

**Dominion Command  
Veterans, Service and Seniors Committee  
VIA ZOOM**

**8 November 2021, 1330 – 1445**

**Record of Discussion**

**File: 65-1**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

<b>Bruce Julian</b>	-	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Owen Parkhouse</b>	-	<b>Vice-Chairman</b>
<b>Bill Chafe</b>	-	<b>Member</b>
<b>John Mahon</b>	-	<b>Member</b>
<b>Dave Gordon</b>	-	<b>Homeless Veterans</b>
<b>George O'Dair</b>	-	<b>Seniors Advisor</b>
<b>Trevor Jenvenne</b>	-	<b>BSO Legion OSI Special Section</b>
<b>Larry Murray</b>	-	<b>Ex-Officio</b>

**DOMINION COMMAND STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

<b>Raymond McInnis</b>	-	<b>Coordinator</b>
<b>Dwayne McCarthy</b>	-	<b>Assistant Coordinator</b>

**1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS**

Comrade Bruce welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided an update on the First Poppy presentation to HEGG. He also advised that he would be meeting with the Minister of Veterans Affairs, the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay on Tuesday.

**2. REVIEW OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes from 23 September 2021 were distributed on 4 October 2021 and forwarded as an attachment with the agenda on 5 November 2021. The minutes were reviewed by the Committee with no observations. The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes.

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded that the members approve the minutes of the last Committee meeting held on 23 September 2021.

**CARRIED**

### 3. RCL-VAC BILATERAL MEETING

Comrade Bruce advised that he hosted the VAC Deputy Minister Paul Ledwell and his Executive staff on 18 October 2021 for the annual RCL-VAC Executive meeting, in attendance from the Legion were Comrades Steven and Ray.

In attendance from VAC were Steven Harris, ADM Service Delivery; Crystal Garrett-Baird, the Acting ADM Strategic Policy and Commemoration, Sylvie Thibodeau-Sealy – the Director Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach and Charlotte Bastien – ADM Strategic Oversight and Communications.

At that time, the Cabinet was not announced so it was more of an introductory meeting between staffs.

Issues discussed but no decisions made were on the Veterans Survivor Fund, Veterans Homelessness, Military Sexual Trauma, Contracts, Long Term Care, Service Dogs/Equine Therapy, Commemoration Activities, and the CAF-VAC Steering Committee.

Comrade Bruce mentioned that the Cabinet has been announced, now is the time to ramp up our advocacy on all our issues.

### 4. VETERANS HOMELESSNESS REPORT

The Chair advised that as this report is an update along with the Seniors update and OSI Special Section update, there is no requirement for a motion to approve.

Comrade Dave advised that Covid-19 has not stopped Homeless Veterans. We continue to see more and more Homeless Veterans coming forward and seeking assistance from the Legion.

The following is a review of the 2021 Quarterly reports (numbers assisted) by Command which has been updated with additional numbers from Ontario Command.

**BC/Yukon** – over 100 from Cockrell House (I used the 100 number) a few females. Note there has been indication of Homeless Veterans being assisted in the interior, Comox Valley, however they were not reported through the Quarterly report.

**Alberta/NWT** – 9 – 1 Female

**Saskatchewan** – 30

**Man/NWO** – 1 – Female

**Ontario** – 973 – 102 females

**Quebec** – 150

**Nova Scotia** – 15 – 2 Female

**New Brunswick** - 2

**PEI** - 2

**Newfoundland** - 0



**Total: 1,182 of which 105 are Female.**

NOTE: Female numbers are included in the totals.

Other than Ontario Command there was not much information given to the monetary funds spent on the program and we will be asking for more detail in the future. Ontario Command has disbursed over \$2.7 million for their Operation Leave the Streets Behind program. He noted that the numbers are not complete as there was no 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter report from Alberta/NWT or PEI.

The Toronto Police Services and OPP have finalized their Officer Training program regarding Homeless Veterans. The Police College finally gave their approval and movement is underway to present the program to them and begin implementation with the OPP and their training. For some reason we need to connect with the RCMP, and a letter has been sent to the Commissioner for their endorsement for the program. Comrade Dave was led to believe that this was done some time ago, so we will ask for their support and hopefully this will be able to be used nationally.

Veterans House in Ottawa has more than 28 new Veterans who have taken up residence with two being female. Wednesday BBQ's are enjoyed by the residents and they have been paid for by District "G" and Zone G-5.

Point in Time counts are being conducted across Canada and Ottawa held their count last week as did many other municipalities. The reports must be complete and presented to the Federal Government by December 31, 2021. The full reports should be available by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2022.

As previously noted, CAEH has been expanding their program and have been in contact with several regions in Ontario and across the country. CAEH is now establishing committees in more than 30 municipalities in Ontario and the Legion is playing a major role with committees being established in all communities as well and he expects this program will move across the country in due time.

The Ottawa Veterans Task Force is moving along and have set in place several committees to take on the various tasks. There was some difficulty with VAC, but he believes the concerns are being corrected. This committee will be a cornerstone for other municipalities as they have established several committees and spread the work, which is working very well. Transition of Veterans from Military to Civilian life, Mental Health and Veteran Homelessness are high on their agenda.

There is a new Veterans organization based in Kingston, Ontario, United Federation of Canadian Veterans. They have some great ideas but seemed to be jumbled in their actions. Comrade Dave spoke to the President last week and he expects the Legion to put up \$15 million for housing in Kingston. He has a face to face meeting next week.



With the reopening of Branches and Command offices he believes it is time to go in a positive direction. He would like to propose we develop a Power Point to promote the Homeless Veterans program. He knows that Dominion Command meets with various organizations and he believes this would be a great tool to promote the program.

He advised that we must do a better job and it is his intention to work directly with the Command VSS/Homeless Chairmen to promote the program and provide them with information to do the job. He will begin sending a report to the provincial reps and hope to do so quarterly. The Guidelines and Action Plan have been sent to BC/YK Command and they have started a new program.

## **5. SENIORS REPORT**

Comrade George advised that there have been some interesting moves, especially in Ontario, regarding seniors' issues since our last meeting. There is a promise to fix LTC, with a commitment to provide an average of four hours of daily direct care, however, this might happen by March 31, 2025.

There is a commitment from the government to spend \$20 million to hire 193 new inspectors to ensure that citizens in LTC, etc. are covered by the care rules.

Also, a commitment to build new LTC Centres and we will have to watch across the country to see if there will be funding for additional beds across the country.

Comrade Ray circulated a Senate Inquiry-Debate document initiated by Senator Judith Seidman which is interesting and covers current seniors' issues quite nicely. So, we have written interest, some with budgets, for Seniors Care into the future and there is a need to continue to push to ensure that promised solutions happen.

## **6. BSO LEGION OSI SPECIAL SECTION REPORT**

Comrade Trevor mentioned that many things have changed within the OSI Special Section. They have changed Presidents, and key executive positions. He advised that the country has begun to emerge from the grips of a global pandemic, and the Legion as a whole has had to change the way we as a body operate.

Operation VetBuild continues to grow, and more locations are coming online regularly.

Buddy Check Coffee has been stymied by the pandemic due to public health orders across the country. They had attempted to have virtual BCCs early on. They were well attended at first, but participation slowly dwindled as time went on. He is confident that this program will get back on track, as more and more Legion Halls, and other social venues return to normal operation.

He attended the pilot serial for a Compassionate Listening course geared towards use by the RCL in mid October. Cost of the course is set at \$2000 per serial of 16, which works out to \$125 per participant. The course was developed by Tim Brodie.

The course is designed to be offered to support services personnel such as executive directors, service officers, and anyone who will be dealing directly with Veterans, especially those with Operational Stress Injuries.

He believes that there is value to this course, and to employees of the Legion to take this training.

However, before he makes any recommendations for support, and or funding, he needs to do his due diligence, and discuss the matter further with his executive. He will provide a further update at the next meeting.

## **7. VSPP APPLICATION – CONCUSSION LEGACY FOUNDATION CANADA**

Comrade Chair mentioned that the VSPP application was sent in advance and we have a majority to recommend the application and the Poppy and Remembrance Committee had already reviewed and supported the application.

**MOTION:** Recommend to the Poppy and Remembrance Committee and DEC to grant \$75K to the Concussion Legacy Foundation Canada for funding Operation Brain Health.

**CARRIED**

## **8. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS/ROUNDTABLE**

No additional agenda items were tabled.

### **ROUNDTABLE**

Comrade Bill asked how the Legion would commemorate the last WW II Veteran, like the commemoration of the last WW I Veteran. He advised that in smaller Branches, there may be only one remaining WW II Veteran and it would be nice to commemorate them while they are living. We should start the conversation now within the Legion.

There was considerable discussion on the issue, and it was decided that we would send the issue to the Membership, Marketing, Poppy and Remembrance Committees to put on their radar for consideration.

**ACTION: Coordinator**



Comrade Larry advised of the excellent support from the D&S Committee and DC staff in producing the Resettlement of Eligible Afghans to Canada letter sent to the Prime Minister and responsible Ministers. He is hoping the letter will make a difference for many deserving Afghans trying to reach safely and to become citizens of Canada.

Comrade John mentioned that in researching for a presentation he is giving this weekend, he was very impressed with the amount of research that the Legion has been involved in and that we are continuing to provide funding support to Veteran and family research initiatives.

Comrade Owen asked how many provinces have MLA or MPP Military or Veterans' liaison representatives. Comrade Ray will conduct an environment scan of all provinces to determine the number of Military/Veteran liaison representatives.

**ACTION: Coordinator**

## **9. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting for the VSS Committee is tentatively scheduled for **24 February 2022** via Zoom at 1330. Tentatively, meetings will be scheduled in May 2022, September 2022 and November 2022.

## **10. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair thanked all for their input, it was a very good meeting and is looking forward to Remembrance Day ceremonies. Stay safe and be well!

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

**CARRIED**

  
Bruce Julian  
CHAIRMAN

  
For Raymond McInnis  
COORDINATOR

Dated 10 November 2021