



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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Email: vscmail@cuyahogacounty.us
1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115



MINUTES

DATE: April 15, 2015 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Daniel T. Weist, President
Mel Baher, Vice President
Frank Pocci, Secretary
Bob Potts, Commissioner
Clayton E. Uzell, Commissioner
Jon Reiss, Executive Director
Brian Gutkoski, Asst. County Prosecutor
Lorri Slivka, Executive Secretary

VISITORS: Honorable Charles Patton, Jr., Derek Moore, Gary Kopchak

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by President Dan Weist 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 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.

A motion was made by Clay Uzell and seconded by Mel Baher to go out of the regular order of business for a presentation by Judge Charles Patton, Jr., of the Cleveland Municipal Court.

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

Judge Patton spoke about the mission, goals and objectives of the Court's Veterans Treatment Specialized Docket. Staff members Derek Moore, Coordinator, and Gary Kopchak, Probation Officer, provided an explanation of eligibility and the volunteer mentoring program. Judge Patton further explained that the purpose of their visit is to develop a partnership with the CCVSC to better assist the veterans in Cuyahoga County. Board members provided a brief explanation of CCVSC benefits and services and offered some suggestions on how we could assist him with his program.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go back to the regular order of business.

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

STATE OF THE COMMISSION AND FINANCE REPORT (attached)

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Clay Uzell to accept the report of the Executive Director as given.

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

The Board recessed at 10:46 a.m. and reconvened at 10:55 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to approve the revised Guideline for Medical Transportation dated April 15, 2015, effective April 21, 2015. Under discussion, the Executive Director noted that according to an opinion from Chief Legal Counsel of the Ohio Dept. of Veterans Affairs, transportation to and from VA Medical Centers is required by 5901.03 as an affirmative duty of the county veterans service commissions and not a benefit to veterans in need. Therefore, the 90-day residency requirement does not apply.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Weist. NAYS: Uzell. Motion carried.

The Executive Director provided board members with a revision to the proposed 2016 Budget. A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to adopt the revised CCVSC proposed 2016 Budget as submitted.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

Jon Reiss distributed a new version of the CCVSC Employment Application form. Following some discussion, the new version was approved and will now be available in a portable document format (PDF) on the CCVSC website.

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to approve the new Financial Assistance Procedures & Training Manual effective April 21, 2015 with modifications. The new manual will replace the commission's current financial assistance policies and guidelines.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to go out of the regular order of business and into Executive Session.

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

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

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell, Weist. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:30 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. (11:39 a.m.)

In Executive Session, employee status and compensation was discussed and the Executive Director was instructed on how to proceed.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to return to the regular order of business.

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

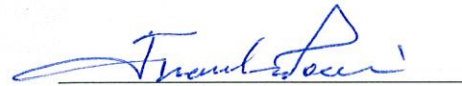
GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Douglas McGilvray, Operations Specialist, will be retiring from the CCVSC effective April 24, 2015. The Board extended best wishes to Doug in his retirement and presented him with a plaque for his nine years of dedicated service to the commission.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

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


Daniel T. Weist, President


Frank Pocci, Secretary

CONTACT INFORMATION

Requests for Financial Assistance:	Steve Fernandez, Finance Operations Manager (216-698-2391)
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)

CUYAHOGA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

Progress Report on the State of the Commission

March, 2015

Issued by:

The CCVSC Commissioners

**Daniel Weist – President, DAV
Mel Baher – Vice President, American Legion
Frank Pocci – Secretary, AMVETS
Bob Potts – VVA
Clayton E. Uzell - VFW**

April 15, 2015

Submitted By: Jon Reiss – Executive Director

The following report summarizes the progress and state of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission as of March 31, 2015:

Executive:

The Executive Director

- Met with Jeff Heinrich, Regional Liaison for the Ohio Treasurer's Office
- Met with Skip Gavorski from Legal Shield
- Attended the Cleveland Recruiting Battalion Awards Ceremony
- Met with Armand Buddish
- Attended Veterans Employment Stand-down with ODJFS and CEOGC
- Attended Network After Work event
- Met with Barbara Krause from WVIZ
- Attended the Wave Open House
- Attended the Last Days in Vietnam planning meeting

