



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 19, 2008 9:34 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
Thomas P. O'Donnell, Asst. County Prosecutor

VISITORS: Diane Snyder Cowan, Hospice of the Western Reserve; Richard Danielson, Korean War Veterans Post 69; Dave Budzik, City of Cleveland; and CCVSC staff – Jeff Sedlak, Laurene Rutkowski, Patty Fowler, Murray Evans, Mary Kitko, and Dave Maier.

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 Dan Weist to dispense with the reading of the minutes of March 5, 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 Dan Weist and seconded by Thomas Zung to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Level III Board Appeals meeting of March 5, 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 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. (One item was set aside.)

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to accept cases approved on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of VSC case file #86854 and #85142 that were set aside, picked at random as part of the quality assurance program, to be addressed in Executive Session. AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to accept cases denied on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of VSC case file #83939 and #86842 that were set aside, picked at random as part of the quality assurance program, to be addressed in Executive Session. AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to accept indigent burials approved for February 2008 as listed on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of those set aside, to be addressed in Executive Session. (None were set aside.)

President Frank Pocci moved to the Good of the Order for a presentation by Ms. Diane Snyder Cowan of Hospice of the Western Reserve. Ms. Cowan, Director of the Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center, explained services provided by the center including grief counseling for children and adults, support groups, school and workplace services, crisis response, and the Peaceful & Proud Program, personalized care for veterans.

Agenda Item E1. Executive Director's State of the Commission and Finance Report (Attached)

In addition, Bob Schloendorn noted that discussions concerning retained office space at the Wade Park VA continue to be a work in progress.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to accept the report of the Executive Director.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

Agenda Item F1. Executive Director – Submitting Personnel Requests

The Executive Director had a personnel issue and a client case file to discuss with the Board in Executive Session.

NEW BUSINESS:

The CCVSC presentation at Strongsville VFW Post #3345 on March 8th was canceled due to inclement weather and rescheduled for Saturday, May 10th at 1:00 p.m. The Executive Director will check with those involved and confirm their attendance with the post.

Discussion took place regarding President Bush's Economic Stimulus Package and how it applies to veterans and veterans' organizations. A copy of frequently asked questions about the rebate and the necessary forms for posts and chapters to file will be included with the minutes.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE IRS AT 1-800-829-1040 OR THROUGH THE INTERNET AT www.irs.gov.

Dan Weist mentioned that the OSAVSC District 2 meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 31st. Information on the location of the meeting is not yet available.

Murray Evans, service officer, represented the CCVSC at a VVA booth at the Sportsman Show this year. Bob Potts extended a thank you to Murray for his help in answering veterans' questions and for his assistance in the tear down at the end of the event.

It is the Board's intention to hold a few Regular Board meetings outside the Commission to afford the public and veterans community an opportunity to attend a meeting at another time and location. Discussion took place on several possible sites and public notice will be given once this information becomes available.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

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

David Budzik

- The summer Homeless Stand Down will be sponsored by the Salvation Army and is tentatively scheduled for July 4th.
- August 2008 has been set for the first annual VetAid National Concert Series. Cleveland will be the host city for a weekend long series of events to help VetAid National raise money in support of our veterans.
- The City of Cleveland has received Memorial/Flag Day requests from the Joint Veterans Commission.
- The Police Memorial Day Parade is scheduled for Friday, May 16th

Richard Danielson

- Absentee ballots for veterans at the VA hospitals
- CCVSC Advisory Committee

Asst. Prosecutor Tom O'Donnell left the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go into Executive Session to discuss client cases and a personnel issue.

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:20 a.m.)

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

AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (12:25 p.m.)

Two case files, pulled from the Consent Agenda's list of cases approved for further investigation, were reviewed and found in order. A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to accept VSC case file #86854 and #85142.

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

Two case files, pulled from the Consent Agenda's list of cases denied for further investigation, were reviewed and found in order. A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Bob Potts to accept VSC case file #83939 and 86842.

