



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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1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115

MINUTES

DATE/TIME: October 2, 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
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 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

- September 4th – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- September 8th – I attended the 9-1-1 Memorial Ride and Ceremony.
- September 11th – The CCVSC Appeals Meeting was cancelled.
- September 11th – I attended a 9-1-1 Memorial Ceremony at the Municipal Complex, City of Rocky River.
- September 14th – I participated in the dedication of a Veterans Memorial for the City of Avon, Ohio with the Patriot Riders Group (PRG) Flag Line.
- September 18th – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- September 19th – I attended the DAV Chapter 108 Annual Financial Audit meeting.

- September 19th – I attended the DAV Chapter 109 Monthly Meeting, Rocky River, Ohio.
- September 25th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.
- I spoke to a veteran who received assistance several years ago. He expressed his gratitude.

Note: There is no scheduled Joint Veterans Council (JVC) meetings until January 2020.

Frank Pocci – AMVETS

AMVETS Post 80 Events

- I completed the financial report for Post 80 and presented the details at the monthly meeting.
- The honor guard continued to serve funeral honor duties at the Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery during September. Their next service will be on October 14th.
- AMVETS Pot 80 is planning to have a special excursion at the COD submarine in the spring of 2020.
- Post 80 attended the D Day ceremonies at Conneaut and will make a donation for the continuation of this wonderful commemorative event.

Other Activities

- During September I attended the scheduled meetings at the CCVSC and started taking the yearly qualifications test required by the state Department for Veterans Services in order to retain my commissioner status. The testing will be completed in October.
- I attended the Italian American war veterans meeting in September and will attend the state department meeting in Lorain, Ohio in October. I reviewed the financial report and will be submitting our tax reports in October. During October the officers will meet to determine charitable donations that the Post will make later this year.
- I am working with a female veteran in trying to have her file a claim for various disabilities. She has been reluctant, but now seems to want to file.

Note: *AMVETS Elects Organization's First Female National Commander*
August 26, 2019

American Veterans (AMVETS) elected Jan Brown to serve as the organization's 2019-2020 National Commander during AMVETS' 75th Annual National Convention in Louisville, KY, August 24th. The election signifies a milestone in AMVETS' history, as Commander Brown will be the first female Commander for the organization.

Bob Potts – VVA

- September 4th – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- September 11th – CCVSC Appeals Meeting cancelled.
- September 18th – I attended the CCVSC Public Meeting.
- September 20th – I attended an MIA/POW program at American Legion 738.
- September 25th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting.
- September 25th – I stayed after the Appeal meeting to take on-line training with all Commissioners.

Note: I helped a WWII veteran and his wife with questions they had about the VA health plan.

VVA Chapter 249 changed the meeting night to the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is October 16th at American Legion Post 385 in Bay Village.

Mel Baher – American Legion

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

- Sunday, September 8th – I attended the American Legion 13th District Council Fall Conference held at American Legion Post 703 in Parma, Hts., Ohio. I presented the executive board approved July 2019 Finance report as District Finance Officer.
- Wednesday, September 11th – I was master of ceremonies for the eighteenth annual Patriot Day Commemoration held on the Berea triangle at 9:00 AM. Speakers included the Mayor, Police Chief, and the Chief of the Berea Fire Department. The event was well attended.
- Thursday, September 12th – 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.
- Friday, September 20th – I attended and participated in the reading of names for the annual POW/MIA ceremony held on the Post 91 pavilion at 7:00 PM.
- Monday, September 23rd – I attended the American Legion 13th District Executive Board meeting, held at American Legion Post 703, in Parma Hts., Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. I presented the August 2019 finance report for executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, September 26th – 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.

Clay Uzell – VFW

- September 4th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- September 8th – I drove the CCVSC van in the Lyndhurst Home Days parade. A re-dedication of the Veterans monument in the park was held, remembering all veterans and first responders for their sacrifice to our Nation and communities. The flag raising ceremony was conducted by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department. Brush High School band played the National Anthem and the Mayor of Lyndhurst led the Pledge of Allegiance. Taps played as the events of 9/11, and all veterans who gave their lives for us to live free, were remembered.
- September 11th – CCVSC Commissioners were off in order to attend 9/11 remembrance ceremonies.
- September 18th - I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- September 20th – I represented the Commissioners at services for an employee's son who passed away. Services were held at Schulte, Mahon, Murphy Funeral Home in Lyndhurst, Ohio.
- September 25th – I attended the CCVSC Appeals Meeting and on-line training.
- September 28th – I attended the VFW Founders Day in Columbus, Ohio and I marched in the parade at Greenlawn Cemetery. Guest speakers were VFW Sr. Vice Commander Hal Roesch and Deborah Ashenurst, Retired Major General from the Ohio Department of Veterans Services. A luncheon followed at VFW Post 9857 in Columbus, Ohio.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Board discussed holiday food cards. There are 198 food cards on hand. The cards will be distributed to clients who have been denied for financial assistance. The cards will be distributed until the supply is depleted and will not be replaced.

The Executive Director led another discussion about a proposed Leadership Development program. Discussion will continue after further research.

NEW BUSINESS:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Chris Grau to approve Resolution 2019-20 for the purchase of training solutions through Skillsoft in order to provide employee development. Expenses not to exceed \$4,000.

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

The Executive Director discussed the option of issuing clothing cards in place of vouchers when issuing clothing as part of financial assistance. Research will be done to determine what options are available for clothing vendors and a resolution will be presented at a future meeting.

The small conference room will be converted to a meeting space with a smart board and computer set up. In addition to meetings, the room will be used for training purposes. Quotes for updating the Board Room will also be obtained. Expenses for the Board Room upgrade will be covered out of the contingency budget.

The Board meeting format will be as follows: First meeting of the month will focus on the Commissioners' reports. The second meeting will focus on action items. The State of the Commission report will be given in the third meeting of the month. And the final meeting of each month will focus on anything that was not covered at a previous meeting.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

The hotel for the Commissioners Fall Conference on November 15, 2019 has been prepaid.

The Executive Secretary will be present at all interviews for employment as representative of the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Frank Pocci to go into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining and to interview candidates for County Veteran Service Officers.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:29 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 11:36 a.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed the collective bargaining process. The County will negotiate the contract on our behalf.

A motion was made by Frank Pocci and seconded by Bob Potts to extend an offer to Nicholas Brown, Terrance Ness, and Michael Milkovich 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 Frank Pocci and seconded by Mel Baher to adjourn the meeting at 11:39 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: Charlene Amos, Service Officer Mgr. (216-698-3831)

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

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)