

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

The Regular Quarterly Meeting of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs Meeting  
Wednesday, July 10, 2013 beginning at 10:00 a.m.  
Iowa Gold Star Military Museum  
7105 - NW 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Johnston, IA 50313-1824

**Present:** Todd Jacobus, Chair  
Dan Gannon  
Becky Dirks Haugsted  
Kate Myers  
Darlene McMartin  
Larry Spencer  
Bill Wallace  
Jon Wille  
Mickey Williams

**Staff:** Robert King, Executive Director, IDVA  
Mari Mielke, IDVA - Recording Secretary  
Jodi Tymeson, COO, IVH

Dave Worley, Commandant, IVH  
Michael Hines, Admin. Asst. IVH  
Steve Prall, IVH

**Guests/  
Presenters:** Mitch Holmes, Cass County VA  
Jon Schneider, IPVA  
Sue Rich, Washington County VA  
Gary Boseneiler, Johnson County VA  
Valerie Buckingham, Iowa City VAMC  
Susan Martens, Ashford University  
Becky Beach, Puppy Jake Foundation  
Renee Jetter, Puppy Jake Foundation  
Michele Mustain, Cong. Latham's Office  
Billie Israel, Iowa DNR  
Lisa Whitmarsh Peterson, Ft. DSM Museum  
A. Bornstein, MD, Fidelis Telehealth  
Dr. Mitchell, Medical Director of Fidelis Services  
Ed Schloeman, Fidelis Services Group  
David Thornburg, DAV Commander  
Dave Bolton, DAV

David Lamb  
Elizabeth Ledvina, Tama County VA  
Patricia Hamann, Cedar County VA  
Ron Langel, American Legion  
Dwayne Rider, Des Moines VAMC  
Julie Simon, IA Senate Demo. Staff  
Ed Cox, Farmer Veteran Coalition  
Aaron McKay, Sen. Grassley's Office  
Amy Beller, Sen. Harkin's Office  
Jerry Yellin, Spirit of 45 Day  
Erin Mitchell, Fidelis Telehealth  
Merrye Schindler, Esq., Fidelis Tele.

John Whitaker, USDA/FSA  
Colin Tadlock, IA House Rep. Staff  
Brett McLain, Story County VA

**NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE 'UNAPPROVED' UNTIL ACCEPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT THE NEXT MEETING.**

**APPROVED:**



Todd Jacobus, Chair, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

Date: 18 Sep 2013

Jacobus Notes from ICVA Meeting  
July 10, 2013 10:00 am – 1:40 pm  
Iowa Gold Star Military Museum  
Building 3692 (A09)  
Camp Dodge, Johnston, Iowa 50131

1. Meeting began at 10:00 am with Pledge of Allegiance, followed by Moment of Silence – “Please consider the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War, the 600,000 Americans who gave their lives in its cause, including 13,000 Iowans. Also, remember Colonel Paul Ladd, United States Marine Corps, Retired, who was the Boone County Director of Veterans Affairs, and was killed while riding his bicycle on Monday, June 24, 2013, near Boone”.

2. Handouts during meeting.

- a. #1 – Request & Proposal for Korean War Monument at Iowa Veterans Cemetery – Mr. Ron Langel
- b. #2 – Korean War Memorial Fund Drive Donation Slip – Mr. Ron Langel
- c. #3 – Iowa Battle Flags Flyer from State Historical Society – Mr. David Lamb
- d. #4 – Minutes from July 9, 2013, ICVA Scheduled Meeting with Fidelity Resources – Mr. Todd Jacobus
- e. #5 – Puppy Jake Foundation flyer – Ms. Becky Beach
- f. #6 – “The Farmer Veteran Coalition of Iowa” flyer – Mr. Ed Cox
- g. #7 – Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs Executive Director Written Report – Mr. Robert King
- h. #8 – Department of Veterans Affairs Updated Telephone Listing – Mr. Robert King
- i. #9 – “Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs Code of Conduct and Work Rules” – Ms. Jodi Tymeson
- j. #10 – “ICVA Notice of Intended Action” – Ms. Jodi Tymeson
- k. #11 – Letter dated October 12, 2012, summarizing meeting with IVH Leaders – Mr. Todd Jacobus
- l. #12 – Agreed Upon Talking Points for State Senate Veterans Affairs Committee relating to the Iowa Veterans Home – Mr. Todd Jacobus
- m. #13 – Mr. Jacobus Notes dated May 6, 2013, from Special Meeting of State Senate Veterans Affairs Committee relating to the Iowa Veterans Home – Mr. Todd Jacobus
- n. #14 – Draft Meeting minutes, Sen. Daryl Beall, Committee Secretary Ms. Erica Shannon Stueve, dated May 7, 2013, from Special Meeting of State Senate Veterans Affairs Committee relating to the Iowa Veterans Home – Mr. Todd Jacobus
- o. #15 – Official meeting minutes, Sen. Daryl Beall, Committee Secretary Erica Stueve, dated May 9, 2013, from Special Meeting of State Senate Veterans Affairs Committee relating to the Iowa Veterans Home – Mr. Todd Jacobus
- p. #16 – Letter to Iowa Court Administrator (David Boyd) Regarding Disability Compensation Calculation of Family Support – Mr. Todd Jacobus
- q. #17 – Listing of Organizations, Agencies & Departments with Oversight of Iowa Veterans Home – Mr. Todd Jacobus

