

## Veteran Advocate Nominating Committee

Meeting Minutes  
February 28, 2023  
2:00 - 3:00 pm

Date of meeting: Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Start time: 2:05 pm

End time: 3:00 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members participating remotely		Vote 1*	Vote 2
1	<b>Daniel Shark</b> ( <i>chair</i> ) – Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)	X	X
2	<b>Gabriel Adams-Keane</b> – Office of Senator John Velis ( <i>designee of the Senator</i> )	X	X
3	<b>Gerard J. Cassidy</b> – Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs	X	X
4	<b>Brooke Doyle</b> – Department of Mental Health (DMH)	X	X
5	<b>Jeffrey Farnsworth</b> – Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)	X	X
6	<b>James C. Fratolillo</b> – American Legion	X	X
7	<b>Gary W. Keefe</b> – MA National Guard / Board of Trustees of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home	X	X
8	<b>Bill LeBeau</b> – Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)	-	-
9	<b>Tom Lyons</b> – Board of Trustees of the Chelsea Soldiers' Home	-	-
10	<b>Cheryl Poppe</b> – Department of Veterans' Services (DVS)	X	X

\* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

### Proceedings

Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance Shark called the meeting of the Veteran Advocate Nominating Committee to order at 2:05 pm. He welcomed members and noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

**Vote 1 to approve the 2/21/2023 minutes:** Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance Shark requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Committee's previous meeting on February 21, 2023.

Mr. Farnsworth introduced the motion, which was seconded by Secretary Poppe and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Assistant Secretary Shark summarized the previous meeting, explaining that members had discussed a number of options for sourcing qualified candidates, which included working with Human Resources to develop a job description for posting on MassCareers, engaging a talent acquisition firm, and soliciting recommendations for candidates from Committee members. He noted that there appeared to be alignment on an approach that prioritized the development of an initial draft by EOHHS and Human Resources, which would then be refined by the Committee, before posting on MassCareers and disseminating broadly across a variety of sources, such as industry journals and weekly newsletters.

Assistant Secretary Shark facilitated a discussion of the draft job description, which was shared with Committee members prior to the meeting. Members discussed the minimal requirements for the position, as well as the differences in scope between the Office of the Veteran Advocate (OVA), the Office of the Inspector General, and various Ombudspersons. Members proposed the following suggested revisions to the draft: standardizing the terminology throughout the documents; including additional information clarifying the Veteran Advocate's responsibilities in hiring staff; and including language expressing a preference for candidates with military experience. For additional details on the job description, refer to the meeting materials on the [Committee's webpage](#).

Committee members also discussed the length of time that the job description would be posted on MassCareers (30 vs. 60 days). There appeared to be alignment on posting for 30 days and specifying that the listing would be open until a suitable candidate is found.

In response to members' questions regarding the scope of the OVA, Representative Cassidy offered to work with Senator Velis to provide background information on the development of the legislation creating the OVA.

In closing, Assistant Secretary Shark thanked Secretary Poppe for her service and explained that incoming Executive Office of Veterans' Services Secretary Jon Santiago and Holyoke Soldiers' Home Board Chair Brigadier Sean Collins would be joining the Committee at its next meeting.

**Vote 2 to adjourn:**

Assistant Secretary Shark requested a motion to adjourn. Secretary Poppe introduced the motion, which was seconded by General Keefe and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

**Meeting Materials**

1. Draft 2/21/2023 Meeting Minutes
2. Draft Veteran Advocate Job Description
3. Draft Veteran Advocate Management Questionnaire
4. Office of the Child Advocate Background Summary