



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCI**  
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans  
**CHRISTOPHER GRAU**  
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/TIME: June 5, 2019 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Clay Uzell, President  
Mel Baher, Vice President  
Christopher Grau, Secretary  
Frank Pocci, Commissioner  
Bob Potts, Commissioner  
Jon Reiss, Executive Director  
Mary Kitko, Executive Secretary  
Brian Gutkoski, Asst. County Prosecutor

EXCUSED: None

VISITORS: None

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 Chris Grau 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, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

### **COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:**

#### Christopher Grau – DAV

- May 1st – I attended the CCVSC public meeting.
- May 14th – I recused myself from the JVC Lakewood/Rocky River meeting due to an ongoing personnel matter at the VSC.
- May 15th – I attended the CCVSC public meeting.
- May 16th – I attended DAV Chapter 108 monthly meeting. Installation of Chapter Officers.
- May 19<sup>th</sup> – I attended practice for the Memorial Day Ceremony at Lakewood Park Cemetery.
- May 22<sup>nd</sup> – I attended the CCVSC appeals meeting.
- May 25<sup>th</sup> – I assisted with placement of 3,817 American Flags on Veteran graves at the Lakewood Park Cemetery in Rocky River, Ohio.

- May 27<sup>th</sup> – I participated in the Rocky River Memorial Day Parade and Memorial Day Ceremony where I placed the National Ensign.

#### Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- I completed the financial report for Post 80 for May of 2019.
- The Honor Guard continues to serve funeral honor duties at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery.
- Plans are being made for possible participation in the Conneaut D Day reenactment.
- A trip to the Dayton Air Force museum may take place later this month.

#### *Other Activities:*

- During May I attended all of the scheduled meetings at the CCVSC.
- I attended the Memorial Day service at Woodvale cemetery where dignitaries from Berea and Middleburg Hts. were in attendance as well as very good general attendance. Afterwards I stopped at American Legion Post 91 with another veteran, later rode in the Commission van driven by Commissioner Baher, and participated in the Berea Memorial Day parade and related ceremony. Mel Baher was the moderator of the ceremony and did an excellent job.
- I attended the Italian American War Veterans meeting and gave my report. The next meeting will be held on June 26<sup>th</sup>. Our post service officer Larry Amato attended and answered questions regarding claims. He also passed out information and a couple of veterans were interested in filing claims. Larry is also in contact with a widow of a Vietnam veteran whom I referred to file a claim.
- I will attend the annual Italian American War Veterans state department convention in Lorain Ohio with other Post 34 officers. As the adjutant I have received notices that at least 5 of the Ohio posts will be represented and the National Commander may make an appearance as well. The national convention will be held in Washington DC in August.
- I attended the Catholic War Veterans May meeting where there was concern that the President would cut off the disability pensions for unemployable veterans. I advised that this is only one of the suggestions from the budget officer related to budget cuts and it has never passed in the past and it is a premature assumption to think that this will actually become law.

#### Bob Potts – VVA

- May 1st – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- May 2nd – I attended the VVA Chapter 249 membership meeting.
- May 9<sup>th</sup> – The Chapter Speakers Bureau spoke with the junior class at N. Royalton High School about the Vietnam Experience.
- May 12th - I attended the CCVSC appeals meeting.
- May 16<sup>th</sup> – The Chapter Speakers Bureau spoke with the students of Rocky River High School about the Vietnam Experience.
- May 19th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- May 26th - I attended the CCVSC appeals meeting.
- May 27<sup>th</sup> – VVA Chapter 249 marched in the Bay Village Memorial Day Parade.

#### Mel Baher – American Legion

- I attended all scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of May 2019. Following is a report of my activities outside of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission for the month of May 2019.

- Wednesday, May 1st – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Council meeting held at American Legion Post 451, in Rocky River, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the executive board approved financial reports for March 2019, as District Finance Officer. Also, the 13<sup>th</sup> District Past District Commanders group conducted our annual Post Everlasting ceremony, reading names of our departed comrades.
- Thursday, May 9th – I attended the American Legion Post 91 membership meeting. The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. and I presented the current membership report, as Post 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander. Also, annual elections of Post officers were held, and I was re-elected as Post 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander and as a delegate to the annual state convention.
- Thursday, May 23rd – I attended the American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting at 7:00 p.m. I presented an updated membership report, as Post 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander. Also, annual Memorial Day preparations were discussed and finalized.
- Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> – As cemeteries chairman for Post 91, I along with members of Post 91 decorated over 1,700 graves at Woodvale, Adams St., St. Mary's, St. Adelbert's, and Chestnut Grove cemeteries.
- Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup> – Annual Memorial Day services were held at Adams St. and Woodvale cemeteries. Following the parade, the Memorial Day program was held at McKelvey Park in downtown Berea. The guest speaker was Renee Betterson, 13<sup>th</sup> District annual Oratorical finalist from Berea. The most interesting factor for this young lady was that she was home schooled and now will be attending Cleveland State University.
- Tuesday, May 28th – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Executive board meeting, held at American Legion Post 572, in Parma, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the March 2019 finance report for executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> – I traveled to the American Legion Headquarters, in Delaware, Ohio, to attend the Department Convention planning meeting. The annual Department Convention is set for June 27- June 30 2019, in Toledo, Ohio. As Department Credentials Chairman, I will oversee the registration of all delegates attending convention meetings.

#### Clay Uzell – VFW

- May 1st – I attended the CCVSC Open Public meeting.
- May 5<sup>th</sup> – I attended the District 7 Convention meeting on West 14<sup>th</sup> at Post 387. New officers were elected and installed. All chairs were filled.
- May 8th - I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
- May 15th - I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- May 22nd - I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
- May 25-26<sup>th</sup> – I distributed VFW Buddy Poppies both days at Dave's Supermarket in Richmond Hts. The Auxiliary President participated in the annual Memorial Day Ceremony on the USS Cod.
- May 27<sup>th</sup> – I participated in the Lakeview Cemetery Memorial Day ceremony by having Post 7536 members place seven wreaths honoring WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Beirut Bombing, Gulf Wars, CCVSC and VFW Auxiliary. A great program as always. About 400 people attended.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Wellness reimbursement was moved to Executive Session.

#### **GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

The VFW 13<sup>th</sup> District Convention was held at Post 610 on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Jimmy Campana attended as the County Veterans Service Officer. Nine (9) County ID cards were issued.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Chris Grau to go in to Executive Session to discuss wellness reimbursement, discipline, compensation, and to conduct interviews for County Veteran Service Officer.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:47 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 11:02 a.m. In Executive Session wellness reimbursements, discipline, compensation, and bargaining unit matters were discussed.

The Board was made aware of a discipline issue. The Executive Director was instructed on how to proceed.

No action will be taken on the employment compensation or the wellness reimbursement at this time.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to extend an offer to Jason Conrad and David Paroline as County Veterans Service Officers and to bring them on board immediately.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. 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 11:05 a.m.

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

  
Clay Uzell, President

  
Chris Grau, Secretary

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Requests for Financial Assistance/  
Filing claims with the Dept. of  
Veterans' Affairs/Memorial Affairs:

Finance Dept.:  
Social Work Dept.:  
Executive Director:  
Commissioners:

Charlene Amos, Service Officer Mgr. (216-698-3831)  
Melinda Halliburton, Service Office Mgr. (216-698-2639)  
Larry Amato, Financial Operations Mgr. (216-698-2391)  
Terry Walker, Social Worker/Case Mgmt. (216-698-2379)  
Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)  
Mary Kitko, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2651)