r. #18 – Memorial in Seoul to US Forces Killed in Korea POST Armistice, Yongson Garrison, Seoul, South Korea – Mr. Todd Jacobus

s. #19 – Roster of ICVA Commissioners – Ms. Mari Mielke

t. #20 – Program for Installation of Terri Beer as Director of the Des Moines VA Central Iowa Regional Office – Mr. Todd Jacobus

u. #21 – Letter dated May 1, 2013, to Veterans Organizations Regarding Iowa state Fair Veterans Parade – Ms. Mari Mielke

v. #22 – Iowa Department of Transportation Press Release dated June 27, 2013, Veterans Can Now Have “Veteran” Added to DL or ID Cards AT ANY TIME – Mr. Todd Jacobus

w. #23 – Approved Uses of FY14 State Legislature Allocation for County VSOs – Ms. Darlene McMartin

3. Valerie Buckingham, Public Information Officer for the VA Medical Center in Iowa City, made a presentation.

Valerie Buckingham, Public Affairs Coordinator, Iowa City Health Care System (VAMC), (319) 339-7104, valerie.buckingham@va.gov, 601 Highway 6 West, Iowa City, Iowa 52246-2208

a. Mr. Barry Sharp, Director of the Iowa City VAMC, will retire in January 2014.

b. IC VAMC opened a new ambulatory service center last month, and it is an incredible facility. Please stop by to visit.

c. Design plans for the parking ramp continue to be developed and staffed.

d. Design plans for the new operating room continue to be developed and staffed.

e. The Community Based Out-Patient Clinic (CBOC) in Galesburg, Illinois should open in September 2013.

f. The CBOCs in Dubuque and Bettendorf are exceeding their capacity due to high use by Veterans in those areas. Therefore, IC VAMC is staffing alternative locations in these areas where they can expand their operations.

g. All CBOCs have certified dieticians on staff now; this is a first.

h. It takes 32 days to schedule a compensation and pension examination at the IC VAMC. Wait times for these is decreasing.

i. Mr. Sharp conducts period focus groups with our Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation New Dawn Veterans. His last meeting was on 24 Jun 2013, where he met with six veterans and their families. He received very positive feedback on their treatment by the VA Staff there.

4. Duane Rider, Public Information Officer for the Des Moines VA Medical Center (VA Central Iowa Health Care System VACIHCS), made a presentation.

Dwayne Rider, Public Affairs Officer, VA Central Iowa Health Care System, 3600 30th Street |Des Moines, Iowa 50310, (515) 699-5588, dwayne.rider@va.gov

a. Duane indicated that Terri Beer, Director of the Des Moines VA Regional Office, is unable to be at the meeting today, but asked Duane to inform the Commission that Ryan Dixon is the new Public Affairs Officer for the Des Moines VA Regional Office.

b. The VA CIHCS has completed interviews for Don Cooper's position as Director of the VAMC. Waiting for announcement on who was selected.

c. Construction at the Des Moines campus is on-going. The facility there will be VERY nice in a few years. We will see more streamlined parking, more technological opportunities for our Veterans / patients, and better working conditions.

d. Last week, the Polk County Emergency Management Team conducted scenario training at the VACIHCS. Very good training.

e. Please like "VA Central Iowa" on Facebook.

5. Question by Darlene McMartin – A Veteran in Pottawattamie County received a letter on 1 July 2013, telling him that he had a compensation and pension examination scheduled at the VA Medical Center on 4 July 2013. This Veteran, who suffers from Post Traumatic Stress, was quite alarmed about being notified of an appointment on a Federal Holiday only three days in advance of the scheduled appointment. The Veteran resides 70 miles away from the VA Facility. QUESTION – Who is responsible for setting up these appointments? In this case it appears that it was a Contractor of the VA which set up the appointment. And, the appointment DID in fact take place on the Federal Holiday. Valerie Buckingham and Dwayne Rider indicated that they would both really like to get more details on this situation, and will definitely ask that more guidance is provided to their contractors in the future.

6. Mr. Ron Langel provided an overview on the Korean War Memorial that has been proposed for the Iowa Veterans Cemetery.

Mr. Ron Langel, Vietnam Veterans of America, American Legion, rlangel@thefortress.net, (712) 830-1683

a. Mr. Langel indicated that the during the 3 April 2013 meeting, the Commission approved everything with the exception of the language inscribed on the monument. A motion was passed to approve the language as presented by edited by the Committee since last meeting. This will read as follows (HANDOUT #1):

KOREA

THE FORGOTTEN WAR

DEDICATED TO ALL VETERANS  
WHO HELPED TO SECURE AND  
MAINTAIN PEACE IN KOREA FROM  
JUNE 25, 1950 TO THE PRESENT DAY

SEPT. 1, 2013

ARMY

MARINES

NAVY

AIR FORCE

COAST GUARD

b. On 14 Sep there will be an open house at the Van Meter American Legion Post. A flyer will provide details.

c. Mr. Langel received a call from a member of the Korean - American Society, saying that this organization wants to recognize ALL Korean War Veterans, who have not already been recognized, with a Korean War Service medallion. More details will be published on this once they become available.

d. Mr. Langel also distributed a flyer asking for considerations of donations to the Korean War Memorial (HANDOUT #2)

7. Mr. David Lamb, Military Historian / Archaeologist, made a presentation on Iowa Battle Flags. (HANDOUT #3)

David M. Lamb, 6350 NW 106<sup>th</sup> Street # 315, Johnston, IA 50131, Home: (515) 986-4825, [digger1@q.com](mailto:digger1@q.com), | 1/Lt. David M. Lamb, Commanding, The Governor's Own Iowa Rifles, Company "A" 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry

a. Mr. Lamb informed the group that he grew up in Des Moines, Iowa, and recalls very vividly visiting the State Capital and seeing the Iowa Battle Flags encased in the rotunda in very poor conditions. These flags continued to deteriorate significantly.

b. There are a total of 329 flags - 265 of which were carried by Iowans during the American Civil War. So much defines what we are as a Nation is connected to this War.

c. For last 13 years, a group has endeavored to restore and maintain these flags for appreciation by future generations. We continue to add to the collection.

d. The point of contact is Sheila Hanke, who is the State Historical Preservation Specialist working for the Department of Cultural Affairs.

e. Mr. Lamb indicated that the first book on the American Civil War was published only 93 short days after the guns fell silent. The Civil War ended 59,213 days ago today, and ONE book about the Civil War has been published EACH DAY since that time.

f. Iowa contributed 33 Regiments, each consisting of approximately 1,000 Soldiers, to the Siege of Vicksburg, which commenced on 22 May 1863, and ended on 4 July 1863.

g. In all, Iowa sent 48 regiments of Infantry, 9 regiments of Cavalry and 4 batteries of Artillery (a total of 76,543 men) or roughly 1.25 of every 2 who might have been eligible to serve. Over a period of 25 months, between 21 April 1861 (muster of the 1<sup>st</sup> Iowa Infantry) and 22 May 1863 (beginning of the Vicksburg Siege), Iowa mobilized, equipped, trained, and deployed over 30,000 Soldiers. Remarkable!

h. Iowans received more medals of honor, 28, than any other State in the Union, only surpassed by soldiers from Canada in this category.

i. Please learn more about Iowa's history in the Civil War at this web site: <http://www.iowavalor.gov>.

j. Since 2009, the Mr. Lamb, and his team from the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, have restored the first monument emplaced in Iowa after the Civil War - near Eddyville.

k. The average Infantryman WALKED 3,800 miles during the American Civil War.

l. This organization raised \$300,000 to restore the Iowa monument at Vicksburg, and this was dedicated in May 2013, during Memorial Day programs there. Mr. Lamb is working to raise another \$100,000 to restore other monuments.

8. Presentation to the ICVA by Fidelity Resources. (Official ICVA Meeting was scheduled with Fidelis Resources for Tuesday evening, July 9, 2013, minutes for that meeting distributed via email (HANDOUT #4)

Edward Schloeman, CMSgt (ret) NYANG, President, Fidelis Services, 59 East 2nd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11218, Office: (718) 436-0021, Cell: (917) 826-8497, ESchloeman@aol.com, www.fidelisservices.net, www.operationwarriorwellness.org

a. Initial comments were made by Mr. Ed Schloeman, Partner with Fidelity Resources. Mr. Schloeman indicated that he is a Vietnam Veteran of the USMC, and retired New York National Guardsman. Mr. Schloeman has become involved in a partnership with Operation Warrior Wellness and the David Lynch Foundation in the area of transcendental meditation. Through this partnership met Mr. Jerry Yellin. Mr. Schloeman wants to bring Tele-Health - to the World! Fidelis has a working knowledge of our Veterans Community, and wants to build a partnership here in Iowa.

b. Dr. Eric Mitchell is a retired U.S. Army Colonel, who is also a Partner with Fidelity Resources. Dr. Mitchell became involved with tele-health initially while assigned duties in Haiti back in 1994. More recently, he has used tele-health while assigned in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait. He is working to bolster tele-health capability in our civilian communities, where it can help Veterans. Dr. Mitchell is not looking for a money, and he is not looking for a job.

c. Dr. Mitchell is looking for a PARTNERSHIP. He believes that Fidelity Resources have a product that will increase Veterans' access to care. Tele-health is PROVEN. As of this time, 18 States have approved legislation to pay for care provided via tele-health, and another 17 States will soon have it.

d. There is a need for legislative leadership! We need to go after tele-health funds.

e. Dr. Abe Bornstein, also a Partner with Fidelity Resources, was working on implementing tele-medicine at Cornell University Medical Center. Those efforts resulted in a new facility in Qatar. Dr. Bornstein wants to use his skills and expertise to help Veterans, as he believes that it is simply unacceptable that a Veteran takes own life every 65 seconds. Dr. Bornstein indicated that their team would be honored to work with us.

f. Dr. Bornstein indicated that Fidelis Resources envisions opportunities to actually SAVE the US Department of Veterans Affairs funds. Dr. Bornstein understands the economics and intends on studying this and publishing results.

g. Question by Ms. Elizabeth Ledvina - Is Fidelity Resources coordinating these efforts through VA?

