



## MILITARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE BOARD

Meeting Minutes  
November 10, 2016

### 1. Call to Order/Roll Call

A meeting of the Military Family Assistance Board (MFAB) was called to order by Secretary Joey Strickland, Chairman, on November 10, 2016, at 1:00pm. The meeting was held at the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs (LDVA) Administrative Office, 602 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA. After the pledge of allegiance was recited in unison, roll call was conducted by Charmagne Scott, Confidential Assistant. Eight of eleven members were present, establishing a quorum.

MFAB Members present: Secretary Joey Strickland, Representative Chris Hazel, Mr. Sammy Guillory, Ms. Sulanda Lonnelle, Col. Jona Hughes, Mr. John Broussard (State Treasurer designee); (Mrs.) Alex Juan, and Mr. Matt Farlow

LDVA Staff present: Homer Rodgers, Undersecretary; Charlie Dirks, Executive Counsel; English Josey, Internal Auditor; and Charmagne Scott, Confidential Assistant

Secretary Strickland briefly commented that Mr. Matt Farlow had been appointed to the MFAB by the Governor, replacing Mr. John Nolan, who had resigned from the LDVA.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the August 28, 2015; August 29, 2016; and September 20, 2016, meetings were presented for review and approval. Prior to a call for motion to approve, Col. Hughes commented that the pending documentation necessary to process the reimbursement of travel funds to the Army National Guard 1023<sup>rd</sup> Vertical Engineer Company (approved at the August 28, 2015, meeting) was finally being submitted. The requested amount of \$45,375.79 remained the same.

It was motioned by Representative Hazel, seconded by Mr. Broussard, to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2015; August 29, 2016; and September 20, 2016, meetings as presented. The motion passed.

### **3. Overview/Board Consideration of Applications Received in Excess of \$1500; Applications Not Related to Flood of 2016; and Applications Submitted after Deadline Date**

Prior to consideration of the referenced applications and in the absence of Mr. Al Leger, Third-Party Administrator, Ms. Juan gave a brief overview of funds expended to date for flood assistance. A total of \$267,950 has been approved; of that amount, \$213,150 has been paid.

The Members then considered and took action on the following applications:

Case #1. Applicant had previously been approved for the \$350 flood assistance payment; request submitted for additional financial assistance for moving expenses and repairs of mobile home. After review, the Members unanimously agreed that more documentation of moving cost estimates needs to be submitted before consideration is granted.

Case #2 (Non-Flood Related). Applicant requested assistance due to being homeless, jobless, and currently in drug addiction recovery. After review, the Members unanimously agreed to refer the applicant to Volunteers of America and the LA National Guard for possible assistance.

Case #3 (Non-Flood Related). Applicant requested \$2,920 to catch up on rent and daycare costs. Applicant receives VA disability compensation, is currently in school, and unable to work. Applicant was previously approved for the \$350 flood assistance payment.

It was motioned by Rep. Hazel, seconded by Col. Hughes, to approve the requested amount of \$2,920. The motion passed unanimously.

Case #4. Applicant requested assistance for miscellaneous household expenses totaling \$5,412.39. Applicant was previously approved for the \$350 flood assistance payment. After review, the Members unanimously agreed that more documentation was needed to support the requested amount before consideration is granted. It was also recommended the applicant be referred to the Louisiana Workforce Commission for possible assistance, and the Third-Party Administrator should find out if the applicant currently receives VA benefits.

Case #5. Applicant requested assistance for payment of house note, stating flood activation caused a loss of main income and created a hardship. No documentation was submitted to support the request. The Members unanimously agreed to refer the applicant to the LA National Guard for review and possible assistance through services offered by the Guard.

Case #6. Applicant requested \$9,250 due to flooding that completely destroyed home. The Members unanimously approved the maximum payment of \$350 for flood assistance.

Case #7. Applicant requested \$2,500-\$3,000 to catch up on rent, car, and utilities payments; applicant claimed payments fell behind due to loss of shared income from roommate. The Members unanimously agreed to refer this application to the LA National Guard for further review.

Case #8. Applicant requested \$15,000 to convert bathroom to handicap accessible and complete other home repairs as a result of flood damage. It was noted that FEMA had provided assistance with damages from the flood.

It was motioned by Mr. Broussard, seconded by Ms. Lonnette, to approve the maximum payment of \$350 for flood assistance; and refer the applicant to the Disabled American Veterans for possible assistance. The motion unanimously passed.

Case #9. Applicant, an 80 year old veteran with Parkinson's disease, requested approximately \$4,719.50 to repair deteriorating floors in home. A bid quoting labor and material costs was submitted to support the request.

It was motioned by Rep. Hazel, seconded by Ms. Lonnette, to approve the amount of \$4,719.50 as requested. The motion unanimously passed.

Case #10. Applicant requested \$8,000 for assistance with repairs to home due to flood damage. It was noted that applicant was approved by FEMA for assistance with home repairs.

It was motioned by Mr. Guillory, seconded by Ms. Lonnette, to approve the maximum payment of \$350 for flood assistance. The motion unanimously passed.

Ms. Juan reported that 10 flood-related applications had been submitted after the deadline date (October 17, 2016) that was approved by the board.

It was motioned by Rep. Hazel, seconded by Mr. Guillory, that applications for flood assistance submitted after October 17, 2016, be denied. The motion unanimously passed.

#### **4. Other Matters**

There was a brief discussion of ideas to raise monies for the MFA Fund due to an increase of need-based applications and anticipated National Guard travel requests. The main source remains donated funds via the income tax return check off. Secretary Strickland stated he would like fund-raising proposals that would provide a consistent flow of revenue.

The next MFA Board meeting was tentatively scheduled for December 15, 2016, at the LDVA Administrative Office.

## **5. Adjournment**

There being no further business to be brought before the MFA Board, the meeting adjourned at 2:20pm.

*Minutes submitted by: Charmagne Scott, Confidential Assistant*

*\*Copies of all handouts referenced in the minutes are available upon request.*

**//Minutes approved by the Military Family Assistance Board at its December 15, 2016, meeting.**