



American Legion
MEL BAHER
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans
FRANK POCCI
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans
CHRISTOPHER GRAU
COMMISSIONER



Veterans of Foreign Wars
VACANT
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: February 16, 2022 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

- Frank Pocci, President
- Bob Potts, Vice President
- Mel Baher, Secretary
- Christopher Grau, Commissioner
- Jon Reiss, Executive Director
- Feronne Williams, Deputy Director
- Mary Kitko, Executive Secretary

EXCUSED: Mark Musson, Assistant County Prosecutor

VISITORS:

- Frank LaRose, Secretary of State
- Aaron Locker, Military & Veterans Outreach Coordinator at The Ohio Secretary Of State
- James Riley, Commissioner (pending journal entry)

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING/LEVEL III BOARD APPEALS

The meeting was called to order by Frank Pocci, President.

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) Two items were set aside for discussion in Executive Session.

STATE OF THE COMMISSION AND FINANCE REPORT (Attached)

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Chris Grau to accept the report of the Executive Director with the necessary corrections and/or additions.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go out of the regular order of business to discuss an item from Good of the Order.

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

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Secretary of State LaRose explained that his primary function is to help everyone in the state vote and to help constituents start up new businesses in the state. He is working to pass legislation that will make it easier for veterans overseas to vote and he will help veterans who are interested in public office. Secretary LaRose encourages veterans to work the election polls.

Secretary of State LaRose is a veteran and thanked the Board, Executive Director and Deputy Director for their service and distributed challenge coins.

A motion was made by Chris Grau and seconded by Mel Baher to return to the regular order of business and discuss Old Business.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

The Executive Director provided the Board with a building update. Mr. Reiss was directed to reengage Joe Nanni regarding allocation of the 2021 surplus for the building fund.

The County continues to require masks due to COVID. The VSC will follow county policy on COVID requirements. The VSC was given test kits, masks, and sanitizer by the Board of Health.

The FMLA Policy will be updated with new contact information. It will be presented for Board approval at the next board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

The issue of including stepchildren on financial assistance applications was discussed. Stepchildren may be included on the application if the veteran provides a signed written statement that the child/children live with him/her and if the children were claimed on the veterans' taxes. The employee should be reasonably sure that the application is truthful.

Deputy Director Feronne Williams reported that he and the outreach team have been working with Michael Hall, Chief for C&P section at the VA Hospital. Mr. Hall will brief the staff on a new process/referral program. VSO's may send veterans who are filing a Service-Connected Compensation claim to schedule the exam prior to submitting the claim. Currently it can take between three and nine months to file a claim. Under the new program, veterans will shorten the claim time significantly.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go into Executive Session to discuss a certain personnel matter – employment and client cases and appeals.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Riley. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:20 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 12:02 p.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed certain personnel matters regarding employment and client cases and appeals. The Executive Director was advised how to proceed.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to remove Rahmin Wright from probation as of February 22, 2022.

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

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 Bob Potts and seconded by Mel Baher to adjourn the meeting at 12:04 p.m.

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



Frank Pocci, President



Mel Baher, 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)

Terrance Ness, Financial Supervisor (216-698-2391)

Finance Dept.:

Executive Director:

Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)

Deputy Director:

Feronne Williams (216-698-3845)

Commissioners:

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