Answer by Mr. Ed Schloeman - Not very well currently. Mr. Schloeman indicated that coordinating this type of effort through the VA is very difficult. He believes that we can implement a system here in Iowa within a few months. Fidelity Resources is NOT looking to by-pass the VA, but instead is looking to keep them informed of progress. Mr. Schloeman indicated that Congressman Thompson of Pennsylvania and Congressman Rangel of New York have agreed to take tele-health to Capitol Hill soon.

h. Commissioner Dan Gannon suggested that this group consider presenting to the State Legislature in January 2014. Mr. Schloeman suggested that we will have this fielded by Jan 2014. Keep in mind that 39 States are already fighting for existing federal funds to execute this.

i. Ms. Amy Beller suggested that Fidelity Resources communicate with Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), as he will be interested in learning more about this.

j. Valerie Buckingham of the Iowa City VA Medical Center reported that components of Tele-Health have existed within the VA system for over a decade. While this technology does not exist in EVERY clinic, the VA IS working to achieve that objective. Ms. Buckingham indicated that tele-mental health has been VERY successful. And, tele-medicine has been successful, as well, within the VA System.

k. Dr. Bornstein suggested that the numbers of Veterans who have PTS needs simply overwhelm the VA system, and that the VA needs to engage with industry to help get existing resources to our Veterans Community.

9. Mr. Jerry Yellin made a presentation to the Commission on the Spirit of 45. He started his comments by saying that he first came to this Commission one year ago almost to the day to speak about Transcendental Meditation, and the great value-added for Veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress. Mr. Yellin commented on the great progress that we've seen across the State of Iowa in providing assistance to Veterans in learning TM. Mr. Yellin indicated that he is here this morning to speak about the "Spirit of 45".

Jerry Yellin, National Spokesman, Spirit of 45, 1612 Dogwood Drive, Fairfield, IA 52556, (641) 209-8886, jerryellin@gmail.com, www.jerryellin.com

a. Mr. Yellin is not an Iowa native; he is an Iowan by CHOICE. By chance he flew during World War II for over three years with FOUR Iowans, including Tom McCullough of Sac City, Bob Rosenberry of either Cedar Falls or Cedar Rapids, Bob Rubey of either Cedar Falls or Cedar Rapids, and Al Sharron of Waterloo, who was killed on July 8, 1945, while flying a P51.

b. Mr. Yellin was appointed National Spokesman for the "Spirit of 45", and that he was the Grand Marshal of the Spirit of the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, DC, where he proudly wore the uniform of a World War II Aviator, which was loaned to him by the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum. Mr. Yellin indicated that he very proudly is the Spokesman for this organization, as he is quite passionate about his representing 16,000,000 Americans who served in uniform during World War II.

c. Senator Lautenberg, Senator Inouye, and Senator Collins sponsored legislation to establish the second Sunday in August as the "Spirit of 45 Day".

d. Mr. Yellin, Mr. Bob King (IDVA Executive Director), and Mr. Todd Jacobus (ICVA Chairperson) met with Governor Branstad, and the Governor's policy advisor, Mr. Ted Stopulos on 26 June 2013. While at this meeting, Mr. Yellin provided an overview of the "Spirit of 45", and asked the Governor to sign on as a supporter of the organization. He informed the group that Governor Branstad was very enthusiastic about this. Further, Mr. Yellin indicated that Governor Branstad committed to signing a decree establishing the second Sunday in August as "Spirit of 45 Day" here in Iowa. And, Governor Branstad also indicated that he will encourage the Joint Assembly to sign a similar decree in January 2014.

e. The USS Iowa was significant in World War II; it was President Roosevelt's personal ship during the War. The USS Iowa has become the West Coast Headquarters of the Spirit of 45 Campaign. On 10 August 2013, there will be a fund raiser on the USS Iowa to make the ship handicapped accessible.

f. Missing from the USS Iowa are photographs of those who served on-board. Mr. Yellin indicated that the Spirit of 45 is currently developing a plan to collect, and is asking for help in collecting these photographs. Jerry can be reached at: jerryellin@gmail.com

g. 2015 will be the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ending of World War II. Congressman Bruce Braley is developing legislation to recognize the sacrifices of our World War II Veterans.

h. The Spirit of 45 organization is inviting the public to submit photos of WWII veterans from their community so they can be included in a "Wall of Honor" that is displayed each year in August during the annual "Tribute to the Greatest Generation." at the National World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. All photos submitted to the "Wall of Honor" project will automatically become part of the digital archive that Fold3.com is creating for the families of the 16.5 million Americans who served in uniform during WWII. Details on this is available at their web site: [http://www.spiritof45.org/wwii\\_wall\\_of\\_honor\\_project0.aspx](http://www.spiritof45.org/wwii_wall_of_honor_project0.aspx)

10. Ms. Becky Beach presented an overview of the Puppy Jake Foundation.

Becky Beach, President, Service Dog Handler, 4020 John Lynde Road, Des Moines, IA 50312, beckysbeach@aol.com

a. This foundation was established by Becky Beach and Jeff Lamberti earlier this year. And, they have raised close to \$100,000 so far and would like to raise \$250,000 in the first year to develop the very best in terms of service dogs for our Veterans. Web site: <http://puppyjakefoundation.com/>

b. Ms. Beach's grandfathers, father, uncles, and husband all served in the military. Providing a service to our Veterans through this Foundation is a great passion!

c. The Puppy Jake Foundation is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization dedicated to helping military veterans through the assistance of well-bred and highly trained service dogs. Additionally, the Puppy Jake Foundation will focus and provide resources for the advocacy and awareness, as well as the acceptability and convenience in public, for those that require the assistance of a service dog. The Foundation is based in Des Moines, IA.

d. They have established a relationship with the Iowa Veterans Home, and are working to expand that to include the Des Moines and Iowa City VA Medical Centers. During visits the dogs in training get used to working around Veterans and the Veterans get the opportunity to interact with these incredible animals.

e. The Foundation is working to become accredited through "Assistance Dog International". No organization in Iowa has this accreditation, and it requires a very high level of training in order to get the accreditation.

f. The quality of dog is very, very important. The Foundation invests a great deal of time in both selecting the right dog, and training that dog to be the highest quality of service dog possible in an animal. Our Veterans need the very best in terms of quality. If the dog is not absolutely fully-functional as a service dog, then they become even more of a burden to the Veteran.

g. At this point, the Foundation is interested in making sure that the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs knows that their organization exists, and to maintain communication with them. They are available to speak to organizations about the Puppy Jake Foundation and would like us to help them with other groups to be aware of their organization. Help get the name out there.

h. Ms. Beach anticipates their first dogs to be placed in the Fall 2014.

i. Please 'like' the "Puppy Jake Foundation" on Facebook.

j. A handout providing an overview of the Foundation was distributed. (HANDOUT #5)

11. Mr. Ed Cox provided an overview of the Farmer Veteran Coalition of Iowa. He was joined by John Whitaker, State Executive Director of the Iowa Farm Service Agency.

Ed Cox, Farmer Veteran Coalition of Iowa, 601 Emma Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50315, (515) 271-2205, [Edward.cox@drake.edu](mailto:Edward.cox@drake.edu).

John R. Whitaker, State Executive Director, Iowa Farm Service Agency, (515) 331-8480, [john.whitaker@ia.usda.gov](mailto:john.whitaker@ia.usda.gov)

a. Mr. Cox distributed a tri-fold flyer titled "The Farmer Veteran Coalition of Iowa" (HANDOUT #6)

b. Rural America is critically important to the United States Armed Forces. While only 17% of Americans call rural America Home, 40% of the United States Armed Forces is comprised of service members who have backgrounds in rural America.

c. Of concern is that there are THREE times the number of farmers that are over the age of 55 than there are farmers under the age of 35.

d. Mr. Whitaker indicated that the placement ratio of Veterans into farming has been very low. Further, if we plan on continuing food production, we need to generate interest in farming. Food security is a significant issue. We need young people, including Veterans, to see farming as a potential career field.

e. Veterans leave the military with a regimen of purpose and innovation. That is exactly what we need in farming.

f. There "Farm Equipment Exchange and Donation" (FEED) Program has existed for a few years. This year, three Iowa Veterans will receive farming equipment through a \$250,000 grant.

g. The Farmer Veteran Coalition does not want to only provide equipment. Rather, they are launching a "return to farm" program, which ensures that these new or returning farmers have a comprehensive approach to synchronize their entire farming operation. This is more of a mentorship program.

h. The Farmer Veteran Coalition is working with Easter Seals to ensure that equipment supports the disabilities of Veterans, as needed.

i. More than anything, the Farmer Veteran Coalition wants to strengthen the link between the Agricultural and Veteran communities. There is a great deal of support from the Agricultural Community in Iowa today, but there seems to be a lack of connectedness to our Veterans, and we need to figure out how to strengthen those bonds so that our Veterans are aware of the programs and resources available to them.

j. The Farmer Veteran Coalition of Iowa wants to serve as a conduit of information about opportunities in farming for Veterans.

k. During the discussion there was an agreement that the Coalition needs to communicate with the Iowa State Extension, which they are already doing, and the County Veterans Service Offices in each of our 99 Counties. While our County Directors and Administrators of Veterans Affairs may not know all of the Veterans in their respective counties, they certainly have the ability to reach out and connect with them as well as anyone. Todd Jacobus committed to getting the contact information for County Directors to the Coalition.

12. There was a discussion about our County Directors of Veterans Affairs losing their membership in the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC). This Association is a private, nonprofit corporation. Members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. ISAC's mission is to promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa. ISAC's vision is to be the principal, authoritative source of representation, information and services for and about county government in Iowa. Ms. McMartin indicated that County Veteran Service Officers fell under the umbrella of one of the 15 associations affiliated with ISAC. However, that is no longer the case. All agreed that it would seem like value added to ISAC, and Iowa Veterans, if our 99 County Directors, all of whom are certified by the National Association of County Veterans Services Office, to be a part of the organization.

13. Ms. Billie Israel and Mr. Todd Robertson provided an overview of Kayaking opportunities for Veterans with disabilities.

Billie Israel, Kayaking for Veterans, [patistra@childserve.org](mailto:patistra@childserve.org)

Todd Robertson, River Programs Coordinator, State of Iowa Department of Natural Resources,  
[todd.robertson@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:todd.robertson@dnr.iowa.gov), (515) 979-9538

John Wenck, Water Trails Coordinator, State of Iowa Department of Natural Resources, [john.wenck@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:john.wenck@dnr.iowa.gov),  
(515) 281-8085

a. Ms. Israel began by stating that the National TEE Tournament in Iowa City provides legally blind and eligible disabled veterans' opportunities to develop new skills and strengthen their self-esteem through adaptive golf and

bowling events. There have been initiatives in Johnson County to get disabled veterans into Iowa waterways into Kayaks and canoes. The problem has been locating veterans who are interested in participating.

