**Veterans’ Healthy Minds Advisory Council – South Texas**

**299 Tufted Crest, San Antonio, TX 78253**

**Working with; Audie Murphy VA Hospital, San Antonio TX**

**“Helping Veterans, Help Themselves”**

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**VHMACST Meeting Minutes 15 February 2024**

 **Call To Order**

Council Chair, Dr. David A. La Pointe called to order the regular monthly meeting of the Veterans Healthy Minds Advisory Council South Texas (VHMACST) on 15 February 2024 at 1300, via Zoom and in person at Northwest (151) VA Clinic, Mental Health Conference Room, 9939 State HWY 151, SATX, 78251. He had everyone attending in-person introduce themselves and Dr. Davis recognized Dr. Christina Savage, Psychology Fellow doing a rotation with Dr. Davis. He introduced our Guest Speaker for today, Shakelia McKenzie. He also mentioned Ms. Michelle Conway will be added as person onto the agenda and will be a non-voting member as a VA representative.

**VHMACST Secretary:**  Robin has volunteered to be the Secretary after she completes her last practicum.

Dr. La Pointe called council roll.

**Rollcall:** Present or Excused: Angie Bukowski, Carlos Acosta, Clifford McGlotten, Cynthia Pitre, Dr. Betsy Davis, Dr. David La Pointe, Ed Thomas, Fred Thomas, Karah Smith, Kevin Crozier, Laura Knoll, Michelle Conway, Guest: Dr. Christina Savage

Not Present: Jason Leef, Juliana Stith, Larissa Martinez

1. **Approval/Review of Previous Minutes/Current Agenda**

Due to technical issues the January Meeting Minutes are not available. Notes will be gathered, and minutes will try to be amassed for the March meeting. **(OPEN)**

1. **Old Business**

**VHMACST Non-Profit Organization (Fred Thomas):** Fred stated that there was nothing new to report. All is well. **(OPEN)**

**Treasurer: (Angie Bukowski):** Angie’s mike was not working; Dr. La Pointe provided the update. He stated that there is currently $500.12 in the savings account and $415.39 in the checking account. “Request for Donation Letters” were sent out. There was a discussion about the possibility of members possibly making individual donations after the first of the year to the council and/or ways we might be able to raise funds on our own in addition to sending out letters requesting donations. Members were asked to think about new options to generate funds for our accounts. It was noted that there is now a Donation page set up on the website. An option for an automatic withdraw for donations was discussed. Kevin Crozier will investigate it. Several different options were discussed about using a couple different apps for automatic payments. Once again, Kevin will investigate it. **(OPEN)**

**Website/Communications (Kevin Crozier):** Kevin did submit the updated Website listing, reflecting the site currently has 686,565 visits! This a jump of over 4,000 hits from last month. A copy of the report will be included in these minutes. **(OPEN)**

**Unaccompanied Burial Memorial Service (UBMS) (ED Thomas):** (Bexar County), 3rd Wednesday of each month, Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, 1520 Harry Wurzbach Rd., SATX 78209 (follow the signs when you enter the main gate). VHMACST provides floral arrangements and roses for the persons being interned. PLEASE wear your VHMACST badge when attending any VHMACST event.

Ed reported that UBMS would now be held quarterly.

**Caregiver Information:** Dr. La Pointe stated that there were a couple Caregiver event notifications sent during the month, but no formal caregiver events occurred. **(OPEN)**

**Veteran Health Education and Information Committee (Dave La Pointe):** Dr. La Pointe reported that there were no documents submitted for review this month. Laura Knoll’s name was submitted to fill a “female” role on the council. **(OPEN)**

**“Check-In Program”:** Dr. La Pointe reviewed what the program entails. He mentioned three council members would like to have folks contact them and check on them. He asked if this is something we should continue or not. We had 3 members volunteer to do check during the meeting. He mentioned every council member needs to complete the Veterans Healthy Mind Check-In form, whether you will participate or not.

