

Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County, Illinois

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



Agenda Report - Final

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

10:00 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. **Moment of Silence – Johnnie Allen**
5. **Roll Call of Members**
6. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – May 18, 2022**
7. **Public Comment (Items not on the agenda)**
8. **President's Remarks**
9. **Superintendent's Report**
 - 8.1 Forest Preserve meeting August 29th
 - 8.2 Legislative update, August 19th
 - 8.3 VACLC By-Law update
 - 8.4 IACVAC Fall Conference Sept 18 – Sept 23
 - 8.5 Vote on Travel Policy change
 - 8.6 State Senator McConchie Veterans Appreciate Event September 24th
 - 8.7 Land Purchase
 - 8.8 ARPA funds and Rental Assistance application submittal
10. **Unfinished Business**
11. **New Business**
12. **Report by Delegates**
 - 12.1 Closing Prayer
 - 12.2 Salute to Colors

Next Meeting: November 16, 2022



Andrew Tangen, Superintendent
Sherry Kruse, Assistant Superintendent
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9/14/2022

VAC MEETING MINUTES

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

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

Roll Call of Members

- Number of members present: 38

Special Guests

- John Slavin: Guest of George Gandara
- Dwayne McNash: Guest of Barry
- Pat Dunham VFW Post 4308

Approval of minutes of previous meeting-May 18, 2022

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

President Report

- Nothing to report

Superintendents Report

- Forest Preserve Update: August 29th vote to approve 4.7 acres of land from Forest Preserve back to Ft. Sheridan was approved unanimously. Will now move to amend the Forest Preserve Act to finalize the transfer of land to National Cemetery Administration to increase columbarium burials at Ft. Sheridan
- Aug 19 Legislative meeting with County Board of Lake County: thank you for guests and members who attended
- Submitted budget \$5,102,791 September 13th Lake County Board unanimously approved increase of levy to increase our budget for next fiscal year
- Budget Update: Budget submitted includes salaries and wages increase to reflect deserved and appropriate amount based on VSO and Administrative duties and other State and County staff/VSO's, addition of 3 new employees next fiscal year (2 Admin Assistants and 1 VSO), land purchase line item of \$3.5mil (Enclosure 1)
 - Our own travel policy has been presented and approved, additional policies and procedures are being drafted along with an inter-governmental agreement for the County to continue to handle specific duties (i.e. finance office, HR, IT)
- Amendment of VACLK By-Laws: with passing of MVAA, By-Laws amendment proposal is to update in accordance with MVAA (Enclosure 2)
 - Article I - NAME: change to strike hyphen between VACLK

- Article II - PURPOSE
 - Section 1: adding language "...or general under honorable conditions..."
 - Strike "/2 thru 45/10"
 - Adding language "...et deq. (as amended by P.A. 102-0732)..."
 - Adding language "... by providing the just, necessary, and needed services and assistance to veterans, their families, and the families of deceased veterans."
 - Section 2: adding language "...service..." and "...s, their families, and the families of deceased veterans residing in the County of Lake."
 - Strike "organizations included as members of this Commission."
 - Section 3: Strike "general" and "indigent"
 - Adding language "...their families..."
 - Adding language "...of deceased veterans".
 - Section 4: Adding language "...Federal and State..." and "...for veteran benefits."
 - Strike "referred to the Commission"
 - Section 5: New section added "The Commission will administer all of the programs provided in Article VI and IX of the Illinois Public Aid Code, 305 ILCS 5 et seq., as commanded in 305 ILCS 5/12-3."
 - Section 6: Struck 5 and turned to section 6
- Article III - JURISDICTION
 - Section 1: Correction from "county" to "County" and "state" to "State"
- Article IV - OFFICE
 - Section 3: New section added "The commission shall have in its sole discretion the location of it's headquarters and principle office."
- Article V - MEMBERSHIP
 - Section 1: correction from "county" to "County"
 - Section 2: Added language "...or a post in any of the neighboring counties of Lake whose membership is comprised of at least 25 per cent of residents of Lake County, in accordance with 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(5)."
 - Section 3: Strike "...may upon approval of the members of this Commission..."
 - Added language "...who are properly nominated by the Commander or Commandant of any Post, Camp, Ship, or Chapter and who files the appropriate delegate and alternate form with the Commission office before March 1 of each year, may..."
 - Change of language "...thereof." to "...of this Commission."
 - Section 5: Added language "recognized Veterans"
 - Correction from "organization" to "Organization" and "he" to "they"
 - Section 6: Added language "...within the time for delegate and alternate submission in accordance with 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(1)."
 - Section 7: Correction from "meeting" to "Meeting"
- Article VI - OFFICERS
 - Section 1: Language change from "Committee" to "Board"
 - Section 2: Added section "Officers of this Commission shall serve a one (1) year term."
 - (Original) Section 2: Language change from "Committee" to "Board"
 - Added language "with no voting rights and will serve in an advisory capacity, unless those Past Presidents are formal delegates to the Commission."
 - Section 2: duplicate will update section numbers

- Section 4: correction of “executive” to “Executive” and change “Committee to Board”
- Section 6: Moved language “A vacancy in any office shall exist when an officer is absent from regular meetings of said Commission for three (3) consecutive meetings.” From end of section to start of section.
 - Change “replaced” to “filled”
 - Change “committee” to “Board”
- Section 7: Correction of “article” to “Article”
 - Change “designation” to “office”
 - Change “he” to “they”
 - Change “represents” to “represent”
 - Change “replace him” to “fill the delegate position”
 - Change “until such time as his” to “for the remainder of the”
 - Strike “ends”
- Article VII - NOMINATIONS
 - Section 1: Strike “two” and change “years” to “year”
 - Change “Annual” to “quarterly”
 - Change “September” to “March”
 - Strike “and will serve a term of one year”
 - Section 2: Change “membership” to “delegates”
 - Section 3: Change “October” to “May”
 - Change “two” to “one” and “(2)” to “(1)” and “years” to “year”
 - Change “November” to “May”
 - Change “two” to “one” and “years” to “year”
 - Section 6: Struck from by-laws
 - Section 7: changed to Section 6
 - Subsection B: Change “Executive Board” to “Commission”
- Article VIII - EXECUTIVE BOARD
 - Section 1: Change “members” to Members”
 - Section 2: Change “members” to Members”
 - Change “the following terms” to “a term of one (1) year”
 - Subsections A through D struck from by-laws
 - Section 5: Strike “...given the authority to act on final decisions of appeal within the Commission’s authority”
 - Added language: “...only authorized to act on the Commission’s behalf upon approval at a regularly scheduled meeting on business related to the VACLCL non0for profit. Any other action will be null and void without Commission approval to act on their behalf.”
- Section 6: Struck from by-laws
- Section 7: Changed to Section 6
 - Added language “... and proposed levy,…”
 - Added language “...the Commission and the…”
- Section 8: Changed to Section 7
- Section 9: Changed to Section 8
 - Struck “three members”
 - Added language “...half of the members of the Executive Board plus one, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1.02.”

