



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCHI**  
COMMISSIONER



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



Veterans of Foreign Wars  
**CLAYTON E. UZELL**  
COMMISSIONER

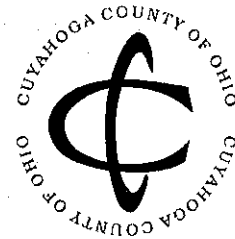


Vietnam Veterans of America  
**BOB POTTS**  
COMMISSIONER

**JON REISS**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission

Ph: 216.698.2600 • Fax: 216.698.2650  
Email: [vscmail@cuyahogacounty.us](mailto:vscmail@cuyahogacounty.us)  
1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115



### MINUTES

DATE: March 19, 2014 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Clayton E. Uzell, President  
Daniel T. Weist, Vice President  
Mel Baher, Secretary  
Frank Pocci, Commissioner  
Bob Potts, Commissioner  
Jon Reiss, Executive Director  
Lorri Slivka, Executive Secretary  
Brian Gutkoski, Asst. County Prosecutor

VISITORS: Mick Panek

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by President Clay Uzell 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 Consent Agenda and to accept the agenda with the necessary corrections and/or additions. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

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

#### **STATE OF THE COMMISSION AND FINANCE REPORT (Attached)**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Dan Weist to accept the report of the Executive Director as submitted.

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

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to approve the revised Food and Shelter Monthly Allowance Guideline dated March 19, 2014, effective immediately.

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

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Jon Reiss discussed the opportunity to use the Quick Series Catalog as a pocket guide of benefits available to veterans. The catalog is a compilation of books that provides information to veterans such as benefits, deployment, education, employment and health and wellness. The Board asked Jon to assemble

a short list of pertinent information from the catalog and distribute approximately 100 copies through our Social Work Dept., on a trial basis, before a final decision is made.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Dan Weist to approve Resolution 2014-15 requesting authority for the employees of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission to utilize agency owned vehicles for transportation out of state.

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

A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Frank Pocci to approve Resolution 2014-16 providing for the renewal of RTA bus ads for the CCVSC for twelve months, March 2014 through February 2015, expenses not to exceed \$68,580.00.

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

### **GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Executive Director:

- Jon Reiss clarified that in order to obtain a VA medical I.D. card, a veteran is required to provide a type of address validation and a primary identification document. For a detailed list of these documents, please contact the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center's information desk at 216-698-3800, Ext. 4444.
- Jon noted that the VA is now working on a presumptive condition for anthrax.
- The Appeals Officer will now be using a new appeals worksheet that is designed to keep on track and to eliminate paperwork.
- An eligibility specialist will now be stationed at the Community Resource Referral Center (CRRC), 7000 Euclid Avenue, one day a week on Thursday, to help provide assistance to veterans.

Bob Potts mentioned that helicopters and C-123s coming back from Vietnam contained Agent Orange. Mechanics that worked on the equipment and diagnosed with cancer have been denied VA benefits because they were not "boots on the ground." Bob also noted that Army units that made a combat landing in Vietnam can now get a Bronze Arrowhead added to their award for that combat landing. For additional information, please contact your congressman.

Judge Tim McMonagle and several other judges have formed a committee to address the homeless veterans' issue. They are currently working with Dan Weist to schedule a meeting at our office to discuss the matter.

President Uzell opened the floor to visitors for any comments. The following bullet points were topics of discussion.

#### Mick Panek

- CCVSC financial assistance
- Classification of a homeless veteran
- CCVSC new bus ad
- VA pain management
- VA dental programs

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to go into Executive Session to discuss medical expenses for veterans and a personnel issue.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell, Weist. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:25 a.m.)

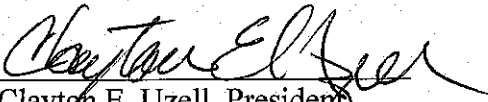
A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular order of business.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell, Weist. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (12:15 p.m.)

In Executive Session, the Board was advised of a situation involving a veteran's medical expenses. The Executive Director was instructed on how to proceed. The Executive Director was also advised on how to proceed with the personnel issue.

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to adjourn the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

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

  
Clayton E. Uzell, 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:	Melinda Halliburton, Service Office Manager (216-698-2639)
Memorial Affairs:	Laurene Rutkowski, Manager (216-698-2655)
Social Work Dept.:	Terry Walker, Manager, Social Worker/Case Management (216-698-2379)
Executive Director:	Jon Reiss (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**

**February, 2014**

**Issued by:**

### **The CCVSC Commissioners**

**Clayton E. Uzell - President, VFW**

**Daniel Weist – Vice President, DAV**

**Mel Baher – Secretary, American Legion**

**Frank Pocci – AMVETS**

**Bob Potts – VVA**

**March 19, 2014**

**Submitted By: Jon Reiss – Executive Director**

The following report summarizes the progress and state of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission as of February 28, 2014:

**Executive:**

The Executive Director

- Met with Sue Feuhrer
- Met with Sandy Green and Larry Brewster about Real Estate Opportunities for Veterans
- Met with Tom Sweeney regarding the Fisher House
- Attended the Joint Veterans Commission Veteran of Year Banquet
- NEOCH Outreach Leaders Meeting
- Attended the Medina County Resource Fair
- Attended the VA Service Organization monthly meeting
- Met with ODVS Director
- Met with the NEO Veterans Initiative and Red Cross
- Met with representatives from Marine for Life Program
- Met with Laura Pechaitis and John Ryan from Sherrod Browns Office
- Attended State Representative Anielski Veterans Benefits Fair
- Met with Brian Albrecht from the Plain Dealer

**Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

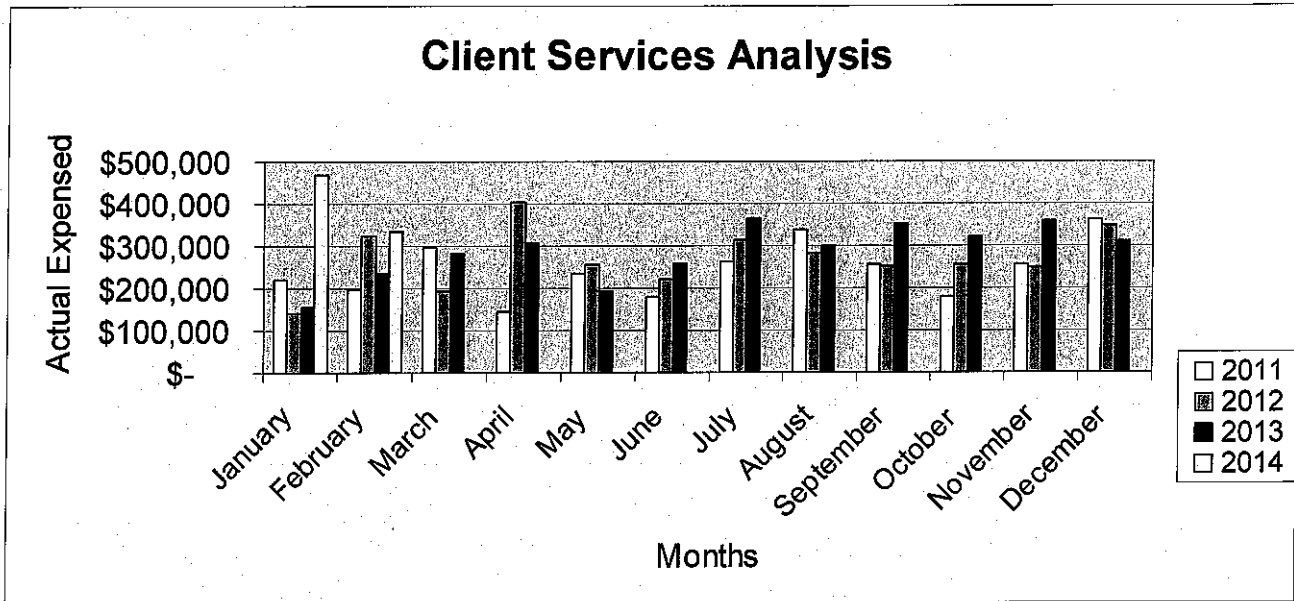
- Submitted: 190
- Positive: 187
- Negative: 3
  - 2 Veterans upset because of FA decision, not staff behavior
  - 1 left no contact information or details

## Finance Department

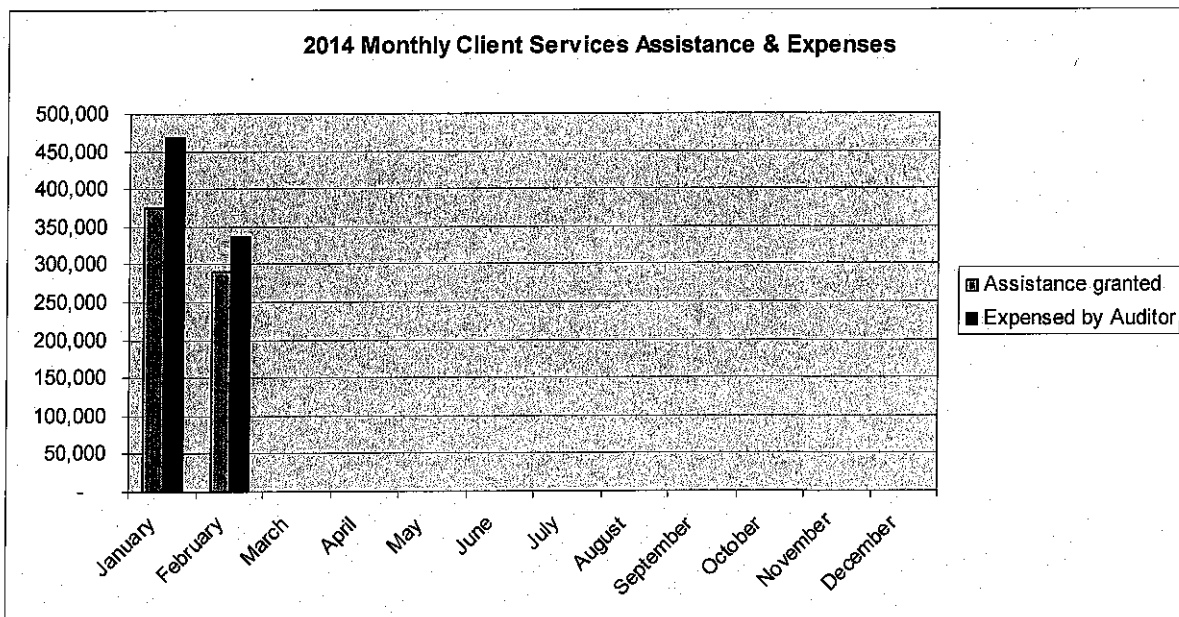
Below are selected February reports from the CCVSC Finance Department. The following charts/graphs depict the overall expenditures by area and type.

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

### Comparative Chart Analysis



### Actual 2014 Expenses



## Total 2014 Expense Analysis

	Total	YTD	YTD	Remaining	2014	Budget
	Budget	Expenditure	Encumbr	Expenditures	Projection	Variance
<b>Salaries</b>	1,823,984	330,165	-	1,422,507	1,752,672	71,312
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	638,394	125,224	-	488,211	613,435	24,959
<b>Commodities</b>	33,000	4,124	-	27,274	31,398	1,602
<b>Contract Services</b>	507,477	47,158	281,183	419,298	466,456	41,021
<b>Controlled Expenditures</b>	323,643	-	-	323,643	323,643	-
<b>Client Services</b>	3,251,069	804,387	-	2,709,220	3,513,607	(262,538)
<b>Other Expenditures</b>	358,377	53,263	7,309	255,373	308,636	49,741
<b>Capital Outlay</b>	51,000	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	26,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	6,986,944	1,364,321	313,492	5,670,526	7,034,847	(47,903)

