



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: June 4, 2008 9:35 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: Tom O'Donnell, Asst. County Prosecutor

VISITORS: Art Stone, American Legion Post 451/7th District VFW.

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 May 21, 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 Dan Weist to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Level III Board Appeals meeting of May 21, 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. (No items were set aside.)

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Dan Weist to accept cases approved on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of those set aside, picked at random as part of the quality assurance program, to be addressed in Executive Session. Due to the large number of Level III appeals, the Board decided to forgo the review of cases for quality assurance.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Thomas Zung to accept cases denied on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of those set aside, picked at random as part of the quality assurance program, to be addressed in Executive Session. Due to the large number of Level III appeals, the Board decided to forgo the review of cases for quality assurance.

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

Agenda Item E1. Commissioners' Reports

Bob Potts

- May 10th – I attended a meeting at Strongsville VFW Post 3345 with fellow commissioner Thomas Zung. Staff members Jennifer Mazzeo and Robert Erb also attended and spoke about CCVSC services and benefits available to qualified veterans.
- May 20th – I attended my monthly membership meeting. Final plans were made for the Memorial Day Parade in Bay Village.
- May 23rd – I, and three other members from Chapter 249's speaker bureau, went to Rocky River High School to talk with students in the American History class about the Vietnam Experience.
- May 26th – The Chapter marched in the Memorial Day Parade in Bay Village. From there we went to Clague Park to participate in the Memorial Day Ceremonies and Dedication of the Memorial to All Veterans. The Memorial was a project done by the son of Stan Bartkiewicz, a member of Chapter 249.
- June 1st – I attended our Chapter's Board Meeting.

Thomas Zung

- On behalf of the Commissioners, I wrote a thank you letter to the VFW 3345 Strongsville Post Commander for hosting the open information meeting for CCVSC. With over 60 people in attendance, the publicity and coordination by David Hrusch and Tom Nevans was worth the effort. We had many questions from the veterans and their families and the audience appreciated meeting our staff and board members. I also sent a thank you note to CCVSC staff members, Jennifer Mazzeo and Robert Erb.
- Sunday, May 25th, the Memorial Tribute Team for the USS Code held their Memorial Day ceremony and were invited afterward to a luncheon at VFW Post 1056 Euclid. The USS Submarine Cod continues to be an attraction to the public and the volunteer members serve as a reminder to the brave sailors who serve our nation during wartime and in peacetime.
- Monday, May 26th, the Euclid City Memorial Day Parade was represented with the Honor Guard of VFW Post 1056. The Honor Guard featured in the parade marched down Lakeshore Blvd. and gathered for ceremonies at the Memorial near the library. Former

District 7 Commander, Clayton Udell, was a special guest at the Memorial. After the parade, veterans were invited to attend a luncheon at Post 1056.

- At the Village of Bratenahl, the Memorial Day Service was welcomed by Duke Young and Mayor Licastro. Featured speaker was Col. Cheryl Ludwa, soon to be deployed on her second tour to Iraq. The special guest was a WWII Tech/Sgt. who served during the Battle of the Bulge. The village had a 5k run to support cancer research before the ceremonies and the runners paid tribute to our veterans with support and participation.

Mel Baher

- May 7th – I attended the 13th District Council meeting at American Legion Post 451 at 7:30 p.m. where I serve as District Asst. Judge Advocate. The Past 13th District Commanders conducted the annual Post Everlasting Ceremony.
- May 8th – I attended the American Legion Post 91 Membership Meeting at 8:00 p.m. where I serve as 1st Vice Commander. Membership and building committee reports were given. I was nominated and won a run-off election for the position of Commander for the 2008-2009 membership year.
- May 23rd – I met with a student class from Berea High School at the Adams Street Cemetery for the purpose of explaining the meaning of Memorial Day. I WAS VERY PLEASED TO SEE THE THREE REPLACEMENT HEADSTONES FOR THE CIVIL WAR VETERANS. I understand several more replacement headstones are on order. The class participated in the placing of 18 flags on the veterans' graves in that cemetery. Interestingly, most were Civil War veterans, however, there was believed to be a Revolutionary War veteran buried there along with one WWI veteran. I also gave the class a brief history of *The American Legion*.
- May 24th – I, and several members of Post 91, decorated over 1100 graves at the Woodvale Cemetery.
- May 26th – I attended the City of Berea/American Legion Post 91 Memorial Day Program which included a ceremony at the Adams Street Cemetery, Woodvale Cemetery, our annual parade, and a program at McKelvey Park, where our guest speaker was Command Sergeant Major William Adams, a twenty year veteran of the United States Army.
- Sunday, June 1st – I attended the American Legion 13th District Summer Convention at Post 610 where I escaped from being elected to any position after holding various offices and positions for the past fourteen years.

