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Pam Bondi
Attorney General
Jeff Atwater
Chief Financial Officer
Adam Putnam
Commissioner of Agriculture

April 24, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Rick Scott
Honorable Pam Bondi
Honorable Jeff Atwater
Honorable Adam Putnam

FROM: Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs
Mike Prendergast, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Agenda – Cabinet Meeting of May 5th, 2015

The next public meeting of the Governor and Cabinet to transact the business of the Department of Veterans' Affairs will be at 9:00 a.m. (EST), May 5th, 2015 in Tallahassee, Florida.

The Agenda and all required back-up materials are attached for your review.

If you have any questions, please call my Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director Colleen Krepstekies, at (850) 487-1533 x7723.

cc: Monica Russell, Director of Cabinet Affairs
Executive Office of the Governor

Cynthia Kelly, Director
Governor's Office of Policy and Budget

Attachments

AGENDA
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Meeting materials for the following items are available on the web at:
<http://floridavets.org/2015-public-notices/>

MEMBERS

Governor Rick Scott
Attorney General Pam Bondi
Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater
Commissioner Adam Putnam

May 5th, 2015
9:00 A.M. (EST)
LL-03, The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida

Contact: Colleen Krepstekies, Director, Legislative & Cabinet Affairs
(850) 487-1533

ITEM	SUBJECT	RECOMMENDATION
1.	Respectfully request approval of the minutes of the March 24 th , 2015 meeting. (ATTACHMENT 1)	RECOMMEND APPROVAL
2.	Respectfully submit Agency 3rd Quarter Report for Fiscal Year 2014-2015. (ATTACHMENT 2)	RECOMMEND APPROVAL

STATE OF FLORIDA

IN RE: MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR
AND CABINET,

CABINET MEMBERS:

GOVERNOR RICK SCOTT
ATTORNEY GENERAL PAM BONDI
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
JEFF ATWATER
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE
ADAM PUTNAM

DATE:

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015

LOCATION:

CABINET MEETING ROOM
LOWER LEVEL, THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

REPORTED BY:

YVONNE LAFLAMME, FPR
COURT REPORTER and
NOTARY PUBLIC

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2 DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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4
5 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Next, we have Mike Prendergrast
6 with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

7 Good morning, still.

8 MR. PRENDERGRAST: It is, Governor, barely.

9 Good morning, Governor Scott, General Bondi, CFO
10 Atwater, Commissioner Putnam.

11 The Department of Veterans Affairs has three
12 agenda items for your consideration today.

13 Agenda Item 1 is the Agency's January 13th
14 Cabinet meeting. We respectfully request approval of
15 this item.

16 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Is there a motion to approve?

17 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER ATWATER: So moved.

18 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Is there a second?

19 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: Second.

20 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Moved and seconded. Show the
21 minute approved without objection.

22 MR. PRENDERGRAST: Thank you.

23 Agenda Item 2 is the Agency's February 5th
24 Cabinet meeting minutes. We respectfully request
25 approval for this item.

1 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Is there a motion to approve?

2 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: So moved.

3 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Is there a second?

4 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Second.

5 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Moved and seconded. Show the
6 minutes approved without objection.

7 MR. PRENDERGRAST: Thank you.

8 Agenda Item 3 is the Agency's recommendation for
9 the Class of 2014 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame. The
10 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame recognizes and honors
11 those military veterans, who their works in life
12 during and after military service, have made a
13 significant contribution to the State of Florida
14 through civic, business, public service, or other
15 pursuits.

16 During the March 10 Cabinet meeting, the Attorney
17 General stated her Office's review of applicable
18 statutes and guidelines could not currently support
19 inclusion of Florida pre-statehood veterans, where
20 those veterans were in the service of the Confederate
21 States of America.

22 As a result, our Agency was directed to forward
23 to you for consideration the five hall of fame
24 nominees initially presented by us at the February 5
25 Cabinet meeting in Tampa.

1 Therefore, the Florida Department of Veterans
2 Affairs is pleased to forward the following
3 distinguished nominees for induction into the 2014
4 Class of the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame:

5 The late Admiral Leroy Collins, Jr., United
6 States Navy Reserve. The late Admiral was a
7 submariner, business and community leader, and former
8 Executive Director of the Florida Department of
9 Veterans Affairs. He died tragically one morning in
10 Tampa Bay while he was doing his morning PT routine
11 prior to going to the office;

12 Major General James Lee Dozier, United States
13 Army. The General is a recipient of the Silver Star
14 for heroism and for Purple Heart for wounds that he
15 sustained while in service in Southeast Asia. He's
16 also a community leader, champion of Veterans causes,
17 and a former member of the Florida Commission of
18 Veterans Affairs;

19 Colonel Frank Farmer, United States Army, Florida
20 Army National Guard and United States Air Force
21 Reserve.

22 Colonel Farmer received the Bronze Star for his
23 service in Vietnam. He then earned his medical
24 degree, returned to military service as a doctor, and
25 later served with distinction as the Surgeon General

1 and Secretary of the Department of Health of the Great
2 State of Florida;

3 Chief Master Sergeant Eugene Cecil Johnson,
4 United States Air Force. Chief Johnson is the first
5 enlisted member and first African-American nominee to
6 be recommended for inclusion in the Florida Veterans
7 Hall of Fame. He is a distinguished civic, education,
8 and veterans leader, who spent 20 years of service as
9 the Veterans coordinator for the South Brevard NAACP;

10 Lieutenant General Lawrence F. Snowden, United
11 States Marine Corps. General Snowden is the highest
12 ranking survivor who fought in the battle of Iwo Jima
13 during World War II.

14 Following his 37 years of distinguished service,
15 he became an international civic and business leader.
16 He also assisted with establishing Florida Department
17 of Elder Affairs, and serves as Chairman Emeritus of
18 the Iwo Jima Association of the United States of
19 America.

20 Before I request approval of these five nominees,
21 there are two speakers who wish to make brief
22 statements regarding the Florida Veterans Hall of
23 Fame.

24 First up is Mr. Graham Smith, representing the
25 Sons of Confederate Veterans.

1 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Good afternoon.

2 MR. SMITH: Good afternoon, y'all. If I may
3 approach y'all and give you a couple of handouts?

4 My name is Graham Fredrick Smith. I am an
5 ancestor of both Confederate and Union soldiers who
6 fought during the Civil War in the United States.

7 As a result of my Confederate ancestry, I am a
8 member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Within
9 the Florida division, I am the Chief of Heritage
10 Operations.

11 In January, I retired from the Florida Department
12 of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles after 33 years'
13 service.