b. Mr. Robertson – There are 18,000 miles of rivers in the State of Iowa. Mr. John Wenck is the State of Iowa Water Trails Coordinator. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources has seen great development of kayaking programs in Johnson County, and sees no reason that this should not expand even further. Mr. Robertson contacted 10 County Conservation Boards, and each of them very quickly indicated that they would be interested in supporting this sort of initiative in their respective counties.

c. The challenge that the Iowa DNR and the respective County Conservation Boards are having is identifying disabled Veterans who are interested in kayaking and canoeing.

d. The group asked that a contact listing be sent to them that would provide them with contacts in each County through whom they can engage for levels of interest. Todd Jacobus indicated that he would send the listing of the County Directors and Administrators of Veterans Affairs to the Iowa DNR.

e. There are grants available to modify boat ramps, and access points to our waterways which will make it easier to get handicapped citizens to the water's edge. Mr. Robertson and Mr. Wenck are aware of these grants and would be great points of contact on this.

14. Mr. Robert King is the new Executive Director of the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, and began his duties on 28 May 2013. Bob King presented a written report (HANDOUT #7) to the Commission. In addition, he distributed the new telephone listing for the Department. (HANDOUT #8)

15. Mr. David Worley, Commandant of the Iowa Veterans Home provided an overview of operations there.

David G Worley, Commandant, Iowa Veterans Home, 1301 Summit St., Marshalltown, IA 50158, Work: (641) 753-4307, David.Worley@ivh.state.ia.us

Jodi S. Tymeson, Chief Operating Officer, Iowa Veterans Home, 1301 Summit St., Marshalltown, IA 50158, Work: (641) 844-6358, jodi.tymeson@ivh.state.ia.us

David Prall, Financial Services Administrator, 1301 Summit St., Marshalltown, IA 50158, Work: (641) 844-6359, steve.prall@ivh.state.ia.us

a. Introduced Jodi Tymeson as the new Chief Operating Officer; and, Steve Prall, the new Financial Services Division Administrator for the Iowa Veterans Home.

b. Census as of today, 10 July 2013, is 603 total residents, including 498 in nursing level care, and 105 in domiciliary level care.

c. Submitted a budget request to I-GOV for \$8,025,000, which was a status quo request. I-GOV approved \$7,525,000. Budget at this point is \$1,600,000 in the black.

d. House File 544 passed. The Commandant no longer is required to have a Nursing Home Administrator license. However, the Commandant must be a Veteran.

e. The Iowa Veterans Home is among the four largest nursing homes in Nation.

f. Received \$26,000,000 in federal funds to renovate Dack and Malloy Residence Halls. Currently under full renovation of the North tower of Malloy; this project should take 12 months. Once complete, will renovate the South tower, which will take another 12 months. Once complete, will begin renovation of Dack.

g. There was a brief discussion on the future of Loftus and Scheeler Halls. Further, there are opportunities for more residential construction at the Iowa Veterans Home; do we want to pursue that? This is a discussion that will need to take place.

h. The guest speaker on Memorial Day at the Iowa Veterans Home was Command Sergeant Major Rachel Fails. She did an outstanding job.

i. CPT Richard Kresser, an Iowa Native, and Iowa State University graduate, will be running the entire 406 miles of RAGBRAI. He will be raising funds for mental health initiatives at the Iowa Veterans Home. Individuals interested in donating can do so at <http://www.runningfarther.com/>.

j. "Pillars of Iron", which is a miniature display of the World War II Memorial in Washington DC, will be on display at the Malloy LRC on Sunday 14 July 2013.

k. Update on the resident population at the Iowa Veterans Home.

(1) On **1 July 2012**, there were a total of **620** residents at the Iowa Veterans Home, including 516 residents in nursing level care, and 104 residents in domiciliary level care. On **30 Jun 2013**, there were 606 total residents at the Iowa Veterans Home, including 501 (15 fewer) residents in nursing level care, and 104 (same number) of residents in domiciliary level care. **THERE IS NO WAITING LIST!**

(2) If there is someone who needs a bed in a secure unit, then they may need to wait a week or so before being admitted.

(3) There have been **THREE** residents involuntarily discharged from the Iowa Veterans Home. One was discharged because they refused to pay their bill, even though they had the funds to do so. One was discharged due to recurring violent acts. One was discharged for repeatedly smoking inside their residence.

(4) Anyone involuntarily discharged gets a discharge plan. No one is involuntarily discharged without a plan.

(5) There were a total of 23 discharges from the Iowa Veterans Home between 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013. Of those, 23 residents were in nursing level care, and 7 were in domiciliary level care.

(6) There were a total of 133 deaths between 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013. This included 131 in nursing level care, 2 in domiciliary level care.

l. Update on assignment of employees at the Iowa Veterans Home.

(1) On 1 July 2012, there were a total of 761 full-time employees.

(2) On 20 June 2013, there were a total of 771 full-time employees.

(3) There are **NOT** fewer employees today at the Iowa Veterans Home than there were in 2013.

(4) There were 112 permanent part time employees in 2013. There are now 125 permanent part-time employees. These part time employees counted for 60 full-time equivalents in 2013 and 67 full-time equivalents today.

(5) There were 28 temporary employees in 2013. There are 45 temporary employees today.

m. Regarding quality of care – The Iowa Veterans Home is highly regulated. There has been a great deal of discussion about the events that have taken place over the last year.

