



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

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### MINUTES

**DATE:** April 2, 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  
Brian Gutkoski, Asst. County Prosecutor  
Lorri Slivka, Executive Secretary

**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 Dan Weist 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.

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

#### Mel Baher – American Legion

- Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> – My wife and I attended the American Legion's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration held at American Legion Post 421 in Fairview Park. The event was presented by the American Legion Auxiliary and included a fine meal and entertainment by Tim Lahey, District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, and a presentation by "Soldier's of the Past."
- Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Spring Conference at American Legion Post 610 in Brook Park. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. and I presented the District Financial Report for February 2014. The guest speaker was Jeff Kaufman, Department Commander. I spoke on the CCVSC and passed out several of the new Department of Veterans Affairs posters.
- Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> – I, along with my fellow commissioners, attended the OSAVSC District 2 meeting at VFW Post 8586 in Perrysville, Ohio at 10:00 a.m. We received our first and only District training credit.

- Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion Post 91 membership meeting at 7:00 p.m. I also went with CCVSC Executive Director, Jon Reiss, to Royal Wood in N. Royalton to speak with veterans about our services.
  - Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup> – I participated in the St. Patrick's Day events at American Legion Post 91 and helped out, as needed, with the kitchen crew.
  - Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District executive board meeting at American Legion Post 610 in Brook Park. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. and I presented the updated financial reports.
- Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting at 7:00 p.m., where I serve as an elected board member.

*Upcoming Events:*

- Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> – I will be attending the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District council meeting to be held at American Legion Post 309 in Maple Hts. I will be presenting District financial reports as District Finance Officer and will remind our members of the upcoming outreach meeting to be held in May 2014 at American Legion Post 91.
- Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup> – American Legion Post 91 membership meeting.
- Thursday, April 24<sup>th</sup> – American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting.
- Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> District executive board meeting - Post 309.

Bob Potts - VVA

- March 4<sup>th</sup> – I attended the VVA Chapter 249 board meeting and membership meeting.
- March 5<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public board meeting.
- March 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended the District 2 meeting at VFW Post 8586 in Perrysville, Ohio.
- March 12<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC appeal hearings.
- March 15<sup>th</sup> – I attended the VVA Buckeye State Council membership meeting in Columbus, Ohio.
- March 19<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- March 25<sup>th</sup> – I attended the VVA Chapter 15 membership meeting and reviewed the status on the End of the Vietnam War Remembrance.
- March 26<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC appeal hearings.
- March 31<sup>st</sup> – I spoke with Tangee Johnson, Manager of special events for Cleveland, and Tom Cross from Key Towers, requesting the fountain on Mall C to be turned off.

Frank Pocci - AMVETS

- I attended AMVETS Post 60 general meeting on April 1<sup>st</sup> and gave my financial report. A motion was made, seconded and approved to discontinue the automatic monthly withdrawal for real estate taxes as all documentation has been filed and we will no longer be liable for these taxes.
- The honor guard served their monthly duty at the Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery.
- The effort to sell the Post continues. Currently, there are two bids for the property and we should know by the end of the month which one of them is viable.
- The AMVETS district commander attended our April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

*Other Activities:*

- During February, I attended all the scheduled appeals and open meetings at the CCVSC.
- I referred two veterans; one to Randy at the Parma location and one to Larry at the downtown office. Service Manager, Melinda, helped me provide contact information to a marine veteran residing in Dallas, Texas.
- I attended the monthly meeting of the Italian American War Veterans Post 34 on March 28<sup>th</sup>. We made a donation to the representative of the COD for the Kaps for Kids effort and their educational efforts.
- I attended the OSAVSC District 2 training held in Perrysville, Ohio.

- I escorted five veterans to the St. Patrick's Day event at American Legion Post 91, of which I participated.
- In March, the ITAM Post 34 officers had a meeting and agreed on a number of donations to be made during the year.
- During the month of April – I plan on attending all of the CCVSC meetings and will be attending the April 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> training for commissioners in Columbus, Ohio.

#### Dan Weist - DAV

- I attended all the open public meetings and Board appeal hearings during the month of March.
- March 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended District 2 training at VFW Post 8586 in Perrysville, Ohio.
- March 17<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Irish Good Fellowship brunch at the Woodmere Hotel before the St. Patrick's Day parade and was recognized as a representative for veterans.
- I attended the monthly membership meeting of VFW Post 7647 N. Olmsted and was nominated Quartermaster for the upcoming year.
- March 30<sup>th</sup> – I attended a VFW reverse raffle at St. Clarence and was named Veteran of the Year for the Post.

