VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

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

Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: 09 DECEMBER 2020 @ 1730 hours

I. OPENING - 1737

A. Meeting held via Zoom Meetings (internet-based meeting platform).

B. Roll Call of Commission Officers, Certified Organizations Delegates & Alternates
Officers__4__ Delegates__6__ Alternates__4__ Cert. Org.__7__ Quorum _YES_

C. Recognition of Guests and or Visitors Guests__2__ Visitors__0__
Steve Thomas, Superintendent; Julie Weis, Secretary

D. Accept the AGENDA: Any additions or changes to be made?
NOTE: Additions can be made. NO MOTIONS or VOTES TAKEN until the following meeting. First Vote taken by Roll Call (R/C). Subsequent votes will be by Show of Hands (S/H) with R/C votes as needed.

Motion presented by reading agenda. 2nd Todd Burton
R/C vote: Y__7__N__0__ Result of Vote: Unanimous

E. Reading and Disposition of October's minutes.

1. The minutes were not sent out prior to the meeting. They will be voted on at the next meeting in January.

2. There was NO meeting in November.

Motion to hold the reading of minutes John Kline. 2nd Jim Nelson
S/H vote: Y_7_N_0_ Result of Vote: Unanimous

II. REPORTS

A. VAC-Administration Reports

1. President

a. IGA at the county and maybe delayed since Dave Kurlinkus was dismissed by the new States Attorney, J. Hanley.

b. 2021 Commission Delegate and Alternate Forms are going out next week and they need to be back in the VAC office before the end of February 2021.

2. Administrative Coordinator

a. Update on meeting with Michael Phillips regarding the Labor Board Hearing.

1. Don Hall tried to file for lost wages of $48,000.00 back in 2018.
2. He finally got a hearing date of 17 NOV 2020.
3. He attempted to file for lost wages up to 14 NOV 2020 for $183,000.00 saying he was still employed by the VAC this entire time.

4. We spent about 4 days gathering documents for the Lawyer to create a timeline of all events leading up to the hearing.
5. One of the major documents was Don Hall's withdrawal of his IMRF money. You cannot withdraw money from IMRF until your employment has ended.
6. We still contend that Don Hall's last Day was 31 DEC 2017.

b. Update on the Labor Board Hearing for Don Hall with our attorney, Michael Phillips

1. The telephone Hearing was held at our office on 17 NOV 2020 at 9:00am.
2. In attendance was John Guler, Nancy Clark, Steve Thomas, Julie Weis, Michael Phillips. Dave Davis was connected by telephone after the operator was able to connect with him.
3. The Judge explained to Don Hall's attorney his options.
4. The final outcome was Don Hall dropped his Labor dispute claim.
5. Most likely he will attempt to sue for his lost wages for the last 3 years.
6. Our lawyer did a great job helping us prepare for the hearing.

Celestine Anderson Joined the Meeting at 1750. She will now be voting on behalf of DAV as she is the Delegate and Todd Burton is the Alternate. Numbers now reflect her being here. There are 6 Delegates now.

c. Upcoming Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule

1. 12/10 Advisory meeting – Discuss any issues from last Commission meeting and work on Handbook for Services.
2. 12/17 Advisory meeting – Finance and work on Handbook.
3. 12/24 Advisory meeting – NO MEETING – Christmas Eve Holiday.
4. 12/31 Advisory meeting – NO MEETING – New Year's Eve Holiday.
5. 01/07 Advisory meeting – Month end wrap up and Agenda Preparation.

d. Update on New Van - VTS #2

1. The Van was donated to the Madison VAMC and there was some confusion on their end since the Van came from the DAV pick up point.
2. A DAV Grant helped us get the van. Madison was treating our new van like all their Wisconsin DAV vans instead of like a VTS van like our original van. We got that sorted out after several phone calls.
3. It does have a DAV wrap on it. We will be putting our information on the windows. People will definitely know the DAV and the VAC are working together to get veterans to their appointments.

4. We will give numbers (riders, mileage, hours) to Madison, who will pass them on to DAV National so they can see how the van is used.

3. **Services Coordinator**
   - **a.** Working on Handbook during Advisory Committee meetings.
   - **b.** No Personal Issues – No report

4. **Appeals Committee** – No Appeals – No Report

Motion presented by VAC-A reports as given. 2nd Jim Nelson
S/H vote: _7_ Result of Vote: Unanimous

5. **Finance Coordinator**
   - **a.** The balance sheet and profit and loss statements were not received by Todd for him to be able to give and analysis of those reports.
   - **b.** He will be able to give a year end report at the next meeting.
   - **c.** We are getting more money than last year and we are spending at the same rate so we are in good shape.
   - **d.** We received a bill from the Lawyer for $3180.00. We have been keeping him busy with the IGA Issues, the Don Hall Hearing, Handbook revision issues, and employee hiring. He has helped us greatly and has earned his money with his support and assistance.
   - **e.** Since meeting with new county administrator and going through the handbook, we have tightened the controls on how we are spending money.
   - **f.** The same person who met with our assistance clients to establish need also made out the vouchers to be paid as well as approved those vouchers.
   - **g.** What we have done is: have a person establish the need and create the vouchers and then has the Superintendent approve them before going to the county to cut the check. Now the Superintendent is the only one who can request payment of vouchers.
   - **h.** If the Superintendent is out of the office for whatever reason and is unable to sign/approve the vouchers, our Lawyer created a way for the Superintendent to appoint an **interim** superintendent to sign the vouchers.
   - **i.** Not sure who will be appointed – one of the Commission Officers or a VAC- O staff member.
   - **j.** Just to be clear, NO ONE is being suspected of any wrong doing. No Monies have been misappropriated. We are trying to make the VAC run as the Law intended.

k. On a personal note, Todd has taken a new job as Chief Financial Officer for the United States Vietnam War Commemoration. He will be working locally telecommuting as well as travelling to Washington DC. So far he feels he will be able to continue as our Financial Coordinator.

