



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCI**  
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:** May 6, 2015 9:30 a.m.

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

**EXCUSED:** Clayton E. Uzell, Commissioner

**VISITORS:** None.

**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, Weist. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:**

#### Mel Baher – American Legion

- Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> – the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Council meeting was held at American Legion Post 469 in Cleveland, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the District financial report for February 2015, as the District Finance Officer.
- Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> – My wife and I, along with some of my fellow Commissioners and Executive Director Jon Reiss, attended the pre-screening of the film, “Last Days in Vietnam” which was held at the Idea Center at Playhouse Square at 5:30 p.m.
- Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion Post 91 membership meeting held at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> – I attended the American Legion Post 91 executive committee meeting held at 7:00 p.m., where I serve as an elected board member.

- Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District executive board meeting at American Legion Post 469 in Cleveland, Ohio. I presented the March 2015 financial report for approval, as District Finance Officer.

*Upcoming Events:*

- Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> – the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Council meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 451 in Rocky River, Ohio. I will be presenting the executive board approved financial report for March 2015, as District Finance Officer. Also, the PAST Thirteenth District Commanders will be conducting the annual Post Everlasting service.
- Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> – the American Legion Post 91 membership meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Election of officers for the ensuing year will be conducted.
- Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup> – the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District executive board meeting is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 451 in Rocky River, Ohio. I will be presenting April 2015 reports, as District Finance Officer.
- Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> – members of American Legion Post 91 will decorate veteran graves at Woodvale Cemetery and several other assigned cemeteries in our local area.
- Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> – American Legion Post 91 will conduct its annual Memorial Day services which includes a parade through downtown Berea and a ceremony at the Coe Lake gazebo, immediately following.
- Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup> – the American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m.

Bob Potts – VVA

- April 1<sup>st</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public board meeting.
- April 7<sup>th</sup> – I attended the VVA Chapter 249 board meeting and membership meeting.
- April 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III appeals hearings
- April 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended the premier of WVIZ’s “Last Days of Vietnam” at the Idea Center at Playhouse Square at 5:30 p.m.
- April 14<sup>th</sup> – The Chapter 249 Speaker’s Bureau went to N. Ridgeville High School to present the Vietnam Experience to the students.
- April 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> – I was invited to attend Family Day and Graduation Ceremony at Parris Island; this was my 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of boot camp.
- April 30<sup>th</sup> – Chapter 249 Speakers Bureau went to N. Ridgeville High School to present the Vietnam Experience to the students.
- April 30<sup>th</sup> – I attended the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the End of the Vietnam War Ceremony at Mall A in downtown Cleveland. The ceremony included a remembrance with the reading of the names of 416 veterans from Cuyahoga County who were killed in Vietnam. Our Executive Director, Jon Reiss, was the featured speaker.
- May 5<sup>th</sup> – I attended the VVA Chapter 249 board meeting and membership meeting.

Clayton E. Uzell – VFW (Report was submitted prior to the meeting)

- April 1<sup>st</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- April 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III appeals hearings.
- April 11&12<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Jr. Girls Conference held at the Airport Crown Plaza and IX Amusement Park. I helped put together breakfast and lunches for the girls.
- April 13<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Lake/Geauga Past District President’s dinner in Mentor, Ohio.
- April 15<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.

- April 18<sup>th</sup> – I attended two VFW testimonials: the first was held at VFW Post 7496 in Felicity, Ohio at noon, and the second was held at VFW Post 9857 in Columbus, Ohio at 5:00 p.m. Both testimonials honored the District Commander and President.
- April 20<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Post 7536 meeting where elections were held. All chairs were filled and I was elected Post Commander again.
- April 22<sup>nd</sup> – I attended the Level III appeals hearings.
- April 26<sup>th</sup> – I attended the past District 7 Commander’s meeting & dinner on Brook Park Rd. in Parma, Ohio.
- April 27<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Past President’s Dinner at Parma Post 1978 and called bingo for the ladies. I also brought one veteran to the CBOC to file for benefits with service officer, Charlene Jorge.

#### Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- I attended the May 5<sup>th</sup> AMVETS Post 80 meeting and gave my financial report.
- The post plans on having their annual participation in the Memorial Day ceremonies in Maple Heights.
- The honor guard served their monthly duty at the Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery.

#### *Other Activities:*

- During April, I attended all of the open and appeals meetings at the CCVSC.
- I referred two veterans to our service department and two veterans for financial assistance. I met these veterans at the Parma CBOC.
- I took a WWII veteran to the Parma Vet Center where he enrolled in the VA system and will be able to apply for loss of hearing and a hearing aid.
- I introduced the wife of a Vietnam veteran who was exposed to Agent Orange and has prostate cancer to our service officer at Parma for the filing of a claim.
- On April 8<sup>th</sup>, along with other CCVSC commissioners and personnel, I attended the preview showing of “The Last Days in Vietnam.” It was well-attended with a good exchange of information.
- I attended the meeting of the Italian American War Veterans (ITAM) Post on April 24<sup>th</sup> where I updated the attendees on new eligibility for VA care and gave my reports of the meeting minutes and the financial report.

#### **Following are some VA news for April 2015**

WASHINGTON – Four new members have been appointed to the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, an expert panel that advises the Secretary on issues and programs affecting women veterans. Of the approximately 22 million living veterans, about 2 million are women veterans. They comprise 9.2 percent of the total veteran population. VA estimates that by 2040, women veterans will comprise approximately 16 percent of the total veteran population.

- Ms. Octavia Harris, El Cajon, California, a retired Command Master Chief, U.S. Navy; currently serves as a program manager of the Comprehensive Advanced Restorative Effort at the San Diego Naval Medical Center;
- Ms. Louisa Long Jaffe, Alexandria, Virginia, a retired Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army; currently serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of Technical and Project Engineering, LLC;
- Dr. Joyce Johnson, Chevy Chase, Maryland, a retired Rear Admiral, U.S. Public Health Service; currently practices medicine in the specialty of public health/preventive medicine, and serves as a global health/public health and management consultant; and
- Ms. Shannon McLaughlin, Sharon, Massachusetts, a Major serving full time in the Massachusetts National Guard, with combat service in Afghanistan.



Daniel T. Weist – DAV

- I attended all CCVSC Board meetings and Level III appeals hearings during the month of April.
- April 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended the premier of WVIZ's "Last Days of Vietnam" at the Idea Center at Playhouse Square at 5:30 p.m.
- I attended the North Olmsted VFW monthly meeting and was elected Quartermaster once again.
- I transported three veterans to the VA hospital for their appointments.
- I referred two veterans to CCVSC service officers for claims.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to approve Resolution 2015-21 requesting authority for NACVSO membership dues for one CCVSC employee, expenses not to exceed \$30.00.

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

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to approve Resolution 2015-22 requesting authority for OSACVSO membership dues for one CCVSC employee, expenses not to exceed \$50.00.

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

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to approve Resolution 2015-23 requesting authority for one CCVSC employee to attend the OSACVSO spring school from May 6-8, 2015 in Independence, Ohio, expenses not to exceed \$175.00.

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

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to approve Resolution 2015-24 requesting authority for seven (7) CCVSC employees to attend the NACVSO accreditation class from September 20-25, 2015 in Dublin, Ohio, expenses not to exceed \$8,120.00.

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

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Mel Baher invited everyone to visit a Walgreen's store in your area on Red Nose Day, May 21, 2015. A donation of \$1 will benefit disadvantaged children in the U.S. and overseas through a selection of trusted and life-changing U.S. charities.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

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

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Weist. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (9:52 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 10:22 a.m. Personnel and employment issues were discussed in Executive Session and the Executive Director was advised on how to proceed.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, 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)