



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

## Cuyahoga County

### Veterans Service Commission

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1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115

**JON REISS**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### MINUTES

DATE/TIME: September 2, 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  
Brian Gutkoski, Asst. County Prosecutor

EXCUSED: None.

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 Clay Uzell 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:

#### Frank Pocci – AMVETS

##### AMVETS Post 80 Events

- I completed the financial report for Post 80 and sent the details via email to the commander and adjutant.
- The honor guard continues to serve funeral honor duties at the Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery.
- The Post cancelled the September 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

##### Other Activities

- During August I attended the scheduled meetings at the CCVSC.
- I delivered a flag case to the sister of a deceased veteran. The sister paid for all the funeral expenses as the deceased veteran did not have the necessary resources. I am continuing to work with the sister to see if we can help with the \$1,000 benefit for indigent veterans who qualify for this type of assistance.

- I delivered pull carts, brochures, grocery bags and masks for distribution to veterans at the food pantry on Est 72<sup>nd</sup> and Broadway. If this works well, we may be able to expand this type of assistance at other food pantries.
- I have advised our secretary of the need to contact the daughter of a 91-year-old veteran who needs help in trying to get some VA assistance, possibly a pension.
- The Italian American War Veterans and the Catholic War Veterans Posts I represent continue to cancel meetings and will likely not resume until we are safe from COVID 19.

#### Bob Potts – VVA

- August 5<sup>th</sup> - I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- August 12<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
- August 19<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- August 26<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.

Note: Meetings will not return until September 2020.

#### Clay Uzell – VFW

- August 5<sup>th</sup> - I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- August 8<sup>th</sup> – I attended funeral services for Bob Poole, past State, District and County Commander from District 7, held at Rittman Cemetery.
- August 12<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
- August 16<sup>th</sup> – I attended VFW District 7 Council of Administration meeting held at Strongsville Post #3345. The budget was reviewed. Due to losses last year cuts were made. All upcoming events are still subject to COVID 19 to determine if they are held or not. I presented the Law Enforcement/Firefighter/EMT program and our CCVSC budget/statistics up to May. I then fielded some questions and distributed CCVSC grocery bags.
- August 17<sup>th</sup> – I attended VFW Post 7536 meeting held outdoors due to our Community Center still closed due to COVID 19. I discussed general business, gave a report on District 7 meeting, and reported that two posted members passed away.
- August 19<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- August 26<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.

#### Christopher Grau – DAV

- August 5<sup>th</sup> - I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- August 12<sup>th</sup> – I did not attend the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
- August 13<sup>th</sup> – I paid tribute to the Veterans Display and the AVTT (American Veterans Traveling Tribute) Wall at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.
- August 19<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
- August 26<sup>th</sup> – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.

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

JVC of Lakewood/Rocky River – scheduled meetings will resume in January 2021.

#### Mel Baher – American Legion

- I attended all the scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of August 2020. Following is a report of my activities outside of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission for the month of August 2020.
- Wednesday, August 5<sup>th</sup> – Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, I participated in a virtual American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Council meeting at 7:30 p.m. I presented the June 2020 executive board approved Finance report, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup> – I conducted the American Legion Post 91 membership meeting as Post Commander. The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. with minutes of previous meetings approved, a finance report was presented to the body, a membership report was given, and an activities report was

presented. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, social distancing was enforced, although the meeting attendance was very sparse.

- Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup> – Due to the COVID 19 pandemic I participated in a virtual American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Executive board meeting at 7:30 p.m. I presented the July 2020 finance report for executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.
- Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup> – As Post Commander, I conducted the Post 91 Executive Board meeting. After all updated reports were given, new canteen hours were discussed and approved for September 2020.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The new county vehicle purchase is in progress. A resolution will be presented during New Business.

A new safe will be purchased for storage of food and clothing cards. The new safe will have increased security features and will be located in the Finance Managers office. The old safe will be rekeyed to also include a digital combination lock for increased accountability.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Clay Uzell and seconded by Chris Grau to approve Resolution 2020-13 for the purchase of one Ford Interceptor for the increased demand of usage for outreach events, administration needs and travel needs that arise, expenses not to exceed \$45,000.00.

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

Resolution 2020-14 for the purchase of vehicle wraps was discussed. The resolution will be voted on as soon as quotes are gathered.

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

None.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Frank Pocci and seconded by Clay Uzell to go into Executive Session to discuss indigent burials, a matter required to be kept confidential and a personnel matter regarding compensation.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (9:55 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 10:47 a.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed a personnel matter, indigent burials, and other compensation.

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Clay Uzell to adjourn the meeting at 10:48 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:

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)  
Feronne Williams (216-698-3845)  
Mary Kitko, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2651)

Finance Dept.:  
Executive Director:  
Deputy Director:  
Commissioners: