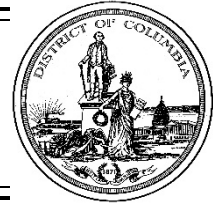

OFFICE OF ANITA BONDS
AT-LARGE COUNCILMEMBER
CHAIR, COMMITTEE ON HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



January 20, 2016

Ms. Tammi Lambert
Executive Director, Office of Veterans Affairs
441 4th Street NW, Suite 870
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Director Lambert:

The annual performance hearing for the District of Columbia Office of Veterans Affairs is scheduled for **February 17, 2016, beginning at 10:00 AM in Room 120**. Please plan to arrive in time to listen to the entirety of the public testimony presented with respect to your agency.

Please review the attached list of questions and return your answers by **February 10, 2016**. Please provide five hard copies of your responses as well as an electronic version in Microsoft Word.

If you feel that I could use additional information outside the scope of the attached questions, feel free to include an additional written statement. If your office requires clarification of any of the attached questions, please contact the Legislative Counsel, Lena Halasa, at (202) 724-5820 or lhalasa@dccouncil.us. Thank you in advance for your timely and comprehensive response.

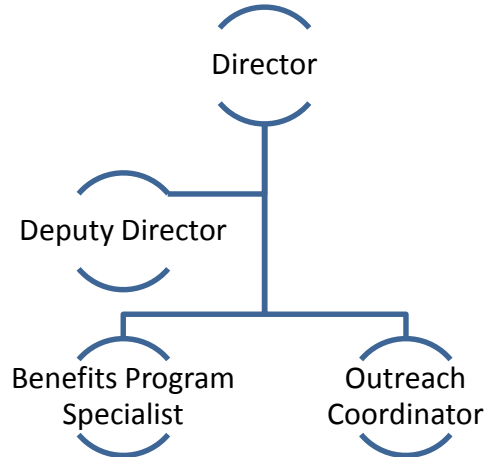
Sincerely,

Anita Bonds
At-Large Councilmember
Chairperson, Committee on Housing and Community Development

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

QUESTIONS FOR PERFORMANCE OVERSIGHT HEARING

1. Please provide a complete, up-to-date organizational chart for each division within the agency including and, either attached or separately, an explanation of the roles and responsibilities for each division and subdivision.



- a. Please include a list of the employees (name and title) for each subdivision and the number of vacant positions.

Tammi R. Lambert, Director
Wanda Smith Battle, Deputy Director
Brenda Hall, Benefits Program Specialist
Yllya Wilson, Outreach Coordinator

There are no vacant positions within the office of MOVA.

- b. Please provide a narrative explanation of any organizational changes made during the previous year.

For efficiency, the organizational structure was changed to streamline operations. In previous years, this office had one director, two benefits program specialist and one outreach coordinator. MOVA recently transitioned one of the program specialist positions into a deputy director position.

2. Please provide a complete, up-to-date position listing for your agency, which includes the following information:

Title of Position	Name of Employee	Date employee began position	Salary and fringe benefits	Grade, Series and step of position	Job Status
Director	Tammi R. Lambert	11 May 2015	\$98,880.00	Grade 9	Excepted Service

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

Deputy Director	Wanda Smith Battle	6 September 2015	\$70,414.00	Grade 12 Step 2	Excepted Service
Benefits Program Specialist	Brenda Hall	27 January 2003	\$60,517.00	Grade 11 Step 4	Career
Outreach Coordinator	Yllya Wilson	14 December 2015	\$39,244.00	Grade 7 Step 2	Term

