



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCHI**  
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans  
**LENON WRIGHT**  
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:** February 19, 2025 9:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** James Riley, President  
Frank Pocci, Vice President  
Lenon Wright, Secretary  
Bob Potts, Commissioner  
Mel Baher, 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 Jim Riley with the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Lenon Wright called roll.

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). Items set aside for Executive Session. Motion seconded by Bob Potts. Discussion: None.

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

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

The Executive Director gave his weekly building update. The new headquarters' construction is progressing well. Dry wall is almost complete on the second floor. 70% of the contingency fund has been used, but no large problems are expected. Items that need additional funds if the contingency fund is exhausted are covered under a resolution. Construction is still expected to be completed by November 2025.

The lease extension for the current building is in discussions. The County is working with the landlord on a lease extension.

The County's law department is working on the lease language for the storage facility. Items will continue to be stored at the U-Haul facility until there is a resolution.

Off-site staffing has been reduced in order to ensure sufficient staffing at the main office. Satellite offices are open on Monday and Tuesday at Wade Park and Wednesday and Thursday at Parma until further notice. Although there has been a complaint, overall the adjusted schedule is working well.

Topics for the upcoming community partner luncheon will be Honor Guard, Color Guard and volunteer coordination. The goal is to maximize impact. The planning luncheon will be at the Wyndham in Independence.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher to approve Resolution 2025-09 to reimburse staff members for memberships at gyms/fitness centers, not to exceed \$100 per month per employee, and not to exceed an agency total of \$25,000. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher to approve Resolution 2025-08 providing for the advertising agreement with Fox8 for the Vietnam – A Lost Generation Campaign. The agreement is for a multi-platform advertising campaign specifically for Veterans Day. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher to approve the creation of a position titled Quality Assurance – Investigator. The position will enable the CCVSC to take a closer look at difficult financial assistance applications. Motion seconded by Bob Potts. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher to approve the creation of a position titled Outreach Coordinator – Digital Marketing. The position will be filled by a skilled individual in the areas of website enhancement, social media, flyers, newsletters, etc. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

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

A motion was made by Mel Baher to update the Administrative Coordinator's position description. The updated position description will be presented to the board at the next meeting. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

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

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

Commissioner Baher mentioned that Post 91 is planning for their St. Patrick's Day celebration.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mel Baher to go into Executive Session to discuss a matter to be kept confidential and employment and compensation of a public employee. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Riley, Wright. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:12 a.m.)

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to the regular order of business at 12:20 p.m. In executive session the Board discussed a matter to be kept confidential and employment and compensation of a public employee. The Director and Deputy Director were directed on how to proceed.

A motion was made by Mel Baher to laterally move Patricia Smith to the position of Quality Assurance – Investigator with a four-month probationary period. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci. Discussion: None.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Riley, Wright. NAYS: None.

A motion was made by Bob Potts to promote Carolyn Webb to Administrative Coordinator at the appropriate pay rate and with a four-month probationary period. Motion seconded by Mel Baher. Discussion: None.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Riley, Wright NAYS: None.

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts to adjourn the meeting at 12:21 p.m. Motion seconded by Frank Pocci.

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

  
Jim Riley, President

  
Lenon Wright, Secretary

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Filing claims with the Dept. of

Veterans' Affairs/Memorial Affairs:

Financial Assistance Manager:

Executive Director:

Deputy Director:

Commissioners:

John Rosine, Service Office Mgr. (216-698-4798)

Geniece Garner (216)-698-4955

Jon Reiss (216-698-2611)

Feronne Williams (216-698-3845)

Mary Kitko, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2651)