



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

Ph: (216) 698-2600 • Fax: (216) 698-2650  
Email: [vsc\\_mail@cuyahogacounty.us](mailto:vsc_mail@cuyahogacounty.us)  
1849 Prospect Avenue • Room 200 • Cleveland, OH 44115



### MINUTES

**DATE:** February 18, 2009 9:37 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Bob Potts, President  
Mel Baher, Secretary  
Frank Pocci, Commissioner  
Robert E. Schloendorn, Executive Director  
Tom O'Donnell, Asst. County Prosecutor

**ABSENT:** Daniel Weist, Commissioner  
Thomas Zung, Vice President

**VISITORS:** None.

**PURPOSE:** GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by the President, Bob Potts, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to dispense with the reading of the minutes of February 4, 2009 and to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections and/or additions. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Level III Board Appeals meeting of February 4, 2009 and to accept the minutes with the necessary corrections and/or additions. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci 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. (No items were set aside.)

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to accept cases approved on the Consent Agenda for the month of January 2009, with the exception of those set aside, to be addressed in Executive Session. (None were set aside.)

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to accept cases denied on the Consent Agenda for the month of January 2009, with the exception of those set aside, to be addressed in Executive Session. (None were set aside.)

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to accept indigent burials approved for the month of January 2009 as listed on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of those set aside, to be addressed in Executive Session. (None were set aside.)

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

*It was noted for the record that Commissioner Zung joined the meeting at 9:45 a.m.*

**Agenda Item E1. State of the Commission and Finance Report (Attached)**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Thomas Zung to accept the report of the Executive Director as submitted. Under discussion, the Board requested that the Executive Director include admission waiting list statistics at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky, Ohio in future reports. Current statistics are as follows: Domiciliary – 0, Nursing Home – 9, Alzheimer’s Ward – 5, and Domiciliary and Assisted Living – 13.

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

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to approve the revised “Guideline for Definition of Unexpected Hardship” effective immediately. A minor change was made regarding the 180-day rule when a client is terminated from employment.

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

A revision to the “Food and Shelter Monthly Allowance Guideline” was discussed concerning rent payment to a relative. Following some dialogue, the Board agreed that the guideline will remain as is.

The Union Agreement between Teamsters Union Local 436 and the CCVSC was approved by the Board of County Commissioners at their January 22, 2009 meeting. Bargaining unit employees will receive salary increases retroactive to January 1, 2009.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

No items were submitted.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to adjourn the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

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

Bob Potts, President

Mel Baher, Secretary

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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

Filing claims with the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs: John Murphy, Service Officer Manager (216-698-2637)

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

Mobile Meals Program Terry Walker, Social Worker/Case Management Officer (216-698-2379)

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

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

# **CUYAHOGA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION**

## **Progress Report on the State of the Commission**

**January, 2009**

**Issued by:**

### **The CCVSC Commissioners**

**Bob Potts – President, VVA**

**Thomas Zung – Vice President, VFW**

**Mel Baher – Secretary, American Legion**

**Daniel T. Weist – DAV**

**Frank Pocci – AMVETS**

**February 18, 2009**

**Submitted By: Robert E. Schloendorn – Executive Director**

The following report summarizes the progress and state of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission as of January 31, 2009:

**Executive:**

The Executive Director

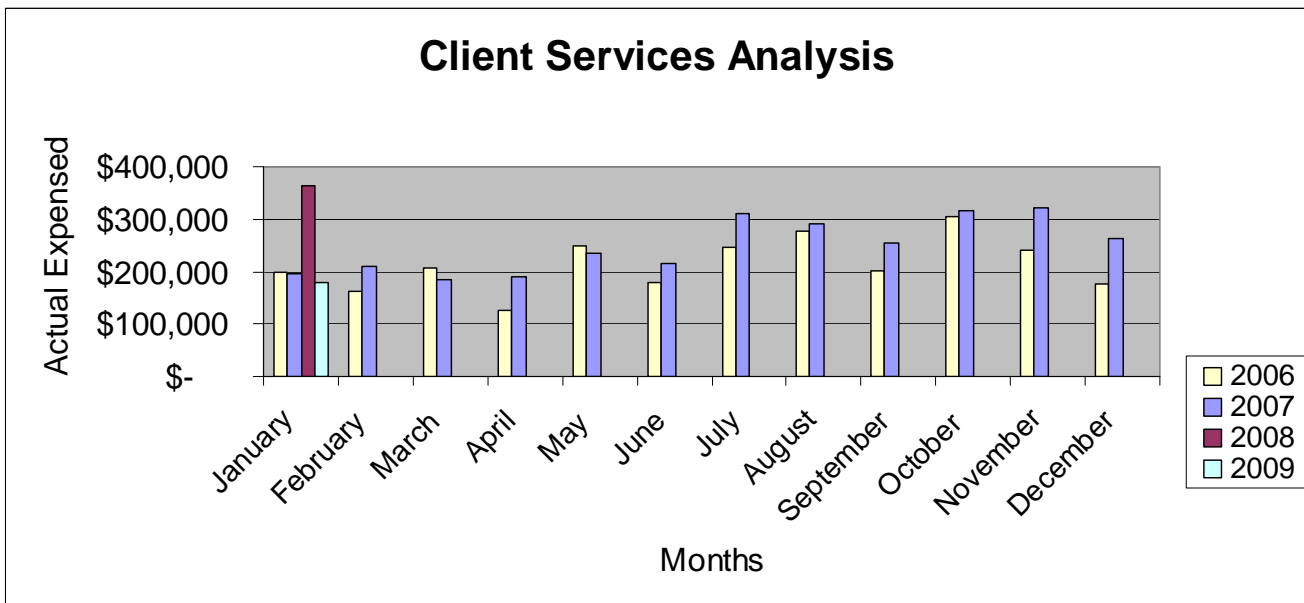
- Went to Columbus for a meeting with designated staff from various Veterans Service Commissions.
- Met with Deb Shaw and Terry Poltorek to discuss the move.
- Attended a networking lunch at the VA.
- Attended meeting at the Crile Archives.

**Finance Department**

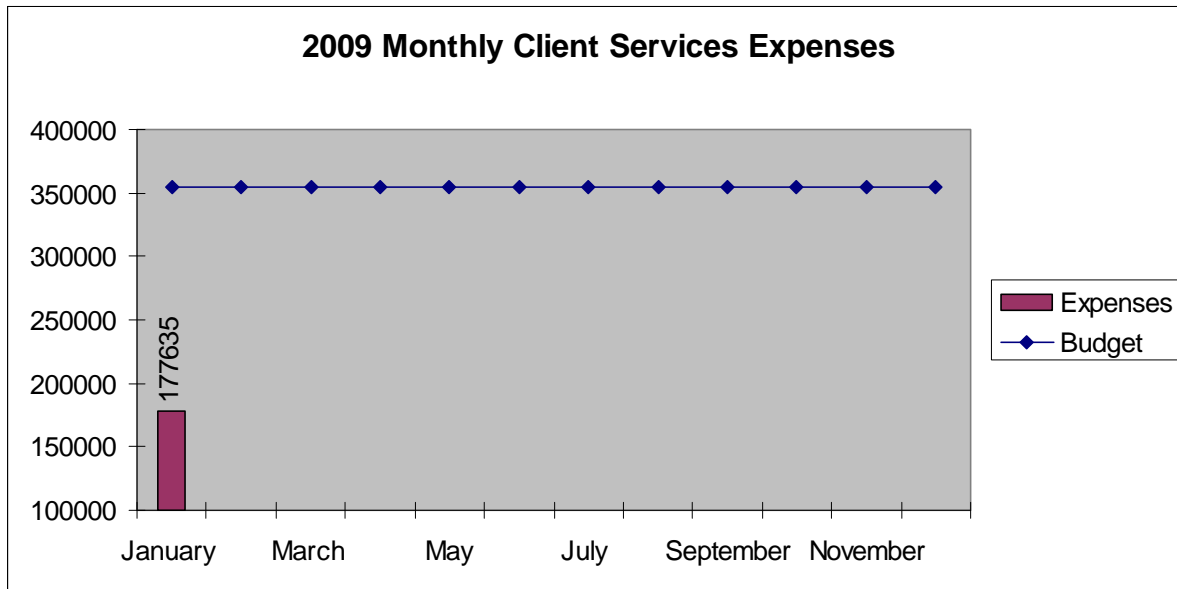
Below are selected January reports from the CCVSC Finance Department. The following charts/graphs depict the overall expenditures by area and type.