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

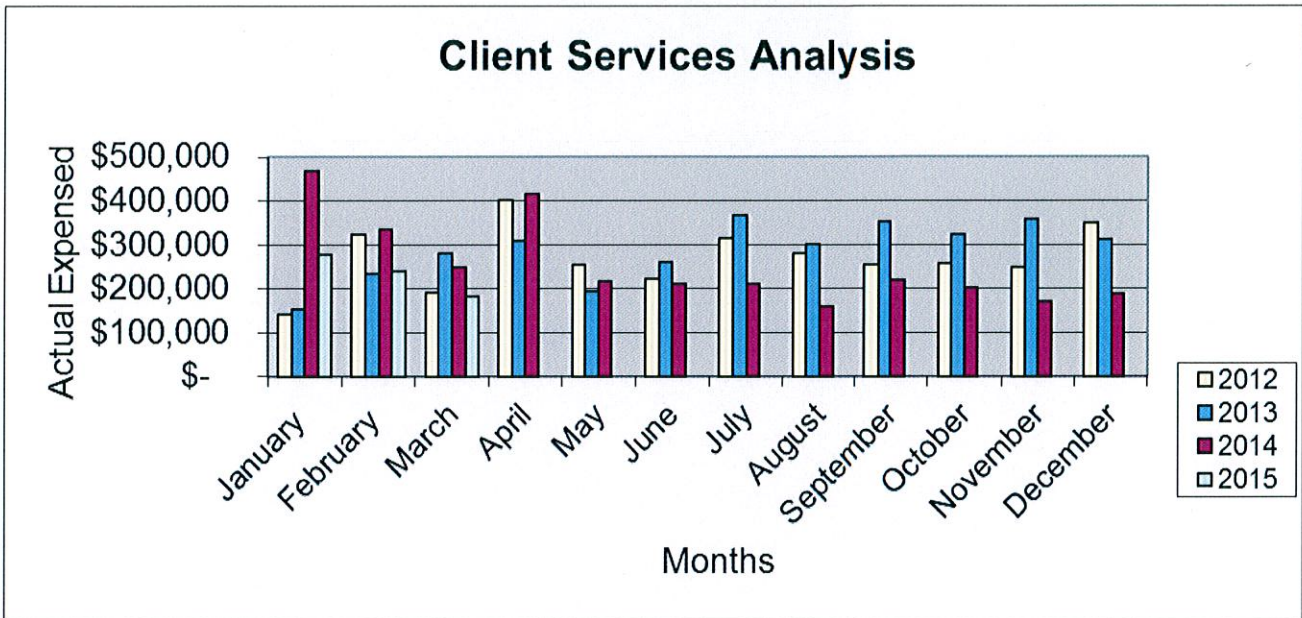
- Submitted: 11
- Positive: 10
- Negative: 1 – Receptionist was rude to a man (civilian) who attempted to get some information for a veteran. Appropriate actions were taken.

