

# Minutes for Idaho Veterans Affairs Commission

## April 14, 2021

### Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

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#### Call to Order

This virtual meeting of the Idaho Veterans Affairs Commission was held on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, via Microsoft Teams. It began at 8:30 a.m. and was presided over by Commissioner **Josh Callihan**.

#### Attendees

Commission Members in attendance: **Jinny Cash, Art Gimpel, Josh Callihan**.

Commissioner **Patrick Grace** was unable to attend, as he was away serving in the US Coast Guard. Former Commissioner **Leo Dub** resigned in advance of the meeting for personal reasons.

IDVS Staff Members in attendance included: IDVS Interim Chief Administrator **Peter Koehler**, IDVS Deputy Chief Administrator **Tracy Schaner**, IDVS Business Support Services Bureau Chief **Paul Spannkebel**, IDVS Financial Officer **Debbie Spence**, ISVH-Boise Administrator **Rick Holloway**, ISVH-Lewiston Administrator **Mark High**, ISVH-Pocatello Administrator **Josiah Dahlstrom**, OVA Program Administrator **Bill Heyob**, Cemetery Administrator **James Earp**, Blackfoot Cemetery Business Operations Specialist **Mark Weaver**, Education Program Specialist **Tonya Erhardt** and Management Assistant **Kevin Wallior**.

Number of Citizens in attendance: 0

#### Announcements

Commissioner **Leo Dub**'s resignation was announced. Commissioner **Josh Callihan** on behalf of the entire Commission thanked former Commissioner **Dub** for all of his years of service to the State of Idaho.

#### Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on October 21, 2020, was made by Commissioner **Art Gimpel** at 8:33 AM. Commissioner **Jinny Cash** seconded.

Minutes were unanimously approved.

#### Legislative Updates

IDVS only submitted two pieces of legislation during the 2021 Legislative Session. Both were housekeeping bills in line with the Governor's Red-tape Reduction Initiatives. They removed obsolete Idaho Code. Both bills were passed by the House and the Senate and signed by the Governor on March 23, 2021.

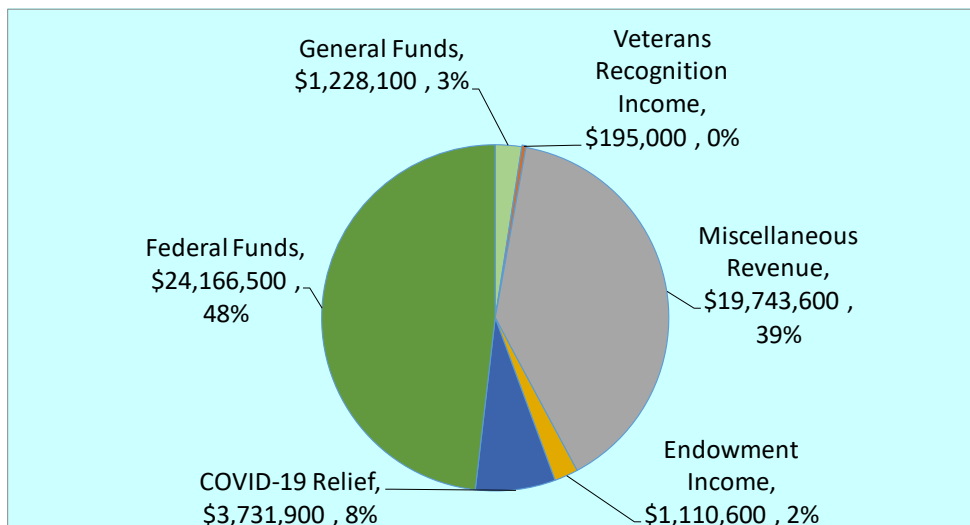
- [House Bill 47](#) – Repeals existing law relating to appropriations for veterans memorials.
- [House Bill 48](#) – Repeals existing law relating to the authorization of males 18 years of age or older to contract under the G.I. Bill of Rights.

Additionally, [House Bill 120](#), which amends existing law to provide for the ability of certain disabled veterans to transfer their veteran's property tax reduction and homestead exemption upon a change of homestead, was passed by the legislature and signed into law by the governor on March 17, 2021.

