

Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County, Illinois

501 N. Riverside Drive, Ste 106, Gurnee, IL 60031



Agenda Report - Final

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

10:30 AM

Meeting Held In Person

Gurnee American Legion Post 771

749 Milwaukee Ave, Gurnee, IL 60031

Quarterly Commission Meeting

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Prayer**
4. **Roll Call of Members**
5. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2021**
6. **Public Comment (Items not on the agenda)**
 - 6.1 Special Guest, Laura Franz with Veterans Path to Hope
7. **President's Remarks**
8. **Superintendent's Report**
 - 8.1 Writ of Mandamus Update
 - 8.2 IACVAC Elections
 - 8.3 NACVSO
 - 8.4 Washington DC Legislative Summit
 - 8.5 IACO
 - 8.6 Mental Health Training
 - 8.7 Allan Lacson, new VSO, accredited
9. **Unfinished Business**
10. **New Business**
11. **Report by Delegates**
12. **Adjournment**
 - 12.1 Closing Prayer
 - 12.2 Salute to Colors

Next Meeting: May 18, 2022



Andrew Tangen, Superintendent
Sherry Kruse, Assistant Superintendent
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3/16/2022

VAC MEETING MINUTES

Opening Ceremonies, Salute to the Colors, Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

- Colors presented by Delegate Nickerson
- Opening prayer by Delegate Honeywell

Roll Call of Members

- Number of members present: 34

Special Guests

- Maggie Roche Chief of Staff for 61st District State Representative Joyce Mason
- Richard Gordon & Vince D. Highwood American Legion Post
- Bobby Sallee Veteran
- Ed Dunam
- Jim Schultz AML
- William Wagner
- Larry Klauser

Approval of minutes of previous meeting-September 15, 2021

- Motion made by Delegate Patterson
- Seconded by Delegate Gabriel
- Motion to approve previous minutes passed

President Report

- Complete and submit annual delegate sheets

Superintendents Report

- Writ of Mandamus update
 - Review of VACLCL Writ of Mandamus history since 2018, currently at 2nd District Appellate Court. Second lawsuit filed for un-paid attorney fees was won. Still awaiting first suit for increase in services for Veterans in Lake County. Actively working on appeal, plans in place for growth of services for Veterans in Lake County once awarded. Effective date of lawsuit is 11/19/2018, once awarded retroactive pay for budget increases will be due.
- IACVAC
 - Annual meeting held in January. Superintendent Tangen elected as President and COS/SVSO Murray elected as 1st District Vice President.

- Legislative update:
 - House Bill 2378 sponsored by Rep. Joyce mason for Surviving Spouses and Permanently disabled children of both deceased parents for property tax exemption statuses, recommend
- NACVSO Update
 - Washington DC February for Legislative conference; Superintendent Tangen and COS/SVSO Murray in attendance. Honoring PACT Act supported in support of 23 presumptive conditions for GWOT/OIF/OEF Veterans. Also adds presumptions to Vietnam Veterans served in Thailand, no matter where on base, as opposed to only perimeter. Additional benefits for Ionizing Radiation Veterans to include additional presumptive conditions and locations.
 - CVSO Act supported to add supplementation for CVSOs in addition to County funds. This act was merged with Honoring PACT Act which passed the house and is currently waiting on Senate vote.
 - National Convention in San Antonio June 5-11. Office will only be manned by Admin Assistant.
- IACO
 - Annual legislative meeting May in Springfield for Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and COS/SVSO.
- Mental Health First Aid Training
 - Massive increase in MH issues and suicide within our County/State/National Veterans of all eras. MHFA Training was scheduled Feb 25, 2022 at Antioch Post, only 4 signed up out of 25, training had to be cancelled. Need support of Veteran Service Organizations to sign up and get help and assistance to increase support of MH for Veterans of the County. VACLC will be providing training, food. Will work to re-schedule, once scheduled a minimum of 1 representative from each Veteran Organization to sign up. Can be scheduled 1, 8hr day or 2, 4hr days.
- Staff Update
 - Introduction Allan Lacson, new VSO. Passed NACVSO Accreditation last Friday.

Superintendents Report Complete

- Motion to accept made by Delegate Patterson.
- Seconded by Delegate Honeywell.
- Motion to approve Superintendents Report passed.