#### Clay Uzell - VFW

- March 1<sup>st</sup> – I attended the District 7 Awards Banquet at the Kirtlander Party Center on Rte. 306. I presented the Police/Firefighter of the Year award to a District 7 winner from the Brunswick police and fire departments. Awards were also presented to the Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen winners.
- March 5<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- March 6<sup>th</sup> – I went to the Columbus VFW Auxiliary Headquarters and helped assemble the incoming president's program books.
- March 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended District 2 training at VFW Post 8586 in Perrysville, Ohio.
- March 12<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC appeal hearings.
- March 16<sup>th</sup> – I attended a VFW pancake breakfast fundraiser at Chatham Post 6892.
- March 17<sup>th</sup> – I attended a meeting at Post 7536 Lyndhurst and was nominated Commander again.
- March 19<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- March 20<sup>th</sup> – I visited the Parma CBOC on Brook Park Rd.
- March 21<sup>st</sup> – I attended the Dept. Auxiliary Chairmen meeting in Columbus and helped with the set-up.
- March 24<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Auxiliary Past President's dinner at Parma VFW Post 1974 and called bingo for the ladies.
- March 26<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC appeal hearings.
- March 30<sup>th</sup> – I met with the incoming State VFW Commander and discussed planning events for the homecoming and testimonial dinner to be held in July.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The CCVSC Board outreach meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 21, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at American Legion Post 91, 91 American Legion Parkway, Berea, Ohio.

Jon Reiss is working with Rick DeChant of Tri-C to provide parking and shuttle service at Tri-C for veterans during the Indians baseball season when parking lots are reserved for day games and charge event prices.

The Executive Director issued the following directives to the CCVSC financial assistance staff:

- 1) Clothing and personal hygiene requests will only be approved after discussion with the F.A. Manager or Executive Director. Clients must show an "immediate need".

- 2) Veterans residing in shelters are not eligible for financial assistance because shelters provide housing, food, hygiene and donated clothing. Level II may approve these items only if the veterans provide documentation that they are not able to obtain these items through the shelter.
- 3) Back rent will only be considered if the veteran can provide documentation that he/she is ineligible for assistance through Cleveland Mediation, has been denied by Cleveland Mediation, or has exhausted their benefits. Approval for back rent must be discussed with the F.A. Manager.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The CCVSC 2015 Budget was presented by the Executive Director and reviewed and discussed by the Board. A motion was made by Frank Pocci and seconded by Dan Weist to approve the 2015 CCVSC Budget with recommended changes.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to approve Resolution 2014-17 requesting authority for nine CCVSC service officers to attend the OSACVSO Spring School from May 7-9, 2014 in Independence, Ohio, expenses not to exceed \$900.00.

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 2014-18 providing for the purchase of 3,861/30 second commercials for 37 weeks on Time Warner/Cox/AT&T Cable television, expenses not to exceed \$37,012.00.

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

Jon Reiss is working with the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Commander of CPD and NEOCH to assist a homeless veteran whose camp site on River Bed Road was ransacked and burned. The veteran is shelter resistant and has refused to go to the VA.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Rick DeChant, Executive Director, Tri-C Metro Campus, will be the guest speaker at American Legion Post 91 on Memorial Day.

Jon Reiss will be the keynote speaker at the Hospice of Western Reserve on May 16, 2014.

Bob Potts reported that the VVA is holding their State Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio in May 2014. People from all over the country will be present to speak on Agent Orange. David Maier, CCVSC Appeals Officer, will be offered the opportunity to participate as an outreach event. A motion was made by Dan Weist and seconded by Frank Pocci to approve normal business travel expenses for David Maier should he attend the VVA State Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio in May 2014.

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

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

Mick Panek

- CCVSC software purchase
- Commission audit

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell, Weist. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:05 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.

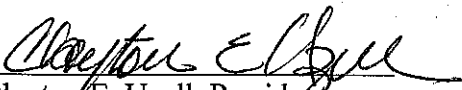
AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell, Weist. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:15 a.m.)

Personnel matters were discussed in Executive Session and the Executive Director was given instructions on how to proceed.

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

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to adjourn the meeting at 11:16 a.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)