(1) Mr. Worley indicated that on 17-18 August 2012, the Department of Inspections and Appeals visited the Iowa Veterans Home as a result of a fall. Following that survey, the IVH was cited for three things. The first citation was because three employees did not follow the rules; those employees are no longer employed at the IVH. The second citation was for violating privacy by not knocking on doors prior to entering, and for not pulling shut the curtains when they provided services. The third citation was for a violation of dignity, which included waking residents up later than what they had requested, and basically not following their wishes. These are considered "G" level citations.

(2) On 7 September 2012, there was another fall at the IVH, which generated media attention.

(3) On 27-28 September 2012, the IVH was cited by DIA again for safety violations, as staff not been properly trained on alarms. This was another "G" level citation. The IVH began accruing fines of \$250 per day until they could complete this training.

(4) On 27-28 November 2013, the IVH was re-surveyed and cleared.

(5) There were no issues between November 2012 and May 2013. Then, in June 2013, DIA visited the IVH again and conducted a week-long survey. There were two citations given during that survey – one was because cream was not properly applied to the legs of a resident, and a catheter was not emplaced correctly on another resident.

(6) In one case, the IVH did not have paperwork to show that one of their staff members had attended adult protective training. That employee had actually completed the training, but the certificate was not on file.

(7) Received a citation because medical records in a nursing office were stored in a file cabinet, but the cabinet was not locked when the surveyor inspected it.

n. Quality of care at the IVH is second to none. Staff at the IVH is outstanding.

16. Ms. Jodi Tymeson presented an overview of the Department work rules.

a. Ms. Jodi Tymeson distributed the "Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs Code of Conduct and Work Rules" (HANDOUT #9) which are used at the Iowa Veterans Home. The last time that these rules were approved by the Commission was on 9 January 2002. The Commission had received a copy of these in advance of the meeting, and unanimously approved their adoption.

b. Ms. Jodi Tymeson distributed the "ICVA Notice of Intended Action" (HANDOUT #10), and went through the document in detail. There was one small adjustment to page 4, definition of Gold Star Parent, which needs to be adjusted. Otherwise, the Commission approved unanimously.

17. Commissioner Todd Jacobus presented an overview of a Senate Veterans Affairs Hearing, where he testified as Chair of the Commission, on 6 May 2013.

a. Mr. Jacobus indicated that concerns about treatment of residents and Veterans at the Iowa Veterans Home began as early as January 2012. This had been discussed at previous Commission meetings. At that time, Mr. Jacobus had asked that individuals who have first-hand knowledge of poor treatment of residents at the Iowa Veterans Home to contact him directly. Mr. Jacobus received no first-hand reports of abuse or miss-use, and could confirm none of the second hand reports.

b. Mr. Jacobus visited the Iowa Veterans Home entire leadership team on Friday, October 12, 2012 from 12:00-12:45 pm. And, Mr. Jacobus reminded the Commissioners that he provided them with a letter summarizing that meeting and discussion. (HANDOUT #11)

c. Mr. Jacobus met on two occasions for a total of 8 hours with one of the authors of the letter which was published in several newspapers. This individual is a former employee, former Department Head at the Iowa Veterans Home, and

has genuine concern for the IVH. Based on what was presented, Mr. Jacobus did not feel a need to do anything further, as the issues involved employee-management relationships, and issues that should be, and were, addressed by the Iowa Department of Administrative Services. Following the exchange of information, this former employee indicated that he was not satisfied with the outcome, and intended to write a letter to the editor of numerous newspapers outlining the concerns. On which he did.

d. Mr. Jacobus was asked by Senator Daryl Beall to make a presentation at a May 6, 2013, special meeting of the State Senate Veterans Affairs Committee relating to the Iowa Veterans Home. Prior to attending, Mr. Jacobus drafted talking points, distributed those to the entire Commission for input, and presented those talking points (HANDOUT #12) over a period of approximately five minutes during the hearing.

e. Following that meeting, Mr. Jacobus distributed his notes to the other Commissioners for review and awareness (HANDOUT #13). The draft meeting minutes were published on May 7, 2013 (HANDOUT #14), and the final meeting minutes were published on May 9, 2013 (HANDOUT #15).

f. The Commissioners discussed the responsibilities of the Commission relative to employees at the Iowa Veterans Home. Mr. Jacobus indicated that we need to continue to have a presence at the IVH, to interact with Residents, Staff, and Volunteers. We need to ensure that they understand the protocol to vet problems and issues relative to disagreements in the workplace. However, we should avoid involvement in the management of people at the Iowa Veterans Home. That is beyond the Commission's scope of responsibility. This is of course open to interpretation and discussion by Commission members.

g. Mr. Jacobus indicated a desire to discuss this issue during an open meeting with the entire Commission so that when this issue is discussed in the future, there will be an understanding by all concerned that the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs was involved during this period of unrest at the IVH, did listen to feedback, asked for individuals with firsthand information of illegal, immoral, or unethical activity, and received no information that merited a recommendation relative to the Commandant.

h. Commissioner Gannon indicated that he has visited the Iowa Veterans Home on numerous occasions to discuss issues and concerns of residents and family members there. Mr. Gannon has never found an occasion where anyone representing the staff has been abusive to a resident. Further, his belief is that Veterans at the Iowa Veterans home get the absolute best in terms of care.

i. Commandant Worley indicated that he appreciates the great support of the Commission. He speaks with Mr. Jacobus and Mr. Gannon no less than weekly on issues relating to the IVH, and believes that the living conditions at the IVH are the very best in the State of Iowa and beyond. Mr. Worley is very interested in moving forward, and sees a very bright future in Marshalltown.