- a. Title of position
 - b. Name of employee or statement that the position is vacant, unfunded, or proposed.
 - c. Date employee began in position
 - d. Salary and fringe benefits, including the specific grade, series, and step of position
 - e. Job status (continuing/term/temporary/contract)
3. Please provide a list of all current vacancies by “title of position” and the date the position became vacant. **The Mayor’s Office of Veterans Affairs has no vacancies. The office is allotted 4 positions and we have 4 staffers.**
4. How does the agency publicize and fill vacancies? **The Mayor’s Office of Talent and Appointments handles all of the agency’s human resource activities to include publicizing and filling vacancies.**
5. Does the agency conduct annual performance evaluations of all its employees? If the answer is yes:
- a. What is the title of the individual that conducts such evaluations?
Tammi R. Lambert, Director
 - b. In what month and year were most recent evaluations held?
Brenda Hall (Mid Year /February 2016)
Yllya Wilson (Initial/February 2016)
Wanda Battle (Mid Year/ February 2016)
 - c. What steps are taken to ensure that all agency employees are meeting individual job requirements? **All staff is responsible for submitting information for the Mayor’s weekly report as well as participating in a weekly staff meeting to measure progress towards weekly goals and forecast upcoming projects, programs and campaigns. The staff meeting occurs on a weekly basis on Mondays.**
6. Please provide the Committee with:
- a. A list of all employees who receive cellphones, personal digital assistants, or similar communications devices at agency expense
Each MOVA employee received a cellphone.
The Director and Benefits Program Specialist have Dell laptops.

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

- b. A list of all vehicles owned, leased, or otherwise used by the agency and to whom the vehicle is assigned. **N/A**
 - c. A list of employee bonuses or special award pay granted in FY15 and FY16, to date. **N/A**
 - d. A list of travel expenses, arranged by employee. **N/A**
 - e. A list of the total overtime and workman's compensation payments paid in FY15 and FY16, to date. **N/A**
7. Please provide a chart showing your agency's approved budget and actual spending, by division, for FY15 and FY16, to date. In addition, please describe any variance between fiscal year appropriations and actual expenditures. (*See Exhibit A*)
8. Please list any reprogramming, in or out, which occurred in FY15 or FY16, to date. For each reprogramming, please list the total amount of the reprogramming, the original purposes for which the funds were dedicated, and the reprogrammed use of funds. (*See Exhibit B*)
9. Please provide a complete accounting for all intra-District transfers received by or transferred from the agency during FY15 or FY16, to date. (*See Exhibit C*)
10. Please identify any special purpose revenue accounts maintained by, used by, or available for use by your agency during FY15 or FY16, to date. For each account, please list the following: (*See Exhibit D*)
- a. The revenue source name and code
 - b. The source of funding
 - c. A description of the program that generates the funds.
 - d. The amount of funds generated by each source or program in FY15 and FY16, to date
 - e. Expenditures of funds, including the purpose of each expenditure, for FY15 and FY16, to date
11. Please provide a list of all projects for which your agency currently has capital funds available. Please include the following: **N/A**
- a. A description of each project
 - b. The amount of capital funds available for each project
 - c. A status report on each project, including a timeframe for completion
 - d. Planned remaining spending on the project
12. Please provide a complete accounting of all federal grants received for FY15 and FY16, to date. **N/A**
13. What steps have been taken during FY16 to reduce agency energy use?
MOVA is in an energy efficient office that has self-activated lights to conserve energy use. Additionally, MOVA asks each staffer to fully shut down or power off their computers at the end of each workday.

