

**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (ADVA)**  
**Commissioner's Goals**  
**Quarterly Meeting of State Board of Veterans Affairs**  
**July 9, 2021**

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**Commissioner's General Intent Going Forward**

- I have 1 1/2 years left in my term as Commissioner.
  - My first year was largely externally focused (i.e., building external relationships/partnerships).
  - My second year shifted to an internal focus (i.e., improving business/personnel efficiency of ADVA).
  - The past year has unfortunately and overwhelmingly continued to be dominated by COVID-19.
  - This third year I will increasingly focus on Veterans well-being issues.
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**Goal #1: Continue to improve customer service to Veterans and well-being of ADVA employees**

- Chick-fil-A training on building a corporate culture of customer service
  - Continue overall professional development of employees
    - Expanded use of technology (WebEx, Microsoft Teams)
    - All-hands live conference anticipated next year
  - Web-based electronic application process for Dependent Scholarship Program and State Veterans Homes
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**Goal #2: Taking care of Veterans in immediate crisis**

- Veteran Suicides
- Veteran Homelessness
- Opioid and other addictions
- General mental health issues (PTSD, TBI, etc.)
- How?
  - New “Programs Manager for Veteran Well-Being”
  - Revitalized AlaVetNet
  - Collaboration with new 988 system

- Public Service Announcements
- Partnerships/Community Veterans Engagement Boards (CVEBs)

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**Goal #3: Taking care of those Veterans with long-term needs**

- Moving ahead vigorously with fifth veterans home
- Addressing potentially controversial issues such as past toxic exposures of servicemembers ... now Veterans

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**Goal #4: Taking care of Veterans/Families in Veterans' final resting place**

- Cemetery Expansion
  - NCA inspection in December 2021
  - Acceleration of Master Plan
  - 100% VA Grant Funded. Grant Request Submitted – Awaiting funding approval
  - 2,762 traditional site, 800 in-ground urn sites, 960 columbarium niches, and 100 memorial wall plaques
  - Estimated completion end of 2023
  - Simultaneous shift to contract services on some topics (e.g., headstone placement/alignment, chemical lawn treatments)

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**Goal #5: Long-range strategic planning**

- May need future SBVA approval/assistance as we modernize Information Technology (e.g., computer hardware, more efficient software packages, video capabilities)
- Long-term plans for major non-IT purchases (e.g., vehicles, cemetery equipment, etc.)
- Continue strategic budgeting process