



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCHI**  
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans  
**DANIEL T. WEIST**  
COMMISSIONER



Veterans of Foreign Wars  
**THOMAS T. K. ZUNG**  
COMMISSIONER



Vietnam Veterans of America  
**BOB POTTS**  
COMMISSIONER

**ROBERT SCHLOENDORN**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**JAMES L. STOLZ**  
SERVICE OFFICER MANAGER

## Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission

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1849 Prospect Avenue • Room 200 • Cleveland, OH 44115



### MINUTES

DATE: February 6, 2008 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Frank Pocci, President  
Bob Potts, Vice President  
Thomas T.K. Zung, Secretary  
Daniel T. Weist, Commissioner  
Mel Baher, Commissioner  
Robert E. Schloendorn, Executive Director

ABSENT/EXCUSED: Thomas P. O'Donnell, Asst. County Prosecutor

VISITORS: Tom Nevans, VFW Post 3345; and Robert Ryan, VFW-Avon.

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by President Frank Pocci followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to dispense with the reading of the minutes of January 16, 2008 and to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections and/or additions. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Thomas Zung to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Level III Board Appeals meeting of January 16, 2008 and to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections and/or additions. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to dispense with the reading of the correspondence since we have a Consent Agenda, with the exception of those items set aside, to be addressed during the regular order of business, and with any corrections and/or additions. (One item was set aside.)

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to accept cases approved on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of VSC case file #75675 and #86765 that were set aside, picked at random as part of the quality assurance program, to be addressed in Executive Session.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to accept cases denied on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of VSC case file #24408 that was set aside, picked at random as part of the quality assurance program, to be addressed in Executive Session.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

### **Agenda Item E1. Commissioners' Reports**

#### Bob Potts

- Our VVA monthly board meeting was held at American Legion Post 211. We had two meetings in the last few weeks because we have switched meeting nights. Monthly meetings will now be on the third Tuesday of the month and the Board meeting will be held on the first Tuesday of the month. Discussion took place on how we would set up the booth at the Sportsman Show. This year, our main focus will be to provide information and not as much as a fundraiser. We will continue to sell POW/MIA tee shirts and make dog tags.
- Discussion took place on contacting those individuals that were members of the chapter, but for one reason or another, have not continued their membership. There are over 200 on that list.
- On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the members of the speaker's bureau will travel to Lodi High School to speak to students about the Vietnam Experience.
- The chapter received a donation of two motorized wheelchairs. We, in turn, gave one of the chairs to a member of our chapter who is confined to a wheelchair and the other was donated to an individual whose chair was not big enough.

#### Thomas Zung

- On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, I attended the Farewell Ceremony for "G" Company, 237<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion in Medina, Ohio. The VFW Post from Strongsville posted three members at the front door and distributed small flags to all the guests. The flags were greatly appreciated and later, many soldiers asked for some extras. Approximately 500 were in attendance and the program included representatives from the offices of Governor Strickland, Senator Voinovich, and Senator Brown, Ohio Rep. Batchelder, Mayor of Medina, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones, the Commissioners, and Brigadier General Todd Carmony. Some 200 soldiers were being deployed to Texas for further training, then on to Operation Iraqi Freedom. The program, speakers, and the band were very stirring and reminded me how times have changed from the Vietnam War troops and the Korean Conflict to this patriotic ceremony with family members supporting our troops. This is the largest deployment reserve troop ever from Ohio.
- I attended a meeting at the Euclid VFW Post where discussion took place regarding the upcoming VFW District 7 Winter Conference and Women's Auxiliary Program at the Hilton Hotel in Beachwood, Ohio. I attended the District Conference dinner on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. We had a good attendance highlighting the "Voice of Democracy Program" and the

winners. Teacher of the Year Awards were presented to two teachers, K-5 and High School 9-12. Presentations were announced for three students for their Voice of Democracy essay receiving scholarships for \$500, \$300, & \$200. Former winners included Miss America, Anita Bryan, and TV commentator Charles Kuralt. A stirring "Pledge of Allegiance", first recorded by Red Skelton, was read by the District Commander. In all, the VFW has awarded some \$1M in scholarships with \$6,500 in scholarship awards from Ohio.

- We have rescheduled the February 14<sup>th</sup> VFW Strongsville Post 3345 open membership information meeting with the Cuyahoga County Veteran Service Commission to Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. This was done to accommodate more members and give more time for publicity through the news media.

#### Mel Baher

- January 2<sup>nd</sup>, I attended the 13<sup>th</sup> District Meeting at Post 469 at 7:30 p.m. where I serve as Assistant Judge Advocate.
- January 10<sup>th</sup>, I attended an American Legion Post 91 membership meeting at 8:00 p.m. where I serve as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander. I presented membership and building committee reports.
- January 20<sup>th</sup>, I attended the American Legion Department of Ohio's Mid-Winter Conference in Columbus, Ohio at 10:00 a.m. where I represented Post 91 as a registered Delegate.
- January 24<sup>th</sup>, I attended an American Legion Post 91 Executive Board Meeting at 8:00 p.m. I presented an updated membership report and building committee report.
- January 21<sup>st</sup>, I attended a Post 91 Constitution & By-laws Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m. to discuss updating post by-laws.
- January 28<sup>th</sup>, I attended and American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Executive Board Meeting at Post 469 at 7:30 p.m.

#### Frank Pocci

- I attended the Italian-American War Veterans Ohio State meeting in Youngstown, Ohio at Post 29. General business was discussed and minutes from the prior meeting were reviewed and approved. The main topics of discussion revolved around the following:
  - A tentative date of June 8<sup>th</sup> has been set for the Ohio Convention to be held in Cleveland.
  - A response will be sent to the Ohio Attorney General's Office regarding the apparent illegal operation of Warren Post 33. We have found no records thus far that this post was ever sanctioned and it appears to be a fraudulent bar operating under the ITAM name.
  - All ITAM Ohio posts were instructed to submit to the state, proof that they have submitted the necessary income paperwork to the State Dept. of Taxation to ensure that all posts are in compliance.

- I contacted Cheir Johnson of the Veterans Workforce Training Program to set up a date to visit their facility so that I have a better understanding of their mission. I will also have an opportunity to inform Cheir on the purpose and mission of the CCVSC.
- I attended services at Ferfolia Funeral Home for AMVETS Post 80 member, William Dory, who passed away on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Post 80 Honor Guard provided honors for this long-standing member.
- I attended services at Johnson-Romito Funeral Home for Antonio Dimora, Commissioner Jimmy Dimora's father. Commissioner Dimora is a member of the Italian-American War Veterans Post 34. I spoke to Jimmy and, after offering my condolences, mentioned that I was there on behalf of the CCVSC.
- I attended the AMVETS Post 80 General Meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>. The club will host bingo at the Brecksville VA Medical Center on February 11<sup>th</sup>. On February 12<sup>th</sup> the club will provide the Honor Guard at the Western Reserve National Cemetery in Rittman, Ohio.
- I attended the meeting of the Italian-American War Veterans on February 1<sup>st</sup>. The club will include CCVSC brochures in all its correspondence to members and other club related mailings.
- I have referred the families of two surviving spouses of veterans to our service officers to try to help in getting them nursing home aid.
- I will be making arrangements with our service officers to bring down an aging veteran who may be eligible to obtain improved benefits from the VA.

#### Dan Weist

- January 2<sup>nd</sup> – I attended a post meeting at American Legion Post 211.
- January 31<sup>st</sup> - I attended a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners.
- February 20<sup>th</sup> – I attended a VFW 7647 post meeting.
- I responded to a letter from Ray Strischek, Athens County Veterans Service Commissioner, regarding his concerns of the work and recommendations of the Veterans Study Council.
- I attended a luncheon of the Cleveland Trades Port Council. In attendance were: Pat Gallagher, Vice President of the UAW; Richard Adkins, Past President of the AFL-CIO; Tony Mangoni, President of the Solidarity Health Group; and Buddy McTaggart, former Labor Relations Coordinator for Cuyahoga County.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

#### **Agenda Item F1. Executive Director – Submitting Personnel Requests**

No personnel items were submitted to the Board.

**Agenda Item F2. Cuyahoga Planning Commission: Proposal to Prepare a State Veterans Home Feasibility Study for Northeast Ohio.**

Bob asked Board members for their comments after having an opportunity to review the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission's proposal for a Northeast Ohio Veterans Home. Several issues were discussed including the cost and timeline for the study.

A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Thomas Zung to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract with the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission for a Feasibility Study for a State Veterans Home in Northeast Ohio, to be completed by December 31, 2008.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Executive Director, Bob Schloendorn

- Bob continues to hold regular weekly meetings with the county on an RFP for office space at Wade Park.
- The Memorial Affairs Dept. has received several mixed reviews from funeral homes to our letter requesting that a service flag be displayed near a veteran's casket. The letter was sent in response to concerns we have received from families.
- Bob contacted Jeanne Schmotzer, Clerk of the Board, to discuss a possible "blanket" resolution that would cover all training/travel and staff development for the year to alleviate a hardship for the staff in having to pay for school in advance. Jeanne responded that the Board of County Commissioners must authorize all travel and training for county employees by a board resolution that is required for each occurrence. Jeanne suggested that resolutions be submitted as soon as possible to delay any reimbursement of expenses.
- Bob is arranging for Hospice of Western Reserve, who works in concert with the Alzheimer's Association, to do a presentation to our staff on grief counseling.
- Bob has directed the Finance Manager to obtain information on debit cards for clients.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Frank Pocci opened the floor to visitors for any comments or questions. The following bullet points were topics of discussion.

Tom Nevans

- VOD Banquet is scheduled for April 6, 2008
- CCVSC representatives will be guests at VFW Post #3345, 17900 Strongsville Rd., in Strongsville, Ohio on Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. (This meeting was originally scheduled for February 14th.)

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Dan Weist to go into Executive Session to discuss client cases and one item pulled from the Consent Agenda.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. (10:50 a.m.)

A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular order of business.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. (11:16 a.m.)

Two VSC case files, pulled from the Consent Agenda's list of cases approved for further investigation, were reviewed and found in order. A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to accept VSC case file #75675 and #86765.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

One VSC case file, pulled from the Consent Agenda's list of cases denied for further investigation, was reviewed and found in order. A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to accept VSC cases file #24408.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Correspondence from Ray Strischek, Athens County Veterans Service Commissioner, regarding his concerns of the work and recommendations of the Veterans Study Council was briefly discussed. Dan Weist will reply to his concerns.

With no further business, a motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to adjourn the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Frank Pocci  
President

Thomas Zung  
Secretary

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Requests for Financial Assistance: Jennifer Mazzeo, Manager/Senior Investigator (216-698-2621)

Filing claims with the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs: Jim Stolz, Service Officer Manager (216-698-2639)

Memorial Affairs: Laurene Rutkowski, Manager (216-698-2655)

Mobile Meals Program: Jeff Sedlak, Social Worker/Case Management Officer (216-698-2615)

Executive Director: Bob Schloendorn (216-698-2611)

Commissioners: Lorri Slivka, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2646)