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

14. Please identify any legislative requirements that the agency lacks sufficient resources to properly implement. **N/A**
15. Please list all regulations for which the agency is responsible for oversight or implementation. Please list by chapter and subject heading, including the date of the most recent revision. **N/A**
16. How does the agency prioritize claims processing in order of urgency? **The Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs has a Memorandum of Understanding with Paralyzed Veterans of America; they process all of our veterans and family member claims. Displaced veterans are prioritized as required by Department of Veteran Affairs.**
17. Please list each new program implemented by the agency during FY16. For each initiative please provide:
- a. A description of the initiative:
Community Engagement: the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Neighborhood Legal Services Program of DC scheduled to travel to the Veteran transitional homes throughout the 8 wards hosting onsite DD214 Upgrade Clinic and Benefits and Entitlement Workshops. The first clinic will be held at Fendall Heights, veteran transitional home on the 25 February 2016.
 - b. The funding required to implement to the initiative: **Zero funding.**
 - c. Any documented results of the initiative: **N/A**
18. Please provide a list of all studies, research papers, and analyses ("studies") the agency requested, prepared, or contracted for during FY15 and FY16. Please state the status and purpose of each study. **N/A**
19. Please explain the impact on your agency of any legislation passed at the federal level during FY15 and FY16, to date that significantly affect agency operations. If regulations the shared responsibility of multiple agencies, please note. **N/A**
20. Please provide a list of all MOUs in place during FY16.
- a. Paralyzed Veterans of America – Unfunded MOU**
 - b. Neighborhood Legal Service Program of DC – Unfunded MOU**
 - c. Department of Disability Services – Unfunded MOU**
21. Please list each contract, procurement, lease, and grant ("contract") awarded, entered into, extended and option years exercised, by your agency during FY15 and FY16, to date. For each contract, please provide the following information, where applicable:
- a. The name of the contracting party: **Dell**
 - b. The nature of the procurement, including the end product or service: **Computer equipment**
 - c. The dollar amount of the procurement, including budgeted amount and actually spent: **\$6873.64**
 - d. The term of the contract: **11 January 2016**

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

- e. The PO Number: **PO536614**
 - f. **Ref Doc: RQ916259**
 - g. The name of the agency's contract monitor and the results of any monitoring activity: **Howard Etwarro/ howard.etwaroo@dc.gov**
 - h. Funding source: **70**
22. Please list and describe any ongoing investigations, audits, or reports on your agency or any employee of your agency, or any investigations, studies, audits, or reports on your agency or any employee of your agency that were completed during FY15 or FY16, to date. **N/A**
23. Please identify all recommendations identified by the Office of the Inspector General, D.C. Auditor, or other federal or local oversight entities during the previous 3 years. Please provide an update on what actions have been taken to address these recommendations. **N/A**
24. Please identify all electronic databases maintained by your agency, including the following:
The Mayor's office of veterans' affairs uses salesforce, a centralized constituent contact management system.
- a. A detailed description of the information tracked within each system:
 - b. The age of the system and any discussion of substantial upgrades those has been made or are planned to the system. **N/A**
 - c. Whether the public can be granted access to all or part of each system. **N/A**
25. What has the agency done in the past year to make the activities of the agency more transparent to the public? In addition, please identify ways in which the activities of the agency and information retained by the agency could be made more transparent.
Over the last nine months, in an effort to engage our population and increase agency presence in the community, MOVA concentrated its efforts in the following four areas: programmatic activities, community relations, social media and marketing.
- a. **Programmatic Activities: Increased programmatic activities and service offerings.**
 - b. **Community Relations: MOVA has expanded attendance of community events to include meetings and special events in all wards.**
 - c. **Online presence: Increased online social media presence through Facebook and Twitter.**
 - d. **Website: MOVA lists every program, service or event on our website.**
 - e. **Marketing: Direct outreach and target utilizing external partners to disseminate information.**
- The advisory board on veterans affairs' meetings are posted on BEGA's public calendar. The board's meetings are open to the public and all meeting are recorded and posted online.**
- Please identify any statutory or regulatory impediments to your agency's operations. **N/A**

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

26. How has a decrease in funding between in FY16 impacted the operations of the agency?
No.

27. How does the agency solicit feedback from customers?

The Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs uses a customer service satisfaction survey to find out what customers think about the agency. The Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs uses a customer service satisfaction survey to find out what customers think about the agency. We also receive feedback from social media, supportive organizations, our Commission and through discussions with the veteran community.

Please describe.

a. What has the agency learned from this feedback? **The feedback has been very constructive with a focus on customer service and agency responsiveness.**

b. How has the agency changed its practices as a result of such feedback?