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

Case file #72417 was withdrawn from the March 5, 2008 Level III Appeal Meeting and given to the Executive Director for further investigation. Bob Schloendorn submitted his findings to the Board. A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to accept VSC case file #72417. AYES: Potts, Zung, Baher, Weist, Pocci. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to adjourn the meeting at 12:26 p.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) |

CUYAHOGA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

Progress Report on the State of the Commission

February, 2008

Issued by:

The CCVSC Commissioners

Frank Pocci – President, AMVETS

Bob Potts– Vice President, VVA

Thomas Zung – Secretary, VFW

Daniel T. Weist – DAV

Mel Baher – American Legion

March 19, 2008

Submitted By: Robert E. Schloendorn – Executive Director

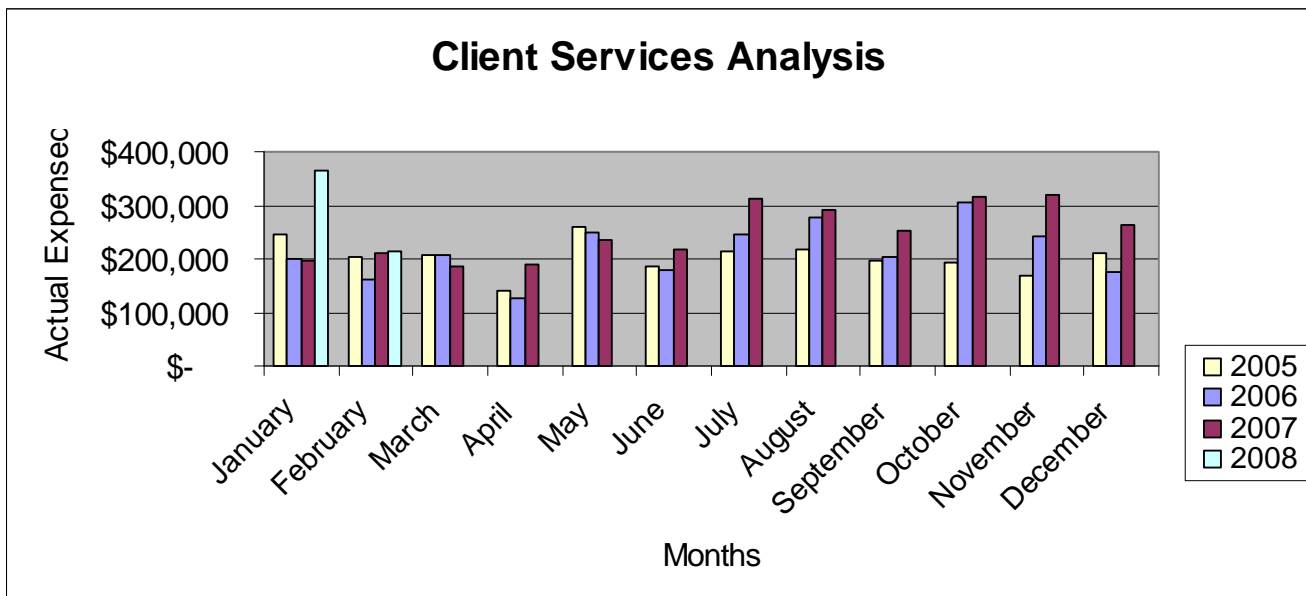
The following report summarizes the progress and state of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission as of February 29, 2008:

Finance Department

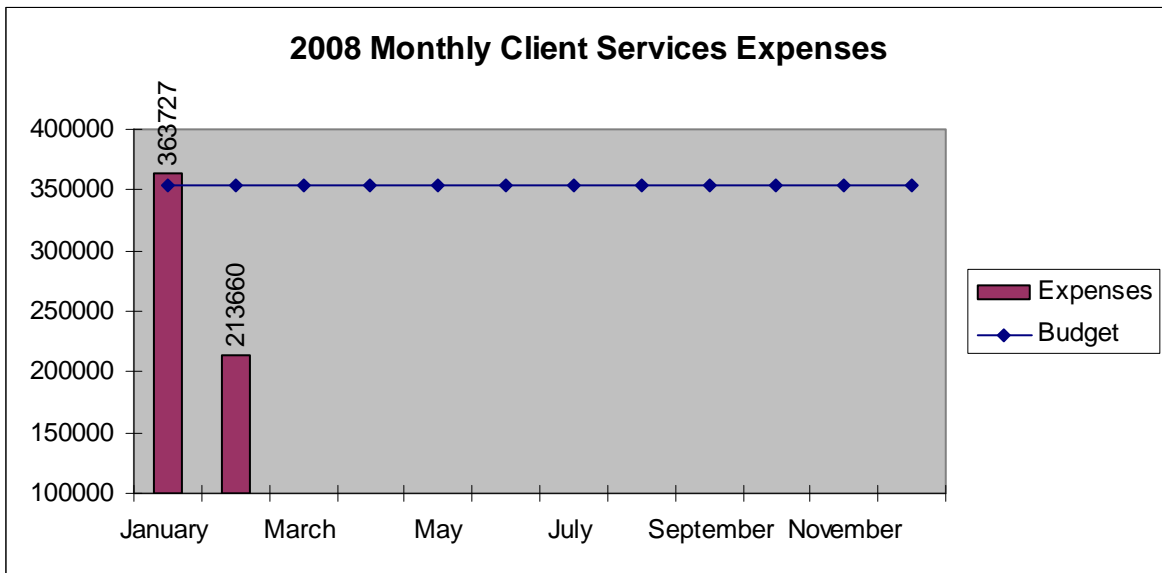
Below are selected February reports from the CCVSC Finance Department. The following charts/graphs depict the overall expenditures by area and type.

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

Comparative Chart Analysis



Actual 2008 Expenses



Total 2008 Expense Analysis

| | Total Budget | YTD Expenditure | YTD Encumbr | Remaining Expenditures | 2007 Projection | Budget Variance |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Salaries | 1,629,691 | 243,120 | - | 1,349,417 | 1,592,537 | 37,154 |
| Fringe Benefits | 607,036 | 86,250 | - | 502,989 | 589,239 | 17,797 |
| Commodities | 47,618 | 4,969 | - | 40,192 | 45,161 | 2,457 |
| Contract Services | 580,233 | 52,729 | 272,807 | 346,707 | 399,436 | 180,797 |
| Controlled Expenditures | 265,613 | - | - | 265,613 | 265,613 | - |
| Client Services | 4,296,807 | 577,388 | 172,388 | 3,250,200 | 3,827,588 | 469,219 |
| Other Expenditures | 587,369 | 28,798 | 129,588 | 330,012 | 358,810 | 228,559 |
| Capital Outlay | 81,850 | 325 | 1,350 | 44,390 | 44,715 | 37,135 |
| Total Expenditures | 8,096,217 | 993,579 | 576,133 | 6,129,520 | 7,123,099 | 973,118 |

Assistance Department:

February financial assistance totaled \$213,660, down from \$363,727 issued during January and up from \$209,922 in February of 2007. Year to date client assistance for 2008 is \$577,387 and YTD for 2007 was \$406,331, up \$171,056 .

The February Financial Assistance Department activity report follows below.

| Indicator | February 2008 | February 2007 | % Change |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Number of clients seeking hardship assistance | 785 | 637 | 23.2% |
| Total applications taken | 567 | 421 | 34.7% |
| Applications Withdrawn | (86) | (86) | 0.0% |
| Applications Denied | (62) | (40) | 55.0% |
| Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.) | 419 | 295 | 42.0% |
| Transportation only approvals | (162) | (125) | 29.6% |
| F/A applications approved | 257 | 170 | 51.2% |

| Indicator | YTD 2008 | YTD 2007 | % Change |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Number of clients seeking hardship assistance | 1763 | 1571 | 12.2% |
| Total applications taken | 1260 | 1120 | 12.5% |
| Applications Withdrawn | (185) | (194) | -4.6% |
| Applications Denied | (151) | (171) | -11.7% |
| Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.) | 924 | 755 | 22.4% |
| Transportation only approvals | (386) | (388) | -.5% |
| F/A applications approved | 538 | 367 | 46.6% |

During February, 2008, 40 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2008 YTD total to 93. In February of 2007, 20 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2007 YTD total to 53.

Listed below is a breakdown of appeals for the month of February, 2008.