Old Business

New Business

- COS/SVSO Murray:
 - Tri-folds handed out, please put out at various Posts
 - Thank you to Allan Ayers for VACLCL newsletter, anyone not currently receiving please reach out to be added.
 - BOD email and Delegate email distributions created, if not receiving please contact to be added.
 - Thumb drives with VACLCL packets previously provided, can be supplied via email with current/updated packets and information for easy sharing.
 - New sign presented, will be placed at Great Lakes Base Commissary / Exchange.
 - Witness slips being sent out for various Bills that VACLCL is supporting
 - Added by Superintendent: importance of Witness slips, they tell the State Representatives and Senators how important a Bill is to the public. The number of proponents vs. opponents becomes key to supporting a Bill to be passed.
- Larry Klauser:
 - Jim Nelson now PGA Hope ambassador for IL. Includes training sessions at various area Golf courses with PGA Professionals. 2022 schedule is out, registration coming in the next few weeks. Jim is available to come out and share about the program. All levels of Golfers can participate.
- \$500 donation to VACLCL NFP from AML Vernon Hills Post 1247 Jim Schultz
 - NFP funds are used to supplement aid to Veteran in need when unable to use County Public Aid funds.
 - Examples of 2 recent assistance with NFP funds:
 - Female Veteran in abusive relationship to get out of situation with one-way U-Haul to move herself and kids out and to Michigan with her family.
 - 80yo Retired MSGT living at home independently, had shared well on property which had a circuit breaker attached to neighbor's house that caught fire, leading to no water for months. Some county funds used to install new well for \$15,000. \$1,500 for additional stump removals and construction assistance used from NFP.
- President Kontz:
 - Mundelein post will be distributing Poppies this Memorial Day weekend, slots still available to sign up.

Report by Officers

Barry Desfor (VFW Post 2486- Island Lake/Wauconda):

- Had a Veteran in need for transportation from his home in Kenosha to Germantown, WI for compensation & pension eye exam. Appointment was arranged for Veteran through scheduling services. Barry drove 1hr from home to Kenosha, an additional 1hr to Germantown. Exam office was unoccupied, calls to services resisted giving provider information for 30 mins. By the time the eye doctor was contacted they could no longer see the Vet and referred him back to scheduling services/contractor.
 - Feedback from VACLCL: certain C&P contractors do offer transportation. Please contact VAC to record complaints or poor service for C&P examiners to be reported to VA contracting services and reflected in the Veterans claim file.

Ted Rock: Lake County Council Navy League:

- One member has attended graduation at Recruit Training command, Great Lakes every Friday morning and presented the Navy League Award to an outstanding recruit. Guests are welcome.
- Navy League sponsored Month of the Military Child event at Great Lakes on April 2nd, 2022.

Ted Rock: American (Legion Post 659):

- One member passed away and we attended the memorial service at Ascension Catholic Church in Mundelein.
- Annual Poppy Day collection will be held in Grayslake on May 27-28th, 2022.

Ernest Chan (AML Post 329):

- AML Libertyville is Celebrating 102nd Birthday on March 15th, 2022. Festivities are scheduled for April 4th, 2022. Short program will preface the dinner at 7:15pm. RSVP to AmericanLegion@Post329.org.
- Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony on May 30th at Cook Park in Libertyville.

Marie Honeywell (VFW Post 11020/ Jr. vice Commander District 5):

- Check out Upscale Rummage & Furniture Warehouse (Affiliated with Midwest Veterans Closet) at 801 East Park Ave. Libertyville, IL 60048. Upscalerummagesale.org or facebook.com/upsclerummagesale. Point of Contact Director Renee Baldwin 224-440-5658 or moveovermartha@comcast.com.

Art Dutkovic (ROA Ft. Sheridan Ch 48):

- Quarterly meeting w/ MOWW held on Feb 20th, 2022@ Dover. Recruiting continues with some success.

James Schultz (AML Vernon Post 1247):

- Organizing St. Bartholomeus Orthodox Church Bloomingdale, IL medical supply collection for use in Ukraine Area.
- \$500 donation to VACLIC.
- \$1000 donation to World Central Kitchen to be used for Poland/Ukraine border meal service to refugees.
- \$1000 donation to Midwest Veterans Closet to support ongoing operations.
- Memorial Day: 3 events at Vernon Township, Willow Lawn, and Vernon Hills Memorial Arbor theater along with Flagging of graves at the 2 cemeteries.
- 12 bags of coats collected in conjunction with Vernon Hills PD delivered to Midwest Veterans Closet as part of winter coat drive.
- 2021 AML Boys State nominee accepted to West Point.