The agency is focused on rebuilding the veterans trust, improving service delivery and setting the course for excellence and impactful outcomes. Impactful outcomes include:

- **Improving the Veterans Experience**
- **Achieving Support Service Excellence**
- **Establishing a Culture of Continuous Performance Improvement**
- **Enhancing Strategic Partnerships.**

28. Please describe the training and informational sessions you provide and/or coordinate for the agency employees? **Salesforce and ethics training. The staff is scheduled to take CPR training 29 February 2016.** What is the frequency of these sessions? **Ethics training is yearly.**

29. How does the agency perform its outreach?

The Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs has enhanced our outreach to veterans and their family members. We have strategically partnered with federal entities, Veteran Service Organizations, Veteran Service Providers, non-traditional partners, and district agencies to expand outreach efforts. We support community agencies and stakeholders that already encounter Veterans as part of their ongoing scope of work through their program and project implementations. By engaging these groups, MOVA is developing a broader resource network. Additional outreach strategies include direct outreach, targeted outreach, social media engagement, and programmatic activities.

30. Please provide a list of types and dates of upcoming training/information sessions for the agency you have planned for FY 2016. **CPR training is scheduled for 29 February 2016**

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

31. Did the agency staff participate in any ethics training in FY15 and FY16 to date?
All agency staff participated in ethics training.
32. Please provide, as an attachment, a copy of the agency's FY16 performance plan and indicate whether you are on track to meet those measures. (See Exhibit E)
33. What are your top five priorities for the agency? Include a detailed explanation for how the agency expects to achieve or work toward these priorities in FY15 and FY16.
- 1. Connecting veterans to services, programs, and partners to help create pathways to the middle class.**
 - 2. Building partnerships that will expand programs, resources, and services to create pathways to the middle class with a focus on employment, entrepreneurship, small business development and housing.**
 - 3. Expand outreach efforts to create greater awareness of the office resources and to differentiate our office from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs.**
 - 4. Improve service delivery by providing timely responses and referrals to service partners.**
- Current Customer Service Stats**
- **22.60% of veterans are assisted by MOVA**
 - **64.3% of veterans are referred to the US Department of Veterans Affairs**
(This number is inclusive DC veterans only however overall our numbers are much higher because people confuse our office with the US Department of Veterans Affairs – we refer 97% of our phone calls to the VA – inclusive of veterans who call our office nationwide)
 - **On average we answer over 400 calls per week.**
 - **13.1% of veterans are referred interagency**
- 5. Create a recognition program for Washingtonians who serve and support veterans in need.**
34. In what areas (e.g. financial training, procedural training, etc.) do you think the agency need the most assistance with? **N/A**
35. What collaborations, initiatives or programs have been successful in FY15 and FY16? Why were they successful?

Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs

The Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs is a unique district agency. We are charged with a plethora of duties that include development and submission of veterans' claims for disability,

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

compensation, and pension benefits; educate and inform veterans of their benefits and entitlements, and we assist in identifying and navigating through resources, to include coordinating access to benefits external of the federal and district government. As a governmental agency we work in tangent with the US Department of Veterans Affairs, fostering effective representation of veterans who are claiming entitlements and earned benefits. All veterans and family members' benefits and entitlements are provided by the federal government therefore we assist veterans with navigating through those processes.

Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs

Fresh Start Initiatives:

1. **Veterans Resource Center (Start Date July 29, 2015)**
The US Department of Veterans Affairs is rapidly evolving technology across multiple disciplines that will assist with reducing processing times for disability compensation claims, and increasing access to and utilization of virtual access to information and healthcare modalities. To support this new trend, the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs opened a fully functional Veterans Resource Center that is equipped with over four computers and a copier w/ fax capabilities. Veterans are using this center to:
 - *Research benefits and entitlements*
 - *Set up email accounts*
 - *Register for Ebenefits.va.gov*
 - *Register for MyHealthe vets*
 - *Request Personnel and Medical Records*
 - i. To date 111 veterans have used our veterans resource center.
2. **Benefits and Entitlements Clinics: Disability and Compensation Claims (Start Date August 20, 2015)**
 - a. The Mayor's Office of Veterans partnered with Paralyzed Veterans of America, who employs accredited veterans service officers who support our veteran population with filing disability and compensation claims, pensions, special types of claims, survivor's assistance and so much more.
 - i. To date 108 veterans have attended the PVA workshops.
 - ii. 65 veterans have been referred to PVA without attending their workshop.
3. **DD214 Upgrade Clinics: (Start Date July 29, 2015)**
Our demographic has a significant number of hard to serve veterans who have discharge characterizations of dishonorable, other than honorable, bad conduct, and undesirable aka "Bad Paper". With those respective characterizations veterans are not accessible to VA benefits and entitlements. We have partnered with the Neighborhood Legal Services Program to host DD214 upgrade clinics.
 - i. To date 105 veterans have attended this clinic.

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

4. **Department of Disability Services:** Provides vocational and rehabilitative services to veterans and their family members with disabilities to help them prepare for, secure, regain or retain employment. (FY 16 start date June 2015)
 - i. To date 6 veterans who were not eligible for VA vocational and rehabilitative services received services from DDS.
5. **Department of Employment Services:** Assist veterans with employment counseling and resume building. (Start date: Starting 1 March 2016)
6. **For Vets program:** In partnership with the OCP-Surplus Property Division Federal Surplus Property Assistance Program/ DC State Agency we hosted a For Vets orientation program. For Vets Act of 2013 which will allow veteran service organizations to distribute furniture through their respective organizations for veterans. This partnership with OSP will offer the capacity needed to support the mission of the furniture program.
 - i. 25 veteran service organizations/providers attended.
 - ii. 3 have submitted their application for certification.
7. **Valor:** Provide financial literacy for veterans who are receiving VASH vouchers. VALOR, MOVA's partner will begin providing financial literacy and budget development every Wednesday at DC Housing. (Starting March 1, 2016)
8. **Veteran Service Organizations Leadership Coalition:** The leadership coalition composition includes veterans service organizations, veterans small businesses and nontraditional veteran organizations who collectively come together to discuss how they can impact change for veterans in the District of Columbia. (Start Date January 21, 2016)
 - i. 8 veteran service organizations are represented
 - ii. 2 nontraditional veteran organizations are represented.
 - iii. 1 small veteran owned business represented.
 - iv. 2 veteran community activist represented

All program funding comes from the MOVA general budget.

36. What measures of success are used by the agency to determine whether the initiative to expand outreach to Homeless, At Risk and Transitioning Veterans and Their Families is successful?

The District of Columbia has a multi-agency approach to addressing the needs of veterans. Ending veterans homelessness, providing wrap around and supportive services for at risk veterans fall under the purview of Department of Human Services,

Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA)

under the leadership of Director Laura Zeilinger. The District of Columbia will end veterans homelessness in 2016.

We have 334 veterans experiencing homelessness within D.C. as of this week, in the following locations:

- Veteran Individuals in Low Barrier Shelters (Year Round): 118**
- Veteran Individuals in Low Barrier Shelters (Hypothermia Alert Night Only): 24**
- Veteran Individuals in Veteran Affairs (VA)-Funded Grant Per Diem (Transitional Housing): 121**
- Veteran Individuals in Veteran Affairs (VA)-Funded Contract Beds (Transitional Housing): 25**
- Veteran Individuals in Other, Non-Veteran Affairs (VA)-Funded Transitional Housing: 12**
- Veteran Individuals in Unsheltered Locations: 31**
- Veteran Families: 3**

As of this last month (December) we have housed 764 veterans during calendar year 2015, which you can see broken down by month in the attached document. We're finalizing January 2016 veteran housing placement figures by our federal deadline of February 20.

37. What measures have been undertaken by the agency in FY16 to increase Veteran attendance at OVA Sponsored Events?
- Targeting outreach efforts to DC Veterans through community networks to increase local awareness of Veteran related issues and develop strategies for increasing their participation in existing VA benefit programs for eligible Veterans.**
 - Continue to create and maintain relationships with all internal and external partners. Foster new opportunities for partnerships by creating veteran service organization database that is inclusive of organizations that support a veterans' agenda.**
38. Did the agency have any unspent funds from the FY15 allocated budget? If yes, please describe how the agency's service output was impacted by the decreased spending. **NO**