- Section 10: Changed to Section 9
 - Added language "...and notice shall be posted within 48 hours as required under the Open Meetings Act."
- Section 11: Changed to section 10:
 - Added language: "...within 48 hours and will brief the emergency and action taken"
- Article X - THE BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF LAKE COUNTY
 - Section 3: Struck "World War II, one member from the Korean Campaign, One member from"
 - Section 4: Change "four" to "one" and "(4)" to "(1)" and "years" to "year"
 - Format correction: remove paragraph and indent, change "The" to "the"
 - Struck sub-section B
 - Section 5: Corrections now reads "The Board of Appeals is created to hear any appeals of the Superintendent's rulings; to ensure that the policies and procedures of the appeal process of the Commission are adhered to."
- Article XI - MEETINGS
 - Section 1: January and July meetings struck
 - Section 2: Language change from "Committee" to "Board"
 - Added language: "...The meeting agenda must be posted on door of the meeting location and the Commissions website 48 hours before the meeting."
 - Section 3: Added language: "At a -minimum, half of the members of the Commission plus one, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. 5 ILCS 120/1.02..."
 - Struck "Five members of this Commission, of which three (3) are elected officers,..."
 - Section 4: Added language "...the Illinois Open Meetings Act and Roberts Rules of Order, Revised."
 - Struck "...except as herein otherwise provided."
 - Section 5: Change "Annual" to "final Fiscal Year"
 - Added language "...year of..."
 - Struck "or" and "year"
 - Added language "...begin December 1 of each year."
 - Struck "...from the date of the Annual Meeting to the day proceeding the Annual Meeting the following year."
 - Section 6:
 - Sub-section A: Struck "...requires that all State and Local government bodies file with the Illinois Attorney General's Office all Open Meetings Act Designees."
 - Added language "Each delegate of the Commission must complete the electronic training curriculum developed and administered by the Illinois Attorney General Public Access Counselor."
 - Sub-section B: New sub-section Added and reads "The Commission shall designate certain employees and officers to complete the electronic training curriculum developed and administered by the Illinois attorney General Public Access Counselor."
 - Sub-section B: Changed to Sub-section C

- Sub-section C: Changed to Sub-section D
 - Struck "...as directed by the Illinois Attorney General's Office."
 - Added language "of the Open Meeting Act."
- Article XII - SUPERINTENDENT
 - Section 1: Added language "...and recommended..."
 - Change "Committee" to "Board to the full Commission"
 - Change "duly" to "and shall be"
 - Change "Committee" to "Board"
 - Section 2: Added language "...has the sole authority to..."
 - Struck "may"
 - Added language "...Veteran Service Officers..."
 - Added language "...and other employees..."
 - Added language "...to carry out the mission of the Commission..."
 - Section 3: Change "staff members" to "employees of the Commission"
 - Change "LCVAC" to "VACLC"
 - Section 4: Change "This" to "The"
 - Added language "...of the Superintendent of the Veterans Assistance Commission..."
 - Added language "...duly elected..."
 - Struck "...further designated as Superintendent of Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County..."
 - Added language "...and shall be responsible for the daily operations of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County."
 - Section 11: Change "Committee" to "Board"
- Article XIII - ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
 - Section 1: Added language "...nominated by the..."
 - Spelling Correction from "Superintendant" to "Superintendent"
 - Added language "...and..."
 - Change "Committee" to "Board"
 - Section 2: New section added and reads: "The Assistant Superintendent shall report directly to the Superintendent."
 - Section 2: Changed to Section 3
 - Section 3: Changed to Section 4
 - Section 4: Changed to Section 5
 - Section 5: Changed to Section 6
 - Section 6: Changed to Section 7
 - Change "by the Senior Veterans Service Officer (SVSO)" to "at the discretion of the Superintendent"
 - Change "the SVSO" to "an employee designated in writing by the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent."
- Article XIV - SENIOR VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER
 - Struck in its entirety because when written it was current, no longer applies, we now will be having 2 SVSO's and 1 Chief of Staff
- Article XV - AMMENDMENTS
 - Changed to Article XIV
- Approval date updated from "December 3, 2018" to "November 16, 2022"
- Questions, concerns, and discussion held between Commission Delegates and Superintendent, consideration taken and additional corrections to be addressed at next scheduled Quarterly meeting

- IACVAC Update:
 - Fall training conference next week Sun-Fri, will be full week with training sessions, including PACT Act which passed with new presumptive conditions for Post-9/11 Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans. Largest piece of toxic exposure ever written in US. Camp Lejeune Veterans wishing to file federal tort claims, do not request VACLIC to do so, we are unable to do so due to the Federal Tort Claims Act. Recommend Veterans find Attorneys and Agencies who are familiar with Federal Tort Claims and Toxic Exposure Claims. Do not recommend Veterans file on their own, forms must be filed correctly and in specific manner. Does not have to only be for listed presumptive conditions, as long as evidence is presented. VACLIC will still represent and file VA Disability claims regarding Camp Lejeune toxic exposure.
- Travel Policy Changes:
 - Policy created separate and distinct from the County. After approved, the County amended the Per Diem rate which changed from \$60/day to \$72/day. Vote presented to amend our Travel Policy to be consistent
 - Motion by Delegate Derue
 - Seconded by Delegate Patterson
 - Motion to approve amended Travel Policy to change \$60 to \$72/day for per diem meals passed
- Veterans Appreciation Event: September 24, 10am-1pm hosted by Senator McConchie
- Land Purchase: As discussed earlier, County unanimously approved VACLIC Levy. One item requested was \$3.5mil to purchase land to build a new VACLIC building. This has been long attempted in the past. We have been renting space for 96yrs. We are in process of reviewing locations and land to develop for full-service, full technology for meeting spaces and Post use. Alec building on Washington as example of building design. (Enclosure 3)
 - Site considerations:
 - Location and building lot sizes have State and Federal law requirements
 - Ideally near the Al Lynch MOH Bridge
 - Raw parcel vs shovel ready site
 - Centrally located: from perspective considering public transportation and ease of access
 - Visibility and accessibility to major highways
 - Curb cutting adds 12-24mos and expense
 - Curb, parking, sidewalk additional costs potentially \$100,000 to \$1mil
 - Potential removal and demolition of existing structures adds 1-4mos and \$50,000-\$70,000
 - Existing and non-existing utilities and services with capability to accommodate proposed building approximately 30-40,000sq ft
 - Detention ponds and runoff required
 - 1st location: Dilley Rd. in Gurnee, listed \$1.6mil, 5.3acres: raw land would require curb cutting, and utilities, storm detention, run-off, extension of sewer
 - 2nd location: DesPlaines Court, Corner of 120 & Rt 21: listed \$1.995mil, 12.4acres: raw and currently developed lot, requiring tenant removal, building demo, curb cutting, storm detention, extension of sewer, water, electric, and gas into site to accommodate building
 - 3rd location: Hunt Club: \$850k; 3.2 acre; raw and un-developed lot require curb cutting, utilities, storm/run-off and zoning