Bill Geary (AML Wauconda Post 911):

- Planning to send at least 6 high school seniors to AML State Boys and AML State Girls in June.
- AML Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Academy in June for 15-17yo.
- Planning Annual Memorial Day Parade.
- Planning 3rd year of Veteran banners on Main St. in Wauconda.
- Upcoming fundraisers: Taco Night, Steak Night, lightning raffle, & Texas Hold-Em.
- Poppies will be handed out again this year.

John DeReu (MOAA):

- MOAA meeting with all legislators during April congressional recess. Locally we have 5: Schneider, Casten, Davis, Anna Miller, & Sen. Duckworth.
 - 3 issues to discuss: 4.6%EI; Richard Star Act; Mental Health Co-pays.
- MOAA last year supported Burn Pit legislation which passed House and Senate March 3rd, 2022 as the PACT ACT.
- VA Asset Infrastructure Review (AIR) to address accessibility, safety, location, provider partnerships, emphasis on outpatient care, collaboration with DoD, and facility renovations.
- VA to publish guidance on capacity & civilian associated facilities.
- Lynch Golf Outing Aug 26th, 2022 at White Deer Run.

Allan Ayers (Marine Corps League 1395/VACLC):

- VAC Newsletter is getting too large, open to ideas for making changes or removals.

James Duncan (AML Zion Post 865):

- Memorial Day service at Veterans Park in Zion on May 30th, 2022.

Larry Klauser (AML Mundelein Post 867)

- \$500 donation to Lake County Catholic Charities Christmas Gift Program in November.
- Post members volunteered over 100hrs for staging and distribution of over 8,000 gifts for less fortunate youth of Lake County through Lake County Catholic Charities Christmas Gift Program.
- \$1000 donation to Illinois Department Tornado Relief fund to help fellow Legionnaires in southern IL recover from destruction of tornado Dec 11th, 2021.
- Post members will be distributing poppies at several Mundelein businesses May 27-29th, 2022
Post Color Guard will be leading Mundelein Memorial Day Parade May 30th, 2022.
- Post will have American Flags available at Diamond Lake Cemetery, Ivanhoe Cemetery, and St. Mary Catholic Cemetery May 25th-June 3rd, 2022.
- Annual Golf outing at the Village Green Golf Course in Mundelein June 14th, 2022, featuring luncheon, silent auction, raffle and 18 holes for all paid participants.

Larry Sassorosi (District 10 St. Vice, AML Highland Park Post 145)

- Ft. Sheridan Cemetery movement to expand by taking over empty land adjacent and currently property of Lake County Forest Preserve.
 - Event April 26th, 2022 5-7pm to show support.
- 40th Anniversary of plane crash of National Guard- Resent Monument.
- Planned event honoring Vietnam Veterans.

George Gandara (VFW Libertyville, Post 8741)

- Trickster's Native American Veterans National Gathering 8th Annual event: July 15th-17th, 2022 at Contigny Park in Wheaton, IL.
- Trickster's Native American Veterans National Gathering 8th Annual event: August 27th-28th, 2022 at Potawatomi Trails Pow-Wow in Shiloh Park Zion, IL.
- All VACLC Members and Veterans are invited to monthly Trickster meetings on the 2nd Saturday of every month from 12-1pm at Trickster's Native American culture center at 190 S. Roselle Rd. Schaumburg, IL. 60193.
- During our Pow Wow's, Social events and special gatherings. We have what is known as the Grand entrance. Where All Veterans are Invited, Recognized, Honored and Welcomed home. We Native Americans are the only people that welcome, recognize and honor the sacrifices not only of our own Veteran's that are tribal members or of Native American heritage. But all Veterans who have served Honorably! And we have always tried our best to heal them all ... They are ALWAYS respected and given special prominence at different kinds of tribal events. One example I can give is at Pow Wow's. All Veteran's in attendance will ALWAYS be invited to join in and lead in the grand entrance ahead of dancers and all participants. They also may be asked to carry the American Indian Eagle staff, the flag of the United States, their tribal flag, flags of their branches of service, VFW, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans and other banners. On very special occasions Veteran's will be honored by Native American tribes, family members, the military, certain organizations or friends with dances, songs and prayers. And the most above all honor. Being presented an Eagle Feather.

Motion to Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by Delegate Patterson.
- Seconded by Delegate Gabriel.
- Motion to adjourn passed.

Next meeting will be held on May 18, 2022 at the American Legion Post , Gurnee