



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: December 4, 2019 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Clay Uzell, President
Mel Baher, Vice President
Christopher Grau, Secretary
Frank Pocchi, 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 Frank Pocchi 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, Pocchi, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

Christopher Grau – DAV

- November 6th – I attended the CCVSC Public and Level III Appeals Meeting.
- November 11th – I participated in Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad Veterans Day Ride. Also participated in lunch at Red Robin, North Olmsted, and dinner at Golden Corral in Brook Park.
- November 13th – I attended the CCVSC Public and Level III Appeals Meeting.
- November 15th-16th – I participated in the Ohio Veterans Service Commissioner training in Dublin, Ohio.
- November 20th - I attended the CCVSC Public and Level III Appeals Meeting.
- November 21st – I attended DAV Chapter 108 monthly meeting in Rocky River, Ohio

- November 27th - I attended the CCVSC Public and Level III Appeals Meeting. I invited Terry Sansbury of DAV #116 and OVH Sandusky DAV Rep. to attend the open public meeting to speak to the Commissioners.

Note: There are no scheduled Joint Veterans Council (JVC) of Lakewood & Rocky River 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 November.
- The Post made a donation to support the yearly D Day reenactment in Conneaut, Ohio.
- The Post issued caps with the Post 80 logo to the approximately 12 members who regularly attend meetings.

Other Activities

- During November I attended the scheduled meetings at the CCVSC and participated in the special meeting to review the progress on the agreement with the union.
- I attended Commissioner training in Dublin, Ohio.
- I attended the Italian American War Veterans executive meeting where decisions were made on various charitable donations and on some new incentives for 2020.
- Plans have been finalized for the yearly Italian American War Vets holiday meeting/dinner and we expect to have about 65 attendees.
- As state adjutant I have procured certificates of good standing to three ITAM Posts in Ohio.
- I continue to work with a female veteran in trying to have her file a claim for various disabilities. I have not heard from another veteran who needed to file a claim but will try to reach out to him.

Bob Potts – VVA

- November 6th – I attended the CCVSC Public and Appeal Meeting.
- November 7th – I stopped by to visit with the people at Wade Park.
- November 10th – the 243rd birthday of the United States Marine Corps
- November 11th – I participated in Panera’s free meal for veterans.
- November 13th - I attended the CCVSC Public and Level III Appeals Meeting.
- November 20th - I attended the CCVSC Public and Level III Appeals Meeting.
- November 27th - I attended the CCVSC Public and Level III Appeals Meeting.

Mel Baher – American Legion

- I attended all of the scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of November 2019. Following is a report of my activities outside of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission for the month of November 2019.
- Wednesday, November 6th – I attended the American Legion 13th District Council meeting held at American Legion Post 343, in Euclid, Ohio. I presented the executive board approved September 2019 Finance report as District Finance Officer.
- November 11th – I attended the Veterans Day activities at American Legion Post 91, which included a luncheon provided by the Auxiliary and dinner provided by the Sons of the American Legion.
- Thursday, November 14th – 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, November 15th – I, along with my fellow Commissioners, departed for Dublin, Ohio to attend the fall session of the State Association of Veteran Service Commissioners training. Training held Saturday afternoon provided the necessary final point required to maintain status as a Commissioner.
- Monday, November 18th – I attended the City of Berea Council meeting, where American Legion Post 92 was presented a proclamation honoring 100 years of service to the Community, State and Nation.
- Friday, November 22nd - I attended union contract negotiations in the CCVSC boardroom from 9:30 a.m. until noon. A lot of groundwork was covered, and many terms of the pending agreement were discussed and approved by both parties.
- Monday, November 25th – I attended the American Legion 13th District executive board meeting held at American Legion Post 196 in Brecksville, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. and I presented the October Finance report for board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, Post Commander Ed Leopold cancelled the Post Executive Board meeting scheduled for November 27, 2019.

Clay Uzell – VFW

- November 4th – I took a veteran to the CBOC to file for benefits. Met with Bill.
- November 6th – I attended the CCVSC open public and appeal meeting.
- November 9th-10th – I distributed VFW Buddy Poppies at Dave’s Supermarket in Richmond Heights from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- November 13th – I attended the CCVSC open public and appeal meeting.
- November 15th-16th – Attended Veterans Service Commissioner training in Dublin, Ohio. Speakers included Ohio Adjutant General Major John C. Harris, Jr., Ohio State Senator Retired Navy Seal Senior Chief Frank Hoagland, Wounded Warrior Project Melody Shaw, and education and training from 1:30-4:00 p.m.
- November 16th – I attended the VFW District Military Ball held at Brenner’s Party Center in Cleveland. VFW Post 7536 was recognized for it’s 50th anniversary and presented with a National Citation.
- November 18th – I attended VFW Post 7536’s meeting. Regular business was conducted, a new member was welcomed, and plans for the upcoming Christmas party at Kuhar’s were finalized.
- November 20th – I attended the CCVSC open public and appeal meeting
- November 25th – Judging to select VFW District 7 and State winners for Police and Fire Fighter of the Year was held. Winners will be honored at Mid-winter banquets.
- November 27th - I attended the CCVSC open public and appeal meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Executive Director reported a delay with the new call management system. County IT is working directly with Five9. Training should begin by the end of the year.

NEW BUSINESS:

The dismissal of fraud cases after ten (10) years was discussed. No change will be made at this time.

Mel Baher asked if there was an emergency program in place to help homeless veterans. Jon Reiss will investigate the possibility of working with an area hotel to provide temporary, emergency housing for veterans.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

The Executive Director will be on jury duty for the week of December 9, 2019.

Commissioner Pocci mentioned the potential scams with donating to charities. Not all organizations have the veteran's best interest in mind. Many times, only a small portion is actually used to help veterans.

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 hear one (1) client case and appeal.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:24 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 10:30 a.m. In Executive Session there was nothing to discuss regarding collective bargaining.

The votes for further assistance, recorded by the Secretary, of the client appeals that were discussed in Executive Session, are attached.

With no further business, a motion was made by Frank Pocci and seconded by Mel Baher to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, 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)

Melinda Halliburton, Service Office Mgr. (216-698-2639)

Finance Dept.:

Larry Amato, Financial Operations Mgr. (216-698-2391)

Social Work Dept.:

Terry Walker, Social Worker/Case Mgmt. (216-698-2379)

Executive Director:

Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)

Commissioners:

Mary Kitko, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2651)