Finance Department

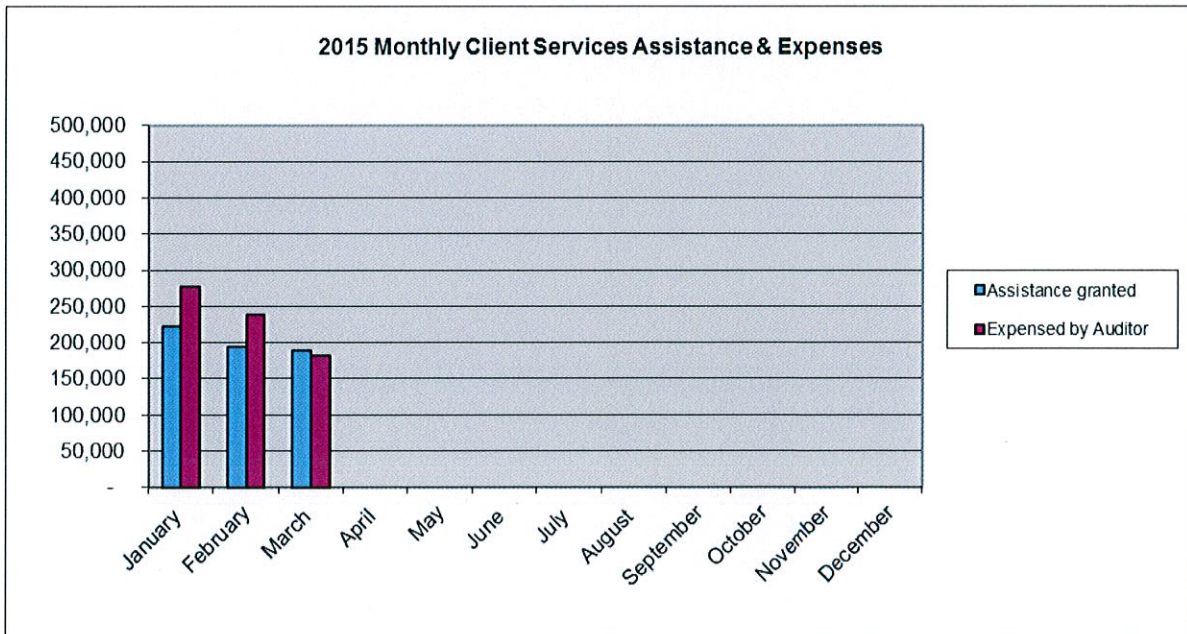
Below are selected March reports from the CCVSC Finance Department. The following charts/graphs depict the overall expenditures by area and type.

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

Comparative Chart Analysis



Actual 2015 Expenses



Total 2015 Expense Analysis

	Total	YTD	YTD	Remaining	2015	Budget
	Budget	Expenditure	Encumbr	Expenditures	Projection	Variance
Salaries	1,859,336	462,291	-	1,360,392	1,822,683	36,653
Fringe Benefits	725,141	174,731	-	536,115	710,846	14,295
Commodities	33,250	9,045	-	19,205	28,250	5,000
Contract Services	428,610	110,248	103,321	318,362	428,610	-
Controlled Expenditures	205,879	(6,841)	-	212,720	205,879	-
Client Services	3,795,292	697,413	-	2,744,244	3,441,657	353,635
Other Expenditures	377,800	65,038	3,500	225,670	290,708	87,092
Capital Outlay	101,467	1,710	90,127	89,757	91,467	10,000
Total Expenditures	7,526,775	1,513,635	196,948	5,506,465	7,020,100	506,675

Assistance Department:

- March, 2015: \$181,558 (Down from \$247,117 in 2014)
- YTD 2015: \$697,414 (Down from \$1,051,505 in 2014)

The March Financial Assistance Department activity report follows below.

Indicator	March 2015	March 2014	% Change
Clients seeking assistance	763	976	-21.8%
Applications taken	758	783	-3.2%
Applications withdrawn	(41)	(14)	192.9%
Applications denied	(52)	(48)	8.3%
Applications approved	665	721	-7.8%
Transportation only approvals	(504)	(493)	2.2%
F/A applications approved	161	228	-29.4%

Indicator	YTD 2015	YTD 2014	% Change
Clients seeking assistance	2197	2522	-12.9%
Applications taken	2175	2110	3.1%
Applications withdrawn	(145)	(59)	145.8%
Applications denied	(155)	(151)	2.6%
Applications approved	1875	1900	-1.3%
Transportation only approvals	(1433)	(1231)	16.4%
F/A applications approved	442	669	-33.9%

- First Time Assistance
 - March 2015: 40 (Up from 37 in 2014)
 - 31 approved, 0 at Level III, 2 partial, 2 denied, 5 withdrawn
 - YTD 2015: 100 (Down from 139 in 2014)

Listed below is a breakdown of appeals for the month of March, 2015.

Appeal Officer workdays	16
Cases on hand at beginning of month	3
Cases received	44
Cases worked	<u>47</u>
Cases on hand at end of month	0

	March	
<u>Appeal Officer Appeals</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Cases Approved	25	72
Cases Denied	18	56
Cases Denied/withdrawn, no show	0	0
Cases Withdrawn	<u>4</u>	<u>12</u>
Total	47	140

	March	
<u>Board Appeals</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Cases Approved	1	23
Cases Denied	2	10
Cases Partially Approved	2	2
Cases Withdrawn	0	0
Cases Verifying Fraud	1	2
Client is Eligible (Review DD-214)	0	0
Fraud Not Verified	0	0
Attempted Fraud	0	0
Fraud expunged	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	5	37

Medical and Other Transportation:

- March 2015: \$14,030.00 (YTD: \$37,142.50)
- Medical Bus Tickets: \$13,850.00 (YTD: \$36,687.50)
- Other: \$180 (YTD: \$455)

Medical and Dental Programs:

- March 2015: \$305 (YTD: \$21,511)
 - Dental: \$0 (YTD: \$3,239)
 - Vision: \$305 (YTD: \$610)
 - Hearing Aid: \$0 (YTD: \$17,662)

Memorial Affairs Department:

- March 2015: \$8,139.61 (Down \$1,568.39 from March, 2014)
- YTD 2015: \$27,591.45
- 10 Indigent burials
 - Air Force: 0
 - Marine: 2
 - Navy: 1
 - Army: 7

Following are the 2015 Year to Date statistics for Memorial Affairs:

	March	2015 YTD	March	2014 YTD
DD-214 Search	106	295	131	365
Benefits Counseling	705	2027	903	2773
Undelivered-Incorrect Headstone/Research	12	24	5	20
Presidential Memorial Certificates	57	156	117	307
National Cemetery Referrals	40	114	71	202
Blue Star Service Banners	0	0	0	0
Indigent Burials	10	31	10	42

Veterans Service Officers:

Parma

	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation Claims	9	38
----- Follow Up	22	52
DIC Claims	1	4
----- Follow Up	0	0
Pension Claims	2	9
-----Follow Up	4	13
Medical	1	1
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	13	48
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	112	301
All Other	<u>18</u>	<u>57</u>
Total	182	523

Interviews:
• 1,340 (YTD: 3,769)
FA Referrals:
• 36 (YTD: 80)
Total:
• 1,376 (YTD: 3,849)
Phone Calls:
• 3,361 (YTD: 8,826)

Wade Park

	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation Claims	61	137
----- Follow Up	145	395
DIC Claims	0	3
----- Follow Up	5	10
Pension Claims	29	50
-----Follow Up	63	152
Medical	1	7
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	41	112
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	306	830
All Other	<u>117</u>	<u>302</u>
Total	768	1998

Main Office

	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation Claims	91	233
----- Follow Up	310	902
DIC Claims	2	11
----- Follow Up	14	32
Pension Claims	54	106
-----Follow Up	155	460
Medical	5	25
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	98	245
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	820	2325
All Other	<u>308</u>	<u>842</u>
Total	1,857	5,181

Social Work

- March Total Signed In: 146 (YTD: 355)
 - Seen: 126 (YTD: 320)
 - Not Seen: 6 (YTD: 14)
 - Offline: 14 (YTD: 29)
 - New Veterans: 12 (YTD: 38)

- Veterans Receiving Consultation: 93 (YTD: 229)
- Veterans receiving follow-up: 33 (YTD: 83)

Referrals

- Internal Referrals
 - FA: 55
 - VSO: 39

- Outside Agencies
 - VA Medical: 20
 - Employment
 - EC/ODJFS: 18
 - CEOGC: 1
 - Towards Employment (N4S): 5

Ohio Veterans Home Network:

In March, no veterans were taken, but the four new hires were taken for a tour.

There are currently 5 beds available in the nursing home and 47 in the domiciliary.

Network Updates

Mobile Kits

Still cannot use the tablets for bus ticket signatures. John Yan said that he will work on fixing it.

VA Satellite Employees

Additional Wade Park and Parma offices are complete.

Network Changes

On list of projects for the county to complete as of 4/2/2015.

A new server has been stood up with the county, to house our eVET app. Tim Verry still needs to contact John Yan for migration assistance, and contact the county SQL Engineer to come up with a plan. Mr. Verry is the lead on this project. This is top priority.

Encrypted email between the VSC and the VA

No changes

Submitted by:

**Jon Reiss
Executive Director**