

Veterans Assistance Commission of Winnebago County
 August 13, 2025 - Commission Meeting Minutes
 555 N. Court Street, Conf. Rm. 115, Rockford, IL 61103 5:30 pm

Meeting Opened: 1730 hours - 5:30 pm

Attendees:

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Guests</u>
Nancy Clark – Acting President (Delegate - VFW Post #5149)	
Eric Willard – Finance Coordinator (Delegate - VVA Post #984)	Debra Hoover – VACWC Assistant Superintendent
Jean Henning (Alternate – Rock Valley AmVets Post #922)	Francesca Montanez – VACWC
Jerome Egilske (Alternate – VVA Post #984)	Mayra Toral – VACWC
Ken VanLandeghem (Delegate - American Legion Post #288)	Timothy Hotchkiss – VACWC
Reuben Hernandez (Delegate – VFW Post #2955)	Willie Borden – VACWC
Dave Davis (Delegate - American Legion Post #1207)	Michael J. Phillips – VACWC Attorney
George Meissen – Sargent at Arms (American Legion Post #1207)	
F.S. Tate (Alternate – VFW Post #5149)	
Gene Schaefer (Delegate – VFW Post #9759)	
John Kline – Via Zoom (Alternate - Blackhawk DAV Chapter #29)	
7 Delegates and 4 Alternates from 10 Posts	

- Appointment of Secretary Pro Tem, Lorie Becker, by Nancy Clark – Acting President (Delegate - VFW Post #5149)
- Opening Ceremonies lead by Nancy Clark – Acting President (Delegate - VFW Post #5149)
- Roll Call – 10 Delegates and Sargent at Arms
- Allow Zoom Attendees: No Zoom attendees present
- Approval of Agenda: Item “Personnel Chair” added to the agenda between items 6b and 6c. Approve Agenda as amended: Motion: Jean Henning 2nd: Rueben Hernandez – Voice Vote Unanimous
- Postpone the approval of prior months minutes until September 10, 2025: Motion: Jean Henning 2nd: Dave Davis – Voice Vote Unanimous
- Public Comments: Gene Schaefer (Delegate – VFW Post #9759) presented about Rockford Police Department’s Citizen’s Police Academy. He explained the outstanding information that is available to the public about the Department’s day to day operations through the program.
- Reports:
 - Acting President – Nancy Clark
 - Welcome
 - Vice President – Nancy Clark
 - Reported dates for upcoming meetings
 - Services Chair – Vacant
 - No Report
 - Personnel Chair – Vacant
 - No Report
 - Finance Officer - Eric Willard
 - FY2025 YTD Report – 65% expended at 80% of the year (10 months)
 - Seeking approval to remove Jesus Pereira and Terrell Lewis, and add Nancy Clark, Eric Willard and Debi Hoover as signers on the bank account. Motion: Rueben Hernandez 2nd: Jean Henning – Roll Call Vote Taken – ... Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain – Result Unanimous

John Kline – (Alternate - Blackhawk DAV Chapter #29) requests to join meeting via Zoom. Motion: Jean Henning 2nd.
Eric Willard – Voice Vote Unanimous

- Assistant Superintendent – Debi Hoover
 - Presented the VAC Year-to-Date Report, January 1, 2025 – August 1, 2025
 - Veterans have recovered substantial amounts of money in retroactive payments.
 - 135 claims have been closed and 315 claims have been submitted
 - Provided \$249,886.59 in General Assistance
 - Aiming to expand and refine outreach for the future
 - Introduction of the VACWC Staff: Luz-Ortiz Rivera, Lead Veteran Service Officer; Timothy Hotchkiss, Veteran Service Officer; Willie Borden Jr., Veteran Service Officer; Francesca Montanez, Administrative Assistant; Mayra Toral, Administrative Assistant; Debi Hoover, Assistant Superintendent. A short biography of each staff member was shared.
- Correspondence
 - None
- Unfinished Business
 - None
- New Business
 - Commission Elections for President, Vice President, and Finance Officer will be held during the September 10, 2025 Full Commission Meeting.
 - Hiring of New Superintendent – Debi Hoover: Job has been posted on Indeed and on the VACWC Website. The job was opened on July 29, 2025 and will be closing on August 18, 2025. Interviews will take place at Veterans Memorial Hall on August 25th and 26th, 2025.
 - Hiring Committee has been established: Nancy Clark, Eric Willard, Rueben Hernandez, Ken VanLandeghem, Dave Davis and Jerome Egilske.
- Old Business
 - Report from Counsel on pending litigation – Attorney Phillips: A motion to dismiss was filed by Winnebago County regarding pending litigation, Judge is hoping to have a ruling on the Motion by August 28, 2025. A second motion to dismiss was filed by Winnebago county regarding the same pending litigation, citing the resignation of Jesus Pereira, which is scheduled to go in front of the Court on August 20, 2025.
- Announcements
 - Dave Davis reported that three Winnebago County American Legions are present and sharing a booth at the Winnebago County Fair.
 - Eric Willard plans to run for VACWC President; Nancy Clark plans to run for VACWC Vice President, F.S. Tate plans to run for VACWC Treasurer, and Rueben Hernandez shared interest in becoming the Personnel Chair.
 - Gene Schaefer presented an idea to expand outreach by having the American Legions send mailings about the VACMC to their members.
 - Reuben Hernandez shared that VFW Post # 2955 had a Breast Cancer Benefit that raised close to \$15,000.
- Veteran Community Events
 - Submit events to vac@vac.wincoil.gov
 - 3rd Monday of each month – American Legion Scholarship Dinner, Post 1207
 - Every Tuesday 9:00 am – 11:00 am – VA/SheVets Breakfast at Johnny Pancakes; Nancy Clark suggested that a VSO attend this event in the future.
 - August 14 – 16, 2025 – VACWC will have a booth at the Winnebago County Fair
 - Dave Davis reported that three Winnebago County American Legions are present and sharing a booth at the Winnebago County Fair.

- Eric Willard plans to run for VACWC President; Nancy Clark plans to run for VACWC Vice President, F.S. Tate plans to run for VACWC Treasurer, and Rueben Hernandez shared interest in becoming the Personnel Chair.
- Debi Hoover shared that the VACWC's Transportation Program is in need of Volunteer drivers.
- Reuben Hernandez shared that VFW Post # 2955 had a Breast Cancer Benefit that raised close to \$15,000.
- Dave Davis shared that American Legion Post #1207 regularly donates it's facility to celebration's of life.
- Closing Ceremonies
- Next VACWC Commission Meeting – September 10, 2025 at 5:30 pm – 555 N. Court Street, Conf. Rm #115, Rockford, IL
- Motion to Adjourn: Jean Henning 2nd: Rueben Hernandez – Voice Vote Unanimous
 - Meeting Adjourned 1833 hours - 6:33 pm