**Assistance Department:**

- February 2014: \$336,124 (Up from \$233,985 in 2013)
- YTD 2014: \$804,388 (Up from \$387, 512 in 2013)

The February Financial Assistance Department activity report follows below.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Feb. 2014</b>	<b>Feb. 2013</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Clients seeking assistance	711	720	-1.25
Applications taken	605	609	-.66
Applications withdrawn	(12)	(27)	-55.56
Applications denied	(45)	(43)	4.65
Applications approved	548	539	1.67
Transportation only approvals	(365)	(367)	-.55
F/A applications approved	183	172	6.40

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>YTD 2014</b>	<b>YTD 2013</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Clients seeking assistance	1546	1593	-2.95
Applications taken	1327	1336	-.67
Applications withdrawn	(45)	(56)	-19.64
Applications denied	(103)	(115)	-10.44
Applications approved	1179	1165	1.20
Transportation only approvals	(738)	(789)	-6.46
F/A applications approved	441	376	17.29

- First Time Assistance
  - February 2014: 38 (Down from 40 in 2013)
    - 35 approved, 0 at Level III, 1 partial, 1 denied, 1 withdrawn
  - YTD 2014: 102 (Up from 77 in 2013)



**Listed below is a breakdown of appeals for the month of February, 2014.**

Appeal Officer workdays	7
Cases on hand at beginning of month	25
Cases received	39
Cases worked	<u>54</u>
Cases on hand at end of month	10

<b><u>Appeal Officer Appeals</u></b>	<b><u>Feb.</u></b> <b><u>2014</u></b>	<b><u>YTD</u></b>
Cases Approved	27	51
Cases Denied	19	31
Cases Denied/withdrawn, no show	6	8
Cases Withdrawn	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>
<b>Total</b>	54	95

<b><u>Board Appeals</u></b>	<b><u>Feb.</u></b> <b><u>2014</u></b>	<b><u>YTD</u></b>
Cases Approved	6	11
Cases Denied	6	15
Cases Withdrawn	0	0
Cases Verifying Fraud	2	6
Client is Eligible (Review DD-214)	0	0
Fraud Not Verified	0	0
Attempted Fraud	0	0
Sanctioned	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	14	32

**Medical and Other Transportation:**

- Total: \$9,871.50 (YTD: \$19,955.00)
- Medical Bus Tickets: \$9,581.50 (YTD: \$19,365.00)
- Other: \$290 (YTD: \$590)

**Medical and Dental Programs:**

- Total: \$2,600 (YTD: \$5,816)
  - Dental: \$1,130 (YTD: \$3,686)
  - Vision: \$1,470 (YTD: \$2,130)
  - Hearing Aid: \$0 (YTD: \$0)

**Memorial Affairs Department:**

- February 2014: \$17,464.90 (Up \$5772.90 from February 2013)
- YTD 2014: \$30,447.90
- 19 Indigent burials
  - Air Force: 3
  - Marine: 1
  - Navy: 2
  - Army: 13

**Following are the 2014 Year to Date statistics for Memorial Affairs:**

	<b>Feb.</b>	<b>2014 YTD</b>	<b>Feb.</b>	<b>2013 YTD</b>
DD-214 Search	109	234	98	222
Benefits Counseling	811	1870	931	1797
Undelivered-Incorrect Headstone/Research	10	15	3	16
Presidential Memorial Certificates	88	190	110	192
National Cemetery Referrals	56	131	67	149
Blue Star Service Banners	0	0	1	1
Indigent Burials	19	32	12	23

