



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
1849 Prospect Avenue • Room 200 • Cleveland, OH 44115



MINUTES

DATE: March 4, 2009 9:43 a.m.

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

VISITORS: Richard Danielson, Korean War Veterans of America Post 69
Lawrence Florence, American Legion Post 315

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 Thomas Zung to dispense with the reading of the minutes of February 18, 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, Weist, Zung. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Thomas Zung to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Level III Board Appeals meeting of February 18, 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, Weist, Zung. 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, Weist, Zung. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Agenda Item E1. Commissioners' Reports

Thomas Zung – VFW

- The Freedom Flight Program is advertising on radio station 91.5 for volunteers and donations. I made a personal donation to the program and will make a proposal to VFW Post 1056 at our monthly meeting that they consider a donation as well.
- Last week, I traveled to New York City and visited the Times Square Visitor's Station to pass out discount tickets to Broadway shows for the last minute time slot. All veterans in uniform were eligible to receive two free courtesy tickets, when available.
- A concern has been raised about Ohio veterans receiving their bonus checks for overseas service. A bill must still pass the Ohio House.

Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- Thursday, February 12th, I attended the general meeting at American Legion Post 91 in Berea.
- Sunday, February 15th, I attended the Ohio Department meeting of the Italian American War veterans at Post #1 in Lorain, Ohio. As adjutant, I gave my report from the last meeting and it was approved. The following week, Dept. Commander Charles Faroni was hospitalized due to extremely bad circulation in one leg, which had been operated on twice.
- Thursday, February 26th, Commander Faroni passed away at University Hospital and funeral services were held March 2nd at Gesu Church, which he designed and helped build. Charles had been a well-known architect and is responsible for many buildings in the area. Post #1 from Lorain, Ohio provided full funeral honors, which was deeply appreciated by the family.
- March 3rd, I attended the Maple Hts. Post 80 AMVETS general meeting. As financial officer, I gave my financial report for the preceding month. Membership dues have been collected and submitted and we have discontinued the post phone service, as the phone was very seldom used. The post continues to provide funeral details for the National Cemetery burials at Rittman and also entertains the veterans at Brecksville medical center.
- March 3rd, I was at the Wade Park VA Medical Center and the construction there is coming along well. One can actually begin to see how some of the new buildings will reshape the look of the center and, more importantly, increase services to our veterans. I have noticed in the last few months that veterans are serviced with a more customer friendly atmosphere. The center's mission to treat veterans well and with respect, at least in my view, seems to be taking hold.

Mel Baher – American Legion

- February 4th, I attended the American Legion 13th District meeting held at Post 196 at 7:30 p.m., where I serve as District Judge Advocate.
- February 12th, I attended American Legion Post 91 membership meeting at 8:00 p.m., where I serve as Commander.
- February 23rd, I attended American Legion Post 91 Executive board meeting held at 7:00 p.m.
- February 26th, I attended American Legion 13th District Executive board meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Post 196.
- March 1st, I attended American Legion 13th District Spring Conference at Post 421 at 10:00 a.m., where I serve as District Judge Advocate.

Upcoming Events:

- March 7th - American Legion Post 91 annual bus trip
- March 12th - American Legion Post 91 membership meeting at 8:00 p.m.

- March 23rd – American Legion Post 91 Executive board meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- March 25th – meeting in Columbus – training session
- March 26th – American Legion 13th District Executive board meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Post 421
- April 3 & 4 – Dublin, Ohio OSAVSC Spring Conference at Embassy Suites Hotel

Dan Weist – DVA

- February 18th, I attended a VFW Post 7647 monthly meeting.
- I continue to chair a committee for the OSAVSC to establish guidelines and gather information on duties and responsibilities of various positions.

Bob Potts – VVA

- February 13th, I went to St. Augustine Catholic Church and delivered an electric wheelchair to John Sattler, a two-tour Vietnam veteran.
- February 18th, I attended the VVA Chapter membership meeting.
- March 3rd, I attended the Chapter board meeting. It was decided not to participate in the 2009 Sportsman Show because of lack of volunteers to work the show. We also prepared 100 ditty bags for the veterans at the VA Hospital.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion took place concerning correspondence to Governor Ted Strickland regarding the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) attacking the required funding of the veterans service commissions. Bob Schloendorn informed the Board that he received a call from Bill Hartnett, Director of the Dept. of Veterans Services who received a copy of the letter, saying that the letter was efficient and that he appreciated the comments.

VVA chapters still have not received notification from the Court of Common Pleas requesting recommendations for appointment to the CCVSC Board to fill the VVA slot.

The Dept. of Veterans Services has granted one educational training credit to Mel Baher for 2008 giving him a total of four training credits necessary for recertification as a veterans service commissioner.

The Executive Secretary was instructed to contact the Lorain County VSC for the date, time, and location of the Spring District 2 training session.

At the request of Dr. John Wasyluk, President of the OSAVSC, John Murphy will conduct a Saturday training session on the VA claims process to those in attendance at the Spring Conference in Columbus, Ohio on April 4th.

Randy Stevenson returned to his former position of Eligibility Specialist on Monday, March 2nd, following a one-year deployment to Iraq. The staff welcomed him back by having a pot luck luncheon.

Client cases, in which funeral homes were found to be charging clients a different amount for a funeral than they were submitting to the VSC, have been referred to the Sheriff's Department. Asst. County Prosecutor Tom O'Donnell gave an update saying that search warrants have been issued to the funeral homes involved and the matter is still a work in progress.

The Executive Director noted that we have not yet received the final report on the Northeast Ohio Veterans Home.

A CCVSC representative will be stationed at a booth at the Cleveland Auto Show, courtesy of the VA.

NEW BUSINESS:

Priority 8 veterans, who are not already enrolled in the VA system, are encouraged to enroll after June 1, 2009. Those who register prior to June 1st will automatically receive a denial.

Roger Erickson, Sr. Systems Administrator, is to purchase a broadband connection and cordless mouse for each of commissioner.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

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

Richard Danielson

- Nursing home requirements

Lawrence Florence

- Quality assurance review of funeral home charges
- Shredding of Iraq veterans claims in Detroit, Michigan

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 11:02 a.m.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Weist, Zung. 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)