



American Legion
MEL BAHER
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans
FRANK POCCI
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans
CHRISTOPHER GRAU
COMMISSIONER



Veterans of Foreign Wars
JAMES RILEY
COMMISSIONER



Vietnam Veterans of America
BOB POTTS
COMMISSIONER

JON REISS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FERONNE WILLIAMS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission

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1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115

MINUTES

DATE/TIME: December 7, 2022 9:30 a.m.

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

EXCUSED: None.

VISITORS: None.

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

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

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 (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes).

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go out of the regular order of business to meet potential new hires and to discuss certain personnel matters regarding compensation and employment.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to go into Executive Session to meet potential new hires and to discuss certain personnel matters regarding compensation and employment.

AYES: Baher, Grau, Pocci, Potts, Riley. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (9:32 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 11:08 a.m. In Executive Session the Board met with a potential candidate and discussed certain personnel matters regarding compensation and employment.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to authorize the Director to bring on John Rosine in the roll of Veterans Service Officer, with a probationary period of one (1) year.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to authorize the Director to re-hire Gary Collins in the roll of Veterans Service Officer, with a probationary period of one (1) year.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to authorize the Director to re-hire Chad Laubenthal in the roll of Veterans Service Officer, with a probationary period of one (1) year.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Bob Potts to authorize the Director to re-hire Jason Conrad in the roll of Veterans Service Officer, with a probationary period of one (1) year.

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

The Board directed the Executive Director to proceed with discipline per policy as discussed.

OLD BUSINESS

The Executive Director gave an update on the new headquarters project. Due to lead time, supply chain issues and a bidding process of six (6) months, the building is not expected to be complete until mid to late 2024.

There is an estimated \$150,000 dollars in 2022 unpaid vouchers which will come out of the 2023 budget.

The projected cost of supplies in the budget has increased significantly which is misleading. The county adjusts the budget based on purchases throughout the year, and the VSC had large purchases in the beginning of 2022. A surplus in the supply line item is expected.

The total cost of VetConnect, including supplies, food and beverages, gift cards and advertising was \$75,000-\$100,000.

NEW BUSINESS:

J. Reiss presented the 2023 holiday schedule. Because Christmas falls on a Monday, December 26th was added.

Research was done on Life Alert and similar programs. Some programs require a monthly fee, have annual plans, and need equipment. All programs are income based. The Board has authorized staff to work with clients in need of this safety measure.

Research was also conducted on Meals on Wheels and similar programs. All programs required the applicant to be home bound and within federal poverty guidelines. More information is needed prior to offering these programs to VSC clients.

Mr. Reiss proposed the option of flexible scheduling for staff. The Board made the decision to keep the office hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A new safe asset policy and procedure was presented by the Executive Director. The policy will ensure greater control over the contents of the safe. The new policy was adopted by the Board.

Several position descriptions were updated and presented to the Board. All were adopted and will be distributed to the employees.

OOD OF THE ORDER:

Frank Pocci encouraged fellow commissioners and leadership staff to write a letter to the state regarding real estate taxes for disabled veterans. While Ohio does offer some reductions in property taxes for disabled veterans, other states reduction is higher. Commissioner Pocci also suggested getting other county veterans service offices on board to improve Ohio benefits.

Commissioner Baher mentioned that another county's veterans service office purchased a large LCD sign for the front of their building. He suggested the VSC look into a similar sign for the new headquarters.

Bob Potts suggested the Executive Director look into advertising at area BMV's on their tv screens.

Mr. Potts also mentioned that PNC bank offers re-loadable credit cards which would make it easier doing business with businesses that do not do invoice billing.

Commissioner Potts' VVA Post donated to the Vet Center for their client's holiday needs. The Vet Center was very appreciative, and Mr. Potts suggested the VSC work more closely with them.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by James Riley to adjourn the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

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



Frank Pocci, President



Mel Baher, Secretary

CONTACT INFORMATION

Filing claims with the Dept. of

Veterans' Affairs/Memorial Affairs:	Melinda Halliburton, Service Office Mgr. (216-698-2639)
Financial Assistance Manager:	Jeanne Bell (216)-698-2635
Finance/Operations Manager:	Terrance Ness, Financial Supervisor (216-698-2391)
Executive Director:	Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)
Deputy Director:	Feronne Williams (216-698-3845)
Commissioners:	Mary Kitko, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2651)