

# Veteran Advocate Nominating Committee

## Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2023

1:30 - 2:30 pm

Date of meeting: Thursday, April 13, 2023

Start time: 1:30 pm

End time: 2:20 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>Sean Collins</b> – Board of Trustees of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home	-	-
3	<b>Brooke Doyle</b> – Department of Mental Health (DMH)	X	X
4	<b>Jeffrey Farnsworth</b> – Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)	X	X
5	<b>James C. Fratolillo</b> – American Legion	X	X
6	<b>Gary W. Keefe</b> – Mass. National Guard	X	X
7	<b>Bill LeBeau</b> – Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)	X	X
8	<b>Caitlyn Letourneau</b> – Office of Senator John Velis ( <i>designee of the Senator</i> )	X	X
9	<b>Tom Lyons</b> – Board of Trustees of the Chelsea Soldiers' Home	-	-
10	<b>Erik Mayberg</b> – Executive Office of Veterans' Services (EOVS) ( <i>designee of Secretary Santiago</i> )	X	X
11	<b>Bridget Plouffe</b> – Office of Representative Cassidy ( <i>designee of the Representative</i> )	X	X

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

## Proceedings

Assistant Secretary Shark called the meeting of the Veteran Advocate Nominating Committee to order at 1:30 pm. He noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call vote and explained that on March 29, Governor Healey signed into law a supplemental budget bill which, among other things, extended the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025. He

noted that this further extension allows public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location.

**Vote 1 to approve the 3/9/2023 minutes:** Assistant Secretary Shark called for a vote to approve the minutes from the Committee's previous meeting on March 9, 2023. Members approved the minutes by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Assistant Secretary Shark explained that since the last Committee meeting, the Human Resources Department (HRD) posted the Veteran Advocate job description on MassCareers. He noted that 23 applications had been received to date and that applications would be accepted until the 30-day deadline concludes on April 21, 2023.

Assistant Secretary Shark facilitated a discussion of the screening and interview process, outlining a number of options for screening applicants' resumes:

- 1) Form a subcommittee of no more than five Committee members with staff from HRD to conduct a preliminary screening of applicants to narrow down the list of finalists in executive session. The full Committee would then review the pared down list of finalists and conduct final interviews in open session in order to narrow the list down to three individuals;
- 2) Authorize HRD staff to act as the preliminary screening subcommittee to rank and narrow down the pool to a recommended list of finalists. The full Committee would then review the list and conduct interviews in open session;
- 3) The full Committee reviews all applications in open session.

After discussion, there appeared to be alignment amongst members on the first option of forming a subcommittee of no more than five Committee members with staff from HRD to conduct a preliminary screening of applicants. Mr. Fratolillo volunteered to serve on the subcommittee along with Assistant Secretary Shark. Commissioner Doyle recommended that Committee staff reach out to the members unable to attend the meeting to confirm their interest in serving on the screening subcommittee.

General Keefe recommended that members review candidates' resumes during executive session and put forth top candidates during open session. Mr. Fratolillo recommended anonymizing candidates to the extent possible.

Assistant Secretary Shark facilitated a discussion of proposed interview questions to ask candidates. Members suggested a variety of questions, including asking candidates about their vision for the Office of the Veteran Advocate; their work with veterans or active military members; their expectations for collaboration with other agencies; and the specific qualities of the Veteran Advocate position that match their experience.

In closing, Assistant Secretary Shark noted that his team would work to refine the interview questions and share with members in advance of the next Committee meeting, scheduled for April 27.

**Vote 2 to adjourn:**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm.

**Meeting Materials**

- I. Draft 3/9/2023 Meeting Minutes