



VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF LAKE COUNTY EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting start time and location

- 9:31 AM
- VACLC, Gurnee

Members Present

- Nick Konz, John Murray, John DeReu, Tom Marciciak, Paul Baumunk, Paul Hettich, Larry Klauser, Allan Ayers, Marie Honeywell, George Gandara

Members of the Public

- None present

Motion to Approve Previous Minutes

- Motion made to approve the Minutes from January made by Delegate Marciciak
- Motion seconded by Delegate Hettich
- Motion passed

NFP Expense Report

- Currently \$45,556.94 in NFP account for January 2024
 - Donation deposit for \$50.00.
 - Check #1235 – Chamber of Commerce – \$695.00 – advertising
 - Check #1238 – State of Illinois – \$5.00 – late fee
 - Check #1239 – Coffee Bar – \$2,250.00 – final payment
 - Totaling \$2,950.00
- Motion made to approve Expense Report by Delegate Baumunk
- Motion seconded by Delegate Hettich
- Motion passed

President's Remarks

- Thank you for your time and dedication on the Executive Board and it is beyond valuable



Superintendents Report

- NACVSO Conference in Washington DC Update
 - The conference was a great success. The conference agenda was distributed and explained what is done. NACVSO accredits us as VSOs. VSOIC Hawkins, Secretary and Trainer, Assistant Superintendent Murray, Judge Advocate, Superintendent Tangen, 1st Vice President, Nate Johnson, 2nd Vice, and Karen Smietanski, Treasurer from Illinois. Illinois is taking the lead in this organization. We are in the position in the next several years to lead and put an imprint on 37 states. Our primary goal is to talk to senior people within the VA and elected officials. We spoke to the Secretary of the VA, Under Secretary of Benefits, Board of Veterans appeals, and Health areas. We have a direct relationship with these areas so if we have an issue in Lake County, we have someone to assist that is a higher level within the VA. Illinois had 16 appointments, I met with Congressman Jack Bergman from Michigan, a retired Marine General. He introduced the PLUS Act we are all against and spoke to him for about an hour that went well. We met staffers of several politicians, Veterans representatives are received very well
- NASDVA Conference in DC
 - Superintendent Tangen is at the National Association State Directors of Veterans Affairs. Terry Prince, Director of IDVA, was nominated as the Jr. Vice President of NASDVA. They are focusing on the home issues. Mr. Prince is a huge supporter on the hill. It is likely that Andrew and Terry will both be Presidents of organizations at the same time, both from Illinois
- Coffee Bar Installation
 - Completed and installed by a small company in Antioch, IL
 - They are not veterans, but are descendants of Vietnam Veterans
- FHCC offices update
 - Completed
 - We want our staff to be competent prior to opening and be ready to help
 - No opening date, yet
 - Put at the top of our needs, per President Konz
 - Delegate Klauser suggested volunteers, President Konz said there is fingerprinting required for volunteers. President Konz advising to get staff to Lovell, not volunteers
 - All services at Lovell will be the same as in the Gurnee office, as a satellite office
- Staff (VSO/AA/Paralegal)
 - We advertised for two VSOs, one Administrative Assistant, and one Paralegal. 23 VSO candidates, 68 Administrative Assistant candidates and zero Paralegal candidates applied. Superintendent Tangen and I talked and will hold off on filling the Paralegal position for now. Seventeen candidates for the VSO position were selected and we completed seven interviews and narrowed the candidates down to five for the second interviews. After the interviews, we changed our plans from hiring two VSOs and hired four VSOs and two



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- Administrative Assistants. Since January, eight applicants applied for the paralegal position none met our requirements
- We moved \$500,000.00 from capital improvement to our personnel line item to hire four VSOs and two Administrative Assistants
 - We are allowing the Gurnee Fire Department to use the Outback building for training
 - Intent to hire additional staff was to get FHCC offices open
- New staff start date 11 March
 - All six staff will receive our VACLIC training
 - Four new VSOs will be in the NACVSO accreditation course in April. Side by side training will also be performed in house. Probation is one year
 - Paralegals are on hold until December. Talks with CLC trustee, Amanda Holliand have been initiated. Delegate Ayers said that Harper College has a good paralegal program, and Cathy from IDES will boost the job description to Indeed and other job boards
 - Delegate Ayers said to provide a shorter version of the Paralegal job description
 - FHCC Oracle/Cerner implementation-Federal Electronic Health Record (FEHR)
 - Merger coming in March 9
 - Met a lead of the merger in DC and they asked to please share any obstacles with us
 - There are six screens to sign-in, when you get the newsletter, please advise what is going on with it, if it is accurate
 - Delegate Baumunk will it be simplified? President Konz said it will not be easier
 - Myhealthvet will not take you to your award letter
 - Annual award letter to submit for property taxes needed if you are not 100% P&T
 - One time award letter for property taxes if you are 100% P&T
 - Delegate Honeywell stated February 24, 2024 – McHenry is having a presentation at the VFW. Oracle Health wants to present the merger. Assistant Superintendent Murray will attend, needs information. Ben Keefe is contact and Post Commander
 - Office furniture installation (All offices furnished)
 - A & P charts are in the training room for reviews
 - All IT equipment is ordered through the county and software updates are performed by county IT
 - Our network is now all fiber
 - We are maxed out and performing data analysis to request an increase
 - We have 21 offices and 2 offices with double seating
 - 2023 Governors Report
 - Take home report to review and give feedback
 - Does the VA get a copy of this report, Dr. Bill Buckley, Navy Base Co and RTC Co
 - Delegate Ayers stated in graphs, they are light and hard to read



