

**Veterans Assistance Commission
of Lake County, Illinois**

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



Agenda Report - Final

Wednesday, May 18, 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 – March 16, 2022**
6. **Public Comment (Items not on the agenda)**
- 6.1 Justin Padoan, LCSW/MSW – guest speaker, overview of PCAFC
7. **President's Remarks**
8. **Superintendent's Report**
- 8.1 Legislative update
- 8.2 Outreach updates – Senior fair, 100 purses, Legislative Town Hall
- 8.3 IACO Update
- 8.4 Ft. Sheridan plans
- 8.5 Cook County update
- 8.6 BOD to approve budget
- 8.7 Ft. Sheridan update
9. **Unfinished Business**
10. **New Business**
11. **Report by Delegates**
12. **Adjournment**
- 12.1 Closing Prayer
- 12.2 Salute to Colors

Next Meeting: September 21, 2022



Andrew Tangen, Superintendent
Sherry Kruse, Assistant Superintendent
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5/18/2022

VAC MEETING MINUTES

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

- Colors presented by Delegate Nickerson
- Opening prayer by John Murray

Roll Call of Members

- Number of members present: 30

Special Guests

- Karyn Davidman – prior Cong Schneider Rep
- Laura Hoyne – Cong Schneiders Rep
- Greg Claus – Cong Schneiders Rep
- Justin Padoan – Lovell FHCC
- Al Ballach – Visitor from Winthrop Harbor
- Jim Reynolds – Bugles Across America

Justin Padoan gave a presentation regarding the Lovell Caregiver Program. There are brochures on each table. There is a team of social workers/nurses who can help bridge getting services that are needed. If a vet has a Caregiver, there may be a stipend for him/her. This program is now open for Vietnam and Post 911 veterans and will be opening up to all era's. There are also appeal processes as well for anyone who has been turned down for the services. If you have any questions, please call the Caregiver hotline at 224-388-6640. Hours are from 7-4 Monday thru Friday.

Approval of minutes of previous meeting- March 16, 2022

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

President Report

- Complete and submit annual delegate sheets

Award Presentation

An award was presented by Supt Tangen on behalf of the VACLV to Karyn Davidman for the outstanding service she provided for Veterans throughout the County. She will be deeply missed.

Superintendents Report

- Legislative update
 - HB5184 has passed and was signed by Governor Pritzger and will go into effect on January 1, 2023. SB1975 passed and is waiting to be signed. Still waiting on the Senate for the PACT ACT to be passed.
- IACO Spring Conference
 - Supt Tangen, Asst Supt Kruse, and COS/CVSO Murray attended the Conference, which was very successful. In attendance was Terry Prince, Stephanie Kifowet, Randal Tyner, Tom Banning and Bob Tyler. Atty Generals office wrote a bill about people filing unscrupulous claims. Veterans or Widows should never have to pay to file a claim, Attorney General is investigating many companies.
- Outreach
 - Supt Tangen stated there were numerous outreach events that our office has done since the last meeting. A few of them include the senior fair at the Zion Township, Honoring Women's Veterans (100 purses outreach) and the Legislative Town Hall at the VFW 4th Dist.
- Ft. Sheridan
 - An event was conducted on April 26, 2022. There are some people, including a few County Board Members who are against approving extra space to be provided at the Cemetery. We will be sending out emails, letting these County Board Members know the importance of obtaining these extra 4.7 acres. This is the last opportunity to get this space, as it will not happen anywhere in the Country.
- Cook County VAC
 - Cook County VAC is still an issue and Supt Tangen among others is talking with the Attorney General and the House/Senate Committee to create legislation on how their board is to be appointed now that it is officially the law that all VAC's must file claims starting the beginning of the year when the updated (clarified) MVAA takes effect.
- Budget
 - With the new change/clarification in the law (MVAA Act) taking effect, we do not have the budget finalized for 2023. The budget will need to be submitted by July 5, 2022.
 - A motion was made by Delegate Gandara, seconded by Delegate Patterson to allow the Board of Directors to approve the budget once completed. Motion carried.

Superintendents Report Complete

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

Old Business

New Business

- President Konz
 - Since the law has changed, it is imperative that the Delegate sheet is updated. January 1, 2023, forms will be sent out and must be returned by March 1st. If this is not done, your post will not be able to vote.
- John Murray
 - If you are not on our email list for newsletters or meeting reminders, please let him know so we can get our files updated to get you on the list.

Report by Officers

Ernest Chan (AML Post 329):

- Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony on May 30 at Cook Park in Libertyville. Followed by Ceremony at Lakeside Cemetery, followed by a reception at Post 329 building.

Art Dutkovic (ROA Ft. Sheridan Ch 48):

- Chapter 48 next meeting, Sunday May 22nd at Noon at Dover Straits in Mundelein. Both Chapter 48 & ROA Dept of Illinois will participate in Swinging for the Vets as sponsors.

