



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:** July 1, 2020 9:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Mel Baher, President  
Christopher Grau, Vice President  
Frank Pocci, Secretary  
Bob Potts, Commissioner  
Clay Uzell, Commissioner  
Jon Reiss, Executive Director  
Mary Kitko, Executive Secretary  
Feronne Williams, Administrative Coordinator

**EXCUSED:** Brian Gutkoski, Asst. County Prosecutor

**VISITORS:** None.

**PURPOSE:** GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by President Mel Baher followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Frank Pocci 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. Some items were moved to Old Business for later discussion. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

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

### **COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:**

#### Frank Pocci – AMVETS

##### AMVETS Post 80 Events

- I submitted the tax filing for the 2019 fiscal year.
- Meetings have been postponed until further notice.
- The Honor Guard did their duty at Rittman National Cemetery.

##### Other Activities

- During June I attended the scheduled meetings at the CCVSC and participated in the special meetings for progress on the agreement with the Union.
- The Catholic War Veterans meetings have been suspended until further notice.
- The Italian American War Veterans National and State Department have agreed to suspend fees, but still provide posts with membership cards.

- I attended and participated in the election of officers at Post 91.
- I referred two veterans to the CCVSC for help with claims.
- I am currently working with a veteran who has PTSD.

#### Bob Potts – VVA

- I attended all CCVSC meetings for the month.
- I worked with a veteran who moved here from Indiana and was having trouble getting his records transferred to Ohio.
- I am working with the Board of VVA Chapter 249 to determine how to proceed during the pandemic.
- VVA Chapter 249 meetings will not return until September 2020.

#### Clay Uzell – VFW

- June 10<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
- June 15<sup>th</sup> - I attended VFW Post 7536 meeting held outdoors. Incoming officers were sworn in and a motion was made to cancel this year's picnic. Other events are put on hold.
- June 17<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- June 24<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.

Note: The Department Convention scheduled for June 17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> is cancelled. A meeting will be held by invitations only for immediate staff and line officers. The Department Council of Administration was also cancelled due to COVID-19. A one-day event for both meetings was held in Columbus and election results and information is posted on-line.

#### Christopher Grau – DAV

- June 3rd – No CCVSC meeting was held.
- June 10<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
- June 17th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- June 24th – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.

Note: DAV Chapter 108 – No meetings until 9/17/2020 due to the COVID-19 shutdown.

Note: JVS of Lakewood/Rocky River – No meetings until January 2021 due to the COVID-19 shutdown.

Note: DAV offices at Wade Park and the CBOC reopened for business.

#### Mel Baher – American Legion

- I attended all of the scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of June 2020. Following is a report of my activities outside of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission for the month of June 2020.
- Wednesday, June 3rd – I participated in a virtual on-line American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Council meeting at 7:30 p.m. I presented the executive board approved April 2020 Finance report, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> – 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. Election of Post officers was conducted, and I was elected as Post Commander for the 2020-2021 membership year.
- Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> – As Post 91 Commander, I conducted our annual Flag Day ceremonies on the Post pavilion at 7:00 p.m. Despite the pandemic, attendance was extremely good, and social distancing was practiced by everyone.

- Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> – I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Executive board meeting held at American Legion Post 451, in Rocky River, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. and I presented the May 2020 finance report for executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> – I drove to American Legion Headquarters in Delaware, Ohio to attend a membership meeting.
- Thursday June 25<sup>th</sup> – As Post Commander, I conducted the Post 91 Executive Board meeting, and I presented my 2020-2021 appointments, for board approval.
- Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> – I drove to the Crown Plaza Hotel in Columbus, Ohio to attend the Department of Ohio final 2019-2020 Department Executive Committee meeting. After lunch, I attended the first 2020-2021 Department Executive meeting. I was recognized and appointed as a Department Assistant Sergeant at Arms for the 2020-2021 membership year.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The window graphics that were damaged during protests will be replaced on the outside of the windows to match the existing graphics.

ADA accommodations were made for an employee suffering from asthma complications from continually wearing a mask during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A terminated employee's appeal was received from SPBR.

The tires were replaced on the agency vehicle.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to approve Resolution 2020-12 for the continued purchase of food cards from Aldi Supermarkets for clients of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission who seek financial assistance, expenses not to exceed \$500,000.00.

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

The Executive Director presented a testing software called *eSkill* to be used when interviewing candidates for positions at the CCVSC. Skill set tests will consist of 100 specific questions to determine the best fit for each position.

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

None

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Clay Uzell and seconded by Chris Grau to go back into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining and certain personnel matters.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:08 a.m.)


The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 10:42 a.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed a number of issues related to different employee situations, where the Board stands on union negotiations, and approved Mr. Motley for financial assistance after being presented with facts on the case.

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Clay Uzell to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

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



Mel Baher, President



Frank Pocci, Secretary

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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

Finance 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)  
Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)  
Mary Kitko, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2651)