- Do you get the State Annual report? IACVAC, 49 VACs, Jake Zimmerman creates a report with input from 33 VACs for the last three years. Board would like a copy the last year report
- Legislative Update (Federal level)
 - The TAP class allows Veteran Service organizations to talk about Veterans Benefits, it will be mandatory
- Motion to accept the Superintendent Report made by Delegate Honeywell
- Motion seconded by Delegate Hettich
- Motion passed

Unfinished Business

- None to report

New Business

- Delegate Klauser – AML Post 867 donated funds to our NFP \$800.00-Check 2832, they received in donations in December

Report by Officers

- Delegate Hettich – Asked about signage for our future home. Assistant Superintendent Murray advised we are holding on the signage for now
 - VFW Post roof was damaged; we want a Veteran owned business, and they could start tomorrow. It is suggested to call Lake County Responds to Veterans to find one
 - Veteran's roof repairs require an additional \$4,000.00 by April 2024. If the board could support additional funds. Delegate Gandara volunteered to ask Home Depot for donation for 100 sheets plywood
 - Motion to approve additional \$4,000.00 for the repairs minus any plywood donated on the roof made by Delegate DeReu
 - Motion seconded by Delegate Marciciak
 - Motion passed
 - Antioch Memorial Committee is not supported by the Antioch VFW Post and does not support Veterans. They have not collaborated with anyone from the Antioch VFW Post
 - Returned from expedition with Team RWB. Post 911 veterans are not part of any other Veteran Service organization. One out of 27 didn't belong to any other organization. They want to do things that are active and not join a post
 - Chicago Auto Show – Branches present were Army, Air Force, and Marines. 2700 contacts made; they hope to get 10 leads to join the military
 - I have Army recruiting materials. If needed, please contact Delegate Hettich
 - Briefing sent out and will send to all delegates
 - Event on Thursday, Michelle Bauman, Avon Township Supervisor, first meeting, Lake County Military Families United as One, focus on family at 6:00pm, 250 Center Street, Grayslake



- Ambassador event attending Military Veteran Resource Group. It is a recruiting event at Mission BBQ in Naperville
- Delegate Honeywell – Will find out additional information about the meeting on February 24
 - Rush Road Home Program will fly Veterans and their families out and pay for them to get treatment
- Delegate Ayers – Newsletter cutoff is the 25th of each the month
- Delegate DeReu – Mike Peck sent a note regarding House Bill 4683 allocating one million a year for the next five years to JROTC Program in Chicago for new equipment, buildings, etc. We have been asked to support the bill
 - Dr. Buckley will be the speaker of MOAA on March 17 with an update
 - Attended a webinar with General Petraeus, served as the Head of the CIA shared his thoughts on what is going on in Tiawan and Middle East
- Delegate Marciciak – Follow up on a document he sent to Superintendent Tangen on American Legion regarding their view on Camp Lejeune Act, I forwarded a resolution that was covered in December and did not receive a response from the Superintendent. Assistant Superintendent will follow-up with Andrew
- Assistant Superintendent – Hines Outreach team will be here in our office on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 10:00am to 2:00pm. First time here is March 27, 2024, VA healthcare, the VA will be here
 - Veteran Fergal Gallagher was a huge supporter of the VAC, passed away and donated a tandem crypt space and mausoleum valued at \$31,147.00. This is very generous. We have a dozen plots that we are not using. We have the means to provide burials for Veterans at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. We have an NFP, that would be a better use for donations.
 - Delegate Ayers will advertise plot information in the newsletter with the contact for the burial plots

Motion to adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by Delegate Ayers
- Motion to adjourn seconded by Delegate Hettich
- Motion passed
- Meeting adjourned at 11:02 am

Next Executive Board Meeting will be held on March 20, 2024 at 9:30am, at the AML in Gurnee, IL