



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: June 3, 2009 9:34 a.m.

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

ABSENT: Thomas O'Donnell, Asst. County Prosecutor

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 Dan Weist to dispense with the reading of the Consent Agenda as published. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

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

Asst. County Prosecutor Tom O'Donnell joined the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Commissioners' Reports

Thomas Zung – VFW

- VFW Post 1056 held their monthly meeting and voted to install an elevator lift for handicapped veterans and seniors. The post was the Honor Guard at the Euclid Memorial Day ceremony and participated in all the activities of the day and sold poppies. The ceremony was well attended.
- Memorial Day, May 24th, VFW District 7 took charge of the ceremony at the USS COD at Cleveland lakefront. The ceremony was also hosted by the District 7 Women's Auxiliary and was led by the VFW District Commander and VFW State Commander. After the well attended ceremony, Post 1056 hosted a luncheon. The weather was great and the ceremony was very respectful to those veterans who served on the USS Cod. A tribute was also extended to all veterans who have served this great country.

Frank Pocci - AMVETS

- On May 12th, the AMVETS District meeting was held at Post 80. Al Kovar, Past Commander of Post 80 was elected as Commander of the AMVETS 20th District. Congratulations to Commander Kovar as he assumes his new responsibilities. Al Kovar brings much experience and dedication to this important post.
- On May 14th, I attended the American Legion Post 91 general meeting. The election of officers took place and our AL Commissioner, Mel Baher, was re-elected as Commander. Mel has done an outstanding job and we all know he will continue to do so.
- On May 17th, I attended the AMVETS Post 80 Memorial Services in Maple Heights. The ceremony was attended by approximately 60 people and over 200 past deceased members and auxiliary members were remembered and honored. Memorial certificates and flags were distributed for comrades who departed in the last year. During the ceremony, the flag of the Maple Heights Memorial Day Association was transferred from the AL Post 309 Commander to the AMVETS Post 80 Vice Commander.
- On May 21st, I hosted ten WWII and Korean War veterans to a lunch at American Legion Post 91 in Berea. During my conversation with the vets, I found that two of them had very potential claims against the VA and referred them to our Service Office.
- On May 24th, I represented the Commission at the Memorial service in Middleburg Heights. This was a wonderful ceremony attended by approximately 1000 people. It was another opportunity to speak with veterans and encourage them, and those they may know, to use the services of our Commission. I also had an opportunity to continue promoting our services at the luncheon the city hosted after the ceremony. The Korean War Veterans, China, Burma, India War Veterans, VFW Posts 3345, 6676, 9340, 9693, AL Posts 91 & 610, the 112th Engineering Btln., ONG and the Lorain Southview High School Jr. R.O.T.C. were all represented at this ceremony. Mayor Starr was the MC.
- Of Memorial Day, May 26th, I represented the Commission by participating in the Parma Heights parade. I placed the Commission magnetic placards on the sides of a friend's classic car. The parade ended with an honor's ceremony at the Pearl Road cemetery in Parma Heights. It was a very well-attended event.
- Also on May 26th, I also participated and represented the Commission at American Legion Post on York Road in Parma. The commander asked me to speak to the membership and guests after the ceremony on how we can help veterans at the Commission. After my talk, I met with three veterans and gave them directions to the office to file a claim.
- On Friday May 29th, I attended the Italian American War Veterans Post 34 General meeting where the main topic of discussion continues to be that of increasing membership.

Mel Baher – American Legion

- May 6th, I attended American Legion 13th District meeting at Post 451 in Rocky River and participated in the Past District Commander's Post Everlasting services. I reported on the state of the CCVSC and provided information on Memorial Day flags and procedures for reporting expenditures to the District Office.
- May 14th, I conducted the American Legion Post 91 Membership meeting at 8:00 p.m. as Post Commander. I was re-elected as Post Commander for the 2009-2010 membership year.
- May 23rd, I, along with members of Post 91, decorated over 1,100 veterans' graves at Woodvale Cemetery.
- May 24th, I attended a memorial service at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Berea at 1:00 p.m.

- May 25th, I conducted flag raising services at Post 91 at 8:00 a.m. followed by memorial services at the Adams St. and Woodvale Cemeteries. Following the annual parade, I served as master of ceremonies for the Memorial Day program at McKelvey Park in downtown Berea. Mayor Kleem presented Post 91 with a community service award for its outstanding support of Berea. The photo is available in the website newsletter, www.postbythelake.com.
- May 28th, I conducted the American Legion Post 91 Executive Board meeting at 7:00 p.m. as Post Commander.

Upcoming Events for June 2009:

- Sunday, June 7th, I will be attending the American Legion 13th District Summer Convention at Post 703 in Parma Hts., starting at 10:00 a.m. Election of new District officers for the ensuing membership year will be held.
- Post 91's Membership meeting is scheduled for June 11th.
- I will be conducting a Flag Day service on Sunday, June 14th at Post 91 at 7:00 p.m.
- Post 91's Executive Board meeting is scheduled for June 28th at 7:00 p.m.

