

**OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 31, 2025, 8:30 A.M.
VEZEY VETERANS COMPLEX
2132 NE 36TH STREET
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73111**

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING:

The Oklahoma Veterans Commission held a Regular Meeting on Friday, January 31, 2025, at 8:30 a.m., at the Vezev Veterans Complex, 2132 NE 36th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73111. An Amended Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on January 14, 2025. The agenda of this meeting was also properly posted at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to this meeting pursuant to the provisions of Title 25 O.S. § 311.

AGENDA:

CHAIRMAN BRETT MARTIN:

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

II. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A. ROLL CALL

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll. The roll was taken as follows:

Commissioner Allen –Present

Commissioner Ellington – Present

Commissioner Martin – Present

Commissioner Mutchler - Present

Commissioner Offel – Absent

Commissioner Orr – Present

Commissioner Perry – Present

The Clerk notified Chairman Martin that 6 Commissioners were present.

B. DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The Chair declared that a quorum was present. Also present were Legal Counsel for the Oklahoma Veterans Commission, John M. O'Connor and General Counsel for the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs and the Oklahoma Veterans Commission, John M. Settle.

III. VERIFICATION OF PROPER NOTICE OF MEETING AND POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The Clerk verified proper notice and posting of the agenda.

IV. INVOCATION

Commissioner Ellington led the Invocation.

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Perry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VI. INTRODUCTION OF ODVA STAFF AND WELCOME TO VISITORS AND GUESTS.

Chairman Martin welcomed all visitors and guests to the Commission meeting and asked if anyone would like to introduce themselves to the Commission. Visitors in attendance were Curtis Bond, Disabled American Veterans and Micheal McNutt, representing the online news site “Non Doc”. The Chairman acknowledged and welcomed the visitors and guests.

VII. BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 1, 2024, OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING.

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any discussion.

There was no discussion.

Commissioner Ellington made the motion to approve the November 1, 2024, meeting minutes.

Commissioner Orr seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Commissioner Allen – Aye

Commissioner Ellington – Aye

Commissioner Martin – Aye

Commissioner Mutchler - Aye

Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Chairman Martin declared the motion passed.

B. REPORTS WITH DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. CHAIRMAN BRETT MARTIN:

Chairman Martin gave update on the Oklahoma Veterans Advisory Forum (OVAF). Chairman Martin discussed the mission of the forum would be to provide advice and guidance on implementing state policies to the OVC and the ODVA addressing the challenges faced by veterans in Oklahoma. Also discussed is the vision of the OVAF to serve as a unifying body to bring together veterans of our state, focus on non-profit programs, providing a platform to be collaborative in nature, and give veterans a chance to share their views and concerns. Meetings would take place quarterly at ODVA Central Office and attended by a member

of the OVC Executive Committee, ODVA General Counsel, and ODVA Executive Director.

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any discussion. There was discussion regarding different veterans advisory groups, boards, and councils and developing conduits for communication and feedback.

Commissioner Ellington made the motion to establish the Oklahoma Veterans Advisory Forum, that the first meeting be scheduled for the last week in March 2025, and an Agenda outlining details.

Commissioner Allen seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Commissioner Allen – Aye

Commissioner Ellington – Aye

Commissioner Martin – Aye

Commissioner Mutchler - Aye

Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Chairman Martin declared the motion passed.

Chairman Martin advised the Commission that the Suicide Task Force 2024 Report has been finalized, sent to Senator Rosino, and presented the final report to the Commission. The Report includes a three-point plan for mental health and suicide prevention. Point 1 – Enhanced resource ability, accessibility, and navigation; Point 2 – Provide Oklahoma with unique resources; Point 3 – Enhanced outreach and communication. Chairman Martin stated the three-point plan will enhance outreach, strengthen mental health services, and foster meaningful partnerships to reduce the rate of veteran suicide in Oklahoma.

C. REPORTS WITH DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. OKLAHOMA SECRETARY OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, JOHNATHAN NASH, REPORT AND DISCUSSION REGARDING:

Secretary Nash reported on legislation that will be discussed in the coming session. Legislation regarding benefits for surviving spouses in Oklahoma. In the State of Oklahoma, a number of veteran benefits end with the life of the veteran. Secretary Nash reported some of those benefits are federal, but the state benefits issue will be taken into hearings and interim studies. Secretary Nash spoke to Senator Stanley's legislative bill regarding state jurisdiction over federal military installations for certain crimes, specifically sexual assault crimes. Secretary Nash also reported on a number of militia bills introduced on

the House side that are being coordinated with the Governor's office and the National Guard.