**Client services include: Financial Assistance for Medical, Food, Infant Layette, Personal Hygiene, Shoes & Clothing**

**Comparative Chart Analysis**



## Actual 2009 Expenses



## Total 2009 Expense Analysis

	Total Budget	YTD Expenditure	YTD Encumbr	Remaining Expenditures	2008 Projection	Budget Variance
<b>Salaries</b>	1,651,412	123,749	-	1,492,632	1,616,381	35,031
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	640,989	42,711	-	587,678	630,389	10,600
<b>Commodities</b>	47,419	935	-	38,021	38,956	8,463
<b>Contract Services</b>	529,408	964	128,833	407,374	408,338	121,070
<b>Controlled Expenditures</b>	260,106	-	-	260,106	260,106	-
<b>Client Services</b>	4,266,028	177,635	12,331	3,310,200	3,487,835	778,193
<b>Other Expenditures</b>	456,295	8,957	27,650	354,124	363,081	93,214
<b>Capital Outlay</b>	331,350	-	1,350	321,350	321,350	10,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	8,183,007	354,951	170,164	6,771,485	7,126,436	1,056,571

## Assistance Department:

January financial assistance totaled \$177,635, down from \$319,315 issued during December and down from \$363,727 issued in January of 2008. Year to date client assistance for 2009 is \$177,635 and YTD for 2008 was \$363,727 down \$186,092.

The January Financial Assistance Department activity report follows below.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>January 2009*</b>
Number of clients seeking hardship assistance	684
Total applications taken	658
Applications Withdrawn/Denied	(185)
Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.)	473
Transportation only approvals	(216)
F/A applications approved	257

\*2008 numbers are not presented because the Paradox system inflated the number of visitors. These numbers were not a true comparison.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>YTD 2009</b>
Number of clients seeking hardship assistance	684
Total applications taken	658
Applications Withdrawn/Denied	(185)
Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.)	473
Transportation only approvals	(216)
F/A applications approved	257

During January, 2009, 15 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2009 YTD total to 15. Of the 15 new claims, 10 were approved, 4 were withdrawn and 1 was not taken. In January of 2008, 53 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2008 YTD total to 53.

**Listed below is a breakdown of appeals for the month of January, 2009.**

Number of workdays	20
Cases on hand beginning of month	6
Cases received	+25
Cases worked	<u>-29</u>
Cases on hand end of month	2

<b><u>Appeal Officer Appeals</u></b>	<b><u>Jan.</u></b> <b><u>2009</u></b>	<b><u>YTD</u></b>
Cases approved	1	1
Cases denied	20	20
Cases withdrawn, no show	2	2
Cases withdrawn	5	5
No determination at Level II (Referred to Level III)	0	0
Cases referred back to Financial Asst./Social Worker	1	1
*Cases not eligible for appeal	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>

<b><u>Board Appeals</u></b>	<b><u>Jan.</u></b> <b><u>2009</u></b>	<b><u>YTD</u></b>
Cases approved	19	19
Cases denied	5	5
Cases withdrawn	0	0
Cases verifying fraud	4	4
Fraud/Fraudulent application	0	0
Cases Referred back to financial Asst./Social Worker	0	0
Client not eligible (not a veteran)	0	0
Board agreed with Level II (no assistance granted)	0	0
No action taken by the Board	0	0
Asst. rescinded due to false statements on application	1	1
Fraud expunged	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>



**Medical and Other Transportation:**

January medical assistance expensed for transportation totaled \$6,579.50 for the month, \$6,579.50 for bus tickets and \$0 for taxi services.

**Medical and Dental Programs:**

Medical payments for January amounted to \$3,960 with \$3,960 expensed for Dental and \$0 for Vision. Year to date medical expenses totaled \$3,960. Dental payments year to date are \$3,960 and Vision year to date payments are \$0.

\$0 in Miscellaneous Medical payments were expensed in January. Year to date Miscellaneous Medical payments are \$0.

**Memorial Affairs Department:**

\$24,975.00 was expensed during January, 2009 for indigent veteran funeral expenses, up \$4,771.16 from January, 2008. During January, 25 indigent burials were approved. The burials were for 3 Air Force, 0 Marine, 4 Navy and 18 Army veterans.

**Following are the 2009 Year to Date statistics for Memorial Affairs:**

	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>2009 YTD</u>	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>2009 YTD</u>
DD14 Search	158	158	241	241
Benefits Counseling	546	546	1,093	1,093
Undelivered-Incorrect Headstones/Research	48	48	116	116
Presidential Memorial Certificates	296	296	264	264
National Cemetery Referrals	151	151	262	262
Blue Star Service Banners	0	0	11	11

## Veterans Service Officers:

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO Melinda Halliburton for the month of January, 2009 for the Brecksville satellite office.

	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	36	36
Pension claims and follow ups	11	11
Medical	6	6
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	15	15
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	82	82
All Other	<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>185</b>

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO Robert Erb for the month of January, 2009 for the Wade Park satellite office.

