



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:** May 17, 2023 9:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Bob Potts, President  
Mel Baher, Vice President  
James Riley, Secretary  
Frank Pocchi, 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 Bob Potts, President.

A motion was made by Mel Baher 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 Pocchi. Discussion: None.

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

#### **STATE OF COMMISSION FINANCE REPORT**

Jon Reiss presented the State of Commission Finance Report. The report was discussed and changes/updates were suggested by the Board.

A motion was made by Mel Baher to accept the finance report with the necessary corrections and/or additions. Motion seconded by Frank Pocchi. Discussion: None.

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

#### **JLD BUSINESS**

Two more deliveries of Memorial Day flags have been made. The remaining four deliveries will be made once contact information has been obtained.

Director J. Reiss will be meeting with RTA next week regarding a Veteran Ride Free program and the option to exchange bus tickets that will expire at the end of the year.

J. Reiss updated the Board on the progress of the new headquarter building. After discussion, it was decided that it is not necessary to incur the expense of a generator. The computers will have battery back-up to prevent any issues with the computers. Placement of the American flag was discussed. Due to power lines, the flags will be on the building.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher to approve Resolution 2023-03 to grant the Executive Director permission to transfer the accrued vacation time for an incoming employee from Summit County. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

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

The discussion regarding the option to reimburse employees for online fitness apps in lieu of gym memberships was moved to executive session.

Deputy Director Williams expressed concern about the Executive Director, Service Manager and Deputy Director being out of the office for training at the same time. A training schedule will be developed and discussed at a future meeting.

A motion was made by Frank Pocci to go out of the regular order of business and into executive session to consider discipline of a public employee, to consider employment of a public employee, to discuss strategy in preparation for collective bargaining negotiations, and for client cases and appeals. Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 12:27 p.m. In Executive Session the Board considered discipline of a public employee and employment of a public employee, discussed strategy in preparation for collective bargaining negotiations, and heard client cases and appeals.

The Board confirmed that an employee who is called up to active duty must provide military orders and an LES, as stated in the policy. The Deputy Director was advised how to proceed. Also discussed was collective bargaining strategies and client cases and appeals.

The votes for further assistance, recorded by the Secretary, of the client appeal that were discussed in Executive Session, are attached. The Executive Director and Deputy Director were instructed on how to proceed.

A motion was made by Jim Riley to remove Jeanne Bell from probation effective December 22, 2022. Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Jim Riley to promote Colleen Kehoe to Financial Operations Manager, with a probationary period of 90 days and an increase in salary as advised, effective May 8, 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 promote Sylvester Byers to IT Manager, with a probationary period of 180 days and an increase in salary as advised, effective May 8, 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 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:**

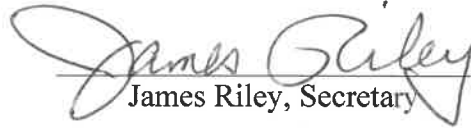
F. Williams mentioned that Congress is considering cuts to get the budget down. A Bill is before Congress to cut VA staff including raters and proposed major changes to VA comp and disability income. Any household earning over \$170,000 (household income) will no longer be eligible for compensation or disability income.

With no further business, a motion was made by Jim Riley to adjourn the meeting at 12:47 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)