



Veterans Affairs Committee Report Summary

This committee report is a record of what transpired and was accomplished during your time together at the USET meetings.

Impact Week Meeting

Joint Collaboration
Mid-Year Meeting

Annual Meeting

This Report is due the day before the last day of meetings, 5:00 pm in the USET office.

Tribal Nations represented _____7_____ Committee Members in attendance _____9_____

Topics Discussed Highlights from Meetings	Outcomes / Any Decisions Made* see directions below	Next Steps / Action Items / Responsible Party* see directions below
DAY 1 AM		
Honor Guard/Board of Directors meeting/Veterans Committee Introductions/OTGR National Update / TACR Update	Spoke on who each Federal rep was and what they offered to us. Veteran distinction on registration possibility.	Mike Cook and Bernice Jordan participated in Color Guard. With the registration of the USET meetings, possibly putting an identifier to include a Veteran distinction so we can better identify our TR. Tribal Advisory Committee Rep. Angela Pratt, NCAI co-chair, asked how we move forward with important topics and create resolutions. Gave multiple ways that NCAI runs their meetings and how beneficial it would be to use to continue to build the structure with our USET region. Mary Culley sent slides to BJ to send out.
Day 1 PM		
Veteran Death Benefits	Explained all the entitlements for veterans and dependents	James Saunders with the National Cemetery Admin spoke on the next level of what is coming within National Cemetery burials, the criteria, and the waitlist. There currently is a process for a Tribal Cemetery Grant, that many TN do not take advantage of. MC sent slides for BJ to send out.
Office of Tribal Health	Explained how the connect through culture was important for TH. Megabus was explained.	Mary Culley talked about how many Tribal citizens are not comfortable with going to an outside care facility because of the many cultural sensitivity pieces that make it difficult to communicate. Megabus Act amended to exempt Veterans who are Indian or urban Indian and from copayments. MC sent slides to BJ to send out.
American Indian/Alaska Native Co-pay Exemptions Legislation and proposed rule	Federal Register Notice on the Co-payment Exemption policy with public comment. Discussed what that meant and why its beneficial to us.	Travis Trueblood, talked about the Federal Register notice on the co-pay exception was extending for public comment. This needs to happen before Feb.13 th . Veterans committee thought it was very important to be heard, so each person will do a public comment. MC sent slides to BJ to send out.
Veterans Committee honored Veteran	Veteran Honored	Veterans committee, led my BJ presented Mr. Roland Poncho, Honoring Sergeant Floyd Poncho, Vietnam Veteran, who could no longer travel. Chief Francis presented Mr. Roland with a plaque and blanket.

Day 2 AM		
Tribal Veterans Rep Program	Explained the program and how to get involved with the Tribal National Service Organization	Attorney Shekeba Morrad, spoke on long she has been fighting for our Tribal Vets and how the Central Office stood up the first T-REP, Navajo Nation. Currently the only one in place. How to take the information back to get the USET region involved in their own T-REPS for processing claims, quickly. MC sent slides to BJ to send out.
PACT ACT and Burial services	PACT ACT criteria is priority for the next year for the VA claims process. Burial service resources and form links given	Julian Wright, talked on how the priority is set to expire on immediate wait times for veterans who meet the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics, this year. More presumptive issues added. MC sent slides to BJ to send out.
Mental Health Suicide prevention	Stats are taken from the CDC	Shared Veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any VA or non-va health care facility for free emergency health care. MC sent slides to BJ to send out.
DAY 2 PM		
Business Plan for next meeting		Planning on doing elections and discussions on color guard.

***Next Steps / Action Items / Responsible Party** (ie: Resolution for submission to Board [Draft resolutions submitted after the deadline are only eligible for consideration at the authorization of the USET SPF Executive Officers Committee (EOC) if: (1) the resolution addresses an emergency, an issue that was not known before the deadline, or for other good cause; and (2) the EOC, at its discretion, agrees to consider the resolution. Whenever possible, late resolutions will be directed to Committee(s) of Jurisdiction prior to USET SPF BOD consideration.]; consultation session scheduled; listening session in works; future/upcoming meetings to be aware of; comments / testimony required – SPF involvement; add to best practices, request special meeting; any motions carried, are there policy implications for USET SPF involvement, etc.)

Impact Week – Did you visit the HILL? Yes No

Annual Meeting – Did you Tour the Host Tribal Nation? Yes No

OTHER Business

Motion #1

A motion to elect Lisa Montgomery for Secretary was made by T.A. Wier and seconded by Mike Cook. All present voted in favor, and Lisa Montgomery was confirmed as the new Secretary.

Motion #2

A motion to elect Mike Cook for Chairperson was made by T.A. Wier and seconded by John Palmer. All present voted in favor, and Mike Cook was confirmed to continue serving as the Chairperson.

Motion #3

A motion to elect James Craig for Vice Chairperson was made by Lisa Montgomery and seconded by Mike Cook. All present voted in favor, and James Craig was confirmed as the new Vice Chairperson.

Next Meeting:

Tentatively the week of April 17-20, 2023 thru Zoom

Motion to adjourn was made at 3pm and was passed unanimously



*From left to right: James Craig, Mike Cook, John Palmer, T.A. Wier
Photo credit: Lisa Montgomery*

At A Glance Agenda Items
for Next Meeting

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Were Elections Held? YES NO

Chair Michael Cook, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

Vice Chair James Craig, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana

Secretary Lisa Montgomery, Penobscot Indian Nation

Date: 2/7/2023

Prepared by: Bernice Jordan

Committee met under the direction of Chairperson: Mike Cook