- 4th location: Northridge Dr (Formerly Joes Crab Shack); \$1.75mil (\$1.4mil offer may be considered) 1.6acre, currently developed, shovel ready, existing curb, gutter, parking, landscape, lighting, utilities, storm, run-off, no demo needed
 - 5th location: Northridge Dr (Formerly Outback Steakhouse): \$1.35mil 1.79acre, shovel ready, existing curb, gutter, landscape, parking, lighting, utilities, demo of old building needed
 - 6th location: SE Corner I-94 and Grand, combined (Formerly Crab Shack, Outback, & Hooters (not yet for sale)), may be able to negotiate for \$2.6mil, which would leave \$900k remaining
 - VACLRC recommendation: 6th option SE Corner I-94 and Grand of combined Crab Shack, Outback, and potentially Hooters: central location, hwy access, visibility, site and soil surveys completed, detention pond/run off already, Gurnee Village and Municipality support, cost and time effective as shovel ready vs. raw land
 - Discussion open for site locations:
 - theoretically best sites are shovel ready
 - public transportation concerns: Pace bus stops on corner and within Northridge Dr. businesses, Pace will pick up and drop off door-to-door within the County. Pace also has services for visually and hearing impaired
 - consideration of VAC van/shuttle: would require additional insurance policies of ~\$120k
 - confirmation of money: Lake County Board approval of requested levy amount; concerns presented by members regarding County follow through, if County does not follow through once contract is in place, the owners of the current land could go after the County Board for the funds
 - Recommendation of committee of 3-5 people to estimate costs for development: cost to demo building \$55,000, costs for new sewer and utilities is in the millions of dollars - advised these considerations already taken with current investigation and presented options
 - Urgency is needed to act, VACLRC staff have done research and course of action, now needed support for recommendation
 - Zoning for restaurant, to be changed to office space: Gurnee government (Mayor and Business Development Office are in support)
 - Consideration if land options will accommodate size of building- building yes, parking will be tight
 - Ideally will be “one-stop shop” for Veterans and Veteran services
 - Motion to approve to make formal offer on recommended site (Site 6) made by Delegate Johnson
 - Motion seconded by Delegate Gandera
 - Motion approved to make formal offer on recommended site (Option 6 combined Outback/Crab Shack/Hooters) passed
- Governors Report: report almost finalized, over \$200k in financial assistance so far, will likely meet between \$235-250k by end of fiscal year, we have provided emergency shelter and food to Veterans and families un-able to go to VA domiciliary. We have applied for federal grant money. We have also applied for rental assistance program for additional funds to assist with Veterans to stay in their rental property. We are still waiting for the grant decisions. Potential budget for FA next year up to \$700k if budget and grants provided. 107 Veterans/families have been provided shelter

- Fisher House: expected to start construction 2023, will serve as temporary housing for family members of Veterans or Active-Duty military hospitalized at FHCC, will be on FHCC property

Superintendents Report Complete

- Motion to accept made by Delegate Voit
- Seconded by Delegate Nickerson
- Motion to approve Superintendents Report passed

Old Business

- None

New Business

- Ft. Sheridan Expansion: Lindenhurst passed resolution in support, approved unanimously to be sent to County Board; request other townships to do the same
- House Bill 2023 NDAA: contains provision to put off reduction of military medical corps until 2024, and establish requirement for DOD to report back to Congress more frequently
- Projected pay and retirement increases: looking between 9-10%, SSA 8%, biggest in last 40yrs, Congress still has authority to limit
- Meeting held at FHCC
 - Wi-fi available with posters posted throughout FHCC facilities
 - Guidance provided on women's reproductive services, VA allowed to perform abortions under 3 circumstances (life of mother, rape, life of baby)
 - Message check-in option to check-into appointments, type "check-in" to 53079, or scan QR codes posted throughout clinics
 - Problems with pool being worked on, hope to have operational "shortly"
 - Awaiting new COVID bi-variant booster, current boosters suspended until receive new one
 - Pharmacy going through upgrades, will be longer delays, expected until mid-October
 - New South garage, having problems but under warrant, currently under 1/3 capacity
 - Problems with lack of POA and Living Wills for Veterans/Patient, recommend all get current/updated POA's and Living Wills: VAC not currently equipped to do so
- Al Lynch Golf event successful. There was participation limit of 135 golfers because of cart shortage. Special live auction included a rare bottle of Kentucky Bourbon, signed by 5 MOH recipients, sold for \$1500. Thanks to all participating posts and the participation to VAC staff.

Delegate Reports

Delegate Magnosta (VFW Post 2245 Grayslake)

- Tuesday September 13, 2022 USN FN3 Herbert Jacobson of Grayslake, IL was laid to rest with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. More than 80yrs later, DNA was able to prove that Herbert was in fact one of the 429 MIA Sailors serving onboard the USS Oklahoma stationed at Pearl Harbor at the start of WWII. He and his family can now live and rest in peace knowing we never forgot

Delegate Desfor (VFW Post 2486 Island Lake)

- On July 8th, 2022, Island Lake VFW 2486 held a ceremony to formally change the name for the Post from "Lakeland Memorial" to "The Paul M. Syverson III VFW post 2486". As part of the re-naming, Lake Zurich VFW Post was dissolved and its active members transferred into 2486, now domiciled in Wauconda at American Legion Post 911. VACLIC Chaplain Marie Honeywell is Commander of VFW 2486

