



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCI**  
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans  
**VACANT**  
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: November 1, 2017 9:30 a.m.

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

EXCUSED: Clayton E. Uzell, Secretary

VISITORS: None.

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 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. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:**

#### Mel Baher – American Legion

- I attended all schedule meetings of the CCVSC during the month of October 2017.  
*Following is a report of my activities outside of the CCVSC for the month of October.*
- Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Council meeting held at American Legion Post 304 in Garfield Hts., Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the executive board approved financial reports for August 2017, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion Post 91 membership meeting at 7:00 p.m. As First Vice-Commander, I gave my updated membership report.

- Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District executive board meeting, held at American Legion Post 304 in Garfield Hts., Ohio at 7:30 p.m. I presented the September 2017 financial reports for approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup> – I attended the American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting held at 7:00 p.m. I presented my updated membership report, as First Vice-Commander.

#### Bob Potts – VVA

- October 3<sup>rd</sup> – I attended Chapter 249 board meeting and membership meeting.
- October 4<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- October 11<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III appeals hearings.
- October 18<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting. Afterwards, we checked out the buffet at Jack Casino for the staff holiday party.
- October 18<sup>th</sup> – I also attended the wake of a veteran at Chamber Funeral Home. I presented the spouse with a flag case from the CCVSC.
- October 20<sup>th</sup> – I stopped by our offices at Wade Park and spoke with VSO's Libby and Iris.
- October 25<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III appeals hearings.

#### Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- I gave the financial report for Post 80 on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. We are waiving the yearly membership fee for any new members in order to encourage membership, as our membership has been declining.
- I will be attending the meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup>, where I will give my reports.
- The honor guard served funeral duties at the Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery in June.
- All finances have been reviewed and found to be in order.

#### *Other activities:*

- During October, I attended all the scheduled CCVSC meetings.
- I referred and accompanied two veterans and a widow to Parma for filing claims, and one to our downtown office with a question regarding a possible claim. However, the daughters of this veteran were not helpful in trying to help him obtain benefits.
- I attended the Italian American War Veterans (ITAM) monthly meeting. As finance officer, I also completed our financial report.
- I was re-elected as the finance officer for the ITAM State Dept. of Ohio.
- I filed the tax report for ITAM Post 34.
- I went with four veterans and some of their spouses to the preview of "Thanks for Your Service" movie, which they all enjoyed and found very moving.

#### Clay Uzell – VFW (submitted prior to the meeting)

- October 4<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- October 9<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Lake Geauga County Council dinner held in Mentor, Ohio.
- October 11<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III appeals hearings.
- October 16<sup>th</sup> – I conducted the meeting at VFW Post 7536 Lyndhurst and discussed post business, approved tickets for the Military Ball, donations to the Wade Park VA, the Military Assistance Program, and set up poppy distribution for November.
- October 18<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- October 24<sup>th</sup> – I attended the Mayfield Hts. Community Center dinner held to honor WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans. We distributed donated Korea Reborn books and Vietnam Anniversary pins to veterans in attendance.
- I will be departing for Bahrain to visit my daughter, Mona, who is stationed there, serving in the Navy.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Information on a VA benefits mobile application was presented to the Board at the last meeting for review and consideration. The Executive Director proposed a three-year contract to purchase the Cuyahoga VA Benefits Mobile Application by Quick Series. Following further discussion, Jon Reiss was instructed to generate a resolution for approval at the next public meeting.

The probationary period for future new hires will follow the 180-day rule. Any extension will be authorized by the Board.

The Board requested that the Administrative Assistant provide them with minutes of staff and leadership meetings, to include any feedback from staff.

The Board requested that the Financial Assistance Procedures and Training Manual be available on the CCVSC website.

Written and phone complaints by clients will be included in the customer service satisfaction surveys listed in the State of the Commission report.

The County Asst. Prosecutor was asked to provide the Commission with a disclaimer for emails.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

The Board reviewed a request from a staff member to participate in the tuition reimbursement program. The course falls under the required guidelines and is related to the employee's current position classification. The request was approved and the Executive Director will develop a plan of action for the employee to utilize this training.

## **GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Veteran's Day, Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, Mel Baher will be attending a ceremony at Woodvale Cemetery at 10:00 a.m. The Ladies Auxiliary will provide a lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., and dinner will be served by the Sons of the American Legion from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues concerning employment.

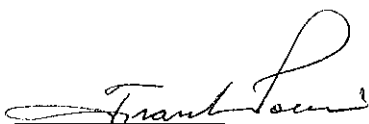
AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts. NAYS: None. Motion carried. 10:28 a.m.


The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 11:05 a.m.

In Executive Session, staff employment was discussed and the Executive Director was instructed on how to proceed.

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to adjourn the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

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

  
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Frank Pocci, President

  
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Mel Baher, Secretary pro tem

**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)