	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	61	61
Pension claims and follow ups	22	22
Medical	14	14
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	21	21
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	15	15
All Other	<u>40</u>	<u>40</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>173</b>

## January performance indicators report for the VSO division indicates the following activities were accomplished:

January  
2009

	VETERAN				DEPENDENT			
	2008	YTD '08	2009	YTD '09	2008	YTD '08	2009	YTD '09
Compensation/DIC Claims	56	56	63	63	2	2	2	2
Follow-up Pending Claims	177	177	90	90	7	7	4	4
Pension Claims	24	24	32	32	13	13	8	8
Follow-up Pending Claims	104	104	44	44	40	40	21	21
Medical	42	42	28	28	13	13	7	7
Notice of Disagreements	12	12	10	10	1	1	1	1
Appeals & Waivers	6	6	6	6	0	0	0	0
Eligibility Verification Reports	22	2	30	30	16	16	16	16
Change of Address	6	6	5	5	2	2	0	0
Education Assistance	6	6	5	5	3	3	0	0
Cert. Eligibility - Home Loan	5	5	2	2	1	1	0	0
Insurance Discharges, Request for copy	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2
Headstone/Marker Application	261	261	115	115	27	27	5	5
Referrals to Other Agencies	6	6	5	5	0	0	0	0
P of A Service Organization Misc. Application/Corresp.	30	130	27	27	1	1	1	1
Ohio Veterans Home	77	77	74	74	11	11	9	9
Burial Benefits High School Diploma Applications	407	407	235	235	42	42	38	38
Discharge Upgrades	7	7	9	9				
10-10 EZ Forms	4	4	2	2	5	5	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>1256</u>	<u>1256</u>	<u>788</u>	<u>788</u>	<u>184</u>	<u>184</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>116</u>

**% Chg**  
---  
**37.2%**

**% Chg. YTD**  
---  
**-37.2%**

### TOTAL (Vet + Dep)

Interviews: Service Dept. Clients	483	483	364	364	32	32	26	26
Fin. Asst. Referrals	68	68	30	30	4	4	1	1
Office YTD	551	551	394	394	36	36	27	27
Phone Calls	2633	2633	1645	1645				

	'08	YTD '08	'09	YTD '09
	515	515	390	390
	72	72	31	31
	587	587	421	421

## **Information Systems:**

### **ClientTrack**

The final SQL Server database of CCVSC data was downloaded on the evening of January 31<sup>st</sup> 2009 and is installed on our server. Of the 600 tables in ClientTrack, 29 contain information of value to the CCVSC. Several queries have been developed to allow VSC personnel to review the information in these tables as required. Several other queries are being developed for the other tables. These queries are available on our network for anyone who needs them.

Catch-up reporting still needs to be completed for the months of June through September.

### **eVetAssist**

The SQL Server database was installed and configured for use by John Yan in developing the eVetAssist application. A test database was also set up by John for our use in testing. A Virtual Private Network connection was set up for John to be able to upload and maintain the application from Columbus. This is working correctly.

We are looking into the purchase of electronic signature pads so that all documentation is electronic rather than being in paper files. The CSC Group is providing information to us on their signature pads and two other vendors have been contacted about their products. John Yan will have to develop an interface to allow these signature pads to work with the eVetAssist application.

A web camera has been installed to take client pictures to be stored with their claim data. The camera works well. Now eVetAssist needs to be modified to allow us to store the pictures. John Yan will be developing a new method for handling the pictures in the system during February.

### **High speed county network**

A high speed connection to the One Community high speed Internet was installed on January 15<sup>th</sup>. Internet speeds have improved for uploading and downloading from the Internet. However, our internal network speed is gated by the VOIP phones which handle both voice and data traffic.

## **VSO Scanning**

VSO's have scanned all the catch-up documents created since the Recorder's office finished the original scanning. The scanned documents are being uploaded to KnowledgeTree during February.

## **Microfilming/Record Retention**

We are investigating several outside companies to do microfilming of our documents once they are scanned and uploaded. This would allow us to microfilm more often and will permit shredding of paper files on a more frequent basis. This will become more important when we move to the new offices later this year as filing space is much more limited.

## **County Ombudsman Office:**

No new information or problems were reported regarding the CCVSC.

## **Ohio Veterans Home Network:**

During January, three veterans were transported to the Sandusky home for tours and admission evaluations.

## **Department of Veterans Services:**

The next Department of Veterans Services Advisory Committee is scheduled for February 19, 2009.

**Submitted by:**

**Robert E. Schloendorn  
Executive Director**