Bob Potts – VVA

- May 5th, I attended my monthly board meeting. Plans were finally made for the Memorial Day Parade in Bay Village. We also discussed the meeting schedule and programs for the upcoming year. We plan on discussing with Chapter 15, combining programs and events since both chapters are having a hard time getting volunteers.
- May 7th, I, along with three members of Chapter 249, went to Wade Park VA Hospital and gave out ditty bags to the patients at the hospital. I took the opportunity to stop in to see CCVSC employees, Robert Erb and Jack Hanley.
- May 14th, I attended American Legion Post 91 meeting for the annual election of officers.
- May 17th, I attended the dedication of the Veterans Memorial in Clinton, Ohio. This memorial is dedicated to the veterans who lost their life in the Vietnam War.
- May 22nd, I stopped at the Western Reserve National Cemetery in Rittman, Ohio and walked down Memorial Walkway to see all the new monuments that have been mounted since our Chapters monument was dedicated.
- May 25th, the Chapter marched in the Memorial Day Parade in Bay Village. From there we went to Claque Park to participate in the Memorial Day ceremonies and the dedication of the Memorial To All Veterans.
- June 2nd, I attended our Chapter's monthly Board meeting.

Dan Weist – DAV

- I assisted in the decoration of three cemeteries for Memorial Day; Lakewood Park Cemetery, Coe Cemetery in North Olmsted, and Butternut Ridge Cemetery.
- VFW Post 7647 hosted the North Olmsted Memorial Day Parade. An area of the North Olmsted Park was dedicated as Veterans Plaza. Our post participated in purchasing the memorial stone for the veterans buried there. I served as the MC and the speakers that day were Mayor Thomas O'Grady, our Executive Director, Bob Schloendorn, and my brother, Father Ned Weist.
- VFW Post 7647 was named one of the All Ohio Posts for participation in the various community activities, membership, etc. As commander, I will receive a white cap at the State Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio at the end of the month.
- Jeff Richie was elected new commander of VFW Post 7647.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bob Schloendorn reported that he has been in contact with Rick Saks from the Planning Commission and learned that the study is nearly completed. A final presentation will be made to the CCVSC Board within the next two or three meetings. Bob suggestion extending an invitation to County Commissioner Tim Hagan, Ohio House Speaker Armond Budish, State Senator Tom Patton, and Bill Hartnett, Director of the Department of Veterans' Services.

Bob Schloendorn mentioned that James Eckerle, Asst. Superintendent of the Ohio Veterans Homes, paid a visit to the CCVSC to file an Agent Orange claim. Mr. Eckerle, who served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1969, had no prior knowledge of Agent Orange, diabetes, prostate cancer, and other Vietnam presumptive disorders.

NEW BUSINESS:

Frank Pucci said that AMVETS Post 80 received correspondence from Cary Brooks, Executive Director, of a non-profit organization called Brooks Home of Recovery for Veterans of Cleveland, Ohio, soliciting funds. The organization claims to provide housing and life skills training to veterans at no cost. Bob Schloendorn was asked to look into the legitimacy of the program.

Dan Weist commented that a demolition crew is hard at work on the renovation of the first floor office space. Bob Schloendorn added that he continues to work closely with Deb Shaw on floor plans, color, and furniture details.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

It was previously decided to invite managers to attend rotating Board meetings to update the Board on their department's progress and activities. Bob Potts turned the meeting over to Jennifer Mazzeo for information on the Financial Assistance Department.

Jennifer announced that her staff is working as a team towards a common goal of assisting the financial needs of the veteran client. In addition to the department's main responsibility, Jennifer has recently tasked the following Eligibility Specialists with gathering information on specific programs:

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| Darlene Smith | - | Homeless & Housing |
| Colleen Kehoe | - | Senior Services |
| Iris DeHart | - | Prior Incarceration & Felonies |
| Robert Markowitz | - | OIF/OEF Veterans |
| Jeanne Bell | - | Employment Training |

In spite of the fact that the commission has used two computer systems within the past eighteen months, Jennifer said that her staff has adjusted well to the changes. Electronic signature pads have been delivered and will be used by clients in the very near future. Jack Hanley continues to do a good job distributing bus tickets at the Wade Park VA; we are 20-40% up from the number of tickets issued last year. Jennifer turned the meeting over to Eligibility Specialist Randy Stevenson for a brief explanation of a slide show presentation he put together for the ESs on the needs of returning veterans and their families. Randy, who recently returned from his second deployment, explained that the purpose for the slide show was to increase individual awareness of veterans and stress related issues of deployment and enlistment, and to enhance sensitivity awareness for our fellow service members and family members. Randy also touched on changes to Form DD-214.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Thomas Zung to go into Executive Session to discuss the recent suspension of an employee.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Weist, Zung. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:43 a.m.)

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

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Weist, Zung. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:10 a.m.)

As a result of discussion in Executive Session, the Executive Director was given instructions as to how to proceed with an employee disciplinary matter.

It was noted for the record that Tom O'Donnell looked into the progress of the VVA appointment on the CCVSC Board and learned that no action has been taken to date.

Terry Walker, Social Work Manager, introduced David Hatcher who was hired for the Social Work/Case Management position on May 26, 2009. The Board welcomed Mr. Hatcher to the commission.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 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)