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Number of workdays | <u>18.5</u> |
| Cases on hand beginning of month | 19 |
| Cases received | +38 |
| Cases worked | <u>-40</u> |
| Cases on hand end of month | 17 |

| <u>Appeal Officer Appeals</u> | <u>Feb.</u> <u>2008</u> | <u>YTD</u> |
|--|--|-------------------|
| Cases approved | 13 | 25 |
| Cases denied | 8 | 14 |
| Cases withdrawn, no show | 8 | 12 |
| Cases withdrawn | 6 | 7 |
| No determination at Level II (Referred to Level III) | 0 | 0 |
| Cases referred back to Financial Asst./Social Worker | 3 | 17 |
| *Cases not eligible for appeal | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Total | 40 | 78 |

| <u>Board Appeals</u> | <u>Feb.</u> <u>2008</u> | <u>YTD</u> |
|--|--|-------------------|
| Cases approved | 10 | 14 |
| Cases denied | 2 | 3 |
| Cases withdrawn | 1 | 2 |
| Cases verifying fraud | 0 | 0 |
| Fraud/Fraudulent application | 0 | 0 |
| Cases Referred back to financial Asst./Social Worker | 0 | 0 |
| Client not eligible (not a veteran) | 0 | 0 |
| Board agreed with Level II (no assistance granted) | 0 | 0 |
| No action taken by the Board | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Total | 13 | 19 |

Medical and Other Transportation:

February medical assistance expensed for transportation totaled \$5,018.50 for the month, \$4,934.50 for bus tickets.

Medical and Dental Programs:

Medical payments for February amounted to \$15,854 with \$14,944 expensed for Dental and \$910 for Vision.

\$ 0 in Miscellaneous Medical payments were expensed in February.

Memorial Affairs Department:

\$15,268.69 was expensed during February, 2008 for indigent veteran funeral expenses, up \$4,308.69 from February, 2008. During February, 18 indigent burials were approved. The burials were for 3 Air Force, 1 Marine, 2 Navy and 12 Army veterans.

Following are the 2008 Year to Date statistics for Memorial Affairs:

| | <u>Feb.</u> | <u>2008 YTD</u> | <u>Feb.</u> | <u>2007 YTD</u> |
|---|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| DD14 Search | 176 | 417 | 234 | 441 |
| Benefits Counseling | 898 | 1,991 | 858 | 1,690 |
| Undelivered-Incorrect Headstones/Research | 87 | 203 | 249 | 550 |
| Presidential Memorial Certificates | 202 | 466 | 319 | 617 |
| National Cemetery Referrals | 221 | 483 | 261 | 484 |
| Blue Star Service Banners | 2 | 13 | 19 | 35 |

Veterans Service Officers:

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO Melinda Halliburton for the month of February, 2008 for the Brecksville satellite office.

| | <u>Feb.</u> | <u>YTD</u> |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups | 52 | 131 |
| Pension claims and follow ups | 20 | 45 |
| Medical | 27 | 50 |
| Power of Atty. to Service Organizations | 19 | 39 |
| Misc. Applications/Correspondence | 114 | 259 |
| All Other | <u>41</u> | <u>98</u> |
| Total | 273 | 622 |

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO Robert Erb for the month of February, 2008 for the Wade Park satellite office.

| | <u>Feb.</u> | <u>YTD</u> |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups | 42 | 83 |
| Pension claims and follow ups | 25 | 66 |
| Medical | 5 | 5 |
| Power of Atty. to Service Organizations | 9 | 28 |
| Misc. Applications/Correspondence | 27 | 72 |
| All Other | <u>46</u> | <u>97</u> |
| Total | 154 | 351 |

February performance indicators report for the VSO division indicates the following activities were accomplished:

February
2008

| | VETERAN | | | | DEPENDENT | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2007 | YTD '07 | 2008 | YTD '08 | 2007 | YTD '07 | 2008 | YTD '08 |
| Compensation/DIC Claims | 30 | 70 | 41 | 97 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| Follow-up Pending Claims | 68 | 156 | 125 | 302 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| Pension Claims | 29 | 74 | 19 | 43 | 17 | 39 | 7 | 20 |
| Follow-up Pending Claims | 16 | 62 | 65 | 169 | 19 | 50 | 36 | 76 |
| Medical | 15 | 28 | 67 | 109 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 16 |
| Notice of Disagreements | 8 | 15 | 11 | 23 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Appeals & Waivers | 7 | 18 | 10 | 16 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Eligibility Verification Reports | 10 | 19 | 11 | 33 | 9 | 13 | 14 | 30 |
| Change of Address | 7 | 14 | 10 | 16 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Education Assistance | 1 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| Cert. Eligibility - Home Loan | 0 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Insurance Discharges, Request for copy | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Headstone/Marker Application | 166 | 223 | 125 | 386 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Referrals to Other Agencies | 18 | 38 | 13 | 43 | 5 | 10 | 1 | 2 |
| P of A Service Organization | 57 | 126 | 46 | 123 | 18 | 43 | 9 | 20 |
| Misc. Application/Corresp. | 115 | 307 | 302 | 709 | 21 | 47 | 38 | 80 |
| Ohio Veterans Home | 1 | 9 | 4 | 11 | | | | |
| Burial Benefits | | | | | 6 | 9 | 4 | 9 |
| High School Diploma Applications | 2 | 3 | 5 | 9 | | | | |
| Discharge Upgrades | 1 | 11 | 4 | 10 | | | | |
| 10-10 EZ Forms | 0 | 1 | 5 | 9 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 551 | 1191 | 872 | 2128 | 116 | 275 | 133 | 317 |

% Chg
50.7%

% Chg. YTD
66.8%

TOTAL (Vet + Dep)

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|----|-----|----|----|
| Interviews: Service Dept. Clients | 272 | 660 | 408 | 891 | 30 | 105 | 29 | 61 |
| Fin. Asst. Referrals | 43 | 88 | 38 | 106 | 5 | 12 | 1 | 5 |
| Office YTD | 315 | 748 | 546 | 997 | 35 | 112 | 30 | 66 |
| Phone Calls | 1600 | 3784 | 1942 | 4575 | | | | |

| | '07 | YTD '07 | '08 | YTD '08 |
|--|-----|---------|-----|---------|
| | 302 | 765 | 437 | 952 |
| | 48 | 100 | 39 | 111 |
| | 350 | 865 | 476 | 1063 |

Information Systems:

ClientTrack (Primary focus)

Jennifer, Mary and I are participating in hands-on training sessions with Sam Taylor, our Data Systems International Account Manager, at least once a week, sometime twice a week. We are finished with the forms required to collect Financial Assistance information and are working on “workflows” for 1) the Receptionist, 2) the Screener, and 3) the Eligibility Specialists. We also have in place a “Virtual Waiting Room” so we can track the progress of clients through our offices and eventually tell how long they have been waiting at each point in the process.

I have converted our Paradox databases to Microsoft Access and have encrypted and compressed them for transmittal to DSI in Salt Lake City. Their server currently won't accept the transmission and DSI is working on a solution to that problem.

VOIP phones

VOIP phones seemed stable during the last month. We did have one total “re-boot” because a VOIP controller computer had to be restarted due to a network problem caused by AT&T.

Scanning

Catchup scanning is occurring regularly. Progress depends on the availability of ES time.

A new imaging server was configured and has been ordered. Meanwhile I am developing automated procedures to back up our files over the network each night to increase reliability and speed of backup.

We are renewing the license for KnowledgeTree for 2008 with the help of the ISC. It requires the company to sign a W8, a document related to not helping terrorists, a three page document related to sole sourcing, and a campaign contribution document. Last year the ISC just purchased the annual license. This year we need a contract. I am not sure why this change is required.

UPS implementation

Replacement Uninterruptable Power Supplies are now installed for all but three people. Once this is done we will turn in the old UPS units as instructed by the County Solid Waste District.

County Ombudsman Office:

No new information or problems were reported regarding the CCVSC.

Ohio Veterans Home Network:

During January, no veterans were transported to the Sandusky home for tours and admission evaluations.

Governor's Office of Veterans Affairs:

GOVA Advisory Committee meetings are held at 10:30 PM at AMVETS Post 89, 3535 Westerville Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43224.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2008.

Submitted by:

**Robert E. Schloendorn
Executive Director**