Frank Pocci

- May 10th – I, along with Commissioners Potts and Zung, and staff members Jennifer Mazzeo and Robert Erb, attended the CCVSC presentation at the Strongsville VFW Post 3345 meeting. The occasion was well attended with over 60 veterans who had many questions for Jennifer and Robert, as well as for the commissioners.
- Friday, May 20th – I met with the current financial officer at AMVETS Post 80 to review the various responsibilities I will have when I take over as Financial Officer.

- Monday, May 26th – I participated with VFW Post 3345 in the Strongsville Memorial Day Parade. I represented the CCVSC and displayed our logo on the sides of my car. I had the opportunity to speak with Senator Spada who was in the parade as well. He was thankful for our role in shaping SB 289 and for participation by our representative, Dan Weist, in Columbus. In his discourse after the parade to the attendees, he specifically mentioned the help he received from the veterans service commissions in making sure the S.B. was written in its current form. In my conversation with Senator Spada, he assured me that, in his opinion, the bill will not have an impact on how the veterans service commissions are run. He also asked me to stop by his office and visit with him next time I am in Columbus; an invitation that, of course, was meant for any of the members of our Commission. The VFW Post 3345 Honor Guard did a great job on the Strongsville Commons as well as at the Memorial Ceremony back at the post after the parade.
- May 30th – I attended the meeting of the Italian American War Veterans where a couple of individuals thanked me for referring them to the CCVSC and told me the people here were very helpful. At the meeting, plans were firmed up for the state convention to be held on Sunday, June 8th.
- May 31st – While attending funeral services at Ripepi Funeral Home, I spoke with the director, Lou Ripepi, who told me how helpful our Memorial Affairs people are and how dedicated they are to the veterans who pass on.
- June 3rd – I attended the AMVETS Post 80 general meeting. The post continues to hold Bingo at the VA Hospitals and in their Honor Guard duties the last time they were at Rittman in May, they provided Honor services for eight funerals. At this meeting, we had the installation of officers and I was installed as the Finance Officer. Our commander (Jim Soltis) was not present as he has been hospitalized with very high blood pressure and abdominal pains. A motion was made and passed to write a letter to the Mayor of Garfield Heights regarding the inappropriate throwing of candy during the parade there (in which Post 80 participated), which was offensive to the veterans during this somber memorial remembrance.

Dan Weist

- May 21st – I was installed as commander of VFW 7647, North Olmsted.
- Memorial Day, I was the speaker at the North Olmsted Memorial Day Ceremony at Lorain Park. I also helped coordinate the placing of flags at the Lakewood Park Cemetery.

Mel Baher, who attended the Memorial Day Association of Greater Cleveland's 140th Anniversary Memorial Day Service on May 30th at CCC's Western Campus, noted for the record, that he was personally offended that the program booklet included an inappropriate request for donations for the Legacy of Care Program.

OLD BUSINESS:

Agenda Item F1. Executive Director - Submitting Personnel Requests.

There were no items for Executive Session. The Executive Director did mention that the announcement for the Service Officer – In Training position has been posted for internal applicants for a minimum of 10 working days.

NEW BUSINESS:

Agenda Item G1. Level III Board Appeal Meeting for June 18, 2008; Cancel or Reschedule

The Board decided to reschedule the June 18th Level III Board Appeal meeting to Wednesday, June 25th at 9:30 a.m. in the CCVSC boardroom.

The Regular Meeting of the Board for June 18th will be held outside the Commission at Euclid VFW Post 1056, 580 E. 200th St., Euclid, Ohio at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Item G2. Huron County VSC – Request for Donations for the New Fisher House in Dayton, Ohio

Bob Schloendorn received a letter from Carol Holden, Deputy Service Officer of Huron County VSC, requesting our help in raising money for the new Fisher House to be built at Wright Patterson Air Force Bases in Dayton, Ohio. It was agreed to send a copy of her letter to service organizations encouraging them to make a charitable contribution. (Letter enclosed)

Agenda Item G3. Food and Shelter Monthly Allowance Guideline; Increase Standard Monthly Allowances for 2008.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to accept the recommended increases to the “Food and Shelter Monthly Allowance Guideline” dated June 4, 2008 as submitted by the Executive Director.

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

Agenda Item G4. Guideline for Applying for Assistance and Verification

A motion was made by Frank Pocci and seconded by Dan Weist to accept the recommended changes to the “Guideline for Applying for Assistance and Verification” dated June 4, 2008 as submitted by the Executive Director.

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

Bob Schloendorn mentioned that we have had a good return on the survey to military veterans concerning the long-term healthcare needs of Northeast Ohio veterans. Results will be submitted to the Board some time next month.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

H1. Client Track Presentation by Sam Taylor

The presentation of the Client Track program was postponed to July.

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

Art Stone

- Art will be sworn in as Commander of the 7th District VFW on May 15th
- Local funeral homes soliciting free burial plots to veterans are not sanctioned by state or national
- Tom O’Grady, Mayor of N. Olmsted, was the speaker at the Rocky River Memorial Day Ceremony
- Congratulations to Dan Weist on his new position as Commander of VFW Post 7647

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There were no items for Executive Session.

With no further business, a motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 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)