**(OPEN)**

**VET-to-Vet Program:** Dr. La Pointe reviewed that we were trying to secure a VA location for veterans to be able to meet just to talk amongst themselves while they we are waiting for their formal metal health appointments with VA staff. We are currently in discussions about how we might initiate this program utilizing non-VA locations. If we do use a VA facility, we would have to have a VA representative in attendance and that would defeat the purpose of these outings. We will connect with council members to gage their interest in this program and determine options for locations to meet. **(OPEN)**

**San Antonio Spurs Mental Health Night:** David mentioned we will have a resource table at the game as in previous years. More information will follow, the Spurs game is expected to be held on Sunday, April 7th.

The chair noted that Dr. Davis has reserved the Mental Health Conference room for March and April. It was discussed, adding the meeting video to the website. Kevin Crozier noted it would take up too much digital space on the website. Kevin Crozier will investigate creating a Youtube.com page to add future meeting videos. Kevin, also, volunteered to co-assist with the February Meeting notes.

**Mental Health Community of Practice: Dr. Davis -** No Report. **(OPEN)**

**VA National Council:** Dr. Davis mentioned the topic was Conflict Management. She will attempt to get a report on the meeting. **(OPEN)**

1. **New Business**

**Guest Speaker: Shakelia McKenzie**

 **Complex Care Coordinator**

 **Liaison for the Wounded Warrior Project**

**Mental Health Summit**: Dr Davis reported on the upcoming summit. This will be a virtual event with several breakout rooms. The topic for this year will be substance abuse.

**Agenda Topics on What Are We Going to Do This Year:** Dr. La Pointe asked all VHMACST members to submit ideas/suggestions/issues for the council to pursue this year in addition to the programs we are already supporting. Some of the ideas proposed so far included new/more outreach programs, the possibility of setting up a tables in front of VA facilities. Dr. Davis was asked to provide a list of contacts at each location for us to coordinate with.

**Grace After Fire**: Lisa Cortinas (lisa@graceafterfire.Org) reviewed multiple events the organization will be holding. More information to follow.

**OTHER: - No report**

**VHMACST Outreach:**

* **Unaccompanied Burial Memorial Service,** 4-17-2024, 0900

**VHMACST Events:**

* **VHMACST Monthly Meeting,** 3**-**21-2024, 1300
* **VHMACST Monthly Meeting,** 4**-**18-2024, 1300
* **VHMACST Monthly Meeting,** 5-16-2014, 1300

**VHMACST Training:**

* Nothing scheduled at this time
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**Community Events:**

* Veteran Health & Resource Fair; March 2, 2024, 1000-1500, VFW – 600 Peace Ave., New Braunfels, TX 78130
* American GI Forum; Veteran Family Wellness Program; Know how to manage/cope with stress and overall wellness, cover the 8 dimensions of wellness. Wednesdays 1200, Peer Support Group, Thursdays 1400, Trauma and Stress Psychoeducational Group, Thursday 1800, Peer Support Group
* CBT – PTSD Group; 12-week In-person Course - Active duty, Veteran, and Family Members, new entry available every 4 weeks, Endeavors, 6333 De Zavala, SATX 78249, 210-399-4838, call for questions, SAclinic@endeavors.org
* Strong Families – Strong Forces; 8-week program, helping families navigate stressors, strengthen communication/connection/and co-parenting, support military families with children 0-17, open to active -duty, reservist, national guard, and veteran families. Every other Wednesday, 1800-1930, (Virtual options available), 6333 De Zavala, SATX 78249, 210-399-4838, call for questions, SAclinic@endeavors.org

**VI. Next Meeting 21 March 2024 - 1300**

**VII. Adjournment**

 Meeting ended at 1430

**VIII: End of Minutes**

 Minutes Submitted by Kevin Crosier

Minutes Approved by Dr. David A. Pointe