14 For the first 27 years, I was with the internal
15 audit section of the Office of the Inspector General.
16 For the final six years, I was with Florida Highway
17 Patrol, responsible for the staff inspection program.
18 Throughout my professional career, I analyzed federal
19 and state laws, Florida Administrative Code Rules,
20 Department and Division policies and procedures.

21 I performed these analyses to determine
22 compliance with the directives by the audited unit or
23 FHP troop. It didn't take long to realize that most
24 often established laws, rules, policies and procedures
25 are black and white; there is no gray area. Seldom is

1 there.

2 With that knowledge and experience, I analyzed
3 the statute pertaining to the Florida Veteran's Hall
4 of Fame. In contrary to the advice and opinions you
5 have received today, I determined that the laws
6 established for the program are very clear and the
7 legislative intent is unquestionable.

8 I will go through Florida Statute 265.003; that
9 will be Exhibit 1, or EX that I've handed you, and
10 explain the clarity of the law and legislative intent.

11 The first section 3A states, the Florida Veterans
12 Hall of Fame is created within the Department of
13 Veterans Affairs as an advisory council as defined in
14 20.037; that's Exhibit 2.

15 The definition states, "The council or advisory
16 council means an advisory body, created by specific
17 statutory enactment and appointed to function on a
18 continuing basis for the study of problems arising in
19 a specified functional or program area of state
20 government," and it also provides recommendations and
21 policies -- policy alternatives for those problems.

22 The first part of the sentence establishes the
23 longevity of the council. The sentence goes on to
24 detail the duty of the council "as studying problems
25 and providing recommendations and alternatives."

1 Therefore, since there have been no problems with
2 or in the program, the Hall of Fame Council had no
3 need to make recommendations or policy alternatives to
4 resolve problems.

5 However, it can be said, but it hasn't yet, that
6 a problem exists where pre-statehood and Confederate
7 Veterans are excluded from the Florida Veterans Hall
8 of Fame. By definition, this would have been a
9 perfect problem to present to the Council so they
10 could study it and make recommendations. Instead,
11 y'all sitting as the Governor and Cabinet, want to
12 return it to the Legislature for clarification without
13 consulting the Council, consisting of members that
14 each of you appointed.

15 Second, in light of the limited scope of duties
16 of an advisory council, defined in 20.037, the
17 Legislature delineated additional responsibilities of
18 the Council, in stead, 265.003.

19 Section 4H states that the Council shall transmit
20 a list of up to 20 nominees to the Department of
21 Veterans Affairs for submission to the Governor and
22 Cabinet, who will select the nominees to be inducted.

23 At the Cabinet meeting earlier this month, both
24 you, Governor Scott and Commissioner Putnam, quired
25 the Veterans Affairs General Counsel on what statutory

1 authority was given to given to Director Prendergrast
2 to exclude nominees prior to passing the list to you.

3 The general counsel responded that Statute 20.03,
4 defining the advisory council, gave that authority.
5 He said that the Council can only make recommendations
6 to the director. That is the not the case and clearly
7 the law has been misinterpreted.

8 However, if it was interpreted correctly, section
9 365.03, paren 4, would state that the Council "shall
10 transmit a list of up to 20 recommendations," not
11 nominations, "to the FDVA for consideration." Also,
12 State Statutes state that FDVA will submit the
13 Council's nominee to the Governor and Cabinet to
14 select the nominees to be inducted.

15 By scrubbing this list, the director of FDVA
16 performed your jobs. Further, after withdrawal of a
17 list of nominees provided by the FDVA in 2011,
18 legislation was passed in 2012 amending the original
19 statute; in doing so, it created Florida Veterans Hall
20 of Fame Council.

21 Chapter 201.215(9) Laws of Florida, which is
22 Exhibit 3 that I've given you, identifies the
23 legislative intent by stating in part an act amending
24 265.003, Florida Statutes, creating the Florida
25 Veterans Hall of Fame Council, providing for the

1 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Council rather than the
2 Department of Veterans Affairs, and that is a quote,
3 to select nominees for induction into the Florida
4 Veterans Hall of Fame and to establish criteria for
5 the selection.

6 Third, section 265.003(5) states in part, "The
7 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Council may establish
8 criteria for the process of selection of nominees for
9 membership. Therefore, the Council is given total
10 authority to establish the criteria to be used in this
11 selection of nominees.

12 For obvious reasons, one set of guidelines or
13 criteria can't be rubber-stamped on each Veterans'
14 application being considered. Each one is unique. As
15 you just heard. For instance, should a veteran's
16 service during a given time period, the MOS, military
17 accomplishments, service medals, et cetera, be
18 considered or not considered. We just heard where
19 some of the veterans being presented have had their
20 service records as well as the medals they received
21 mentioned; that decision must be left to the Council
22 as each application is reviewed.

23 The Statute further states that the applicant
24 will have made a significant contribution to the state
25 in civic, business, public service or other pursuits.

1 This is another situation where one set of criteria
2 can't be used for all. The Council must be permitted,
3 as the Legislature has authorized, to establish the
4 guidelines as the need arises. Obviously, the Council
5 amended their established guidelines so it could
6 nominate three Florida Veterans of the Civil War.

7 Finally, regarding the definition of a Veteran.
8 There is none in Chapter 265, nor is there a reference
9 in that chapter to any other definition in another
10 chapter.

11 The Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Council was
12 created by the Florida Legislature in 2012. Its
13 composition is seven honorably discharged Veterans;
14 four of which are members of a Congressionally
15 Chartered Veterans Service Organization. I'm certain
16 this body of veterans has your, the State's, and all
17 of Florida veterans' interest in mind.

18 The Council has performed its statutory
19 obligation and each member has fulfilled his or her
20 responsibility to their appointing authority -- that
21 would be y'all. In something so, they forwarded eight
22 nominees for your consideration of inclusion into the
23 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame.

24 There is no need for legislative interpretation
25 or clarification. The law is clear. All eight of the

1 nominees reported to you must be considered for
2 induction at the same time. Now is the time to take
3 action on the Class of 2014. It has been delayed long
4 enough -- four months to be exact -- and action should
5 be taken today on all eight.

6 Thank you.

7 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Thank you. Are there any
8 questions?

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: No.

10 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Thank you very much.

11 MR. LANG: May I come forward because I would
12 like to present something on behalf of my
13 great-grandfather?

14 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Absolutely.

15 MR. LANG: My name is David Lang. I'm the
16 great-grandson of Major General David Lang who was
17 Florida's first General, and I would like to speak on
18 behalf of his nomination, which I had nothing to do
19 with. And by the way, I only learned of this meeting
20 last night, so I prepared a letter for you and I would
21 like to present it to you at this time, if I might?
22 And I will be brief.

23 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Okay.

24 MR. LANG: First of all, I want to congratulate
25 the members that are about to be inducted into this

1 Hall of Fame. They are very justly due to this award
2 and I congratulate them. I would also like to commend
3 the Council who nominated my great-grandfather, and
4 I'm certain that they took their time in doing it. If
5 I might, I'll read my letter quickly and then I'll
6 have my seat.

7 I have received a copy of your deputy -- this is
8 addressed to Attorney General Bondi, because it's her
9 staff that prepared the Attorney General's opinion
10 that was presented to you.

11 I have received a copy of your Deputy Attorney
12 General Kent J. Perez's opinion regarding
13 qualifications of persons concerning including in the
14 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame, noting that the nominee
15 criteria expressed or created by the Florida Veterans
16 Hall of Fame Council would not currently support
17 inclusion of Florida pre-statehood or Veterans of the
18 Service of the State, of Confederate States of
19 America.

20 His opinion also states that the federal
21 statutory language appears to be more restrictive than
22 the state law, as it limits recognized military
23 service to the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps,
24 Air Force and Coast Guard. I also recognize that each
25 Cabinet officer, the President, and the Speaker of the

1 House appointed a fully-qualified military Veteran to
2 represent and serve on the Florida Veterans Hall of
3 Fame Council.

4 That Council nominated my great-great-
5 grandfather, David Lang, to be your candidate for the
6 Veterans Hall of Fame. He was placed in nomination
7 because he was appointed Florida first Adjutant
8 General of Florida troops in 1885 and remained such
9 until 1894. This was a full-time position.

10 He also served as a close aide to Florida's next
11 two governors. After learning that the Executive
12 Director of the Florida Department of Veterans'
13 Affairs have removed three names, nominees, from the
14 list the Council recommended because they had
15 Confederate Army service, I made an appointment to see
16 Colonel Prendergrast the next morning.

17 In our discussion, he advised me he had removed
18 Major General Lang's name, because he didn't have a
19 copy of his honorable discharge, which was required by
20 law, and I'm certain, however, that the records of the
21 State of Florida can provide that list.

22 David Lang served honorably as Florida's first
23 Adjutant General, wore the uniform and federal
24 insignia that went with it. It was blue. It had the
25 federal shield. I presented the uniform to the

1 Florida National Guard some years ago and I have full
2 knowledge of it.

3 He was instrumental in obtaining changes in the
4 militia law when the new Florida Constitution was
5 adopted in 1885. Among key provisions were increased
6 funding for training camps, United States Army, pay
7 scales for military militant on active duty and
8 tougher controls over militia units and summer
9 encampment.

10 He was, as I said, a full-time Florida military
11 officer. He was honored by Major General Ronald
12 O'Harrison, Adjutant General in the State of Florida,
13 at a Florida National Guard ceremony dedicating a
14 historical monument at his grave site on 30 March,
15 1999.

16 Yes, David Lang had been a Confederate officer,
17 as had the other two nominees, and they all served
18 honorable. All contributed substantially to the State
19 following the Civil War in significant capacities. In
20 my opinion, all three have been -- should have been
21 included in this year's nominees, and apparently so
22 did the members of Veterans Hall of Fame Council.

23 However, if Deputy General Perez's opinion holds
24 true, then maybe General David Lang should still
25 qualify as a nominee to you for the Florida Veterans

1 Hall of Fame. He served as a full-time Major General
2 in Florida of troops in an active duty status, from
3 1885 to 1894, in a federally recognized position and
4 served as Florida's first Adjutant General, and is
5 known as the Father of the Florida National Guard.

6 He was a Veteran of Florida's post-war military,
7 serving honorably in that position, and he would still
8 qualify as a Veteran under your Attorney General's
9 opinion, despite the statement that nominee criteria
10 would not currently support inclusion of Florida's
11 pre-statehood Veterans or Veterans in the Confederate
12 States of America.

13 Thank you very much, and I hope you'll take this
14 into consideration.

15 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Thank you very much.

16 Any questions? All right.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MR. PRENDERGRAST: Thank you, Mr. Smith and
19 Colonel Lang.

20 Our next speaker is Mr. Dale Landry, Regional
21 Vice-President of Florida State Conference of NAACP
22 branches.

23 Mr. Landry?

24 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Good afternoon.

25 MR. LANDRY: Good afternoon, Governor.

1 Thank you, Colonel.

2 Governor Scott, Attorney General Bondi, CFO
3 Atwater, Commissioner Putnam, on behalf of President
4 Adora Obi Nweze and the Florida State Conference of
5 the National Association for the Advancement of
6 Colored People, all of our units, members, and most
7 important our veterans, greeting and thanks for this
8 honor to address you on this most important issue.

9 Let me start off by saying that I agree that it
10 is important to honor and remember those who have
11 sacrificed and fought valiantly to defend and preserve
12 the United States of America. The Florida Veterans
13 Hall of Fame was designed to do this and has
14 accomplished just that.

15 A recent proposal to induct three Civil War
16 Veterans: David Lang, Samuel Pasco, and Edward Perry,
17 has been a topic of many conversations and
18 controversy; however, one key point that many
19 seemingly fail to remember is the side these soldiers
20 fought for, the Confederacy.

21 These three men fought against the Union and
22 symbolized a dark time in America in our state's
23 history, a period full of hatred and slavery. It is
24 important to recognize and remember that these men who
25 took up arms against the United States of America and

1 killed or wounded members of the United States Armed
2 Forces; they absolutely should not be honored by
3 placement in the Florida Veterans Hall Of Fame, along
4 with those who have honorably served, wounded, and
5 died, fighting against enemies of this United States,
6 in Europe, in the Pacific, in Asia, in South America,
7 in the Caribbean, the Mid East, and now again in our
8 homeland, as depicted by those who have taken up arms
9 in support of terrorist extremists and attacked US
10 Armed Forces on military posts here in the United
11 States of America. Again, all who like the
12 Confederacy took up arms against our service members
13 of the United States Armed Forces in defense of our
14 great nation.

15 All three of these men went on to pursue admiral
16 careers that reflected great service to our state and
17 country's history: Lang was founder of the Florida
18 National Guard, Pasco was a US Senator, and Perry was
19 once Florida Governor.

20 In these capacities, they have already left their
21 legacies, but by inducting these men into Florida
22 Veterans Hall of Fame, is a bad message being sent; a
23 message that the behaviors and belief they fought for
24 are not only accepted, but honored, and that's just
25 plain wrong.