Delegate Schultz (AML Post 1247 Vernon Hills)

- In partnership with the Village of Vernon Hills, Post 1247 began a Service Honors Program where banners are created and hung throughout the Village honoring both Active Duty and Veterans for their service. 11 initial banners were created and are currently hanging from streetlamp poles in town. Additional banners will be developed and hung in Spring, replacing the initial honorees
- Post 1247 conducted its 4th Annual Support the Hero's Gulf Outing on August 27th. In excess of \$6,000 was raised, to be donated to Veterans relief efforts over the coming months
- Post 1247 will be supporting the VHPD (Vernon Hills Police Department) at the Jim Heier Fishing Derby held for patients from Lovell Federal Medical Center /VA Hospital at Big Bear Lake on Sunday September 18th
- On October 6th Post 1247 Monthly Bingo event will begin. The event is also a fundraiser for Veterans Relief efforts. The monthly events are held at the Vernon Hills Golf Course, beginning at 6:30pm on the first Thursday of the month from October through April
- Post 1247 once again will be the transportation agents for the Winter Clothing Drive collected as part of the GLMV (Green Oaks, Libertyville, Mundelein, and Vernon Hills Chapter of Commerce) Coat Drive, delivering the collected items to the Midwest Veterans Closet in North Chicago
- Post 1247 is working with VHHS as the Color Guard once again for Military Appreciation Night
- Post 1247 is working with Hawthorn School District 73 to participate in several Veterans Day Observances at multiple locations throughout the District

Delegate Nickerson (Post 25 PLAV)

- PLAV, USA had their Department meeting Sunday September 11, 2022, held at VFW Joliet, IL
- PLAV National Convention will be held October 18-23, 2022 in Romulas, MI
- September my last year of a two-year term. This has been a huge experience. My two-terms had me close three posts, and open one new post.
- Membership is down
- Ad requests for National Convention Book Sponsorship is available
- Need information for lapel pin manufacturers

Delegate Hacket (Post 867 AML Mundelein)

- At the Al Lynch MOH Golf Tournament Post 867 Member & PGA Hope Illinois Rep Jim Nelson won the 50/50 raffle and the 4-some he was in won the "Most Honest" award for handing in such a lousy score
- I myself attended last weeks PGA Hope lessons at Veterans Memorial, and everyone was impressed with the program

Delegate Castella (Post 911 AML Wauconda)

- I am currently serving as District 10 Commander (Lake County) for the American Legion Department of Illinois. I am a voting member of the Department of Illinois Executive Committee meetings and events. The DEC is the policy and operations body responsible for following A.L. by-laws and voting on all matters that may come before the DEC.
- "Be the One!" is the new American Legion motto
- Buddy check program is ongoing

Delegate Geary (Post 911 Wauconda)

- Wauconda AML Post 911 planned a flag retirement ceremony on Flag Day, June 14th, 2022 but was rained out. We rescheduled for Patriots Day September 11th, 2022, and it also rained. Scouts had already arrived, we decided to have the ceremony indoors without the burning of the flags, the burning was done privately later. After the ceremony we had a brief lesson of flag folding for the benefit of our Cub Scouts. We have scheduled another Flag Retirement for Veterans Day, November 11th, 2022. No rain is scheduled

Delegate Dutkovic (Chapter 48 ROA Ft. Sheridan)

- Upcoming Chapter 48 meeting to be held at Dover Straights on September 25th, 2022
- ROA celebrates 100 years this year in Washington, D.C. at our convention September 29-October 2

Motion to Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by Delegate Voit
- Seconded by Delegate Gabriel
- Motion to adjourn passed

Next meeting will be held on November 16, 2022 at the American Legion Post , Gurnee