner Gimpel asked if the Merit Matrix's intent is to minimize turnover.

Tracy responded that that is a major factor particularly to retain long time employees with a lot of experience.

Commissioner Gimpel asked if it brought us up to market rates.

Tracy responded that it does not bring our salaries up to market rates but did allow IDVS to catch up a little bit.

Commissioner Spurny asked if there was a 30% turnover how did IDVS have significant salary savings.

Tracy responded that the 30% turnover is why IDVS had funds available for CEC. The difference in salary of experienced outgoing employees versus junior replacements.

	<p>Administrator, Josiah Dahlstrom, asked if there are other factors that have been discussed to incentivize retention such as reward programs.</p> <p>Tracy responded that the state does not provide funds for organizations to reward/incentivize recognition of employees, but the ISVH do have fundraising ability to raise money for employee recognition.</p>
Action/Decision/Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Human Resource Director
Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting until complete.
Status:	INFORMATION
Topic C.	Idaho State Veterans Home - Boise (James Roberts – Administrator):
Information/Data Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boise has been in constant survey mode. ISVH-Boise expects the state survey any day. • The VA survey generally went well. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surveyors said that ISVH-Boise has a great facility. ○ While the surveyors were there, there was an immediate jeopardy dock for a veteran going through a safety rail. This particular veteran requires extra effort and 1 to 1 coverage. ○ The surveyors fixated on building issues associated with maintenance. ○ Those issues are being worked. • Building safety inspection went well. • ISVH-Boise received an American Health Care Association Bronze Award. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only 4 other facilities in Idaho received this award. ○ ISVH-Boise will send a nurse to Washington DC to accept this award on ISVH-Boise's behalf. 2. Data Tracking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a slight dip in the Census, but ISVH-Boise is still much higher than the state average of 63% and sits at 90% occupancy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Admissions and discharges are consistent with norms. • Receipts – VA, Medicare and Medicaid – are all in line with norms. • Energy costs have reflected the facilities improvements. • Food costs have been consistent with past numbers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These food costs are slightly higher than other homes in the community, but this reflects improved veteran experience. • ISVH-Boise has seen greater agency use in the last quarter than previous quarters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tougher and tougher to recruit RNs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CNA turnover has contributed as well. ○ This increases agency costs considerably. <p>3. DPW/Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bathroom and shower rooms are almost complete. ● Cable is in the process of being added to all residents' rooms. ● Monitors will be added throughout the facility to provide information about the facility similar to information channels in hotels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hoping to have information accessible on all TVs in every room in the building. <p>4. Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The new maintenance staff has been excelling and doing a great job. ● The CEC was greatly appreciated by the staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tremendous morale boost. <p>Floor opened for questions and/or comments. No questions or comments.</p>
Action/Decision/Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Boise Home Administrator
Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting until complete.
Status:	INFORMATION
Topic D.	Idaho State Veterans Home - Lewiston (Kenneth Shull – Administrator):
Information/Data Discussion:	<p>1. Surveys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lewiston is done with their surveys for the year. ● All of their surveys went really well. ● By the end of the year Lewiston will be in a position to apply for awards. ● ISVH-Lewiston has raised their star rating from a one star facility to a three star facility. <p>2. Staffing/Miscellany</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The facility is approximately 80% paperless with the shift to Point Click Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Within the next year hope is to increase to 90% paperless. ● 2 senior nurses will go to Orlando in the near future for advanced training on the Point Click Care system. ● This was the first quarter Kenneth has been with ISVH-Lewiston that there wasn't a staffing turnover in nursing leadership. ● Housekeeping is hiring a new manager. ● Hiring a religious activities coordinator. <p>3. Data Tracking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Census is increased to 88%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with a local hospital to ensure that patients that require assisted living care are aware of ISVH- Lewiston. Receipts have been consistent with past quarters. Food costs have been consistent with past quarters. <p>Floor opened for questions and/or comments. No questions or comments.</p>
Action/Decision/Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Lewiston Home Administrator
Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting until complete.
Status:	INFORMATION
Topic E.	Idaho State Veterans Home - Pocatello (Josiah Dahlstrom – Administrator):
Information/Data Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Data Tracking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Josiah noticed that Pocatello has a lower occupancy compared to other ISVH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While 71% is not terrible compared to other ALFs in Pocatello area he believes improvement is possible. Staffing/Miscellany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing and turnover rates provide leadership an opportunity to determine ways to ensure higher morale as well as needs of facility are met. The staff seems to be very positive. Overall impression of the facility is positive. Believes there is a great opportunity to increase ISVH's star rating. <p>Floor opened for questions and/or comments. No questions or comments.</p>
Action/Decision/Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Pocatello Home Administrator
Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting until complete.
Status:	INFORMATION
Topic F.	Idaho State Veterans Cemetery (James Earp – Director):
Information/Data Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cemetery Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cemetery closed out FY14 with over 617 interments conducted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase of 7.5% over FY13

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This was the first year that the cemetery had over 600 interments. ● The cemetery continues to improve interaction with veterans and their families by improving and clarifying the eligibility and marker forms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These improvements were modeled after National Cemetery standards. ○ The intent is to reduce delays in marker shipments and increase accuracy with eligibility verification. <p>2. Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The cemetery is in the final month of their construction project. ● This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resurfaced Main flag pole plaza ○ Addition of fallen service member monuments ○ New irrigation pump ○ Infrastructure place throughout the cemetery grounds to support new security cameras ○ Speaker addition to committal shelter ○ Automated reader board <p>3. Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cemetery hosted the annual Memorial Day ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attended by the Governor ○ 2000 attendees ● Hosted the Syringa Girls State Tour with over 250 participants ● Hosted George Eisenbach, the NCA Director of the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visit was primarily to review the completed expansion projects but included a courtesy review of our operations and overall cemetery appearance. ○ Review yielded positive results and feedback for the upcoming inspection in September ○ Our cemetery has been requested to be the focus for next quarter's Veterans Cemetery Grants Newsletter. <p>4. Volunteer Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Volunteer program continues to grow. ● Approximately, 2000 volunteer hours were completed for FY14 <p>Floor opened for questions and/or comments. No questions or comments.</p>
Action/Decision/Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Idaho State Veterans Cemetery Director
Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting until complete.
Status:	INFORMATION

Topic G.	Office of Veterans Advocacy (Doug Jacobson – Service Officer):
Information/Data Discussion:	<p>1. Stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th Quarter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1090 claims processed ○ 1471 contacts with claimants made ○ 18 VA hearings ○ 6 Grants approved at \$5500 ○ Just over \$3.5 million brought into state via claims ○ 469 outreach contacts made • Year to Date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approximately 4211 claims processed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 288 claim increase from FY13 ○ Accepted 3047 Power of Attorneys on behalf of claimants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 310 claimant increase from FY13 <p>2. VA Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert McDonald will be the new Secretary of the VA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Graduate of Class of 1975 from West Point ○ Commissioned Army infantry officer ○ Spent 5 years in the Army ○ 30 years with Proctor & Gamble • VA has established a burn pit registry for Gulf War and OEF/OIF era veterans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Similar to Vietnam Era Agent Orange presumptive conditions registry • Veterans Same-Sex dependency claim rules have been established • New burial benefit procedures in an attempt to stream line the process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Non-service connected death \$300 benefit ○ Service connected death \$2000 benefit • 300 Idaho Claims are being worked at Houston VARO • VA Health Admin has mandated that VAMC meet with Veterans Service Organizations on a monthly basis. • Stakeholders Enterprise Portal (SEP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20 minutes for a simple dependency claim <p>Floor opened for questions and/or comments. Kenneth Shull asked if burning oil fields would be included with the burn pit registry. Doug Jacobson answered in the affirmative.</p>
Action/Decision/ Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Office of Veterans Advocacy Director

Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting until complete.
Status:	INFORMATION
Topic H.	Idaho Division of Veterans Services (Tamara Mackenthun – Deputy Administrator):
Information/Data Discussion:	<p>1. IDVS Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phones/cabbling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Phone numbers have changed for all IDVS facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Old numbers will work for the next few months ○ Part of the cabling project ○ Part of shifting to VoIP ○ Bandwidth has been expanded ○ Each resident will have their own phone if they so desire ○ Cable television will be provided for each resident room in all of three homes. • Upcoming meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meetings with contractor for needs assessment to determine the need for additional capacity or changes to the services we provide in the Veterans Homes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mountain Home July 28 ▪ Post Falls July 29 ○ July 31 Meeting with the staffers of all four of Idaho's Congressmen. ○ August 12 Commemoration/Dedication ceremony for the renaming of the Idaho portion of I-84 to the Vietnam Memorial Highway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Veterans Support Fund paid for the four initial signs. ○ David and Tamara will be attending NASDVA in San Diego. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David will be installed as the 1st Vice President. ○ 20th Anniversary of ISVH-Lewiston's opening will be the 1st Weekend of October <p>Floor opened for questions and/or comments.</p> <p>Chairman Napier asked if IDVS could please update and clarify the information regarding the Veterans Recognition Fund on the website.</p> <p>Tamara replied that the information is currently under revision, and will be posted by September 1st.</p>
Action/Decision/ Conclusion:	As above; information update as available.
Responsible Party:	Division Administrator
Target Completion Date:	Update each meeting until complete.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

**Next meeting is scheduled for
Thursday, October 16, 2014
Idaho State Veterans Home – Lewiston
Conference Room**

Commissioner Gimpel moved that the meeting be adjourned; Commissioner Prewitt seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 am MST.

H. Melvin Napier, Chairman

David Brasuell, Executive Secretary