James Schultz (AML Vernon Post 1247):

- Members attended Ft Sheridan Expansion open house as a proponent. Members requested to email Angelo Kyle, Lake County Forest Preserve President with your support of this expansion. akyle@lakecountyil.gov
- Post facilitated a request from Hanover Park VFW via State Rep Mussman to obtain handwritten notes of thanks to accompany gift packages sent to Service Personnel serving overseas. 50 letters have been written by Vernon Hills Seniors Club Members and Village Staff and delivered to VFW Post.
- Attended VFW/Legion Northwest Suburban Town Hall with local legislator on veterans' issues at Elk Grove VFW Post.
- Secured a registration for a candidate from Vernon Hills High School to attend 2022 Boys State Event.
- Contacted Lovell concerning event possibilities. Earliest is late summer. This was in support of by Vernon Hills Police Dept that conducts in June, the Jim Heier Fishing Derby.
- Facilitated monthly Veterans Appreciation Day at Hitz Pizza in Mundelein and manned Veterans information table.
- Post has scheduled 5 events over the Memorial Day weekend.
- Scheduled the 4th annual Support the Heroes 9-hole golf outing at Vernon Hills golf course on August 27th.

John DeReu (MOAA):

- Completed contacting Federal Legislators regarding three issues: Maj Richard Starr Act; Stop Copay Overpay Act; Military pay increase. The number of co-sponsors increased after MOAA actions.
- General info – Buckley roadwork – traffic delays

James Duncan (AML Zion Post 865):

- May 26th, post will be putting flags on Veterans graves in the cemeteries in Zion
- May 27-28th, the post will be distributing poppies
- May 30th, the post will hold a Memorial Service at Veterans Park in Zion at 10:30am.

Robert Gabriel (Lakes Region Post 703, Fox Lake)

- Post 703 Lakes Region has had a sad past two months with losing our Post Commander; Sandy Fedderly. Past Commander, Larry Verjinski and Harry Nevar, Past Cdr 72-73
- Post hosted the “Take a Vet Fishing” this past Saturday. Approximately 240 vets in a attendance. Organization plans on making it an annual event at Post 703.
- Post 703 will be conducting a funeral event for two members who passed away
- Memorial Day Ceremony at Fox Lake followed by Post 703 events.

Duane Peacy (Homer Dahringer Post 281)

- Memorial Day Veterans Park, Waukegan at 11am

Richard Jonnson (Lake Zurich AML Post 964)

- Memorial Day

George Gandara (VFW Libertyville, Post 8741)

- First quarterly report of May 18, 2022 to Lake County Veteran's Assistance Commission and to VFW State District board on successful missions of Mercy, charitable and helpful accomplishments and good of the order for the betterment of Our Veteran's, military and their families in our District, State, in our nation and across Mother Earth:
- Trained south Alabama law enforcement officer in PTSD law and service dog law as well as de-escalation techniques for both.
- Donated bicycles to homeless veterans in the Pensacola, Florida area
- Picked up motorized scooters, delivered one to
- Veteran in need in Denver Colorado
- 640 pounds of clothes for Ukrainian refugees to the Patriot Transportation Inc in Carol Stream, IL with the support of Ukrainian Consul General's office. And assisted VFW member Bill Wagner in collecting and donating 80 to 86 Ballistic vests and Kevlar helmets to the Ukrainian Consul General's office and Polish Consul Office for protecting Medic's, Firefighter's, Nurses, doctors and truck drivers delivering relief aid and supplies in war torn Ukraine!
- Delivered trailer full of bicycles to homeless veterans in Colorado Springs area who need transportation to and from work.
- Donated \$20,000 worth of clothes, boots, camping gear and more to homeless veteran clothes closet in Topeka Kansas.
- Helped disabled Green Beret waiting for benefits to obtain temporary housing until finances could be arranged

