

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
The Regular Quarterly Meeting of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs
Wednesday, September 18, 2013 - 10:00 a.m.
Iowa Veterans Home
1301 Summit Street
Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

Present: Kate Myers, Chair
Col. Todd Jacobus
Dan Gannon
Darlene McMartin
Bill Wallace
Jon Wille

Absent: Becky Dirks Haugsted
Mickey Williams
Larry Spencer

Staff: Robert King, Executive Director, IDVA David G. Worley, Commandant, IVH
Michael Hines, IVH - Recording Secretary

Guests/ Presenters:	Laurel Phipps, VFW	Ed McGivern American Legion
	Colin Tadlock, House Rep. Caucus Staff	Amelia Schoeheman, Congressman Loeb sack
	Terri Beer, VA	Brett McLain, Story County VSO
	Marie Lofgren, VA	Mike Kuhn, Marion County VSO
	Valerie Buckingham, Iowa City VAHCS	Sandy Lurvey, Oktoberfest
	Bart Quick, Des Moines, VAMC	
	Amy Beller, Senator Tom Harkins	
	David Thornburg, DAV	
	Mari Mielke, IDVA	

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

APPROVED: Kate Myers Date: 1/8/14
Kate Myers, Chair, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

1. Meeting Handouts:

- a. Sandra Lurvey hand out for Oktoberfest Vietnam Veterans Parade information
- b. Iowa Veterans Home Operating Budget
- c. 2 page document hand-out from Commissioner Dan Gannon for 2014 legislation efforts
- d. Signed copy of Commission Quarterly Meeting minutes for 10 July, 2013
- e. Signed copies of Trust Fund Application for May 1, June 5 and July 3, 2013

2. Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order by Kate Myers at 10:01 a.m.

3. Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence:

Pledge of allegiance was led by Chair Myers followed by a moment of silence.

4. Roll Call:

Recording secretary took roll call.

5. Welcome/Introductions of Guests:

Chair Myers welcomed everyone in attendance and asked guests to introduce themselves.

6. New Business:

Commissioner Gannon briefed the Commission about the upcoming 2014 Legislation effort. Gannon passed out a 2 page document to everyone and explained the documents. The two strongest issues they would like to see be brought back up are the property tax initiative and the retired military initiative that we did last year. Gannon further explained that some surrounding states offer a property tax break. For example; in the state of Minnesota, if you were 50% disabled your first \$150,000 dollars was tax exempt. So therefore; you wouldn't pay any property taxes if your home net worth is less than \$150,000. Right now the property tax value for veterans in the state of Iowa is only \$1,850 off the property value. This amount goes all the way back to World War II and has not been changed since then. The census from everyone involved that something needs to be done to change the property tax issue.

Commissioner Gannon informed the commission about the issues for dental for veterans.

Commissioner McMartin made a motion to approve the property tax initiatives for the 2014 legislative session. Second by Commissioner Wallace. Motion carried; approved unanimously.

7. VA Regional Office Update:

Terri Beer, Director of the VA Regional Office presented the Commission with an update on the VA Regional Office.

a. Transformation is going well. Teams were rearranged to take care of the inventory. They are organized into three different lanes based on the type of claim, depending on what type of claim it is. They have been really able to drop the average days pending. In December the average day pending was 242 days and today the average is 178 days. We have no claim that is over two years old.

b.Thanks to MG Orr we will have a presence on Camp Dodge three days weekly. We have an office there on Tuesdays and Thursdays to support vocational rehabilitation initiatives – to include job issues and the outreach specialist that is there on Wednesdays.

c.Terri defined what a fully developed claim is. It is basically a claim where there are no further actions on the part of the VA Staff to develop as they process the claim.

8. VA Medical Center - Iowa City Update:

Valerie Buckingham presented the VA Medical Center Iowa City Update.

a.Valerie informed the Commission that they are still searching for a new chief of staff. They conducted in person interviews; about 3 weeks ago, but no one was selected.

b.Tammy Neff accepted the position of Deputy Associate Director of Patient Care. Roberta Patterson accepted of Nurse Administrator of Primary Special Medicine.

c.Bids for the parking ramp came in over budget.

d.The CBOC in Galesburg, Illinois, will be closed starting September 19, 2013, and will be closed as they will move to their new clinic. The new clinic will have 9,974 square feet.

e.The Bettendorf and Dubuque CBOCs are next in line to be relocated because they need more space. Neither one of those relocation plans have been approved by DC. Bettendorf is our oldest clinic and has been in the existence for 22 years; it is also our largest clinic.

f.Veterans Health Administration has mandated that all of their medical facilities have a standard phone tree in all facilities. The message will be shortened as the second and third layer message will help the veteran to understand the phone tree. You will get the same phone message throughout the country. This should go live with all medical centers October 1st.

g.All VA medical centers are mandated to have chiropractors and acupunctures on staff. We are in the process trying to find chiropractors and acupuncture practitioners and hiring them.

h.There are also dietitians at the CBOCs. Some are full time and some are part time.

9. VA Medical Center – Des Moines Update:

Bart Quick presented the Des Moines VA Central Iowa Health Care System update.

a.There are 2 critical staffing vacancies available in Des Moines; Director position and our Nurse Examiner.

b.There is a new Nurse Manager in the women’s clinic; looking to expand those services.

c. Construction continues. Additional offsite is being looked at for staff.

d.Started to expand the idea of Saturday clinics; has not been announced to the public but will be shortly when some issues will be resolved.

e. Bart is going to look into the front entrance restrooms. Bart explained the 1 year warranty.

f. Bart was asked whether or not the Central Iowa VAHCS is looking for chiropractors and acupuncture practitioners as well. He indicated that he would have to research this further.

10. Approval of Commission Minutes:

Commissioner McMartin made a motion to approve Commission minutes of July 10, 2013, quarterly meeting. Second by Commissioner Wille. Motion carried; approved unanimously.

11. Trust Fund Applications:

Commissioner Gannon made a motion to approve minutes of Trust Fund Meeting of July 3, 2013. Second by Commissioner Jacobus. Motion carried; approved unanimously.

Commissioner Wallace made a motion to approve minutes of Trust Fund conference call of August 7, 2013. Second by Commissioner McMartin. Motion carried; approved unanimously.

Commissioner Wille made a motion to approve minutes of Trust Fund conference call of September 4, 2013. Second by Commissioner Gannon. Motion carried; approved unanimously.

12. Old Business:

No Report

13. IDVA Update:

Director Robert King updated the Commission on the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs.

a. Robert briefed the events in which the IDVA has been and will be involved.

b. If anyone needs proclamations out of the Governor's office, then IDVA needs a minimum of 48 hours to get that processed.

c. Robert explained the change that he made on the \$10,000 county allocation and that it can be used to attend the national school. He did not change the non use of money for transportation for veterans to different facilities.

d. Our relocation to the new building is complete.

e. The Trust Fund Committee was thanked for those that came into to work a couple weeks ago for the Branstad and Reynolds applications. Two applicants are going to get \$10,000 each because of those efforts.

d. Cemetery events were updated. All staff has returned from medical leave. A new grounds person was hired. The cemetery was on the RAGERAI route. There were 11 services that were done last week. There was a visit from the National President of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Women's Auxiliary. The Submariners will be at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery on Saturday, September 21, 2013, for their annual memorial reunion. On Saturday, September 14, 2013, the Korean War Memorial dedication was conducted in Van Meter. Hamilton Funeral Home is coming out for a

continued education program with about 40 or 50 people. The \$1.2M construction project has begun. They are about two weeks behind. As of today at the close of business; there are 1,683 individuals interred in the Iowa Veterans Cemetery. That is 90 since the last commission meeting.

e. So far this year there have been 80 trust fund applications for a grand total of \$157,000.

f. The Commission has approved 13 injured veterans' grants for a total of \$87,500.

g. The Commission has received 135 Honor Guard reimbursements in 2013, and disbursed and disbursed nearly \$150,000.

h. We have no way of accounting the exact numbers on the veteran's designation on the license plates. However; Robert King continues to sign off a lot of those applications that come to the Department and a lot of them are done at the counties as well.

i. The Military Homeownership Grant Program produced 436 applications during state fiscal year 2013. 300 of those have been approved this calendar and have been sent to the Finance Authority.

j. The County allocation program remains fully funded; 81 counties spent 100% of their \$10,000 allocation. 18 counties returned a little over \$48,000 of their allocated funding.

k. Upcoming events are as follows: POW/MIA ceremony at the Gold Star Museum; Iowa Veterans Coalition at the IDVA building, Fall School in Des Moines 29-30 October, 2 scheduled events on Veterans Day, Wreaths Across America, Veterans Day on The Hill in January 2014.

14. Veterans Home Update:

David Worley, Commandant of the Iowa Veterans Home, gave the update on the Iowa Veterans Home.

a. Commandant Worley informed the Commission that we are no longer required to vote on the budget.

b. David presented IVH CFO, Steve Prall and IVH Budget Analyst, Diana Steiner, to the Commission. Steve updated the Commission on the budget. Diana thoroughly briefed the process of the Iowa Veterans Home budget.

c. David informed the Commission that BG Jennifer Walter will be the key note speaker celebrating the Air Force birthday.

d. Census today is 609; 501 in Nursing and 108 in Domiciliary.

e. Governor's Chief of Staff, Jeff Boeyink, has resigned. Our contact person, Ted Stopulus, has resigned, as well.

f. Commandant Worley reported that he submitted the administrative changes with our recent code changes (35D).

h. David told the Commission about CPT Kresser running RAGBRAI. He is raising money for our mental health treatment.

i. David informed the Commission about the structure of IVH leadership team.

j. David spoke on the Commission about the construction projects that are going on. David further explained that in less than 3 years we will have 449 beds of nursing care that are all new. 429 of them will be single rooms and 20 of those rooms will be designed specifically for couples.

16. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Sandy Lurvey from the community briefed the Commission on the Oktoberfest parade here in Marshalltown, Iowa. The Oktoberfest parade will take place on September 28, 2013 which starts at 10:00 a.m. Sandy went on to say that the response from the community for Vietnam veterans has been amazing. There have been 700 or flags and fans that have been donated by Meskwaki for the parade. The flags say welcome Vietnam Veterans.

Dave Thornburg mentioned the POW/MIA recognition will be at Camp Dodge (Gold Star Museum) with the program starting at 1:00 p.m. The DAV and VFW post of Valley Junction are putting on a feed for our ex POWs and families at 11:30 a.m. this Friday.

17. Determine next Commission Meeting:

The next quarterly Commission of Veterans Affairs Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January, 8, 2013, at the Gold Star Military Museum. The remaining dates were decided as the following dates and locations: April 2 at IVH, July 9 at IDVA and October 1 at IVH.

18. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Hines
Recording Secretary

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APPROVED: _____ Date: _____

KATE MYERS, Chair, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

Co: Jerry Hansen, President, IACCVSO
Matt Hinch, Chief of Staff, 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
Steve Ainger, Dept. of Administrative Services
Jill Joseph, Outreach Coordinator, IDVA
Jodi Tymeson, Commandant, IVH
Michael Hines, Staff Assistant, IVH
Senator Daryl Beall, Senate VA Comm. Chair

Terri Beer, Director, VA Regional Office
Barry Sharp, Director, VAMC, Iowa City
Director, VAMC, Des Moines
Lyle Schaffer, Commander, American Legion
John Derner, Adjutant, American Legion
Larry Winther, Commander, VFW
Jon Schneider, President, PVA
Dale Purdy, Commander, AMVETS
David Thornburg, Commander, DAV
Allan Packer, Commander, Ex-Prisoners of War

Senator Ken Rozenboom, Senate VA Comm. RM
Rep. Dwayne Alons, House VA Comm. Chair
Rep. Sandy Salmon, House VA Comm. VC
Tom Ashworth, Senate Republican Caucus Staff
Colin Tadlock, House Republican Research Staff
Zeke Furlong, House Democratic Research Staff

Paul Pickard, Commander, MOPH
Ray Hutchison, Commander, VVA
Rep. Jerry Kearns, House VA Comm. RM
Julie Simon, Senate Democratic Caucus Staff

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