



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCHI**  
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

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1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115

**JON REISS**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**FERONNE WILLIAMS**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

### MINUTES

**DATE/TIME:** April 5, 2023 9:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Bob Potts, President  
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

**EXCUSED:** None.

**VISITORS:** Rachel Killen, Van Auken Akens Architects  
Danita Ervin

**PURPOSE:** GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Bob Potts, President.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Finalized position descriptions for the Executive Director and Deputy Director were presented. The Board accepted the position descriptions as written.

The letter regarding the Ohio Homestead Act and a letter opposing the Bill to change ORC 5901 have been sent to Ohio Representatives, all Ohio Veterans Service Commissions, local Posts and community partners.

Rachel Killen from Van Auken Akens Architects presented design options for the new headquarters building. Finishes were chosen by the Board. Rachel will proceed with the project and the chosen design elements.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

The draft of the 2024 Budget was discussed. Director Reiss will make the suggested changes and present the updated budget at the next open public meeting.

1 day bus tickets purchased in 2020 will expire in January. Jon Reiss will schedule a meeting with Matt Convery, Assistant County Prosecutor, and the RTA to discuss exchanging the tickets for new tickets. If this is not an option, the tickets will be given to the veterans of Cuyahoga County and community partners who serve veterans.

Commissioner Pocci inquired about cost effective defibrillators for the posts. Several options were discussed, including applying for grants that will allow the money to be spent on things for the posts.

The discussion regarding fraud cases was moved to executive session.

A motion was made by Frank Pocci to go out of the regular order of business to consider compensation and employment of a public employee and to discuss strategy in preparation for collective bargaining negotiations.

Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher to go into Executive Session to discuss fraud procedures, to consider compensation and employment of a public employee and to discuss strategy in preparation of collective bargaining negotiations. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Riley. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:30 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 12:07 p.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed fraud procedures, considered compensation and employment of a public employee and discussed strategy in preparation for collective bargaining negotiations.

A motion was made by Jim Riley to remove Carolyn Webb from probation effective April 3, 2023. Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Jim Riley to remove Darness Holden from probation effective April 3, 2023. Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Jim Riley to remove Donald (DJ) Schilling from probation effective April 11, 2023. Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Jim Riley to remove Carly Wilder from probation effective April 23, 2023. Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Frank Pocci to rescind the fraud confirmation for Danita Ervin. Motion not seconded. Motion failed.

A motion was made by Frank Pocci to return to the regular order of business and discuss Good of the Order.

Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

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

Mr. Baher provided an update on water and supplies for the East Palestine community. The donations have been very generous and East Palestine is looking for somewhere in a nearby community to store the excess items. Post 91 will be sending a truck down with donations in the near future.

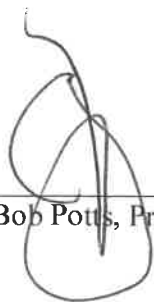
Commissioner Potts mentioned that the Daughters of the Revolution will be presenting at the next VVA Chapter meeting.

Commissioner Pocci stated that, while at Commissioner training, the group discussed adhering more closely to 5901. Mr. Pocci expressed his support.

Director Reiss mentioned that he is a finalist for the Bush Institute Veteran Leadership Program. Those who are accepted will be notified by the end of May.

With no further business, a motion was made by Jim Riley to adjourn the meeting at 12:22 p.m. Motion seconded by Mel Baher.

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



Bob Potts, 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)