## Division Bureau Reports

### Financial Report presented by **Debbie Spence**

1. 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter FY21 Average Cost Per Resident Per Day
  - a. Boise Home - \$606.78
  - b. Pocatello Home - \$642.93
  - c. Lewiston Home - \$612.06
2. 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter FY21 COVID-19 Cost Per Resident Per Day
  - a. Boise Home - \$65.95
  - b. Pocatello Home - \$60.90
  - c. Lewiston Home - \$71.59
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter FY21 Quarterly Occupancy
  - a. IDVS Dom/Res Care – 40%
  - b. IDVS Nursing – 60%
  - c. Nursing Goal – 88%
4. FY21 Charge Changes (0% Increase to Charges effective June 1, 2021)
  - a. No Changes stays at \$204/per day
  - b. Average cost of other Idaho Nursing Homes - \$297.27/day
  - c. Last time increased – 5% on 6/1/19; last year included \$16/day medical supplies ancillary in daily rate (7.8%)
  - d. Looking at current and future needs for the Homes – ideal census
5. FY2020 Single Audit
  - a. Division of Veterans Services was included by Legislative Services Office to audit. The audit is being finalized.
  - b. We have not been notified of any findings.
6. FY2021 Budget
  - a. Fiscal year end coming fast
  - b. Continue to watch revenue and cash flow
  - c. Are using cash reserves due to lower census (decreased revenue) and increased expenditures
  - d. COVID expenditures are paid with CARES Act funding
7. FY2022 Budget Appropriation
  - a. \$50,175,700



- b. General Funds 2% of Total Budget
- c. \$162,400 Change in Benefit Costs
- d. \$379,200 Inflationary Adjustments
- e. \$1,084,400 Replacement Items
- f. \$41,400 Statewide Cost Allocation
- g. \$71,000 Annualizations – Blackfoot Cemetery
- h. \$435,100 Change in Employee Compensation (2% Classified Employees)
- i. \$66,400 New Leases and Capital Outlay
- j. \$1,000,000 Medicaid Reimbursement Change
- k. \$1,389,800 Construction Grant – Lewiston & Pocatello Life Safety
- l. \$790,200 Boise Cemetery Expansion
- m. \$1,915,900 COVID-19 Construction Grant – Post Falls
- n. \$195,000 Veterans Recognition Fund
- o. \$3,731,900 – COVID Relief Act for Nursing Homes
- p. \$3,132,400 Reappropriation Authority for Blackfoot Cemetery
- q. \$42,918,900 Reappropriation Authority for Post Falls Nursing Home

8. FY2022 DPW Projects

| AGENCY/INSTITUTION                            | INITIAL AGENCY REQUESTS | REVISED AGENCY REQUESTS | PBFAC Recommend | Build Idaho's Future | JFAC Additional Appropriation | PRIORITY Initial | PRIORITY Revised |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>VETERANS SERVICES, DIVISION OF</b>         |                         |                         |                 |                      |                               |                  |                  |
| Replace Two Boilers, VET-B                    | 218,500                 |                         | 218,500         |                      |                               | 1                | 1                |
| Wiring, Emergency Generator/Appliances, VET-B | 405,000                 |                         |                 | 405,000              |                               | 2                | 2                |
| Replace HVAC System, VET-B                    | 120,000                 |                         | 120,000         |                      |                               | 3                | 3                |
| Upgrade Elevators, VET-B                      |                         | 175,000                 |                 |                      | 175,000                       |                  | 4                |
| Install Parking Lot Drains (21007)            |                         | 105,000                 |                 |                      | 105,000                       |                  | 5                |
| Replace Light Fixtures (20000)                |                         | 85,000                  |                 |                      | 85,000                        |                  | 6                |
| Restroom Renovations, Cemetery, VET-B         | 150,000                 |                         |                 |                      |                               | 4                | 7                |
| Remodel IT Room                               |                         | 100,000                 |                 |                      |                               |                  | 8                |
| Post Falls Vets Home                          |                         | 1,495,725               |                 |                      |                               |                  | 9                |
| Matching Funds for future Home Improvements   |                         | 5,000,000               |                 |                      |                               |                  | 10               |
| Land Acquisition, Treasure Valley             |                         | 4,000,000               |                 |                      |                               |                  | 11               |
| 158 Bed Home Treasure Valley                  |                         | 47,856,204              |                 |                      |                               |                  | 12               |
| Renovations, Lewiston                         |                         | 17,500,000              |                 |                      |                               |                  | 13               |
| Renovations, Pocatello                        |                         | 17,500,000              |                 |                      |                               |                  | 14               |
| Adult Health Care Facility, Treasure Valley   |                         | 2,627,847               |                 |                      |                               |                  | 15               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>893,500</b>          | <b>2,627,847</b>        | <b>338,500</b>  | <b>405,000</b>       | <b>426,000</b>                |                  |                  |

