

Veteran Advocate Nominating Committee

Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2023

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Date of meeting: Wednesday June 14, 2023

Start time: 4:01 pm

End time: 5:00 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

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

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

** Commissioner Doyle voted in favor of approving the 6/5/23 minutes and abstained from approving the 6/1/23 and 6/7/23 minutes

Proceedings

Assistant Secretary Shark called the meeting of the Veteran Advocate Nominating Committee to order at 4:01 pm. He noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call vote.

Assistant Secretary Shark proposed that the Committee vote on the meeting minutes from the previous 3 meetings and asked if there are any proposed changes.

Commissioner Doyle mentioned that she was absent for two of the previous three meetings and will approve the minutes for the meeting in which she was present and abstain from voting on the other two meeting's minutes. She acknowledged that she received and reviewed all three meeting minutes.

Vote 1 to approve minutes from 6/1, 6/5, 6/7: Assistant Secretary Shark called for a vote to approve the minutes from the Committee's previous 3 meetings on 6/1, 6/5, 6/7. Mr. Lyons introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dockter and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Assistant Secretary Shark summarized that last week, the preliminary screening subcommittee reviewed the 7 applications that were received after the priority 4/21 deadline and interviewed 2 of those candidates. The subcommittee has chosen to advance one of those candidates to the full Committee.

Assistant Secretary facilitated a discussion on the finalist candidates. He summarized that the finalists who were brought forward at the last full committee meeting were Susan Kane, Glen Hevy, Robert Notch, and Greg Widberg. Assistant Secretary Shark mentioned that the 5th finalist that the subcommittee is recommending is Christopher Shaw. The preliminary screening subcommittee summarized the resume and qualifications of Christopher Shaw. The Committee aligned on bringing the 5 finalist candidates to the full committee for second-round interviews.

Assistant Secretary Shark proposed that the full committee meet with each of the 5 finalists in open session next week for 45 minutes each. Committee staff asked members to send available time blocks for next week to conduct the interviews. While it was difficult to find times that worked for everyone, the best time blocks were Tuesday 6/20 from 9am-12pm and on 4pm-6pm. When looking at these times, priority was given to members who did not have the opportunity to meet the candidates yet. If members are unable to attend, they are welcome to send a designee and to let Committee staff in advance if they plan to send a designee. He asked if there were any concerns with the time and facilitated a discussion on the interview process.

A few Committee members expressed some unavailability on Tuesday. Assistant Secretary Shark proposed that the Committee take another look at availability for interviews a little further out to find a time that works better for more members. Members asked questions about staggering interview times across several dates, interview structure and questions, recording the interviews for members unable to attend, and making the interview questions available to the candidates in advance of the interviews. Assistant Secretary Shark noted that he does not believe the Committee can record the interviews but will follow-up with EOHHS legal counsel for advice. After discussion, there appeared to be alignment that all 5 interviews shall occur on the same day and that members should formulate new questions based on the detailed summaries from the subcommittee for the second-round interviews. Each interview will be 45 minutes each and all candidates will be asked the same questions along with follow-up questions. Assistant Secretary Shark asked for members to send their availability for the weeks of 6/26 and 7/3 and suggested interview questions to Committee staff by Tuesday. Committee staff will come back with a recommendation for a time block for interviews and interview questions.

Assistant Secretary Shark noted that typically candidates who were offered first-round interviews that were not chosen to advance to the second-round are notified that the Committee has not chosen to move forward with their candidacies before second-round interviews are held. He asked if there are any concerns with this and members did not express any concerns.

Assistant Secretary Shark proposed that after interviews, members rank candidates from 1-5 and send their rankings to Committee staff the day before the scheduled meeting. Committee staff will compile the results and when the Committee meets, they will discuss the rankings, talk about salary recommendations, and advance the top 3 candidates based on the scoring. There seemed to be alignment from the Committee on

this approach. Mr. Dockter asked if there is any HR guidance for discussing candidates in open session to ensure the discussion is productive, but also sensitive to the candidates who are being discussed. Adjutant LeBeau and General Collins suggested that the Committee could enter executive session to discuss candidates' qualifications. Commissioner Doyle expressed concerns about the risk of candidates being able to listen to the deliberations in open session and would like to see if there is a possibility to limit the candidates themselves from listening. Assistant Secretary Shark said that he will follow-up with EOHHS legal counsel for advice on executive session and will follow up on Mr. Dockter's question when he receives some clarity.

In closing, Assistant Secretary Shark noted next steps being his follow-ups to EOHHS counsel and for Committee staff to reach out to members to receive their availability and suggested questions for interviews. He thanked members and noted if members have any questions, they should feel free to reach out directly to Committee staff.

Vote 2 to adjourn:

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm.

Meeting Materials

1. Draft 6/1/2023 Meeting Minutes
2. Draft 6/5/2023 Meeting Minutes
3. Draft 6/7/2023 Meeting Minutes
4. Veteran Advocate Finalists Resumes for Susan Kane, Glen Hevy, Robert Notch, Christopher Shaw, and Greg Widberg