

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

555 Court Street, Rockford, IL 61103 – 815-516-2850 – VAC@wincoil.us

Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: 14 July 2021 @ 1730 hours

I. OPENING – 1742 hours

- A. Hybrid Meeting held in Person at the VFW located at 922 – 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104 and via Zoom Meetings (internet-based meeting platform).
- B. Opening Ceremonies: Salute Flag, Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence.
- C. Roll Call of Commission Officers, Certified Organizations Delegates & Alternates
Officers 4 Delegates 7 Alternates 3 Cert. Org. 8 Quorum YES
- D. Recognition of Guests and or Visitors: Guests 3 Mike Phillips, Attorney; Steve Thomas, Superintendent; Julie Weis, Acting Secretary Visitors 3 Joe Harper, newly elected commander of American Legion Post 676; David Draeger, American Legion Post 332; Becky Hillburst of Commercial Printing.
- E. Joe Harper came to tell us about Breathing for the Vets. He explained that Twenty-two veterans commit suicide each DAY in the United States. Studies reveal that the main culprit behind this is a desire to end intense emotional distress caused by PTSD. It's been shown that meditation, the act of calming the mind and body, helps with reducing emotional distress and the effects of PTSD. Breathing for the Vets is a class on different breathing techniques which are a form of meditation. Class will take place inside Anderson Japanese Gardens. Two Classes will be offered, 8:00am or 9:30 am on 07 AUG 2021. Free to the public. Donations will be excepted and given to the Stand Down event in October.
- F. Accept the AGENDA: Any additions or changes to be made?
NOTE: Additions can be made. NO MOTIONS or VOTES TAKEN until the following meeting. All Votes taken by Roll Call (R/C). Adjournment vote will be by Voice vote.

****Motion presented by reading agenda. 2nd John Kline***

****R/C vote: Y 8 N 0 AB 0 Result of Vote: Unanimous***

- G. Reading and Disposition of June's minutes.

****Motion presented by reading of minutes. 2nd Jean Henning***

****R/C vote: Y 8 N 0 AB 0 Result of Vote: Unanimous***

II. REPORTS

A. VAC-Administration Reports

1. President

- a. Need to go into closed session tonight for upcoming litigation.
- b. The 2022 Budget was turned into the County for approval.

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- c. IGA is on the Agenda with the County to vote for approval.
- d. Nominations for officers will start at August meeting.
- e. Elections will be held during the September meeting.

2. Administrative Coordinator

- a. 07/15 Advisory meeting – Discuss any issues from last Commission meeting.
- b. 07/22 Advisory meeting – Finance.
- c. 07/22 Special meeting – Following Advisory Committee meeting to work on the Services Handbook. This will be a blended meeting held in Person at the VFW located at 922 – 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104 and via Zoom
- d. 07/29 Advisory meeting – Finance and services Handbook
- e. 08/05 Advisory meeting – Month end wrap up and Agenda Preparation.
- f. All commissioners are invited to attend all of these meetings.
- g. Advisory committee meetings are held on Zoom from 1pm to 3pm. Contact Julie for Zoom info.

3. Services Coordinator

- a. Special meeting on 7/22.
- b. No Personnel Issues – No report

4. Appeals Committee – No Appeals – No Report

****Motion presented by VAC-A reports as given. 2nd John Guler***

****R/C vote: Y 8 N 0 AB 0 Result of Vote: Unanimous***

5. Finance Coordinator

- a. See meeting packet for reports.
- b. Financial Reports as of the end of June 2021
- c. Todd says we are on track with the budget.

****Motion presented by financial report as given. 2nd Jean Henning***

****R/C vote: Y 8 N 0 AB 0 Result of Vote: Unanimous***

B. VAC-Operations – See Meeting Packet for reports

1. Superintendent

- a. An Internal Audit has been ongoing in the office and many old files were made digital.
- b. We are still waiting for computer upgrades.

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- c. Steve getting his PIV card soon so he can access the Veterans Benefits Administration data base.
- 2. Client Assistance
- 3. Veterans Service Officers
- 4. Outreach
- 5. Transportation
 - a. The older VTS Van #1 was left unlocked.
 - b. The cell phone was taken along with a case for it and a digital thermometer.
 - c. Police reports were filed with the City of Rockford and at the Madison VAMC.
 - d. Parking Problems are still not resolved with the city.
 - e. The second Van has a 9-foot Clearance and the parking garage has a 7-foot clearance in the far lower level.
 - f. We need cameras on our vehicles.

****Motion presented by VAC-O reports presented. 2nd Celestine Anderson***

****R/C vote: Y 8 N 0 AB 0 Result of Vote: Unanimous***

III. CORRESPONDENCE - NONE

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. 2 regular attending units have not turned in VMO form for 2021.
- B. VFW post 9757 and American Legion post 340.
- C. Our officers will talk to those unit commanders personally.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation involving the VAC as authorized by Section 2(c)(11) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, as amended.

****Motion to enter closed session by Jean Henning 2nd John Kline***

****R/C vote: Y 7 N 1 AB 1 Result of Vote: Passed***

- B. Allow non-commissioners into the Executive Session.

****Motion to allow Michael J Phillips, Attorney; Steve Thomas, Superintendent; Julie Weis, Secretary to be apart of the closed session Jean Henning 2nd Todd Burton***

****R/C vote: Y 8 N 0 AB 0 Result of Vote: Unanimous***

- C. Motion to go back into open session.

****Motion to go back into open session Todd Burton 2nd John Guler***

****R/C vote: Y 8 N 0 AB 0 Result of Vote: Unanimous***

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VI. GOOD OF THE ORDER

- A. Enclosed Minutes from Advisory Committee Meetings for previous month.
- B. Veterans Smile Event 31 JULY 2021 at Don Carter Lanes – Get your unit involved!!!
- C. Breathing for the Vets 07 AUG 2021.
- D. Bring in Flyers (or email Julie a copy) for your upcoming events!!!

VII. CLOSING

- A. Closing Ceremonies
- B. Next Meeting is on **August 11th, 2021 @ 1730 hours**

****Motion to Adjourn. Todd Burton 2nd Jean Henning***

Voice Vote: 8 Ayes 0 Nays

- C. Meeting Adjourned at: **1849 hours**