

Report on Boards & Commissions

Department: Arkansas Department of Veterans' Affairs

Secretary: Secretary Nate Todd

The purpose of this report is 1) prompt an analysis of the Boards & Commissions in your Department and to identify efficiency (cost savings) and effectiveness (better results) opportunities and 2) to propose and develop to deliver efficiency and effectiveness improvements.

Boards & Commissions Project Proposal

- 1.1. List all boards, commissions, etc. within your department.
 - Transformation had no material effect on ADVA's boards and commissions structure.
 - ADVA is accountable to one commission: the Arkansas Veterans' Commission (the Commission) consisting of 15 appointed individuals from throughout the State.
- 1.2. What state resources support each board, commission, etc.? What is the total cost associated with each board, commission, etc. broken down by general revenue and by all other sources?
 - In FY19, the Commission cost \$4,614.76 in general revenue funding.
 - In FY20, ADVA has allocated \$15,000 in general revenue funding for the Commission, however, we expect the end-of-year cost to be comparable to that in FY19.
- 1.3. What are the key results, outcomes, performance indicators and/or success measures for each board, commission, etc.?
 - Continuous Communication and Robust Oversight: ADVA will only be successful to the extent that it consistently seeks input and oversight from the Commission for the benefit of the States' veterans. To this end, ADVA meets face-to-face with the Commission quarterly and briefs the Commission on ongoing operations, opportunities for improvement, and demonstrated successes. As an example of how seriously ADVA views the importance of the commission, our most recent Commissioners' meeting was on January 17, 2020. At this meeting, ADVA briefed the Commission on the progress of the Arkansas State Veterans' Cemetery expansion at North Little Rock. One commissioner took a vocal interest in the vehicle fleet at the cemetery and, within a week, ADVA arranged for the commissioner to come to the cemetery for a brief and tour.
 - Financial Health: ADVA recognizes it derives large portions of its funding from revenues generated at its two Veterans' Homes and two Veterans' Cemeteries. With cemetery expansion, fluctuating resident acuity, and an evolving landscape of federal law, the financial situation at ADVA has been and will continue to be dynamic. Regular and transparent dialogue with the Commission is more important now than ever to ensure ADVA meets the Governor's expectation of efficient and effective State government practices.
 - Quality of Care: The singular core of ADVA's ethos is that we provide the most effective level of care to Arkansas' veterans. This focus transcends our three statutory mandates: operation of our two Veterans' Homes, operation of our Veterans' Cemeteries, and representing veterans through our District and County Veteran Service Officers. The Commission's collective concern for Arkansas' veterans ensures not only that ADVA remains steadfast and tenacious in meeting the Governor's and the taxpayers' expectations, but also that we are shaping the agency to provide the same level of care for the next generation of veterans and their loved ones.
- 1.4. After a thorough analysis of boards, commissions, etc. within your department, identify key opportunities you would propose for more effective operations, improved services, and/or efficiencies.
 - This Fall, ADVA will begin a deliberate and thorough strategic assessment of the agency. The last formal assessment of this type was conducted under Director Matt Snead in 2016. The assessment will result in a five-year, strategic plan for ADVA.
 - I have directed my Chief of Staff and Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Austin Booth, to lead this effort. A critical opportunity for ADVA will be the presentation of the proposed strategic plan to the Commission at our meeting in the Spring of 2021.

1.5. Identify any obstacles to the implementation of these proposals.

- The chief obstacle in renewing the five-year, strategic plan for ADVA will be ensuring the plan is as comprehensive as it is useful and capable of implementing.

1.6. What would be key action steps for these proposals?

- The only way to ensure ADVA's five-year, strategic plan is both comprehensive and actionable is to seek input and participation for a plurality of stakeholders throughout the State, to include not only a diversity of perspective, but also guidance from those responsible for implementing the plan itself.

Additional thoughts/comments: