



American Legion
MEL BAHER
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans
FRANK POCCHI
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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1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115

MINUTES

DATE/TIME: September 4, 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 Kitkó, Executive Secretary
Feronne Williams, Administrative Coordinator
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 Frank Pocci 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

- August 7th – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- August 14th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.
- August 21st – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- August 23rd – I attended the Ohio Flags of Honor event, honoring those from Ohio that have died in service since September 11, 2001.
- August 28th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.
- I spoke to a veteran who received assistance several years ago. He expressed his gratitude.

Note: There was no DAV Chapter 108 meeting in August, and we are recessed until September 19th. JVC resumes in January 2020.

Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- I attended AMVETS Post 80 meeting and gave the financial report for two months.
- The tax reports for Post 80 were submitted and an audit was conducted and approved.
- I attended the ITAM Post 34 meeting.
- I attended 3 of the 4 scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of August.
- I have been working with 2 veterans who need to file disability claims.
- I prepared the mailing for the ITAM State Department meeting.
- AMVETS Post 80 served at 9 funerals at the National Cemetery in August.

Bob Potts – VVA

- August 7th – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- August 14th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.
- August 21st – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- August 28th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.

Mel Baher – American Legion

- I attended three of the four scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of August 2019. Following is a report of my activities outside of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission for the month of August 2019.
- Wednesday, August 7th – I attended the American Legion 13th District Council meeting held at American Legion Post 572, in Parma, Ohio. I presented the executive board approved June 2019 Finance report as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, August 8th – 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 1st Vice Commander.
- Monday, August 19th – I attended the American Legion 13th District Executive Board meeting, held at American Legion Post 572, in Parma, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the July 2019 finance report for executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, August 22nd – I attended American Legion Post 91 executive board meeting held at 7:00 p.m. I presented an updated 2020 membership report as First Vice Commander.
- Friday, August 23rd – I departed for Indianapolis, IN to attend the 101st National Convention of the American Legion.
- Saturday, August 24th – As a National Appointee, I attended the National Security Council meeting held at 9:00 a.m. We were briefed on matters of importance by Generals of all 5 major branches of our military.
- Sunday, August 24th – I attended the Ohio delegation caucus for a summary report on pending resolutions and constitutional amendments. We were also prepped for the parade which stepped off at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 26th through August 28th I attended all sessions of the convention held at the Indiana Convention center. Vice President Mike Pence was our guest speaker. The most important Constitutional Amendment changed the wording in the Auxiliary membership requirements from (wife) to spouse. This now means the spouse of a female veteran is eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary.
-Mike DeWine was at the convention to receive an award behalf of the late John McCain. I was introduced to Tammy Puff, the Veteran Liaison for the Governor.

Clay Uzell – VFW

- August 4th – I attended the Past District Commanders meeting held at Parma VFW Post 1974 where District 7 business for the upcoming year was reviewed.
- August 7th – I was excused from the Open Public Meeting to attend a doctor’s appointment.
- August 12th – I met with the Executive Director, Jon Reiss, for a meeting at the Cuyahoga County Office of Public Works.
- August 14th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.
- August 18th – I attended the District 7 VFW Council of Administration Conference held at Parma Post 1974 at 9:00 a.m. I spoke on the new reporting system and the Law/Fire/EMT program. I attended the VFW Post 7536 annual picnic held at a member’s home in Gates Mills. 40 members attended and had a great time.
- August 19th – I attended the VFW Post 7536 meeting and went over picnic expenses and awards to be given out.
- August 21st - I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- August 28th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.
- August 31st – I attended a fundraiser BBQ at VFW Post 2133 on West 131st. The fundraiser was held to raise funds for a member’s medical expenses and was well attended.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Board discussed the purchase of a digital dog tag machine. The machine will be used at outreach events to increase traffic. Similar machines have been used on hospice centers, etc. and have been shown to have amazing results. It has helped veterans open up about their experiences. A resolution will be presented at the next Board meeting for approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Executive Director discussed the option of making all board meetings open public meetings. Level III Appeal meetings will then take place after each open public meeting. This will reduce the time a veteran must wait for a Level III appeal. The Board agreed to begin this new format in October on a trial basis.

The Executive Director stated that a flyer will be included in the next mailing to the posts. It will ask each post to report meeting dates, drawing nights, etc. so a calendar can be built for the outreach mobile vehicle.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Commissioner Uzell will be in the Mayfield Hts. Unity Days Parade on Sunday, September 8, 2019.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Chris Grau to go into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining, matters to be kept confidential, and personnel matters related to conduct and complaints.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Poggi, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:00 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 10:19 a.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed the collective bargaining process, conflict issues surrounding personnel, and matters to be kept confidential.

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Chris Grau to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Picci, Potts, and 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)