



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: August 4, 2021 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Christopher Grau, President
Frank Pocci, Vice President
Bob Potts, Secretary
Mel Baher, Commissioner
Jon Reiss, Executive Director
Feronne Williams, Deputy Director
Mary Kitko, Executive Secretary
Mark Musson, Assistant County Prosecutor

EXCUSED: Clay Uzell, Commissioner

VISITORS: None.

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by President Chris Grau followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to dispense with the reading of the Consent Agenda and to accept the agenda with the necessary corrections and/or additions. One item set aside for Executive Session. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

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

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

Frank Pocci – AMVETS

AMVETS Post 80 Events

) I completed the financial reports for Post 80 and attended the monthly meeting.

Other Activities

) During July I attended all scheduled CCVSC meetings.

) I attended the Italian American War Vets meeting.

) I attended the Grand Re-opening VetConnect event at the Veterans Service Commission.

) I assisted the widow of a Korean War veteran.

) I spoke with a homeless veteran and asked that a Service Officer contact him to see if the VSC can assist him.

Clay Uzell – VFW

No report for July.

Mel Baher – American Legion

-) I attended all the scheduled meetings of the CCVSC during the month of July 2021. Following is a report of my activities outside of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission for the month of July 2021.
-) Sunday, July 4, 2021 – Post 91 held its annual 4th of July events which included City of Berea fireworks at 10:00 p.m. The fireworks can be viewed in the Post parking lot because Coe Lake is the background the City uses to shoot off the display. The place was packed, with food and drink available for those in attendance.
-) Wednesday, July 7th – I attended the American Legion 13th District Council Meeting held at American Legion Post 469 in Cleveland, Ohio. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. and I presented the Executive board approved Finance report for the month of May, 2021, as District Finance Officer.
-) Thursday, July 18th – I departed for the Holiday Inn, in Independence, Ohio to begin setting up for the American Legion Department of Ohio State Convention. Registration of delegates to the convention began on Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. and lasted until 6:00 p.m. Following close of registration, my committee met and counted registered delegates for the day. Saturday registration resumed at 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. At that time my committee met again and determined the final count. Two roll call votes were conducted on Sunday to determine the newly elected Department of Ohio 2nd vice commander. His name is Charles Stennis, former Department Treasurer for two years. Newly elected officers were installed by Past National Commander Denise Rohan.
-) Thursday, July 22nd – As Post Commander, I conducted the Post 91 Executive Board meeting. Updated committee reports of Finance, Membership, Canteen, Building, along with activities for August, were presented by each chairman. The Post Family picnic is August 15th, and the JCM Golf Classic is August 28th. I will be departing on Friday August 27, 2021 for Phoenix AZ, to attend the American Legion National Convention. I will return September 3rd.
-) Monday, July 26, 2021 – I attended the American Legion 13th District Executive board meeting. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m., and I presented the June 2021 finance report for Executive board approval, as District Finance Officer.

Bob Potts – VVA

-) July 7th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
-) July 14th – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
-) July 17th – I attended the CCVSC Open House. I brought a neighbor Army veteran that I have been working with for 14 years. He was very pleased with the outcome for the day.
-) July 21st – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
-) July 22nd – I attended VVA Chapter 249 meeting. The meeting members decided the first event will be a picnic, August 21st, at Huntington Beach.
-) July 28th – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.

Note: I received a call from a postal worker who was concerned for a veteran who was on her route. I referred the worker to the CCVSC.

I spoke with a Marine veteran who received a payment from the VA and wanted some advice.

Christopher Grau – DAV

-) *6/25-26 – I attended the Department of Ohio Summer Convention in Columbus, Ohio.
-) July 7th – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
-) July 14th – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.
-) July 21st – I attended the CCVSC open public meeting.
-) July 28th – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeals meeting.

Note: DAV Chapter 108 – the next scheduled meeting is 09/16/2021.

JVC of Lakewood/Rocky River – the next scheduled meeting is 01/12/2022.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was a lot of success with the dog tag machine at the VetConnect event. There has been continued interest at outreach events. The Executive Director suggested repairing the VSC's old dog tag machine and purchasing a new machine. The Board chooses to donate the old machine and purchase the machine that will emboss correctly and can be serviced if necessary.

J. Reiss briefed a new homeless program he would like to implement. After a lengthy discussion regarding homelessness expectations as we recover from COVID, the Board is open to the idea. The program will be developed and re-presented to the Board at a future date.

Social media was discussed. It was decided that the outreach team will handle the bulk of 'advertising' through social media and digital marketing. Several tools will be needed, but the team will begin with resources that are offered at no cost.

The Executive Director is looking for ways to streamline operations. One option is monthly and/or annual passes for RTA. The ED asked permission to re-engage with RTA regarding a Veteran Ride Free program and whether a special program can be created for veterans. Also discussed, hiring a driver to transport veterans to medical appointments.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Frank Pocci mentioned the dedication of the Rocky Calavito statue at Tony Brush Park in Little Italy. It is expected to be well attended.

Commissioner Pocci also asked about the Veterans Resource Guide. He would like updated copies. J. Reiss mentioned that he could order them from Quick Series with the VSC's logo on it and would reach out to the company for more information.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matter – employment/compensation.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:36 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 11:27 a.m. A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to offer Robert McEndree the position of Outreach Coordinator upon completion of his probationary period. The position will come with a two-step increase in pay.

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

Also discussed an ongoing collective bargaining issue and the appropriate ADA process for an employee.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to adjourn the meeting at 11:39 p.m.

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

Chris Grau, President

Bob Potts, 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)

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Finance Dept.:

Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)

Executive Director:

Feronne Williams (216-698-3845)

Deputy Director:

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

Commissioners: