



American Legion
MEL BAHER
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans
FRANK POCCHI
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans
CHRISTOPHER GRAU
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

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1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115

MINUTES

DATE: August 1, 2018 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Bob Potts, President
Clayton E. Uzell, Vice President
Mel Baher, Secretary
Frank Pocci, Commissioner
Christopher Grau, Commissioner
Jon Reiss, Executive Director
Brian Gutkoski, Asst. County Prosecutor
Lorri Slivka, Executive Secretary
Mary Kitko, Administrative Assistant

VISITORS: None

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

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

A motion was made by Chris Grau and seconded by Frank Pocci 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, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:

Mel Baher – American Legion

- I attended all schedule meetings of the CCVSC during the month of June 2018. Following, is a report of my activities outside of the Commission for the month of June.
- Sunday, June 3rd – I attended the American Legion 13th District Summer Convention held at American Legion Post 421 in Fairview Park, Ohio. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. I presented the executive board approved financial reports for April 2018, as District Finance Officer. Also, elections of officers for the 2018-2019 membership year were held. I was re-elected as Finance Officer and as a delegate to the American Legion National Centennial Convention to be held in Minneapolis, MN, August 24-30th.
- Thursday, June 14th – Prior to the monthly membership meeting, Post 91 conducted its annual Flag Day ceremony on the Post pavilion at 6:00 p.m. At 7:00 p.m., I attended the American Legion

Post 91 membership meeting. I presented my updated membership report, as 1st Vice Commander.

- Monday, June 25th – I attended the American Legion 13th District Council executive board meeting held at American Legion Post 421 in Fairview Park, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the May 2018 financial reports for executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, June 28th – I departed for Columbus, Ohio to attend the American Legion Department of Ohio Annual convention. I was unable to attend my American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting due to my trip to Columbus.
- I attended all scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of July 2018. Following is a report of my activities outside of the Commission for the month of July, 2018.
- Wednesday, July 4th – I volunteered at Post 91's annual Fourth of July events which included parking cars starting at 6:00 p.m., until the fireworks show at 10:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 11th – I attended the American Legion 13th District council meeting held at American Legion Post 196 in Brecksville, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the executive board approved financial reports for May 2018, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, July 12th – I attended the American Legion Post 91 membership meeting. I presented my updated membership report, as 1st Vice Commander.
- Monday, July 23rd – I attended the American Legion 13th District Council executive board meeting held at American Legion Post 196 in Brecksville, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the June 2018 financial reports for executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, July 26th – I attended the American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting and presented an updated membership report, as 1st Vice Commander.

Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- I completed the June and July financial reports for Post 80 and have submitted the tax reports for the fiscal year ending in May 2018.
- The honor guard continues to serve funeral honor duties at the Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery.
- The activities committee is planning several trips of military interest during 2018.
- I have been invited as an honored guest representing the Commission by the Catholic War Veterans at the commemoration of their 60th anniversary on August 12th.
- I filed the donation reimbursements for the Memorial Day contribution by Post 80.
- The AMVETS 74th Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida on August 7th.

Other Activities:

- In June and July, I attended all the scheduled CCVSC open public meetings and Level III appeals hearings.
- I attended the Italian American War Veterans (ITAM) monthly meeting in June and July. As finance officer, I also completed our financial report.
- June 10th, the ITAM Dept. of Ohio held its annual convention. New officers were elected. I was reappointed as the state adjutant.
- I took one veteran to the Parma CBOC to file a claim for hearing, and referred another vet to our downtown office. I am also working on getting paperwork for a veteran whose documents were lost in the St. Louis fire.
- I participated in the Memorial Day parade in Middleburg Hts. using the CCVSC van. I had help from some of the ladies there in distributing CCVSC brochures.

Christopher Grau – DAV

- June 13th – I attended the VSC appeals meeting.
- June 19th – I attended the JVC of Lakewood/ Rocky River meeting.
- June 20th – I attended the VSC open public meeting.

- June 23rd – I attended a presentation by Veterans Court Graduate in Westlake, Ohio.
- June 27th – I attended the VSC appeals meeting.
- June 28th – I attended the Cuyahoga County Veterans Treatment Court Graduation (Judge Jackson).
- July 4th – No meeting due to Independence Day.
- July 11th – I attended the VSC appeals meeting.
- July 13th – I attended the City of Rocky River’s Flag Dedication Ceremony with JVC and CCVSC.
- July 18th – I attended the VSC open public meeting.
- July 25th – I attended the VSC appeals meeting.
- July 27th through July 29th – I attended the OSAVSC Summer Convention.

Clay Uzell – VFW

- June 6th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- June 6th through 10th – I attended the VFW Department of Ohio Convention in Columbus, Ohio. I attended all business sessions and gave the year-end safety report for the State. I also attended the “Night at the Races” banquet.
- June 13th – I attended the CCVSC Level III appeals hearings.
- June 18th – I attended the VFW Post 7536 meeting. General business was discussed and we also talked about plans for the picnic to be held in Gates Mills on August 19th.
- June 20th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- June 27th – I attended the Level III appeals hearings.
- July 11th – I attended the Level III appeals hearings.
- July 13-14th – I attended the VFW Dept. of Ohio C of A Conference in Columbus, Ohio. I reported on the new programs and schools of instruction.
- July 16th – I attended the VFW Post 7536 meeting. We finalized plans for the Post picnic and several members had questions on touring OVH in Sandusky and filing claims for newly diagnosed cancer.
- July 18th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- July 20-26th – I left for Kansas City, MO to attend the VFW National Convention. I was appointed National Aid-De-Camp and attended business sessions and events. My wife, Sandra, announced her candidacy for the high office of Auxiliary National Guard for 2019-2020. I also attended President Trump’s visit.
- July 29th – I attended the retirement party for Bill Seagraves, Director of VFW Charities, held at Post 8794 Whitehall, in Columbus, Ohio.

Bob Potts – VVA

- During the months of June and July 2018, there were no Chapter 249 board and membership meetings because of summer break.
- I attended all CCVSC open public meetings and Level III appeals hearings held in June and July.
- I spoke to a Vietnam Veteran who needed assistance with veterans’ benefits. She is having trouble getting a response from the VA. I also counseled a Veteran regarding his claim for Agent Orange exposure as a Blue Water Navy Veteran.

OLD BUSINESS:

At last month’s meeting, Jon Reiss provided a chart with recommended changes and considerations for service deployment of staff that includes a specialty area of Senior Services. Jon also recommended that the Board revisit the concept of varied office hours; four ten-hour days and five eight-hour days. After further review and discussion, it was recommended that Jon provide security costs involved and that staff meetings be held quarterly. Brian Gutkoski also recommended that policies and procedures be developed for Senior Services.

A motion was made by Chris Grau and seconded by Mel Baher to approve the Executive Director's recommendation for Senior Services and a varied work week, on a trial basis for a six month period, January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019.

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

The separated spouse policy was revisited due to an influx of financial assistance cases where a married couple, both veterans, have separated and the terms of assistance became an issue in eVetAssist. Several options were discussed and the Director will address this issue with staff for further input before policy changes are made.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Chris Grau shared a few highlights from his attendance at the OSAVSC Summer Convention at the Columbus Marriott Northwest from July 27-29, 2018.

- ▶ Agent Orange claims of Vietnam Veterans that served in Thailand are now broken down into two categories: tactical grade (off base) and commercial grade (on base).
- ▶ Embassy Suites is not honoring contract prices for the Fall Conferences while renovations are being made. The Executive Secretary will follow up and confirm reservations already made.
- ▶ The National Veteran's Memorial Museum in Columbus is to open in the fall of 2018. The official date of the opening ceremony has not been set.
- ▶ Terry Prince, the new Ohio Veterans Home Superintendent, was a guest speaker. Mr. Prince is the sixth appointee in ten years.

Jon Reiss will be attending Community Veterans Engagement Board program in Washington, D.C. from August 22-24, 2018 and the 5th Annual Warrior Community Integration Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia from September 5-7, 2018.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to go into Executive Session to discuss a legal issue.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:17 a.m.)


The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 11:29 a.m.

In Executive Session, the Board received clarification on a legal matter from the Assistant County Prosecutor. The Executive Director was instructed on how to proceed.

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

With no further business, a motion was made by Clay Uzell and seconded Chris Grau to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

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



Bob Potts, President



Mel Baher, Secretary

CONTACT INFORMATION

Requests for Financial Assistance/
Filing claims with the Dept. of

Veterans' Affairs/Memorial Affairs:
Social Work Dept.:

Executive Director:

Commissioners:

Melinda Halliburton, Service Office Mgr. (216-698-2639)

Terry Walker, Social Worker/Case Mgmt.) (216-698-2379)

Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)

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