2. ODVA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ADMIRAL JAY BYNUM, REPORT AND DISCUSSION REGARDING:

Director Bynum reported on his travel this quarter which included visiting the Ardmore and Sulphur Homes.

Director Bynum reported on the ODVA Budget Meeting and Hearing with Legislators. The legislature was briefed on the ODVA Veterans Homes and that there are two institutional types of homes, the older homes which were inherited buildings that were converted, and the homes that were purpose built. Of the three oldest homes, the average age of the buildings inherited is 104 years old. Directory Bynum discussed the life cycle cost to maintain those homes is significant. Director Bynum also discussed ODVA budget request for FY26 and ODVA's goal to match delivery with our aspirations to be the destination of choice for the nation for veterans and their families. Director Bynum addressed ODVA request for \$23 million increase from the past, as the costs of care in the homes over the past five years have risen by 66%.

3. SHAWN KIRKLAND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, REPORTS, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

Deputy Director Kirkland reported on the Union Soldiers Cemetery and the previous plans to expand. Deputy Director Kirkland stated Union Soldiers Cemetery was established in 1919, with the first burial in 1921, and was under the US Military Department since 1953. In 2022 legislation was passed to place the cemetery with ODVA. Once ODVA received the cemetery records from the military department it became apparent the records were incomplete. Upon review of the records, ODVA determined there are 213 burial space with remains present and possibly 32 burial spaces that may or may not have remains. The records also indicate burial spaces were switched, some burial spaces are unmarked, and there may be unknown remains buried. The previous Director, Admiral Slavonic, made the decision to not move forward with expansion. Deputy Director Kirkland stated that ODVA is currently exploring a preservation plan and will provide an update at the next OVC meeting.

4. LISA A. WHITE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, REPORTS, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

Lisa White reported on FY24 overview, revenue stream, funding stream, and total revenue for FY24. Ms. White also reported on category cost breakdown at each of the veterans homes.

5. NISHA YOUNG, CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATOR, REPORTS, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

Nisha Young gave an update on the Sallisaw Veterans Home construction progress which is 95% complete. The Sallisaw Veterans Home dedication ceremony is scheduled for February 21, 2025.

Ms. Young requested the Oklahoma Veterans Commission Ratify the Change Orders and Emergency Declarations made since the last Oklahoma Veterans Commission meeting, pursuant to and in accordance with Title 61 O.S. § 130 (B) and (F). Ms. Young further reported that in compliance with Title 61 Okl.St. Ann. § 130 (G), the Office of Management and Enterprise Services was notified by letter of the factual details which described the Emergency situations which existed at each of the State Veterans Homes and required payment of the invoices presented.

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any discussion. There was no discussion.

Commissioner Allen made the motion to approve a Request for Ratification of the Change Orders and Emergency Declarations.
Commissioner Mutchler seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Commissioner Allen – Aye

Commissioner Ellington – Aye

Commissioner Martin – Aye

Commissioner Mutchler - Aye

Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Chairman Martin declared the motion passed.

6. LISA ACEVEDO, WOMEN VETERANS PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON, REPORTS, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

Ms. Acevedo reported on SB 530, which would create the Oklahoma Veterans Foundation and allow the Oklahoma Veterans Commission to incorporate the proposed foundation as a 501(c) organization, placing limits on voting membership and requiring the foundation's financials to be available for audit.

Ms. Acevedo also reported on SB 723, which would amend 72 O.S. 63.18, changing the words “unclassified” and “classified” to align with the passage of the Civil Service and Human Capital Modernization Act of 2020.

VIII. ODVA RULEMAKING HEARING FOR FY25, CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE PROPOSED FY25 ODVA RULE CHANGES:

1. CHAIRMAN BRETT MARTIN: Suspended the OVC Meeting to take up the ODVA Rulemaking Hearing. The ODVA Rule Making Hearing was opening by Chairman Martin at 09:39, Friday, January 31, 2025, and the agenda below was followed;

- i. Announcement of publication of Notice of Public Hearing regarding proposed ODVA Rules to be amended (Rules), pursuant to Oklahoma law;
- ii. Description of purpose of this Public Hearing and listing of ODVA Rules proposed to be amended;
- iii. Discussion of all written comments received, if any;
- iv. Discussion of all telephone calls received, if any;
- v. Introduction of all members of the public who have appeared to comment and presentation of each public member's comments regarding any of the proposed Rule changes;
- vi. Discussion and possible action by the Oklahoma Veterans Commission members to; either adopt the amendment of the Rules as proposed, adopt the amendment of the Rules but with changes to any of those Rules, or abandon the proposed amendment of the Rules.

There were no members of the public that appeared to make any public comments. The ODVA Rule Making Hearing was adjourned by Chairman Martin at 09:44, Friday, January 31, 2025, to allow the OVC Meeting to continue.

Chairman Martin took up the proposed ODVA Rules to be amended through the Rulemaking process. General Counsel John Settle requested that if the commissioners intended to consider adopting any of the changes proposed, that any motion made would identify either the original changes proposed in Version 1, or the changes proposed in Version 2 of the materials included in the commission materials packet which was shared during the meeting with the meeting attendees. Settle further commented that the changes proposed in Version 2 included a few additional grammatical and spelling corrections which were missing from the changes proposed in Version 1 of the meeting packet materials.

There was no discussion.

Commissioner Allen made the motion to adopt ODVA Permanent Rule Changes Version 2.

Commissioner Ellington seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Commissioner Allen – Aye

Commissioner Ellington – Aye

Commissioner Martin – Aye

Commissioner Mutchler - Aye

Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.
Chairman Martin declared the motion passed.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

X. OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

May 9, 2025, 10:00AM
Sallisaw Veterans Home
2243 S. Kerr Boulevard
Sallisaw, OK 74955

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any discussion.

There was no discussion.

Commissioner Ellington made the motion to approve the next ODVA regular meeting date and time.

Commissioner Mutchler seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Commissioner Allen – Aye

Commissioner Ellington – Aye

Commissioner Martin – Aye

Commissioner Mutchler - Aye

Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Chairman Martin declared the motion passed.

XI. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ADJOURNMENT.

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any discussion.

There was no discussion.

Commissioner Ellington made the motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Allen seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin declared the meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.



OKLAHOMA

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING:

The Oklahoma Veterans Commission will hold a regular meeting on Friday, January 31, 2025, at 8:30 AM at the Vezey Veterans Complex, 2132 NE 36th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73111. Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on November 4, 2024. The Agenda of this meeting was also properly posted at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to this meeting pursuant to the provisions of Title 25 O.S. § 311.



Veterans Advisory Forum (OVAF) on Veterans Programming

Mission:

The Oklahoma Veterans Advisory Forum (OVAF) provides advice and recommendations to the Oklahoma Veterans Commission (OVC) and the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) on solutions and policy alternatives addressing the challenges faced by veterans in the state of Oklahoma.

Vision:

The OVAF serves as a unifying body to bring together veterans-focused nonprofit programs across Oklahoma. It provides a platform for collaborative discussions on veterans' issues and identifies actionable solutions. The OVAF works in partnership with the ODVA, the OVC, and the newly established State of Oklahoma Veterans Foundation to:

- Enhance services and outcomes for veterans and their families,
- Offer advice and guidance on implementing state policies affecting veterans, and
- Act as a channel for identifying and addressing emerging issues within the veterans' community, ensuring they are brought to the attention of the OVC and the ODVA Executive Director.
- Membership is free – no dues

Meeting Schedule:

The OVAF will convene quarterly at the ODVA Headquarters, located at 2132 Northeast 36th Street in Oklahoma City.

Mandatory Attendees:

Quarterly meetings will be attended by, at a minimum:

- A member of the OVC Executive Committee,
- The ODVA Chief Counsel, and
- The ODVA Executive Director or their designated representative.

Nonprofit organizations serving Oklahoma's veteran community are encouraged to attend and participate actively.

Agenda for First Meeting

1. Call to Order

2. Introductions

3. Discussion of OVAF Purpose

- Address the historical challenges of divisive politics and inter-organizational conflicts within the veterans' nonprofit sector.
- Promote collaboration and a unified approach among veterans-serving organizations to better serve Oklahoma veterans and their families.

4. Open Forum for Input

- Invite attendees to share insights, challenges, and recommendations.

5. Discussion of Next Steps

- Outline action plans and priorities for the forum moving forward.

6. Scheduling of Next Meeting

7. Adjourn Agenda



Lisa A. White
Chief Financial Officer

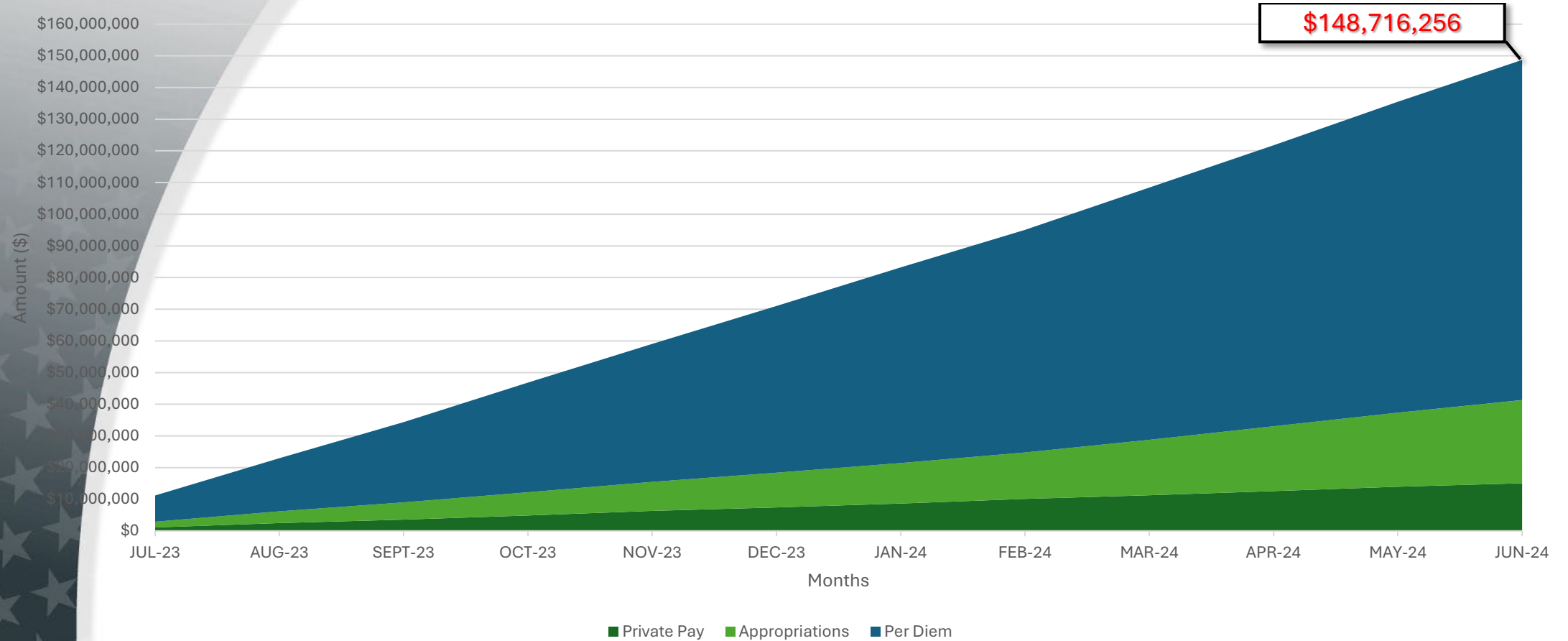


LISA A. WHITE, ODVA CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, REPORT WITH
POSSIBLE DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING:

