



American Legion
MEL BAHER
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans
FRANK POCCI
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans
VACANT
COMMISSIONER



Veterans of Foreign Wars
JAMES RILEY
COMMISSIONER



Vietnam Veterans of America
BOB POTTS
COMMISSIONER

Cuyahoga County

Veterans Service Commission

Ph: 216.698.2600 • Fax: 216.698.2650

Email: vscmail@cuyahogacounty.us

1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115

JON REISS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FERONNE WILLIAMS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

MINUTES

DATE/TIME: March 15, 2023 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Mel Baher, Vice President
James Riley, Secretary
Frank Pocci, Commissioner
Jon Reiss, Executive Director
Feronne Williams, Deputy Director
Mary Kitko, Executive Secretary
Matthew Convery, Assistant County Prosecutor – via Zoom

EXCUSED: Bob Potts, President

VISITORS: None.

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING/LEVEL III APPEALS

The meeting was called to order by Mel Baher, Vice President.

A motion was made by Jim Riley 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). Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

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

OLD BUSINESS

Position descriptions for the Executive Director and Deputy Director were presented. A motion to approve the descriptions with changes will not take place until the commissioners have time to review them.

The letter regarding changes to the Homestead Act was updated with a signature block. The letter will be sent to all Ohio Veteran Service Commissions with a cover letter requesting their support. The hope is that each will endorse the initiative and send a version of the letter to legislature.

A draft of the opposition of Bill 69 was presented to the Board. Some layout changes were suggested, and a signature line was added. The opposition letter was signed by Commissioner Baher in President Potts absence.

New building updates include additional security cameras and increased Wi-Fi. The architect suggested closing off the front entrance if the entrance was not going to be used to enter the building or as an emergency exit. The Commissioners were fine with this change.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jon Reiss presented an updated draft of the 2024 budget to include a change in the commissioner’s salaries. The Board will review the draft and it will be discussed at a future meeting.

CCVSC offices are closed on Fridays for staff training and to catch up on administrative work. The Board expressed concern that there may be a client in need and perhaps the office could be open half a day on Friday. Deputy Director Williams explained that training and time to follow up on claims is essential. If clients have an emergency, they are seen on Friday.

Agency computers have been very slow lately. C. Grau investigated and determined that an increase in bandwidth is needed and will be at the expense of the agency. Jon Reiss was directed to move forward with the increase.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Commissioner Riley stated that his VFW post will be hosting a Vietnam Veterans event on March 29th to celebrate Vietnam Veteran Day.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:


A motion was made by Frank Pocci to go into Executive Session to discuss preparations for a collective bargaining strategy. Motion seconded by Jim Riley.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Riley. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:25 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 11:31 a.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed upcoming collective bargaining strategies. The Deputy Director was advised on how to proceed.

With no further business, a motion was made by Jim Riley to adjourn the meeting at 11:31 a.m. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci.

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


Mel Baher, Vice President


James Riley, Secretary

CONTACT INFORMATION

Filing claims with the Dept. of
Veterans’ Affairs/Memorial Affairs:
Financial Assistance Manager:
Executive Director:
Deputy Director:
Commissioners:

Melinda Halliburton, Service Office Mgr. (216-698-2639)
Jeanne Bell (216)-698-2635
Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)
Feronne Williams (216-698-3845)
Mary Kitko, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2651)