



Department of Veteran Services
 294 Main Street • Greenfield, MA 01301
 Phone 413-772-1571 • Fax 413-772-1401
www.greenfield-ma.gov

Christopher Demars, Director
 Laura Thorne, Assistant
 Stacey Geneczko, Deputy Director

UPPER PIONEER VALLEY VETERANS' SERVICES DISTRICT

Veteran Resource and Referral Center located in Greenfield, satellite locations throughout the district

Member Towns

- Ashfield
- Bernardston
- Buckland
- Charlemont
- Colrain
- Conway
- Deerfield
- Erving
- Gill
- Greenfield
- Hawley
- Heath
- Leverett
- Leyden
- Monroe
- Montague
- New Salem
- Northfield
- Plainfield
- Rowe
- Shelburne
- Shutesbury
- Sunderland
- Warwick
- Wendell
- Whately

Meeting Notice

Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District
 294 Main Street, Greenfield, MA 01301
 Thursday October 12, 2023
 6:00 P.M.

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes for April 2023
3. Old Business
 - Leyden Outreach going well
 - PACT Act claims put us behind but we are pretty much caught up
4. New Business
 - NAVSCO Accreditation for all VSO
 - VSO Update
 - Memorial Day Flag orders
 - FY23 Report
 - **FY25 budget presentation/discussion**
 - Set next meeting date / time (April/May 2023) and location
5. Executive Session, if desired

***Please note that the list of topics in this notice was comprehensive at the time of posting, however the public body may consider and take action on unforeseen matters not specifically named in this notice.**



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April 13, 2023 UPVSD Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Member Towns

- Ashfield*
- Bernardston*
- Buckland*
- Charlemont*
- Colrain*
- Conway*
- Deerfield*
- Erving*
- Gill*
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- Warwick*
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- Whately*

-Meeting called to order at 1800 by Chairman Denis Brennan. Nine members reported to fill the quorum.

Towns Present: Ashfield (2), Bernardston, Conway, Greenfield, Heath, Leverett, Leyden, and Northfield

-Approval of prior meeting Minutes: (October 2022) motion by Shutesbury, seconded by Ashfield, vote passed unanimously.

-Old business

- Tim retired and no changes to services with change over.
- Chris explained how the early submittal of PACT ACT Claims have been very successful for Vietnam Veterans for Hypertension
- Chris discussed minor changes due to salaries and addition of dues and mileage of FY24 Budget

-New Business:

- Denis Brennan presented election of Officers for the new term, no changes are made to current officials. Motion to accept by Conway, seconded by Leyden, vote passed unanimously.
- Introduced Stacey Geneczko as the new Deputy Director
- New Wendell outreach being conducted 2nd Tuesday of each month at Wendell Town Offices from 1:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.
- Leverett discussed setting up outreach in Leverett. Will schedule location and times with Leverett Board member in near future.
- Chris discussed help to promote the Medal of Fidelity to the District. Would like to setup ceremonies in Greenfield and in the eastern and western side of the district once applications are approved.

-Next meeting date set for Oct 12, 2023 at 6:00 pm UPVSD offices

-Motion to adjourn by Ashfield at 1825, seconded by Heath, vote passed unanimously, meeting adjourned



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District Annual Report CY23

Mission Statement: To advocate for veterans, their spouses, dependants, widows or widowers for Veterans' Benefits on the Local, State and Federal levels

Office has maintained continued outreach operations across the district. We have dramatically increased the amount of VA claims we have been completing due to increased VA Presumptive diseases for numerous eras of service:

- District now brings in \$1,850,500.00 in Federal and State money **per month** from all sources (VA, State Reimbursements, State Annuities and sales).
- District hired a new Deputy Director, Stacey Geneczko, who has completed all her National Certifications for the VA.
- District is in the process of hiring a new Veteran Service Officer (VSO) to fill the VSO Vacancy that is open. This new VSO will complete the State, VA and National VSO Certifications. Our office will go from one national certified VSO to three.
- VSA, Laura Thorne, has maintained her SHINE certification and is helping veterans and their dependents, taking some of the load off the Senior Centers.
- The Director Chris Demars conducted a Chapter 115 presentation for GCTV to reach out to Franklin County Veterans.
- Expect a significant increase to Chapter 115 benefits for all City and Towns due to inflation and cost of living adjustments by the State of Massachusetts.
- We project a slight increase of the overall operational budget Fiscal Year 25 budget while continuing to expand services in 2024.

Christopher Demars, Director
 Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District