18. Ms. Lisa Whitmarsh Peterson, who is nearing the end of her assignment as the Veterans Education and Programs Coordinator at the Fort Des Moines Museum and Education Center, provided some observations during public comment. Ms. Peterson appreciates very much the Commission's welcoming of her following her in the summer of 2012. She learned a great deal about the Veterans community, the incredible amount of activity taking place throughout the State of Iowa, and the great passion with which those who serve in this community have in taking care of Iowa Veterans. Ms. Peterson indicated that there the Iowa Veterans Home has the very best in terms of care for our Veterans, and that the services provided at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery are outstanding. She appreciates the great support, the great teamwork, and looks forward to maintaining contact in the future.

19. Mr. Jacobus reported to the Commission that neither himself nor Ms. Jodi Tymeson have received feedback from the March 7, 2013, letter (HANDOUT #16) to Mr. David Boyd, Court Administrator for the Judicial Branch of Iowa. Our request was intended to get information regarding how the Courts in Iowa make decisions relative to the use of disability compensation in the calculation of family support. These veterans believe that federal law, U.S. Code Title 38, Section 5301 disallows the use of disability compensation for calculation of family support. In some cases, our disabled Veterans have lost the ability to earn adequate wages, as well as now must endure pain and suffering that can

accompany service-related injuries and illness. Our intent in contacting the Court Administrator is to determine how Iowa Courts interpret this federal statute and calculate family support. In addition, we inquired if the Iowa Courts treat the calculation of family support for disabled Iowans who are not Veterans differently than veteran-related disability compensation. It is frustrating to the Commission, as we have an inquiry into the Court Administrator since October 2012, with a formal letter sent in March 2013, and yet have not yet received a response. We will work this issue through the Office of the Iowa Attorney General.

20. Mr. Todd Jacobus indicated that the last order of business is to elect a Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson, and Second Vice Chairperson, who will be responsible for leading the Commission, and serving as a conduit of information among the commissioners, the Iowa Veterans Home, the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, and other organizations. The out-going Chair is Commissioner Todd Jacobus, the out-going First Vice Chairperson is Commissioner Darlene McMartin, and the out-going Second Vice Chairperson is Commissioner Dan Gannon. The following individuals were elected:

Kate Myers  
CHAIRPERSON  
Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs  
103 S. Jackson Avenue  
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E-mail: [kateny@mchsi.com](mailto:kateny@mchsi.com)  
Palo Alto County – NP  
Public Member at Large  
Beginning Term: 5/1/11  
Term Ends: 4/30/15

Jon Wille  
FIRST VICE CHAIRPERSON  
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Polk County – NP  
Disabled American Veterans  
Beginning Term: 5/1/12  
Term Ends: 4/30/16

Willard "Bill" Wallace  
2<sup>ND</sup> VICE CHAIRPERSON  
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Cell: 515-710-4060  
Office:  
Fax:  
E-mail: [dadshine@aol.com](mailto:dadshine@aol.com)  
Polk County – R  
Reserve Officers Association  
Beginning Term: 7/1/10  
Term Ends: 4/30/16

21. The next meeting of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs is on Wednesday, September 18, 2013, at 10:00 am, at the Iowa Veterans Home, Malloy Learning Resource Center, Iowa Veterans Home, 1301 Summit St., Marshalltown IA 5015. The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

**Cc:** Brenna Findley, Chief of Staff, Governor's Office  
Lynn McRoberts, Policy Advisor, Governor's Office  
Sandra Hurtado-Peters, Dept. of Management  
Barbara Galloway, Attorney General's Office  
Jennifer Acton, Legislative Fiscal Agency  
Jenny Lawrence, Auditor's Office  
Bob King, IDVA Executive Director  
Jill Joseph, IDVA Outreach Coordinator  
David Worley, Commandant, IVH  
Mike Hines, Administrative Assistant, IVH  
Senator Daryl Beall, Senate VA Committee, Chair  
Senator Jeff Danielson, Senate VA Comm. VC  
Senator Ken Rozenboom, Senate VA Comm. RM  
Rep. Dwayne Alons, House VA Comm. Chair  
Rep. Sandy Salmon, House VA Comm. VC  
Rep. Jerry Kearns, House VA Comm. RM  
Zeke Furlong, House Democratic Research Staff  
Colin Tadlock, House Republican Research Staff  
Tom Ashworth, Senate Republican Caucus Staff  
Julie Simon, Senate Democratic Caucus Staff  
Jerry Hansen, President, IACCVSO  
Terri Beer, Director, VA Regional Office  
Barry Sharp, Director, VAMC, Iowa City  
Timothy McMurry, Acting Dir., VAMC, Des Moines  
Lyle Schaffer, Commander, American Legion  
John Derner, Adjutant, American Legion  
Jon Schneider, President, PVA  
Larry Winther, Commander, VFW  
Dale Purdy, Commander, AMVETS  
David Thornburg, Commander, DAV  
Allan Packer, Commander, Ex-Prisoners of War  
William Gansemer, Commander, MCL  
Reginald Richardson, Pres., ROA  
Paul Pickard, Commander, MOPH  
Ray Hutchison, Commander, VVA