1 More than 1.5 million qualified Veterans live in
2 the state of Florida, the third largest population of
3 Veterans in the country. These brave men and women
4 have also put their lives on the line; the difference
5 is, these veterans defended America's values for
6 justice for all.

7 Furthermore, according to the criteria set forth
8 for the induction into the Hall of Fame, these three
9 men did not serve in the United States Armed Forces,
10 and likewise, the United States military as depicted
11 in the photos I provided you, making them ineligible
12 for the Hall of Fame.

13 Sons of the Confederacy, a group comprised of
14 those whose ancestors fought against the Union,
15 disagree. They have a right to disagree, but they
16 don't have a right to hijack this process that are
17 their own interest. There should be no question as to
18 what qualifies a Veteran for the Florida Veterans Hall
19 of Fame.

20 The real question is what does the Hall of Fame
21 represent. I believe that the Hall should celebrate
22 the finest Floridians who served our great nation,
23 these United States of America, with courage, skill
24 and loyalty.

25 The Civil War ended 150 years ago, and we have

1 worked hard to rebuild our state and nation, but if
2 you act to induct these three men into the Hall of
3 Fame, you might as well also fly the Confederate flag
4 over the State Capitol again.

5 In closing, I believe that both the law and
6 common sense make it clear that Confederate soldiers
7 and sailors should not be inducted into the Florida
8 Veterans Hall of Fame. Taking such inappropriate
9 action would be a kin to issuing a new declaration of
10 Civil War. It would be an insult to our Veterans of
11 Armed Forces and many Floridians, especially Native
12 Americans, African-Americans, and Latinos, across our
13 great state and great nation, who have served to
14 defend these United States of America.

15 History has spoken, and members of the
16 Confederate Forces, just as other forces that have
17 fought against the United States of America and our
18 Armed Forces, do not belong in a Hall of Fame honoring
19 US Armed Forces service members.

20 That concludes my remarks, and thank you.

21 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Thank you. Any questions?

22 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: I have a question.

23 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Hold on just a second, ma'am.

24 We have one question.

25 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: I have a quick question for

1 you about David Lang, who, in addition to serving in
2 the Confederate States of America Army, also served US
3 Army as Florida's first Adjutant General. So he's
4 someone who helped bind up the wounds from that war
5 and did serve the reunified United States of America.
6 Does he fall in a different category than those who
7 only served CSA?

8 MR. LANDRY: Commissioner Putnam, and I have to
9 be honest with you. Again, as we in the NAACP, we
10 support what's right. With that knowledge that came
11 out about General Lang that he did serve in the United
12 States -- he served in the Florida National Guard as a
13 part of the United States Armed Forces -- I believe we
14 would have to support that induction, because he did
15 serve honorably under the blue uniform.

16 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: I've always found you to be
17 fair and admirable, and I appreciate that.

18 MR. LANDRY: Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Thank you for your
20 comments, and thank you.

21 MR. LANDRY: You're welcome, sir.

22 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Any other questions?

23 All right, ma'am. Did you have something?

24 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Yes. Governor,
25 Council, it is called Florida Veterans Hall of Fame,

1 and I just want to mention to you a couple of things.
2 The State of Florida succeeded from the United States.
3 The State of Florida joined the Confederate States of
4 America. The State of Florida sent 15,000 citizens to
5 the war; 5,000 of those men died in the service for
6 the State of Florida during the Civil War. And from
7 1880 to 1955, the State of Florida paid pensions to
8 its Confederate Veterans and their widows.

9 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Thank you. We're going to hold
10 for a second so Attorney General can come back.

11 I want to thank everybody that came. I think one
12 great thing about our state is we're a state where
13 people can express their views. And thank God, we
14 have people that are willing to put the uniform on and
15 defend the freedom to be able to do this, whether we
16 all agree or disagree. I'm very appreciative of
17 everyone that's served in the military and protected
18 our freedom.

19 All right. So is there a motion to approve the
20 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame class?

21 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Governor, I'll move that we
22 approve the list with the addition of David Lang.

23 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. Is there a second?

24 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER ATWATER: Second.

25 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. I'm going to vote

1 against it just because -- I have no issue with David
2 Lang. I just haven't looked at his whole background,
3 so I'm not going to vote for it.

4 I'm going to vote against it only for that
5 reason, and I have no problem in bringing it back up.

6 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: Can I just talk to my
7 general counsel?

8 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Sure, sure.

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: I have -- this is
10 nothing to do with the people involved. This has to
11 do with what's legal, based on the Council's rule and
12 based on what the Legislature has placed into law, and
13 that's my job as Attorney General. Just so -- can I
14 have a moment?

15 Okay. My general counsel says because of the
16 National Guard service, we have the ability to add
17 him. It may be challenged, and we may have to revisit
18 it. At this time, no -- I mean, I think we're
19 familiar with his background, and I have no problem at
20 this time admitting him.

21 But again, you gentleman have to realize, it may
22 be challenged, because there is confusion in the way
23 the Council is structured and the law, and I again, am
24 advising you that they need to clarify that.

25 GOVERNOR SCOTT: So the motion on the table has

1 been seconded, is that it would be the five members
2 that the Florida Veterans -- the five members of
3 Florida team has brought forward, plus the David Lang.
4 That's the motion on the table.

5 Did you have another?

6 MR. HERMAN: Governor, may we make one comment?
7 My name is David Herman; I'm general counsel for the
8 Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, and I
9 apologize. Emotions run high, and again, it's not
10 about the people and it's about the law, and I've been
11 asked to weigh in on the law.

12 Those who served the National Guard are not
13 considered to be Veterans under the law, unless they
14 served during a period of active where they were --
15 where the Guards were nationalized. Today, if
16 National Guardsmen were to apply for service to be
17 inducted into the Hall of Fame, they would not be
18 eligible because they're not veterans, unless they
19 served in active duty in the time of war.

20 So under that definition, regrettably, I don't
21 believe that David Lang would qualify.

22 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. So what you're
23 saying is that a member, today, a reserve member of
24 the National Guard, would not be able to be in the
25 Florida National Veterans Hall of Fame unless they

1 were called up for active duty, because they've never
2 served active duty.

3 MR. HERMAN: Governor, it's active duty for
4 purposes other than training.

5 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Active duty for purposes other
6 than training.

7 MR. HERMAN: And that's for Guardsmen and for
8 Reserves. Now, if they get activated in a
9 humanitarian operation...

10 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Or go to Afghanistan or
11 whatever.

12 MR. HERMAN: Yes, Governor, correct.

13 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. So the advice of
14 counsel is that unless there's evidence that David
15 Lang was called up on active duty, which we don't have
16 that in the record today, then he would not be
17 entitled to be inducted.

18 MR. HERMAN: That is correct, Governor.

19 MR. LANG: Would that include called up by the
20 Governor of Florida?

21 MR. HERMAN: I don't believe so, sir. I'm sorry.

22 MR. LANG: You don't think so?

23 GOVERNOR SCOTT: So the motion, still the motion
24 that we are on -- we heard all of the advice, but the
25 motion on the table is that it would be five members

1 plus David Lang. That's the motion on the table. So
2 everybody is fine with voting on that, so I'm going to
3 vote opposed to it, based on the fact that I don't
4 know enough about his background. But I'm okay with
5 it.

6 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: And Governor, I have to
7 vote against it. And this is not a vote against your
8 great-grandfather at all. This is a vote against the
9 way the Council's structured, and the law, which I
10 believe we need to fix.

11 MR. LANG: Ma'am, I have no problem.

12 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: So my vote is no as
13 well, sadly.

14 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Governor?

15 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Hold on just a second.

16 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Restate the motion.

17 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Hold on. So are you finished?

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: I'm --

19 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Commissioner?

20 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Well, if we finish the
21 vote, I don't need to restate the motion, if you've
22 called to question, but I am prepared to --

23 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Do you want to make another
24 motion?

25 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: -- withdraw the motion and

1 move that we accept the original list, and that we
2 continue this quest for clarity on who is and who is
3 not eligible, and what that criteria is, and what role
4 that DVA has in administering this process.

5 So my motion very simply is that we accept the
6 slate of nominees that are before us.

7 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. So we'll just do
8 that first. The first motion is just accept the five.
9 Is there a second?

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: Second.

11 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. Any comments or
12 objections with that? Okay. Hearing none, that
13 carries.

14 Now, let's figure out -- Commissioner has a good
15 point. We need to go back now, and so probably the
16 right way of doing this is probably, Attorney General,
17 would you be comfortable coming back at the next
18 Cabinet meeting and taking the David Lang's example
19 and taking what the attorney for the Florida
20 Department of Veteran Affairs said and give us your
21 advice on the National Guard?

22 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: Certainly. And again,
23 as I said at the last meeting, I believe we all agreed
24 we want the Council to get clarification from the
25 Legislature or change the rules of the Council to

1 apply.

2 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. And then I would
3 just like if, also, if you'll also give us the
4 background again on David Lang. Because we -- I also
5 -- we might want to bring that up.

6 MR. PRENDERGRAST: We'll bring that before the
7 next Cabinet meeting.

8 GOVERNOR SCOTT: I would just like to get his
9 background again.

10 MR. PRENDERGRAST: We'll get that to you.

11 GOVERNOR SCOTT: If you can do that for all of
12 us.

13 MR. PRENDERGRAST: Sure. We'll deliver that to
14 the staff.

15 GOVERNOR SCOTT: So I don't think we need to have
16 a motion on that; you'll bring it up.

17 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: That's fine.

18 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: I'm sorry, go ahead.

19 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER ATWATER: I just would --
20 maybe all of this because now we've been back around
21 it several times. It might be our own Florida
22 National Guard. I just want to be sure, or when we
23 all come back and settle up on where this is going to
24 go or get Legislature -- or wherever this may go, I
25 just want to be sure that I understand your last

1 comment, sir, Colonel.

2 If somebody were to dedicate their life to the
3 preparation and training of Florida, being prepared
4 and ready for whatever we may be called upon in
5 service in the country or to service one another in
6 crisis; that an individual that has dedicated their
7 life to that work as a member of the Florida National
8 Guard, is precluded, notwithstanding whether they've
9 worn that uniform to prepare troops, and gave
10 everything and they had given, and lost their life in
11 a catastrophic event they were helping to save the
12 lives of fellow Floridians; is that person excluded
13 because they were never part of active duty?

14 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Why don't you let your counsel
15 answer that. That's your understanding of the law,
16 right?

17 MR. HERMAN: Yes, sir. It's a question of
18 eligibility for Veterans Benefits, and that's set by
19 federal law which the State of Florida follows; is
20 that the National Guardsmen, unless they're activated
21 nationally are not considered veterans for national
22 services.

23 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER ATWATER: Then maybe for
24 anyone listening, we're trying to thread a needle
25 here, what -- I know we're trying to do this as

1 thoughtfully and as carefully as we can, and how the
2 Council may be able to with its wisdom provide
3 nominees in the future. But I just would hope that we
4 don't find ourselves, for very different reasons than
5 we've been discussing here today, that we're cornered
6 out of considering an application of someone or their
7 nomination of someone who again may have done a
8 tremendous service in the uniform of this country but
9 technically didn't get through the eye of the needle
10 that someone else created as, this is one of needles
11 you need to get through. I just want to understand
12 them all.

13 ATTORNEY GENERAL BONDI: And I believe that can
14 be fixed.

15 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER ATWATER: Okay.

16 GOVERNOR SCOTT: Do you have another point?

17 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: I do. The minutes of the
18 Veterans Hall of Fame Council where these selections
19 were made indicate that FDVA's general council, Dave
20 Herman was present, and the deputy executive director
21 of the agency was present by teleconference.

22 Now, throughout that long meeting, when they made
23 these selections and six of the seven council members
24 voted for at least one of the Veterans that have now
25 been excluded, and five of the seven members voted for

1 two of the three veterans in their top ten, why didn't
2 either one of you say something in June of last year?

3 If you were so clear and so convinced that they
4 were breaking the law in forwarding the name of
5 Florida's first Adjutant General, who has his own
6 memorial for his role in leading our National Guard
7 and the namesake of a county, and a former governor,
8 why didn't you say something when you had the Council
9 together? Why did you waste their time if they were
10 breaking the law?

11 MR. PRENDERGRAST: Commissioner, because I was
12 here. The meeting was set during a Cabinet meeting.
13 I was present here. I came at the very end of that
14 meeting after the vote had been taken.

15 Additionally, the Florida Department of Veterans
16 Affairs did not have a policy of reviewing the
17 applications, going through them, screening them in
18 any way before they went to the Council at that time.
19 The Council, it was only after the Council had
20 selected its list of nominees that the Department of
21 Veterans Affairs became aware that it included
22 nominees that were not eligible under the criteria in
23 Florida law.

24 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: So you pick and choose when
25 you decide to engage in this process? I mean, you've

1 got a volunteer board that's dedicating their time to
2 sort through all of these worthy Floridians, and then
3 you didn't bring it to us until January of '15, after
4 they had made their first round of selections in June
5 of '14. Did you ever let them know that you had taken
6 the position that three of their nominees were
7 illegal?

8 MR. PRENDERGRAST: Yes, sir, we did.

9 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Prior to our Cabinet
10 meeting?

11 MR. PRENDERGRAST: Commissioner Putnam, that's
12 not a statement of fact. The Agency brought the list
13 of eight nominees to each of the respective offices of
14 the Cabinet members and the Governor's Office in
15 August of 2014, and so informed them of the list of
16 nominees, and so informed them of the list of nominees
17 there was a problem with three nominees on the list.
18 In fact, that the Hall of Fame Council had ignored its
19 own published guidelines for the proper nomination of
20 the individuals in the first place.

21 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: That's my point. You had
22 someone in the room when they allegedly ignored their
23 own guidelines. Why didn't y'all speak up then?
24 There's no reflection in the minutes that you spoke up
25 in the meeting where the vote took place.

1 MR. PRENDERGRAST: I was also at a Cabinet
2 meeting at the same time.

3 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Your deputy was there.
4 Your general counsel attended the end of the meeting.

5 MR. PRENDERGRAST: I was not in the room,
6 Commissioner Putnam, and I was here at the Cabinet
7 meeting with all of you. My general counsel was here
8 for most of the meeting, and the information was not
9 provided to us until sometime in July.

10 GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. Anything else?
11 Anyone have any other questions? Thank you very much.

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Mike Prendergast
Executive Director

State of Florida
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Office of the Executive Director
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Rick Scott
Governor
Pam Bondi
Attorney General
Jeff Atwater
Chief Financial Officer
Adam Putnam
Commissioner of Agriculture

DATE: April 22, 2015

TO: The Honorable Rick Scott
The Honorable Pam Bondi
The Honorable Jeff Atwater
The Honorable Adam Putnam

FROM: Mike Prendergast
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Prendergast".

SUBJECT: Quarterly Report – Third Quarter 2014-2015

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs submits this Quarterly Report for the Third Quarter of the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year, covering the period January 1 – March 31, 2015.

This Quarterly Report is submitted pursuant to the procedures authorized by Rules 55-1.003 and 55-2.010, Florida Administrative Code. The report will be placed on the agenda at a future meeting of the Governor and Cabinet.

If you have any questions regarding any matter covered by this report, please contact me, Deputy Executive Director Al Carter, at (727) 518-3202, or the Legislative Affairs Director Colleen Krepstekies, at (850) 487-1533.

CC: Senator Rene Garcia, Chairman, Health and Human Services Appropriations Committee
Senator Thad Altman, Chairman, Military Affairs, Space and Domestic Security Committee
Representative Kenneth L. Roberson, Chairman, Health Innovation Sub-Committee
Representative Matt Hudson, Chairman, Health Care Appropriations Sub-Committee
Representative Jimmie T. Smith, Chairman, Veterans and Military Affairs Sub-Committee
Cynthia Kelly, Director, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget

Attachment 1: FDVA Quarterly Report

ATTACHMENT 1

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS THIRD QUARTER REPORT January 1 – March 31, 2015

This report covers the activities of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) for the Third Quarter of the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year.

1. **Administrative Highlights:**

a. **Current Issues/Concerns**

Executive Direction: Executive Director Mike Prendergast continued his campaign of advocating with purpose and passion for Florida veterans and linking them to superior services, benefits, and support. Colonel Prendergast presented department overviews and updates on current federal and state legislative initiatives to veterans' groups, civic groups, and legislative committees. During this quarter he also met with local businesses and organizations to discuss outreach programs and projects to assist veterans. Colonel Prendergast served as the keynote speaker at the Citrus County Military Officers Association of America Luncheon in Crystal River and attended a Florida National Guard ceremony to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center Museum and Memorial Gardens in Starke. He also attended the Change of Command Ceremony for the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team at the C.W. Bill Young Armed Forces Reserve Center in Pinellas Park and attended the Military Order of the Purple Heart 10th Annual Ceremony in Crystal River. The ceremony commemorated the proud legacy of the Purple Heart and honored Florida's fallen heroes of the Global War on Terror.

New State Veterans' Nursing Home: Veteran Nursing home care delivery has experienced a significant change in philosophy of care, complexity of care, levels of service, length of stay, architecture, demographics of populations served, and new generational cohorts of residents requiring care that can only be provided in nursing homes. This has resulted in an initiative to transform the culture of nursing home care in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs from a medical model where the care is driven by the medical diagnosis to a person-centered model where the care is driven by the needs of the individual, as impacted by medical conditions. In personalizing the delivery of care, the transformation of the culture of nursing home care challenges care providers to deinstitutionalize care and workplace practices. The Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County) is in the initial planning stages and will be the first FDVA home to be reflective of these new changes. The 120-bed facility will offer skilled nursing care and will accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease.

Division of Benefits and Assistance:

Bureau of Veterans' Claims: Claims Services has adapted to recent VA paperless upgrades and mail as we know it is a thing of the past. All mail from Florida Veterans who correspond through the US Postal Service to the VA was moved from the VA Regional Office in St Petersburg to a scanning facility in Georgia. The mail is digitized, uploaded to the VA web-based mail portal for a VA employee to review, and forwarded to the appropriate team for processing. These new procedures were modified to provide quicker access to the mail and upload to the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). VA employees now review the digitized file from any VA office. Claims Services has kept in step with the VA, making the transition appear seamless to Veterans we serve. This quarter, the office advocated for over 43,648 Veterans and their families and reviewed over 8,116 disability claims for disability benefits. The Claims Appeal Team represented 237 Veterans before Judges at the Board of Veteran Appeals, advocating for benefits sought. Additionally, the Claims Team attended 96 VA Personal Hearings scheduled to represent and assist veterans to present their cases to the VA Hearing Officer regarding proposal to reduce or retention of their benefits. The Veteran Claim Examiners worked with the VA to resolve 65% of the Personal Hearings in favor of the Veteran without the necessity of the Veteran traveling to the VA Regional Office.

Bureau of Field Services: Field Services provided 13 Veterans' Claim Examiners and 201 Man Hours to support the Governor's Veterans Service Award Ceremonies in Melbourne, Panama City and The Villages. The Bay Pines zone assisted Lee County Service Officers by providing a VCE to serve Veterans and their families while they were hiring new Service Officers. Field Services' David Austin, Harry Rudy and Ernie Kuykendall provided training at the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Certification Course March 2-5. This quarter, Field Services attended 182 outreach events providing benefit information to 9,522 veterans and their families. Total Veterans served this quarter by Field Services is 66,616.

The Bureau of State Approving for Veterans' Education and Training (or State Approving Agency/SAA): State Approving Agency team members, Betsy Wickham and Katherine Snyder, were active providing legislative guidance this quarter. Public Law 113-146, The Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014, Section 702, requires all public Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) to charge 'covered individuals' no more than the state resident rate for tuition and fees beginning July 2, 2015, or face disapproval of participation in Ch. 30 and Ch. 33 VA Education Benefits. Working closely with Florida Senate and House committee members, SB 7028 and HB 35 were drafted and have gone forward for committee review and consideration. In addition, Katherine Snyder, Florida Program Specialist and Chair of the National Association of State Approving Agencies' (NASAA) Flight Committee also provided input for HR 476, The GI Bill Education Quality Enhancement Act of 2015, a bill which is being reviewed by Congress and which addresses the role of SAAs, approval criteria and IHLs that have contracted with flight schools. SAA members presented information and fielded questions pertaining to aforementioned bills at the NASAA Mid-Winter Business Meeting in Washington, D.C., in February and at the Atlanta VA Regional Processing Office's School Certifying Official and VA/SAA Conference in Atlanta in March where over 800 school and VA/SAA officials were in attendance.

b. **Audits**

- No internal or external audits were finalized this quarter.

c. **Consultants**

- No new consultants were contracted, nor were any existing agreements changed this quarter.

d. **Contracts**

- Sims SVNH “Chiller Removal and Replacement” contract, with DMS as Project Agent, executed on 8/13/14. DMS activated “architect/engineering services” with McGinnis & Fleming Inc., on 9/26/14. DMS activation of “construction services” firm is pending as of 3/31/15.
- Lopez SVNH “Chiller Removal and Replacement” contract, with DMS as Project Agent, executed on 6/20/14. DMS activated “architect/engineering services” with TLC Engineering Inc. on 8/1/14. DMS activated “construction services” with Tappouni Mechanical Services on 3/26/15. Project underway.
- Lopez SVNH “2 new pavilions” contract, with DMS as Project Agent, executed on 3/5/15. DMS activation of “architect/engineering services” firm and “construction services” firm pending as of 3/31/15.
- Jenkins SVDH “Chiller Removal and Replacement” solicitation issued on 2/3/15. Bid opening performed on 3/31/15. Anticipated notice of intent to award on 4/14/15.
- Bennett SVNH “Nurse Call System” contract Change Order No. 5, with JSC Systems, executed on 2/23/15; extended contract completion date to 4/30/15 (due to required State/AHCA approvals).
- FDVA “Veterans Career Services and Promotion of State Residency” contract, with Florida is for Veterans, Inc., executed on 1/27/15.
- FDVA “New State Veterans’ Home” legislative appropriation provided on 7/1/14, with DMS as Project Agent. DMS “architect/engineering services” contract with Rogers, Lovelock, & Fritz Inc. executed on 10/20/14. DMS “construction services” contract with OHL-Arellano Construction Co. executed on 1/30/15. State/FDVA receipt of USDVA funding letter and USDVA Memorandum of Agreement pending as of 3/31/15.
- FDVA “Veterans Benefits Information System” solicitation revised and re-issued on 2/19/15. Response opening held on 3/13/15; response evaluation meeting on 3/27/15. Oral Presentations and system demonstrations to be held on 4/9/15. Anticipated notice of intent to award on 4/27/15.
- FDVA “Medicare/Medicaid Cost Reporting Services” solicitation, replacing contract w/Moore Stephens Lovelace P.A., issued on 3/17/15. Respondent proposals due by 4/28/15.
- FDVA annual certification of Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF), for fiscal year 2013-14, issued on 1/12/15.

e. **Leases**

- FDVA made no additions, alterations, or modifications to leased space this quarter.

f. **Lawsuits/Claims in Litigation or Settled this Quarter**

- **2 General Liability Claims** (0 new this quarter): 0 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 2 pending
- **2 Employment Liability Claims** (1 new this quarter): 0 won, 1 settled, 0 lost, 1 pending

g. **Donations**

Cash Donations by State Veterans' Home

FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER	Total, Year to Date
Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	\$1,014.27	\$521.01	0.00		\$1,535.28
Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	\$9,227.06	\$15,657.00	\$5,129.42		\$30,013.48
Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	\$1,000.00	\$20.00	\$1,900.00		\$2,920.00
Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	\$1,000.00	\$299.00	\$410.00		\$1,709.00
Sims SVNH, Panama City	\$1,000.00	\$200.62	\$585.00		\$1,785.62
Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	\$1,000.00	\$225.00	\$12.51		\$1,237.51
Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	\$1,000.00	\$275.00	\$1,375.00		\$2,650.00

Non-Cash Donations:

Jenkins State Domiciliary – Lake City

No Donations this quarter

Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home – Daytona Beach

Electric Mobility Scooter

Go-Go Elite Traveler \$929.00

Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home – Land O Lakes

Did not respond

Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home – Pembroke Pines

4-16" wide wheelchairs @ \$119.00 \$476.00

4-18" wide wheelchairs @ \$119.00 \$476.00

Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home – Panama City

Wheelchair – Drive transport chair \$143.82

Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home – Port Charlotte

Broda chair \$1,000.00

Hausmann Bariatric table \$3,266.00

50 folding chairs w/storage rack \$744.49

Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home – St Augustine

2- Gas grills Charbroil Advantage \$369.00 \$738.00

h. **Memberships in Professional Organizations Paid this Quarter**

St. Augustine 50-95-10 Health Planning \$900.00

2. Division of Benefits and Assistance: Statistics

- Summary of veterans' benefits derived vs. cost of the benefits staff: \$128:1 (ROI).

a. Bureau of Veterans' Claims

<i>EVENT 2014-2015</i>	<i>FIRST QUARTER</i>	<i>SECOND QUARTER</i>	<i>THIRD QUARTER</i>	<i>FOURTH QUARTER</i>	<i>YEAR TO DATE</i>	<i>PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.</i>
Retroactive compensation	\$36,770,963	\$29,067,865	\$39,184,611		\$105,023,439	\$138,121,275
Largest single retro. benefit	\$292,897	\$502,803	\$204,354		\$1,000,054	\$502,693
Debt relief	\$77,113	\$133,494	\$36,163		\$246,770	\$239,518
Notices of Disagreement	526	575	658		1,759	1,047
Statements of Argument in Appeals Cases*	179	241	415		835	941
Act as Representative at Hearings*	82	102	27		211	111
Veterans' Appeals Hearings*	55	111	237		403	162
Ratings Reviewed	10,039	8,500	8,116		26,655	24,548

* The appeals representation process includes formal filing of the appeal application, and paralegal representation with the veteran at the Regional Office and in teleconferences with the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA).

b. Bureau of State Approving for Veterans' Training (SAA)

<i>EVENT 2014-2015</i>	<i>FIRST QUARTER</i>	<i>SECOND QUARTER</i>	<i>THIRD QUARTER</i>	<i>FOURTH QUARTER</i>	<i>YEAR TO DATE</i>	<i>PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.</i>
SAA Programs Approved	3,671	2,551	1,467		7,689	6,757
Other Approval	778	649	594		2,021	1,375
Compliance Visits	40	28	29		97	89
Inspection Visits	12	13	6		31	27
Outreach Activities*	185	204	155		544	561
Liaison Activities**	183	142	248		573	643
Technical Assistance***	1,050	857	1,054		2,961	2,547

* Outreach Activities are any activity designed to inform or encourage those with entitlement to use it.

** Liaison activities are those that foster education about the SAA with other education and training professionals, which promote and encourage the exchange of information and support to raise awareness of the professional nature of the SAA approval function.

*** Technical assistance is any interaction designed to assist an individual or a facility with any aspect of the approval function.

c. Bureau of Veteran Field Services

EVENT 2014-2015	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE	PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.
Issue Resolution	5,304	4,790	6,132		16,226	15,375
Total Amount	\$14,627,699	\$14,284,148	\$16,435,695		\$45,347,542	\$41,877,024
Outreach Visits	198	180	182		560	459
Veterans Served at Outreach	15,365	13,153	9,522		38,040	33,196
Bedside Interviews	3,138	3,049	2,867		9,054	13,017
Walk-ins/ Counseling	33,060	31,164	34,929		99,153	100,298
Claims	8,310	7,685	8,044		24,039	20,386
Voter Regis/ Pref forms	3,060	2,893	2,551		8,504	7,708
Homeless Walk In	933	543	403		1,879	1,995
Ratings Reviewed Orlando/W Palm	260	146	81		487	2.127

d. Outreach*

EVENT 2014-2015	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE	PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.
Reintegration and Pre-Deployment Events for Guard and Reserve units	4	3	4		11	17
Homeless Veteran Stand Down Events	7	7	4		18	20
Medical Center Welcome Home events	0	0	1		1	6
Congressional Open House events	9	8	6		23	11
National Conferences	0	0	0		0	1
New Patient Orientation	67	35	30		132	127
Transition Assistance Briefings	10	8	11		29	20
Other	102	180	123		405	258

* Supervisors and VCEs throughout the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provide presentation, orientations, and briefings on state, federal, and local veterans' laws and benefits.

3. State Veterans' Homes Program

State Veterans' Homes Census

<i>FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015</i>	<i>FIRST QUARTER</i>	<i>SECOND QUARTER</i>	<i>THIRD QUARTER</i>	<i>FOURTH QUARTER</i>	<i>YEAR TO DATE</i>	<i>PREVIOUS FY, same 1/4</i>
Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	97.24%	97.72%	97.54%		97.50%	87.0%
Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	99.65%	98.70%	97.75%		98.70%	99.8%
Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	99.76%	99.63%	99.60%		99.66%	99.6%
Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	98.33%	97.45%	97.92%		97.90%	99.0%
Sims SVNH, Panama City	99.76%	99.88%	97.87%		99.83%	99.9%
Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	99.53%	98.70%	99.11%		99.11%	99.4%
Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	99.73%	99.90%	99.93%		99.85%	99.6%

a. Quality of Care:

Panama City has been chosen for the Gold Seal Award which recognizes nursing homes that demonstrate the highest standards of quality of life and care for their residents. They will receive a new facility license with the Gold Seal Emblem as well as a certificate signed by Gov. Scott. The Gold Seal Award will be in effect from July 1, 2014 thru June 30, 2016.

The Gold Seal Award program was established in 2002 and developed and implemented by the Governor's Panel on Excellence in Long-Term Care, which is composed of persons appointed by the Governor's Office, Agency for Health Care Administration, Department of Health, Department of Elder Affairs, Florida Association of Homes for the Aging, Florida Health Care Association, Florida Life Care Residents Association and the State Long Term-Care Ombudsman. Nursing homes that wish to be considered for the Gold Seal Award are reviewed by the panel, which considers the criteria below and makes recommendations to the Governor. Gold Seal recipients must be in operation a minimum of 30 months prior to the date of application and the facility must:

- Meet a quality of care scoring and ranking that places them in the top 10 percent in their region or top 15 percent in the state and be a 5-star facility in the Nursing Home Guide
- Have no Class I or II deficiencies within 30 months preceding application
- Provide evidence of financial soundness and stability
- Participate in a consumer satisfaction process involving residents, family members and guardians
- Involve families and members of the community in the facility on a regular basis
- Have a stable workforce
- Have an outstanding record with the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Council within the 30 months preceding application
- Provide targeted in-service training to meet training needs identified.

b. Occupancy Trends:

The third quarter data confirms that census levels are greater than 98% for FDVA skilled nursing homes with the average occupancy for the State of Florida at 87%. Florida has the third highest population of veterans' in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau data indicates that based on population figures, Florida has the highest number of elderly residents. This segment of the population will continue to increase because people born during the baby boom generation are beginning to retire. This trend of occupancy for FDVA nursing homes will likely continue as the State of Florida has a rapidly growing veteran population and the third largest population of disabled veterans in the nation.

c. State Veterans' Homes Program Renovations:

The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (FDVA) received a grant under the State Veterans Homes Construction Grant Program to design and install a Safe Resident Handling and Transfer System to accommodate residents in all six State Veterans' Nursing Homes throughout the state. Facilities with ceiling lifts have shown a reduction in patient falls; a marked reduction in workers' comp injuries to nursing staff and a higher retention of nursing staff. The total project cost estimate is \$6,158,173.00; the federal funding's cost at 65% is \$4,002,812.45.

d. Volunteer Services:

There are a number of registered volunteers in the State Veterans' Homes that provide invaluable services for our veteran residents. The multitude of hours that are contributed add to the quality of life for the residents as well as allow the skilled employees to attend to more complicated, professional level tasks associated with resident care.



Veteran Fletcher Cooper enjoys the St. Patty's Day music show



1950's party at Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home