- Donated 15 garage size bags of new and gently used coats and winter clothing, boots and other equipment to the Midwest Veterans Closet in North Chicago, IL.
- Assisted family in Virginia financially with hard transition after husband was paralyzed during surgery
- Assisted veteran family in Colorado Springs whose mother committed suicide. Helped them with transitional funds and clothing
- Donated several hundred pounds of coffee to the 101st airborne at Fort Campbell Kentucky. They were on a 24-hour recall.
- Donated several hundred pounds of Coffee and snacks to the fourth infantry division at Ft. Carson when they were on 24-hour recall
- Provided veteran advocate in Buffalo Grove with oxygen concentrator needed to make him more mobile and a motorized wheelchair for when he cannot ambulate
- Supplied bicycle, boots and camping gear to the homeless veteran in Zion Illinois
- Financially assisted homeless veteran in North Chicago waiting on benefits. Participated in a yard sale and donated items worth \$2000 to a special fundraiser for him. Arranged for him to be seen by the veteran's assistance commission. His disability rating is pending.
- Helped a former MP and civilian police officer with transitional housing in Libertyville, IL and Colorado Springs, Co.
- 600 pounds of coffee to troops on alert at Ft. Carson and Ft. Campbell. All coffee donated by Hansa coffee as with many Winter coats and clothing during my 8th VFW clothing drive in 2021.
- Began replacing items from our van which was stolen in Topeka Kansas in April. We lost clothes and goods, medical supplies and equipment Worth about \$20,000. We had no insurance coverage. Thankfully it just delivered several thousand dollars' worth of new and gently used clothes and camping gear to the homeless coalition there.
- Donated remains of the recovered/stolen van, it was trashed, to retired police officer who transports therapy dogs for the VA hospitals in Topeka Kansas.
- Donated \$900 new shower chair to paralyzed veteran. His wife has been transferring him for several years and now is physically unable to assist. Provided VFW Honor Guards for 6 different Veteran's funerals. 4 in Libertyville, 1 for a Cavalry Officer's wake in Lake Forest. IL then for internment at Ft. Sheridan and 1 for a US Coast Guard CPO 1st class in South Chicago at St. Mary's Cemetery. Raised \$200 dollars as of today to be donated to Trickster's Native American culture center in Schaumburg, IL for hotel and travel expenses to the 8th National Gathering of Native American Veteran's at the 1st Infantry museum in Cantigny Park located at 1s151 Winfield Rd. Wheaton, IL. On July15th, 16th and17th, 2022 for Elder Native Veteran Speakers who will NOT be able to receive funding from their tribes due to very limited lack of funding or because they only receive VA disability and SSA benefits. Distributed 9 garbage bags full of winter coats and clothing to VFW Director Mr. Paul Bezazian of Homeless Veteran's programs in Chicago, IL. Collected 1420 lbs. of clothing donations of Winter coats and clothing for Woman's and Children from Mr. Dino Moran Coach/Teacher at Stevenson H.S. Lincolnshire, IL., Winter coats, socks and Valentine's Day cards from Teacher at Rockland School in Libertyville, IL. and 10 garage bags full of coats from 4th District VFW Post 2202 in Schaumburg, IL. Dropped off 12 bags of Garbage size clothing at Sparrows Nest in Third Lake, IL. Completed VFW Voices of Democracy and Patriot's Pens judging, choosing and awarding Winners with checks for scholarships. Attended the Lake County Ft. Sheridan National VA cemetery proposed expansion area meeting and took information on getting fellow Veteran's and their families to contact Angelo Dani of Lake County to support this bill. I voted to support HR5427 Bill. Also sent out email requests to Congressman (D) Brad Schneider and Senator's (D

)Tammy Duckworth and Craig Wilcox (R) to support YES vote on the Illinois Act. H.R.914 - Dental Care for Veterans in Illinois. Requested information from Lake County Veteran's Assistance Commission how to look into the property taxes on disabled Veteran receiving 100% VA disability when they miss their filing date's due to injuries, being hospitalized, dementia, depression or forgetfulness so they won't be penalize through NO fault of their own, asked to check on tax exemption status for VFW post homes, storage sheds or storage property. Contacted Illinois US Army National Guard, Marine Air Wing 48 , 2/24 Marine's, the Gold Star Mother's, the Blue Star Mother's, POW/MIA representatives, Military and family counselors on Military and Veteran's Suicide Prevention and Awareness, Military sexual trauma, Domestic violence awareness and Prevention to attend the National Gathering. Invited from Lovell VA FFHC Director Dr. Robert G Buckley, his staff and Dr. John Patrick Bair VA Psychologist (Ret.) Professor of Psychology and Behavioral science at Roseland Franklin University of Medicine and Science. All of North Chicago, IL to be speaker's at the National Gathering of Native American Veteran's and at the Potawatomi Trails Pow-wow's on August 27 and 28, 2022 at Shiloh Park 25th Street in Zion, IL. Requesting that Lake County Veteran's Assistance Commission setup an information booth at both the National Gathering and the Potawatomi Trails Pow-wow if possible. Waiting on confirmation on all the above requests. And after my meeting with the Trickster's Native American Veterans of Illinois this Saturday May 21, 2022. I will recommend that Mr. Allen Lynch MOH recipient of Gurnee and US Navy Capt. Jamison Williamson Commander of Great Lakes Navy base in North Chicago, IL. on inviting them both to attend the National Gathering and the Potawatomi Trails Pow-wow if they are available to attend and either say a few words or be Honored Veteran's in our Sacred Circle. My vision for this year's theme at the National Gathering is that we have a Healing of the Spirit, mind, body, heart's and Health for all Veteran's, military and their families. If anyone has any questions. Please contact me. Respectfully George R Gandara VFW Director of Homeless Veteran's programs 5th District of Illinois, Lake and McHenry County's and Commander VFW Post 8741 at 293 Peterson Rd. Libertyville, IL. 60048. Post phone number 847-680-8741. President of Trickster's Native American Veterans of Illinois at S. Roselle, Rd. Schaumburg, IL. 60193. Office phone number 847-301-2090. Cell phone number 224-515-6527

Motion to Adjourn

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

Next meeting will be held on September 14, 2022 at the American Legion Post , Gurnee