- FY24 State Veterans Home Overview



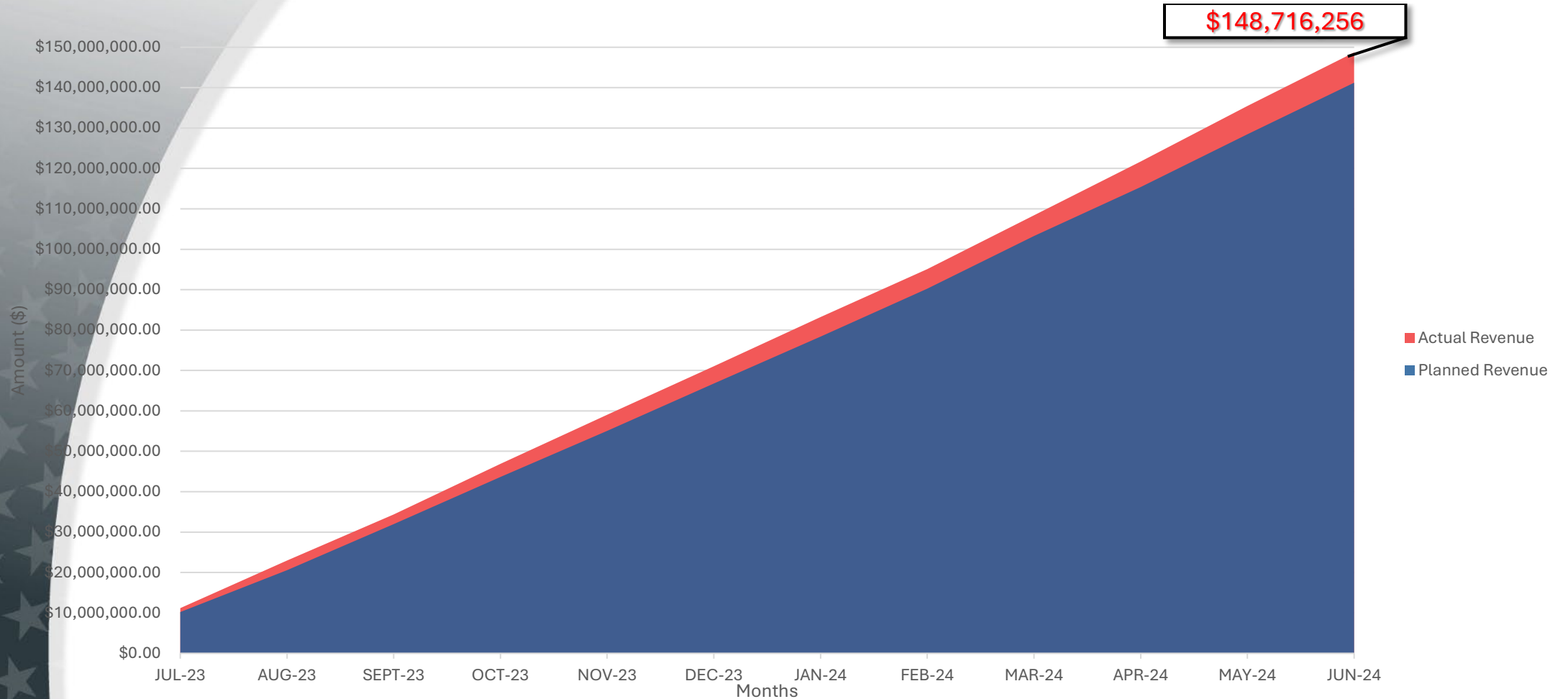
FY24 Total State Veterans Home Revenue





OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

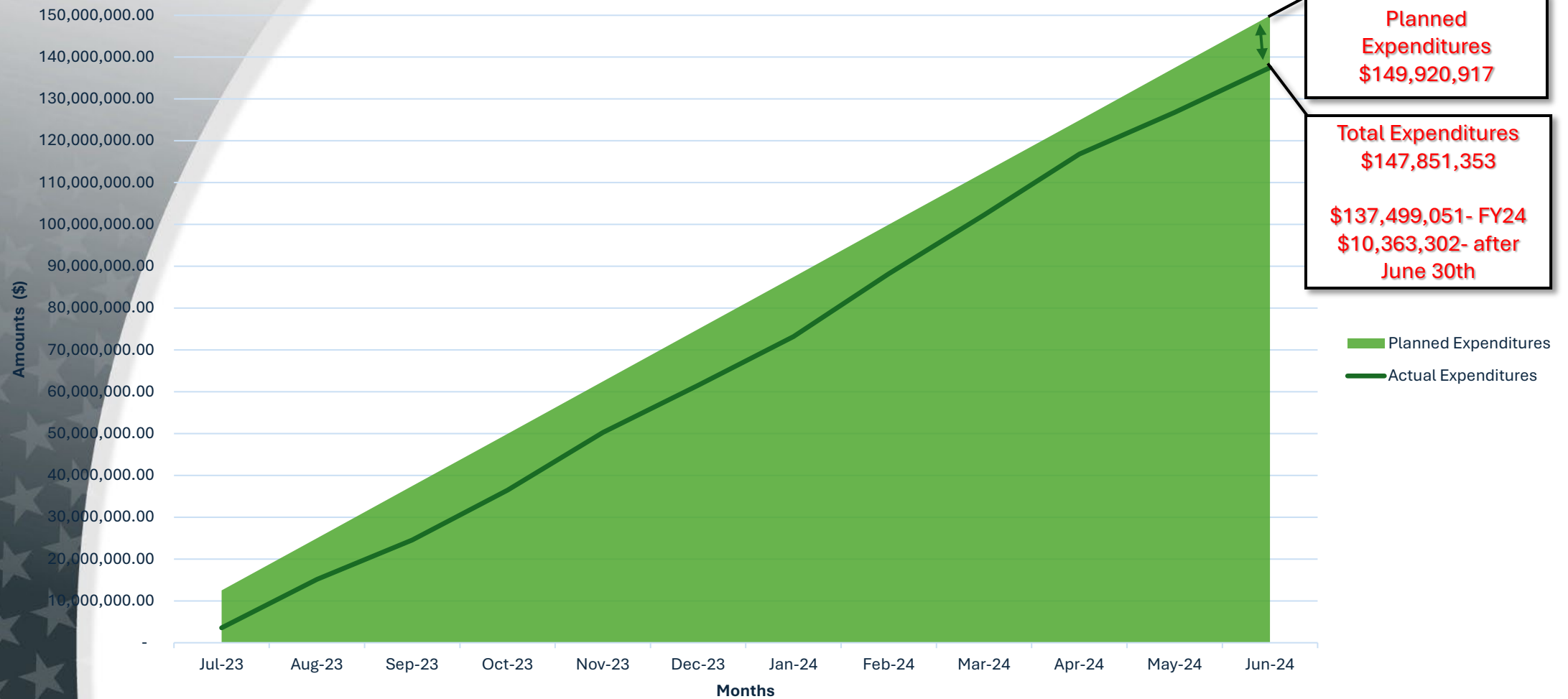
Planned Revenue vs Actual





OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

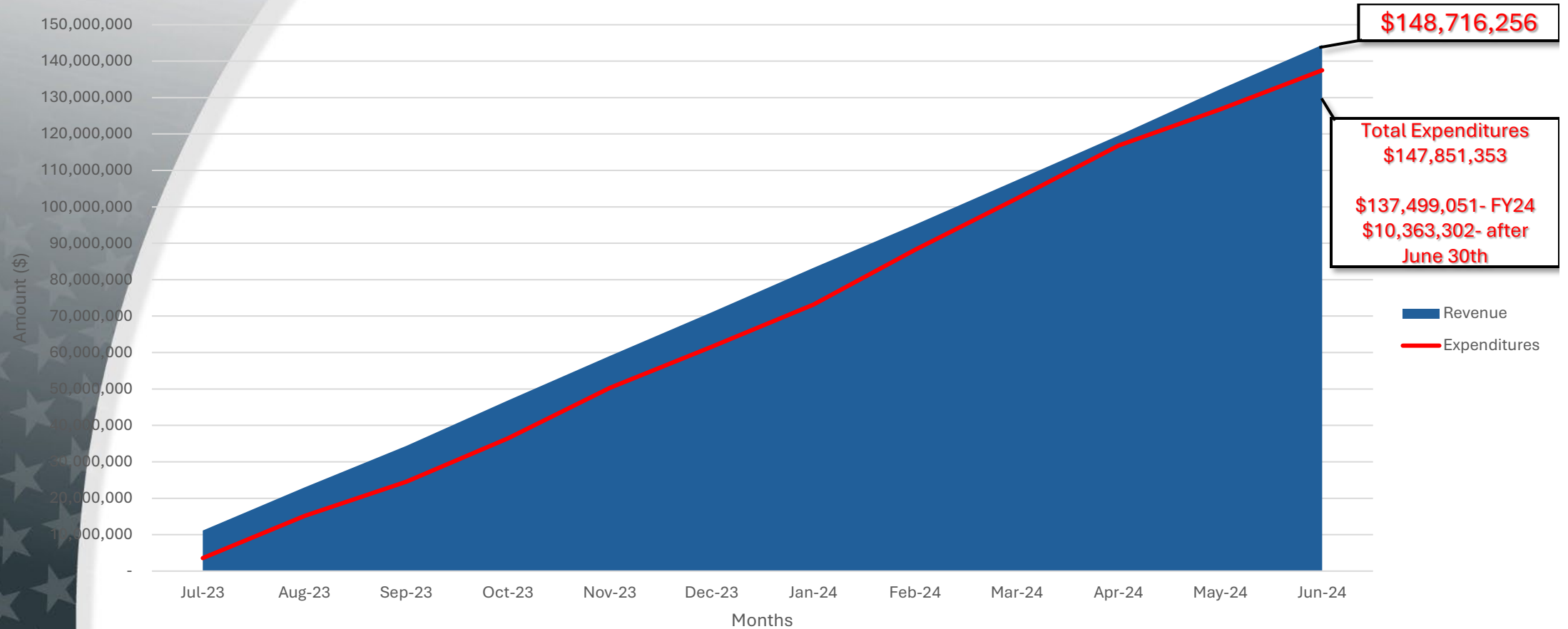
Planned vs Actual Expenditures



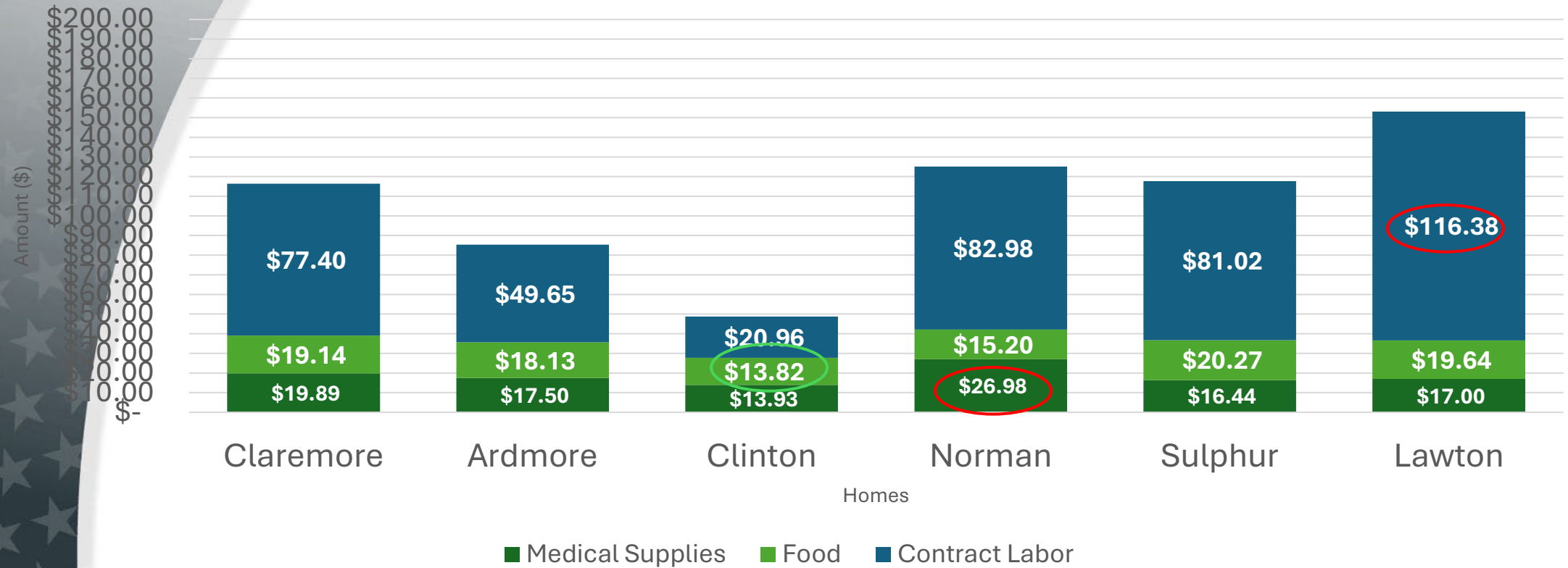


OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

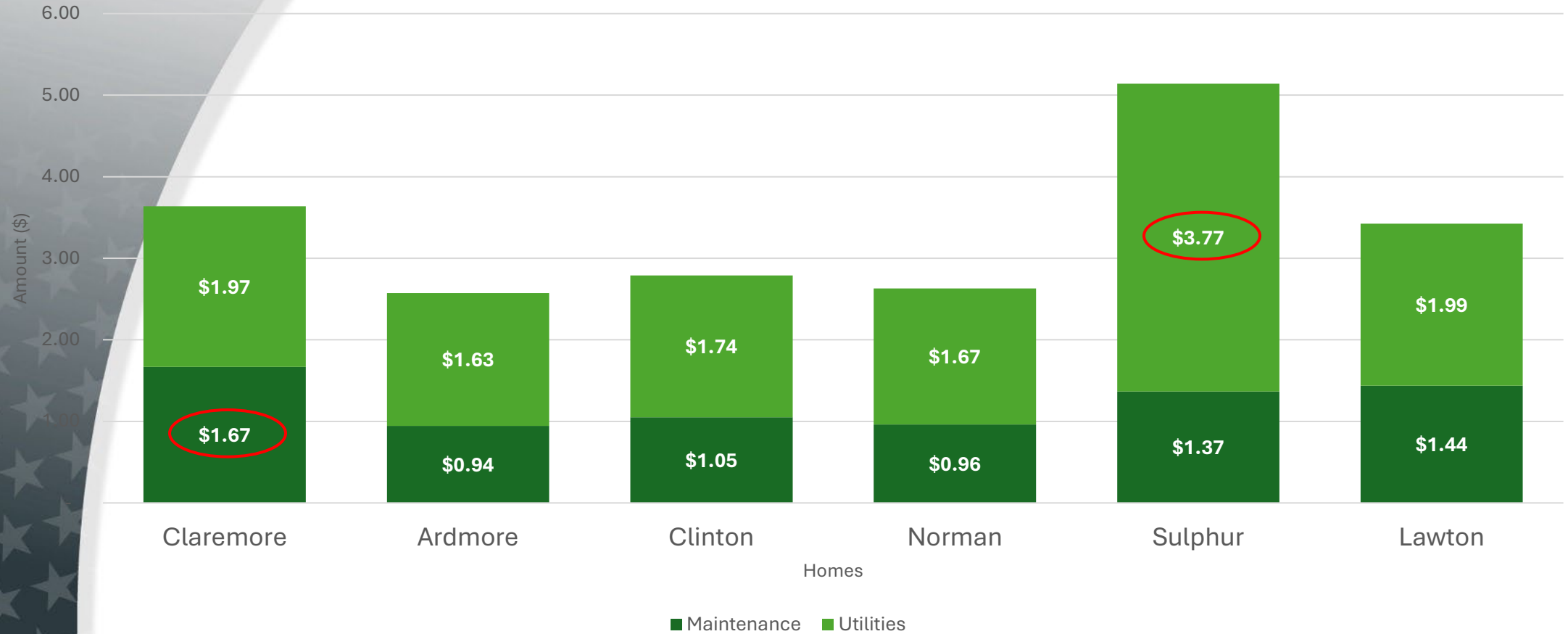
Revenue vs Expenditures