**Veterans Service Officers:**

VSO Randy Stevenson at Parma

	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	77	247
Pension claims and follow ups	14	30
Medical	0	0
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	10	28
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	103	285
All Other	<u>45</u>	<u>90</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>680</b>

VSO's Iris DeHart and Libby Jenkins at Wade Park

	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	63	117
Pension claims and follow ups	45	81
Medical	3	7
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	21	39
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	276	563
All Other	<u>90</u>	<u>177</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>984</b>

Main Office

	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	294	709
Pension claims and follow ups	131	314
Medical	9	22
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	66	133
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	713	1568
All Other	<u>333</u>	<u>635</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1546</b>	<b>3381</b>

- Interviews: 1383 (YTD: 3,016)
- FA Referrals: 33 (YTD: 83)
- Total: 1416 (YTD: 3099)
- Phone Calls: 3304 (YTD: 6709)

## Social Work and Employment

### Social Work

- Total Signed In: 156 (YTD: 299)
  - Seen: 135 (YTD: 252)
  - Not Seen: 4 (YTD: 15)
  - Offline: 17 (YTD: 32)
  - New Veterans: 40 (YTD: 65)
- Veterans Receiving Consultation: 102 (YTD: 178)
- Veterans receiving follow-up: 33 (YTD: 74)
- Monthly Activities
  - February 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> – Veterans Treatment Dockets
  - February 27<sup>th</sup> – Preparation for Supreme Court Certification Site Visit with Veterans Treatment Docket.

### Referrals

- Internal Referrals
  - FA: 52
  - VSO: 47
- Outside Agencies (10 or more Veterans Referred)
  - VA Medical: 24
  - Food Stamps: 12
  - Employment
    - ODJFS: 12
    - CEOGC: 10

### Employment

- Internal Referrals: 43
  - Consultation: 28
  - Orientation/Group: 12
  - Offline: 2
  - No Contact: 1
- Total Seen: 58 (YTD: 58)
- Offline: 80 (YTD: 80)
- Rescheduled/No-Show/Cancelled: 23 (YTD: 23)
- Employment Orientation: 13 (YTD: 13)
- Direct Placements: 1 (YTD: 3)

## **Information Systems:**

### **Mobile Kits**

3 laptops have been formatted. Printer software still needs to be loaded. Identification and procurement of 3 mobile scanners and 3 signature pads is still not complete.

### **Internet Explorer**

Internet Explorer 11 updates will be completed by COB 3/13/14.

### **PC Purchase**

PC and Monitor price should be \$930.00 per unit, without Microsoft Office. The workstations come with a 5 year warranty. We should be able to place the CSR on Friday. MS Office 2013 Standard package is \$251.00 per unit. It includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Outlook and Publisher. Steve mentioned requiring the Visio software. I will need to find out who else in the office uses it. I also could use it for office layout and equipment diagrams. I sent a request for a Visio quote today.

### **Network Changes**

None

### **VA issuance of bus tickets at McCafferty and Parma**

VA is awaiting resolution of bus ticket process from Jon. If we move forward, I will just need to check out the equipment functionality at the designated install site. Melinda Roberts and Randy already have VPN accounts.

### **Encrypted email between the VSC and the VA**

Requested that Steve order 1 x IOGEAR card reader from the QRS rep. If it functions properly we can move forward with ordering the required amount.

### **Speech recognition software**

I am ready to train new staff as necessary. Estimate 4 hours training to go through the automated tutorial/training session twice, employee practice, and then follow training as necessary. It will probably take several days to get used to using.

### **Ohio Veterans Home Network:**

In February, no veterans were taken to the OVH for tour and admission evaluation.

At the OVH, there are 4 beds available in the nursing homes and 121 beds available in the domiciliary.

**Submitted by:**

**Jon Reiss**

**Executive Director**