**** Todd Burton will give an updated Financial Report at next month's meeting.***

B. VAC-Operations – See Meeting Packet

1. Superintendent
- **a.** Took training for 3 days to learn more about appeals.
- **b.** NACVSO (National Association of County Veterans Service Officers) is now doing appeals. Our office belongs to NACVSO.
- **c.** Had training to get his PIV to be able to look at our veteran's files with the VA for claims processing.
- **d.** Finally got the 1st quarter draw after emailing both county administrators in play telling them we will have no money next week.
- **e.** Debi, our Accountant, has been working with Steve on revising the Profit and Loss Statement to reflect this year's budget.

2. Client Assistance
- **a.** We have started new voucher process.
- **b.** Kiki prepares the vouchers and signs them. A new line was added to the voucher with an approval signature for the Superintendent to sign.
- **c.** 74 assistance clients for November.

3. Veterans Service Officers
- **a.** We have 2 new VSO's – Julie Weis and Orquidia Perez aka Kiki.
- **b.** 58 VSO clients for a total of 132 clients.

4. Outreach
- **a.** We have been using our driver to deliver Dollar Tree cards and pick up assistance paperwork since our building is on lock down again for CoVid.
- **b.** He has also been involved in getting signatures from clients for VSO work.

5. Transportation
- **a.** Numbers are staying about the same.
- **b.** We have 2 new drivers that finally went through orientation.
- **c.** Because we have limited capacity (2 Riders) the new drivers have not gone on their final drive along with a current driver. We are looking at them going together on a day where we have no riders or I might take them in our van.
- **d.** The WCVA wrote a check to the VAC for $500.00 for Julie to by $50.00 Visa gift cards for our volunteers in lieu of an Appreciation Dinner.

6. We will be sending out meeting packets from November and December.

Motion presented by VAC-O reports as given. 2nd Celestine Anderson
S/H vote: _7_ Result of Vote: Unanimous

III. **CORRESPONDENCE – No Report**

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – No Report

V. NEW BUSINESS

- **A.** VMO Forms for 2021 going out by Mail to all Veteran Member Organizations in Winnebago county.
- **B.** VMO Forms for 2021 will also be emailed to all current Delegates and Alternates.
- **C.** VMO Forms due NO later than 28 February 2021.
- **D.** We need to revalidate the Commission by March 6th.
- **E.** If you know people in other VMO's that are not members of the commission, encourage them to join our VAC.

VI. GOOD OF THE ORDER

- **A.** WCVA 2-Go Feed-a-Vet Meal Program is planning a Christmas meal that will be delivered 19 December 2020 between 1pm – 4pm. Call the VFW on 7th Street to get added to our delivery list or stop by the post
- **B.** *Support our Troops Across America* donated 150 stockings to be distributed to our Veterans with the Meal on 19 December. These stocking were originally to be sent to our troops overseas, BUT CoVid restrictions stopped them from being shipped.
- **C.** *Santa for Vets* donated $500.00 to help provide the meals for our veterans.
- **D.** The Second Division Commander of the American Legion donated $300.00 for the meal program put on by the WCVA (Winnebago County Veterans Association.
- **E.** Rockford SheVets and AmVets has 2 raffles going on for the Veteran Smile Program.
  1. Adult Beverage Basket
  2. Weber Smokey Joe Table Top Grill
  3. December 19th is the drawing date – get your tickets now at VFW on 7th St.
- **F.** The Rockford Women's League donated a Mink coat and a Fox coat to the SheVets group. They plan to raffle them off in the future.
- **G.** American Legion Post #1207 has Lunches prepared by Junior's Joint available from 11:00 to 3:00 for Curbside Pick-up – Adult Beverages can be purchased along with food orders as well as soft drinks. Call the post to place your orders 1-815-397-6672. When you arrive call them to let them know you are there.

***Curly Thompson - Alternate from the Montfort Point Marines joined meeting**

H. Scott Haugh, the DAV Commander, had a setback. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

I. Dave Johnson told us a previous commander of the American Legion who was 90yo passed away from CoVid and other medical problems. He wants to keep the family in our thoughts and prayers.

J. The Rockton American Legion is doing a raffle for Valentines Day contact Dave Johnson.

VII. CLOSING

A. Next Meeting is on **January 13, 2021 @ 1730 hours**
Motion to Adjourn. Nancy Clark** 2nd **Celestine Anderson
Voice Vote: _7__ Ayes _0__ Nays

B. Meeting Adjourned at: _1833 Hours_

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to One and All!!!!!

Recorded and Filed **Julie Weis, Secretary**