

Veteran Advocate Nominating Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 25, 2023

11:00 - 11:30 am

Date of meeting: Tuesday, July 25, 2023

Start time: 11:05 am

End time: 11:20 am

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members participating remotely		Vote 1*	Vote 2	Vote 3	Vote 4
1	Daniel Shark (<i>chair</i>) – Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)	X	X	X	X
2	Sean Collins – Board of Trustees of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home	X	X	X	X
3	Brooke Doyle – Department of Mental Health (DMH)	-	X	X	X
4	Jeff Farnsworth – Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)	A	X	X	X
5	Jim C. Fratolillo – American Legion	X	X	X	X
6	Gary W. Keefe – Mass. National Guard	X	X	X	X
7	Bill LeBeau – Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)	-	-	-	-
8	Tom Lyons – Board of Trustees of the Chelsea Soldiers' Home	X	X	X	X
9	Erik Mayberg – Executive Office of Veterans' Services (EOVS) (<i>designee of Secretary Santiago</i>)	X	X	X	X
10	Bridget Plouffe – Office of Representative Gerard Cassidy (<i>designee of the Representative</i>)	X	X	X	X
11	Katie Verra – Office of Senator John Velis (<i>designee of the Senator</i>)	X	X	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 11:05 am. He reminded members that the Committee is subject to the Open Meeting Law and all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

Assistant Secretary Shark informed the Committee of the sad news that the HR liaison who had been working closely with the Committee, David Olsen, had unexpectedly passed during the prior week.

Vote 1 to approve the 7/17/2023 minutes: Assistant Secretary Shark requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Committee's previous meeting on July 17, 2023. General Collins introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Lyons and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Assistant Secretary Shark facilitated a discussion of the proposed salary recommendation for the candidates, explaining that HR had recommended a salary of \$165,000 for all three candidates. In response to a member's question, he clarified that that approximate salary for a Secretary-level position is roughly \$180,000.

Assistant Secretary Shark informed the Committee that in advance of the meeting, his staff had circulated a draft letter meant to inform the Governor, Attorney General, and State Auditor of the Committee's three nominees and salary recommendation for the Veteran Advocate. Members had no comments on the draft letter.

Vote 2 to approve the three nominees and salary recommendation: Assistant Secretary Shark requested a motion to approve Glen Hevy, Susan Kane, and Robert Notch as the Committee's three nominees at a salary of \$165,000. General Keefe introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Farnsworth and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

General Collins requested that as a courtesy, members of the Committee be informed privately once the final decision had been made by the Governor, Attorney General, and State Auditor, given the Committee's high level of involvement in the selection process.

Mr. Lyons thanked members for their work and expressed concern that as the head of an independent office, the Veteran Advocate does not officially report to anyone. He noted that the statute only requires that the Veteran Advocate report annually to the Governor, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Senate and House Committees on Ways and Means, and the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs.

Assistant Secretary Shark requested that the Committee permit him to act on their behalf in approving the meeting's minutes to avoid having to convene another meeting solely for the purpose of approving the meeting minutes.

Vote 3 to nominate the Committee Chair to approve the 7/25 meeting minutes: Assistant Secretary Shark requested a motion to nominate him to act on behalf of the Committee in approving the final meeting's minutes. Mr. Farnsworth introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Fratolillo and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

In closing, Assistant Secretary Shark thanked members for their work on the Committee and highlighted the diligent work of the Committee's staff. He noted that he would be contacting each of the three candidates personally to inform them of their nominations.

Vote 4 to adjourn: Assistant Secretary Shark requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fratolillo 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 11:20 am.

Meeting Materials

- I. Draft recommendation letter