9. FY2023 Budget Request

- a. Started budget training in April
- b. Address future requirements, objectives, and Veterans Recognition annual allocation plan
- c. Submit agency budget request by August 31, 2021

Questions from the Commissioners:

Both Commissioners **Callihan** and **Gimpel** asked about the increasing operation costs. Are the increases due to COVID?

Response: We have more COVID funds available than ways to spend the funds. COVID relief funds are only authorized for personnel costs and materials directly related to COVID. Most of our residents are VA, Medicare, or Medicaid eligible. Any increase in cost primarily falls upon our private-pay residents. Ultimately it was determined that the small increase did not justify the increased burden to private pay residents.

Additional Comment from Commissioner **Callihan**: The Veterans Homes should not be responsible for funding all other IDVS programs and services. As the cost of care continues to increase, the Homes need to be relieved of the additional financial burden. Any assistance the legislature could provide via additional general funds or approval of other funding mechanisms would be greatly appreciated and extremely helpful in continue to provide excellent service to our Veterans community.

*10-minute Break (9:15 AM MT)*

**Boise Veterans Home Report** presented by **Rick Holloway**

1. Average daily census for the 3rd quarter of FY21 was 72 nursing care residents – 59% occupancy. Occupancy has begun to improve as of April 14, 81 residents with an uptick in admissions.
  - a. Admissions were previously limited due to the October 2020 COVID outbreak in the Home.
  - b. Targeting a census of 105 by the summertime.
  - c. The Boise VAMC is currently at full divert, our ability to increase admissions will reduce pressure in their facility.
2. Food costs are higher, but we are feeding staff one meal a day to minimize staff entering and exiting the facility repeatedly.
3. All but 2 staff members are currently vaccinated, as of today.
4. There were only 6,450 hours of staffing agency usage this quarter, which is a downward trend.
5. The last resident to test positive for COVID was in December. They recovered and it was considered a resolved case as of January.
6. Today marked the one-year anniversary of all staff wearing scrubs in the facility.
7. Visitation has commenced at the Boise Home; visitors have been asked to coordinate with the activities department to schedule their visit.
8. Boise is anticipating a State Survey. A good survey result should elevate the Boise Home to a CMS 5-star rating.
9. The Boise Home received Best in Class distinction in 16 of 17 focus areas on the most recent Pinnacle Survey.
10. The Boise Home has begun facility dining again, first time since the beginning of the pandemic.
11. The memorial outside of the Boise Home was renovated with granite tiles being replaced with granite slabs. Additionally, the exterior of the Home is being repainted.
12. A ceremony will be scheduled soon to commemorate the new putting green that was installed just prior to the pandemic.

Questions and comments from the Commissioners:

Commissioner **Callihan** expressed his gratitude for the hard work and sacrifices our Veterans Homes staff have made to take care of our residents throughout this pandemic. He expressed how extremely proud he is of the leadership our Administrators in the 3 state Veterans homes showed navigating this pandemic. The other two commissioners concurred with his sentiments.

**Pocatello Veterans Home Report** presented **Josiah Dahlstrom**

1. Census for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY21 was 61% of the 66 available beds.
2. The screening area expansion, made possible through a VA Construction Grant, is mostly complete. Additionally, the Nurse Call System installation is complete.
3. The Pocatello Veterans Home contributed to the University of Idaho's [Project ECHO](#).
4. Communal dining in the dining room has begun again.
5. Throughout the Holiday Season, the Pocatello Community participated in the Be the Light Campaign, helping uplift the spirits of our residents and staff. Community members lit up the trees outside our facility with holiday lighting.
6. The Idaho National Laboratory donated a 82" television to the Pocatello Home.
7. The Pocatello Home scored in the top percentile nationally in 14 of 16 categories and received a Pinnacle Customer Service Award.

A video presentation showcasing Activities, human interest stories, and morale in the Pocatello Home was screened for the Commissioners.

Questions and comments from the Commissioners:

Commissioner **Gimpel** expressed a desire to return to the Pocatello Veterans Home to visit with residents.

Commissioner **Callihan** reiterated his earlier comments regarding the phenomenal work our Administrators and their teams have done throughout this pandemic.

### **Lewiston Veterans Home Report** presented by **Mark High**

1. Census for the third quarter of FY21 averaged 61% of the 64 available beds.
2. Receipts are down due to the low census. Food costs are up, as Lewiston like the other two Homes, provides one meal a day to staff.
3. January COVID Outbreak
  - a. During the COVID outbreak in the Lewiston Home, the West Wing of the facility was converted into a COVID wing for the duration. It has since been converted back to normal admissions.
  - b. Nursing PPD and OT were high due to the COVID outbreak.
  - c. 1<sup>st</sup> Case reported in December.
  - d. There were technically two separate outbreaks. Amongst two different groups of four veterans who shared a bathroom between them.
  - e. Total of eight cases; zero casualties. The outbreak was completely contained.
4. Visitation is a hot button item.
  - a. Open 3 different times throughout the pandemic.
  - b. Most recently visitation rooms are now available.
  - c. Two rooms are dedicated to in-person visits.
  - d. All visits are by appointment only.
5. The Activities Room was dedicated and named in honor of Teresa Brockman in honor of her 27 years of service to the Lewiston Veterans Home. Forevermore it is called the "Teresa Brockman Activities Room."
6. The Dining Room Expansion Project start is imminent.
7. A Memorial Day Ceremony is being planned dependent upon the community infection rate.
8. The Lewiston Home was awarded a Pinnacle Award for Best in Service, as well as, being named Best Nursing Home in Idaho by the US News & World Report.
9. The local chapter of IVAC is preparing a care package for former Commissioner **Leo Dub**.
10. The Lewiston Home is moving under the jurisdiction of the Walla Walla VAMC, previously under the Spokane VAMC.

Questions and comments from the Commissioners:

Commissioner **Cash** expressed her gratitude regarding the care her father receives in the Lewiston Home.

Commissioner **Gimpel** asked if there is a POC for the IVAC being created to serve the Post Falls Veterans Home. There is not, yet.

Commissioner **Callihan** reiterated his appreciation to the Administrators and their teams for what they do.

*5-minute Break (10:18 AM MT)*

**Office of Veterans Advocacy Report** presented by **Bill Heyob**

1.

- OVA statistics comparing 3rd Qtr FY 2021 totals to 3rd Qtr FY 2020:

|                   | <u>2021 YTD</u> | <u>2020 YTD</u> | <u>Increase/Decrease</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Interviews YTD    | 3,711           | 5,881           | - 2,170                  |
| Phone Interviews  | 32,371          | 38,658          | - 6,287                  |
| POAs Filed YTD    | 3,326           | 4,007           | - 681                    |
| Claims Filed YTD  | 5,224           | 6,610           | -5,224                   |
| Correspondence    | 3,556           | 6,125           | - 2,569                  |
| Appeals YTD       | 284             | 287             | - 3                      |
| Home Visits       | 104             | 176             | - 72                     |
| Veterans Seen by  |                 |                 |                          |
| OVA in Vet Courts | 446             | 557             | - 111                    |
| State Emergency   |                 |                 |                          |
| Grants Approved   | 5               | 0               | + 5                      |

- Notable changes from March 2021 and 2020:

March 2021 had (2) more office interviews, (78) fewer phone interviews and (23) less claims submitted compared to March 2020. **\*\* Showing signs of returning to normal**

2. Noteworthy Issues currently happening with the VA

- a. Construction continues adding a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to the Boise VARO – will be used to expand VAMC Telehealth Services.
- b. Boise VARO losing some FTE as they no longer process any legacy appeals (DROs RVSRs, VSRs)
- c. January 1, 2021, the William M Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act was passed into law which approves three new herbicide exposure presumptive conditions: Bladder Cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism or Parkinson-like symptoms. VACO has not released final rules yet on adjudication.
- d. VACO released updates to the Disability Rating Tables for total joint replacements for total knee and joint replacements (effective February 7, 2020). Temp 100% rating dropped from 13 months to 5 months.
- e. VA's Debt Management Center has continued suspension of VA debts until September 30, 2021.
- f. VA has authorized the release of Public Facing DBQs (was stopped due to VA IG Report on Fraud)
- g. Due to Covid-19, the National Personnel Records Center continues to operate on a reduced capacity.
- h. VAMCs now offering Covid vaccinations to all age groups along with spouses and caregivers of VAMC-enrolled Veterans.
- i. Under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Act of 2021, FEMA will provide financial assistance for Covid-19 related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020. FEMA will begin accepting applications on April 12, 2021.

3. Significant Events within the OVA

- a. There was a recent OVA Organization Restructure that shift the IDVS Education Office under Bill Heyob and moves Mitzi Cheldelin from CSO to OVA.
- b. The new office locations for OVA Staff in Lewiston (2604 16th Ave, Ste A) and Pocatello (IDOL Bldg., 430 N. 5th Ave) are now fully operational.
- c. The VFW's Virtual Proficiency Training Course will be held from May 3-11. Along with myself, three OVA Team Members were submitted to attend: Shay Henry, Darrel Homer, and Robert Smith.
- d. Outreaches are being conducted in all counties across the State.

- e. The 2021 Annual County and Post Service Officer Training is being cancelled due to ongoing Covid-19 concerns.
- f. The 100% Property Tax Break and Circuit Breaker Programs (Idaho Tax Commission) application period is being extended until May 17, 2021.

Questions and comments from the Commissioners:

Commissioner **Callihan** brought up [US Senate Bill 344](#) the Major Richard Star Act (co-sponsored by Senator Crapo) which allows a veteran with a combat-related disability and fewer than 20 years of creditable service to receive retirement pay, without reduction, concurrent with disability compensation.

The VFW supports this legislation.

**Veterans Cemetery Report** presented by **James Earp**

1. Cemetery 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Operations Report (Boise, ID)

**Idaho State Veterans Cemetery  
FY 2019 3rd Quarter Operations Report**

| Receipts                 | January   | February  | March     | Total      |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| License Plates           | \$ 5,356  | \$ 7,424  | \$9,152   | \$ 21,931  |
| Interment Fees           | \$ 24,947 | \$ 26,007 | \$ 21,254 | \$ 72,208  |
| Plot Allowance Submitted | \$ 23,381 | \$ 39,391 | \$ 32,580 | \$ 95,352  |
| Total                    | \$ 48,328 | \$ 65,398 | \$ 62,986 | \$ 176,712 |

| Accumulated Total Interments | January | February | March | Total |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                      | 51      | 42       | 38    | 131   |
| Spouse                       | 20      | 22       | 22    | 64    |
| Dependent                    | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                        | 71      | 64       | 60    | 195   |

| Pre-Registration Applications | January | February | March | Total |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                       | 28      | 32       | 54    | 114   |
| Spouse                        | 25      | 27       | 33    | 85    |
| Dependent                     | 1       | 0        | 1     | 2     |
| Total                         | 54      | 59       | 88    | 201   |