Direct Care Cost per Resident



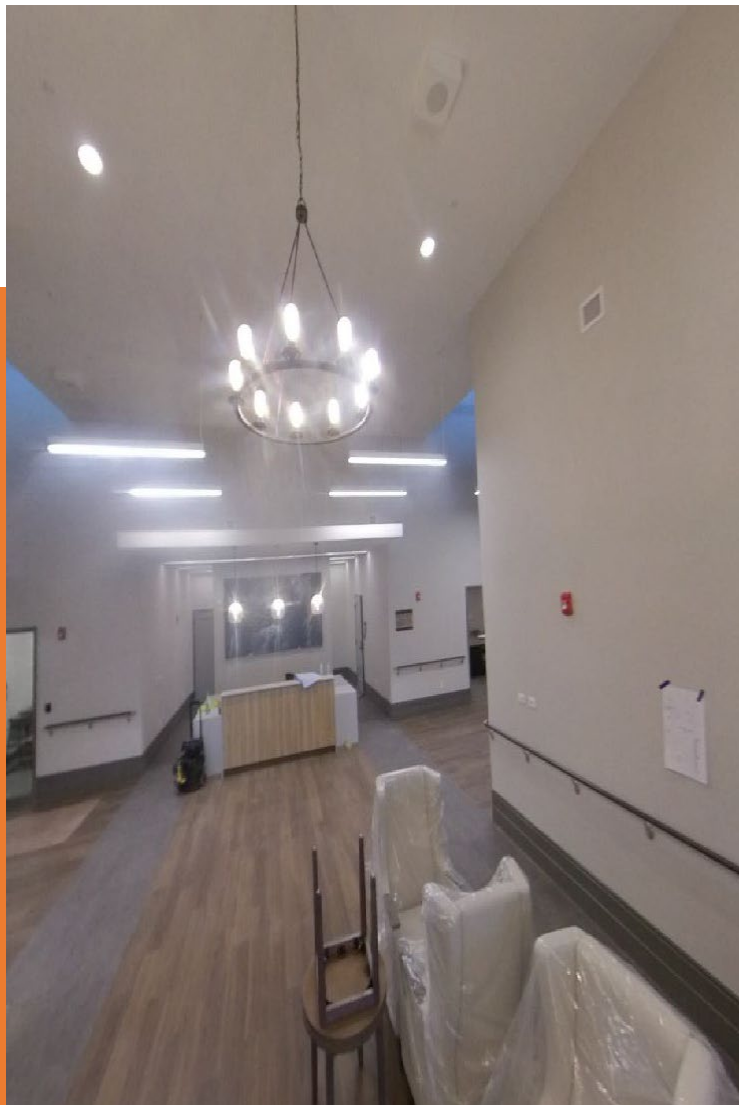
Facility Cost per Square Foot





ODVA Construction Update

As of Wednesday, January 15, 2025



Sallisaw Veteran Home

FAI: 40-062: 175- Bed Replacement

CAP#19273 CM

\$77,000,000.00 (+\$21,726,939.00 Emergency)

- The Sallisaw project is approximately 95% complete, with around \$82 million of the total \$90 million construction budget expended.
- Substantial completion is scheduled for the end of January 2025, with final project completion expected in February 2025, pending oxygen tank installation.
- Buildings 100, 300, and 400 were turned over prior to December 24, 2024. The remaining building is scheduled for punch list inspections on January 24, 2025, weather permitting.
- Furniture installation has been completed in all buildings except Building 200, which is scheduled for installation on January 27, 2025.
- The Oklahoma State Fire Marshal is set to inspect the facility on January 24, 2025, for the issuance of a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO), allowing the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) to begin staff training in Buildings 100, 300, and 400.
- IT equipment is expected to arrive before the facility opens. Artwork and other facility décor installation are ongoing.
- The facility's dedication ceremony will be held on Friday, February 21, 2025, at 10:00 AM, with the first resident admissions scheduled for March 1, 2025.

Interior Photos



Questions????



ODVA Legislative Liaison



Lisa M. Acevedo, MPA

Email: Lisa.Acevedo@odva.ok.gov

Office: (405) 522-8075

Cell: (405) 431-8625





OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

Called to Serve