



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

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: May 15, 2024 9:30 a.m.

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

EXCUSED: None.

VISITORS: None.

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by President Mel Baher with the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Frank Pocci called roll.

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

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

STATE OF COMMISSION FINANCE REPORT

Jon Reiss presented the State of Commission Finance Report for 1st quarter of 2024.

A motion was made by Bob Potts to accept the State of Commission Finance report with changes. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

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

OLD BUSINESS

The CCVSC's current space's elevator has not been working regularly. The landlord will be contacted. The new headquarter project bidding process ends on May 21, 2024. When the bidding process is over, all bids will be reviewed and, within a week or two, one will be awarded.

An ALICE certified active shooter trainer has been identified. Training will be scheduled as soon as possible. Outback Team Building and Training has been scheduled for July 12th for diversity, equity and inclusion training.

J. Kehoe is working on updated quotes for new a vehicle with leather seats for durability and a navigational system to ensure staff are not using their personal cell phones while driving.

VetConnect has been scheduled for September 21st at the Fulton Road facility. Planning meetings have begun. Updates to follow.

The 2025 Budget has been submitted with the Boards suggested changes. The budget will be reviewed by County Council and, if necessary, the Executive Director will attend the budget hearings to answer questions.

A new contact list is being built for Memorial Day flags. The updated list will help with next year's distribution. An updated count of the flags will be presented at the June 5, 2024 meeting.

The Board is considering retaining an attorney to help veterans with their will and/or POA paperwork. C. Morice will review the contract Lorain County has with their lawyer and revise it for Cuyahoga County VSC's purposes. The terms are to be determined.

Deputy Director Williams presented the suggestion that all staff attend nationals training in 2025. He believes the training would provide the non-Service Officer staff with information that will help provide more information to clients and to recognize when a client should be referred to service.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Greater Cleveland Veterans Memorial website has an Honor Roll for all Cuyahoga County veterans who were killed in action. The Memorial is non-profit and is unable to afford the upkeep costs of the website. Because of the importance of their mission, the board is committed to assisting in the cost. Ideally the board would like the website to become part of the VSC website, but the Executive Director will reach out to determine if this is an option. An MOU will be written and presented to the board at the next meeting.

J. Reiss suggested that moving forward, advertising only be used to promote large events. The board is in agreement.

A vision provider for clients has been identified. The board was given a flyer and standard operating procedures for providing a client with vision assistance.

The Deputy Director presented the option of adding additional travel expenses to the VSC Travel Policy. The GSA rate does not always fully cover the expense of travel for work, depending on the type of vehicle, etc. The board made the decision to continue to follow the GSA posted rate. No additional costs will be considered at this time.

F. Williams also presented the option to combine paid lunch with other types of leave. The current county policy states that the employee must return to the office after lunch before leaving for sick or vacation time. A VSC policy will be written that will allow the staff to incorporate their lunch into their paid time off.

A motion was made by Jim Riley to approve Resolution 2024-19 providing for the purchase of items needed for VetConnect from various vendors, not to exceed \$250,000.

Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Jim Riley to approve Resolution 2024-20 providing for the purchase of a software system that will encompass both service and financial assistance providing support services to the veterans of Cuyahoga County, expenses not to exceed \$1,000,000. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: Discussion held.

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

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Jim Riley to go into Executive Session to consider compensation of a public employee and a pending court action. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Riley. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:59 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 1:19 p.m. In Executive Session the Board discussed compensation of a public employee and a pending court action.

A motion was made by Frank Pocci to begin the process of an early retirement program (ERIP). The Executive Team was advised how to proceed. Motion seconded by Jim Riley. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Frank Pocci to begin review of the GS scale with AFSCME. Motion seconded by Jim Riley. Discussion: None.

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

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts to adjourn the meeting at 1:21 p.m. Motion seconded by Jim Riley.

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



Mel Baher, President



Frank Pocci, 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)