**Interments**

| Casket Lower | January | February | March | Total |
|--------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran      | 15      | 16       | 9     | 40    |
| Spouse       | 6       | 6        | 8     | 20    |
| Dependent    | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total        | 21      | 22       | 17    | 60    |

| Casket Upper | January | February | March | Total |
|--------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran      | 11      | 7        | 4     | 22    |
| Spouse       | 5       | 6        | 3     | 14    |
| Dependent    | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total        | 16      | 13       | 7     | 36    |

| Cremation - Columbarium Wall | January | February | March | Total |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                      | 17      | 13       | 15    | 45    |
| Spouse                       | 8       | 9        | 7     | 24    |
| Dependent                    | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                        | 25      | 22       | 22    | 69    |

| Cremation - In-Ground | January | February | March | Total |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran               | 8       | 5        | 7     | 20    |
| Spouse                | 1       | 1        | 2     | 4     |
| Dependent             | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                 | 9       | 6        | 9     | 24    |

| Cremation - Scatter Garden | January | February | March | Total |
|----------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                    | 0       | 1        | 3     | 4     |
| Spouse                     | 0       | 0        | 1     | 1     |
| Dependent                  | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |

2. Cemetery 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Operations Report (Blackfoot, ID)

**Idaho State Veterans Cemetery  
FY 2020 3rd Quarter Operations Report**

| Receipts                 | January    | February   | March      | Total      |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Interment Fees           | \$0.00     | \$0.00     | \$1,614.00 | \$1,614.00 |
| Plot Allowance Submitted | \$2,421.00 | \$3,174.00 | \$807.00   | \$6,402.00 |
| Total                    | \$2,421.00 | \$3,174.00 | \$2,421.00 | \$8,016.00 |

| Accumulated Total Interments | January | February | March | Total |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                      | 4       | 1        | 1     | 6     |
| Spouse                       | 0       | 0        | 2     | 2     |
| Dependent                    | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                        | 4       | 1        | 3     | 8     |

| Pre-Registration Applications | January | February | March | Total |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                       | 7       | 15       | 11    | 33    |
| Spouse                        | 8       | 10       | 10    | 28    |
| Dependent                     | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                         | 15      | 25       | 21    | 61    |

**Interments**

| Casket    | January | February | March | Total |
|-----------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran   | 2       | 1        | 1     | 4     |
| Spouse    | 0       | 0        | 1     | 1     |
| Dependent | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total     | 2       | 1        | 2     | 5     |

| Cremation - Columbarium Wall | January | February | March | Total |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                      | 2       | 0        | 0     | 2     |
| Spouse                       | 0       | 0        | 1     | 1     |
| Dependent                    | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                        | 2       | 0        | 1     | 3     |

| Cremation - In-Ground | January | February | March | Total |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran               | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Spouse                | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Dependent             | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                 | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |

| Cremation - Scatter Garden | January | February | March | Total |
|----------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Veteran                    | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Spouse                     | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Dependent                  | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |
| Total                      | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0     |

3. Currently under Stage-4 of the Governor's re-opening plan we remain fully staffed and have implemented safe work practices that promote the highest possible safe environment for our employees, volunteers, honor guard personnel, and our clients. The administrative offices for both Boise and Blackfoot are open to visitors and able to conduct business.
4. Interment numbers are still much lower than pre-pandemic but expect that to change as weather warms up and people get more comfortable with the relaxed restrictions.
5. Volunteers
  - a. Volunteering has recommenced.
  - b. Hours are reduced from pre-pandemic levels due to less volunteers.
  - c. 12,500 Time to Honor books were distributed to Vietnam Veterans through the assistance of Volunteers and Veterans Service Organizations.
6. Memorial Day
  - a. No official ceremony planned.
  - b. Working with community organizations to still honor Veterans throughout Memorial Day weekend.
7. Construction
  - a. Awaiting approval of a VA Construction Grant to commence with the Cemetery Expansion Project.
  - b. Next quarter looking to replace dilapidated stairs to the upper area. Will replace the wood with concrete and add handrails.
  - c. Future Blackfoot Cemetery DPW projects include an expansion to their maintenance



facilities, as well as, additions of a maintenance bay, conference room, public bathrooms, and a staff breakroom.

8. Blackfoot Cemetery
  - a. Partial substantial completion on November 16, 2020.
  - b. Burial services began December 7, 2020.
  - c. A dedication has not been scheduled, yet, but will be in the future.
  - d. Actively working to make communities in eastern Idaho aware that the Blackfoot Cemetery is open. Exploring the possibility of billboards and highway signs.

Questions and comments from the Commissioners:

Commissioner **Callihan** thanked James for his work and acknowledged the sensitivity of the position.

**Veterans Education Bureau Report** presented by **Tonya Erhardt**

1. Reduction in IHL but received an approval request from the extension center of the University of Dubuque in Meridian.
2. Completed 4 surveys in FY2021 to date. One currently in process, with four more remaining.
3. **Stephen Tamm** delayed from being able to conduct surveys by the VA slowness in conducting his background check.

Questions and comments from the Commissioners:

No questions or comments.

**Business Support Services Report** presented by **Paul Spannkebel**

1. FY22 CEC Raises were submitted to DHR for approval.
  - a. 2% was authorized for the current FY, that was previously withheld due to the pandemic.
  - b. 2% was also approved by the legislature for FY22.
  - c. Governor's guidance was to combine the 2% from FY21 with the 2% from FY22 for a total of 4%.
  - d. If DHR approves, planning to implement the pay increase May 16 which would cover the final two pay periods of FY2021.
  - e. Evaluation must be completed to be eligible.
  - f. Not quite a bell-curve with the distribution of eval ratings. There is plenty of room to coach up staff from the achieves rating to the solid sustains rating.
2. CEC Raises are based off performance and allocated utilizing a matrix with the following components:
  - a. There are 4 rating in IPerform (DNA, APS, SS, EX)
  - b. 70-99% compa-ratio and 100-125% compa-ratio

- c. Employee longevity <10 years credited state service and >10 years credited state

**Employees with less than 10 Years of Meritorious State Service**

|              | DNA | APS  | SS   | EX   |
|--------------|-----|------|------|------|
| 100% -- 125% | 0%  | 3.5% | 4.0% | 4.5% |
| 70% -- 99%   | 0%  | 4.0% | 4.5% | 5.0% |

**Employees with 10+ Years of Meritorious State Service**

|              | DNA | APS  | SS   | EX   |
|--------------|-----|------|------|------|
| 100% -- 125% | 0%  | 4.5% | 5.0% | 5.5% |
| 70% -- 99%   | 0%  | 5.0% | 5.5% | 6.0% |

service.

3. IDVS Organizational Effectiveness Spire
  - a. Looking to hire an additional HR Specialist, Senior to focus on process improvement.
  - b. This new staff member would complement Bert and her team who would be focused on people/personnel development.



4. Danny Arnold is completely onboarded and fully integrated into the team as the new Purchasing Agent for the agency.
5. IT continues to be a work in progress. There are significant concerns regarding ITS processes and in particular the lag in accomplishing necessary IT tasks.

Commissioner **Callihan** interjected asking in what way the Commission could assist us in alleviating these barriers. Paul highlight the excellent lines of communication between our interim Chief Administrator and the Governor's Office, which has helped escalate some of the problem solving related to ITS services.

**Division Updates presented by Tracy Schaner**

Deputy Chief Administrator Tracy Schaner began her brief by lauding the work of the entire leadership team and their staff for all their successes in spite of the barriers created by the pandemic. Thanked them for ensuring our services continued unabated throughout the past year.

1. IDVS was successful in obtaining several Grants from the VA to improve our Homes and make them better able to serve our residents during a pandemic.

| <u>IDVS Active Construction Grants</u>          | <u>Total Funding</u>    | <u>Federal Funding</u>  | <u>State Funding</u>                          | <u>Status</u>               |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>Post Falls Home (4 grants)</b>               | <b>\$ 54,349,525.63</b> | <b>\$ 34,967,642.62</b> | <b>\$ 19,381,883.01</b>                       |                             |
| 64-Bed New Construction                         | \$ 50,143,608.21        | \$ 30,761,725.20        | \$ 19,381,883.01                              | Awarded                     |
| COVID #1  | \$ 3,242,247.02         | \$ 3,242,247.02         |   | Opportunity Letter Received |
| COVID #2  | \$ 400,724.52           | \$ 400,724.52           |   | Pending Approval Process    |
| COVID #3  | \$ 562,945.88           | \$ 562,945.88           |   | Pending Approval Process    |
| <b>Lewiston &amp; Pocatello Homes (1 grant)</b> | <b>\$ 2,138,137.00</b>  | <b>\$ 1,389,789.05</b>  | <b>\$ 748,347.95</b>                          |                             |
| Lew Dining Rm Expansion                         | \$ 711,309.00           | \$ 462,350.85           | \$ 248,958.15                                 | Opportunity Letter Received |
| Lew Flooring Replacement                        | \$ 517,561.00           | \$ 336,414.65           | \$ 181,146.35                                 | Opportunity Letter Received |
| <u>Poc</u> Handrails & Wall Protection          | \$ 212,401.00           | \$ 138,060.65           | \$ 74,340.35                                  | Opportunity Letter Received |
| <u>Poc</u> Doors & Door Security                | \$ 536,639.00           | \$ 348,815.35           | \$ 187,823.65                                 | Opportunity Letter Received |
| Lew Door Security                               | \$ 160,227.00           | \$ 104,147.55           | \$ 56,079.45                                  | Opportunity Letter Received |
| <b>Boise Cemetery (1 grant)</b>                 | <b>\$ 790,200.00</b>    | <b>\$ 790,200.00</b>    | <b>\$ 79,200.00 (10% commitment/ A&amp;E)</b> |                             |
| Boise Expansion                                 | \$ 790,200.00           | \$ 790,200.00           | \$ 79,200.00                                  | Grant <u>Submitted</u>      |
| <b>Boise Home (2 grants)</b>                    | <b>\$107,828,806.46</b> | <b>\$ 70,023,724.20</b> | <b>\$ 37,805,082.26</b>                       |                             |
| 158-Bed Replacement Home                        | \$102,153,262.97        | \$ 66,334,620.93        | \$ 35,818,642.04                              | Grant Submitted             |
| 40-Participant Adult Day Health Care            | \$ 5,675,543.49         | \$ 3,689,103.27         | \$ 1,986,440.22                               | Grant Submitted             |

- a. COVID #1, #2, and #3 relate to special grant funds available to improve a home to better control the spread of infection.
- b. Deliverables for the Pocatello and Lewiston Homes grants are due in June.
2. Construction on the Post Falls Veterans Home is ongoing.
  - a. Underground utilities have been laid.
  - b. Pipework has also been laid.

**Division Report** presented by **Peter Koehler**

1. Strongly recommend growth in general funds to contribute to operations.
  - a. This will be particularly important for the Post Falls Home, but also for the Boise Replacement Home, eventually. Costs are only increasing, and in some cases very rapidly.
2. The incoming Chief Administrator has not been announced, yet. April 15, 2021 is the final day for Interim Chief Administrator Peter Koehler.
  - a. Peter expressed absolute faith in the leadership teams across our agency.
  - b. Additionally, he passed on the compliments of Governor Little, who is extremely pleased in the operations of our 3 State Veterans Homes.

**New Business**

With Commissioner **Leo Dub** resigning and the current vacancies in the Veterans Recognition Fund

Committee, we need to actively recruit to fill those 3 vacancies.

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, July 14, 2021. Possibly in person.

### **Veterans Recognition Fund Committee**

With the costs associated with current construction ever increasing, and the 35% matching requirement for any future construction grants, the current balance will be insufficient to meet those needs.

Commissioner **Callihan** put forth a question to the Commissioners on whether the Veterans Recognition Fund should be earmarked for VA Construction Grants, or should they be reserved for funding grants for organizations in the state who serve Veterans?

They discussed the history of the program and the original intent of the funding set aside. Ultimately, they decided to vote to suspend allocating grant funds for FY2023 to protect funds for matching funds for VA construction grant opportunities. They will re-evaluate the issue in advance of FY2024.

Commissioner **Art Gimpel** made a motion at 12:05 PM to "suspend allocating grant funds for FY2023 and re-evaluate the issue in a year, in advance of FY2024." Commissioner **Josh Callihan** seconded. All three Commissioners in attendance vote in the affirmative.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:09 PM MT



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Kevin R. Wallior  
Management Assistant  
Idaho Division of Veteran Services