



VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF LAKE COUNTY EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting start time and location

- 9:31 AM
- AML, Gurnee

Members Present

- Nick Konz, Andrew Tangen, John DeReu, Tom Marciciak, Paul Baumunk, Paul Hettich, Larry Klauser, Allan Ayers, Marie Honeywell

Members of the Public

- None present

Motion to Approve Previous Minutes

- Motion made to approve the Minutes from February made by Delegate Baumunk
- Motion seconded by Delegate Marciciak
- Motion passed

NFP Expense Report

- Currently \$47,276.94 in NFP account for February 2024
 - Three donations totaling \$1,720.00
 - No payment in February
- Motion made to approve Expense Report by Delegate Marciciak
- Motion seconded by Delegate Baumunk
- Motion passed

President's Remarks

- Last month, a lot of us were upset and did not fully listen to Assistant Superintendent Murray as to why Lovell was not opening sooner. Superintendent Tangen advised that due to the PACT Act increase, burn pit, and hiring new staff that was reasonable verification to not open earlier

Superintendents Report

- NASDVA Conference in DC
 - I attended the National Association State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) midwinter conference in February. NACVSO is different from NASDVA. It is a high-



level briefing for the VA, and they are directors of their state. Terry Prince was elected the Jr. Vice President of NASDVA. This creates the potential, if I am elected President of NACVSO that Terry and I could both be Presidents of these organizations at the same time and from Illinois

- FHCC offices update
 - We are booking out to June/July for appointments with the PACT Act. We need the new staff trained and ready to support the Veterans at FHCC
 - We are working with the Homeless program at Lovell to get their claims filed
 - If Veterans arrive at Lovell from other counties, we will provide the Veteran to their local county or the other veteran service organizations within Lovell
 - We have a lot of Cook County residents come to Lovell for appointments and we need to focus on Veterans that reside in Lake County

- Staff (VSO/AA)
 - We hired Ali and KC who are doing claims. They are both fully accredited and trained. They are doing claim work. We have six new staff: four VSOs and two administrative assistants. The training provided is the basics or foundation to ensure they can do the job. We provide training and have the reputation that we are doing the job correctly the first time. The trainees go to the Basic Benefits Class in April 2024
 - We plan to have staff at Lovell in July 2024
 - Appointments will be made through the Gurnee, choosing either Lovell or Gurnee for location

- FHCC Oracle/Cerner implementation-Federal Electronic Health Record (FEHR)
 - Implementation still has issues, and the pharmacy computers are not talking to the VA computers which makes it difficult to navigate
 - The training went well for those listened and not so well for those that did not take seriously
 - Delegate Ayers is taking feedback on how to navigate the new system and how to sign on a little more easily. He will find an easier way to sign in and share with all

- Denman House Update Conversation
 - Last month, we needed to provide \$4,000.00. Delegate Gandara was to go to Home Depot to get the plywood and there was no action. Delegate Hettich stated the roof was completed on March 15, 2024, due to the safety of the house. Superintendent advised that the motion was stayed last meeting
 - Motion to recoup payment for the Denman roof paid by the VFW in Antioch in the amount of \$4,000.00 made by Delegate Baumunk
 - Seconded by Delegate Ayers
 - Motion passed



- Paralegal Staffing Update
 - There were 11 applicants, and none were qualified or trained for the Paralegal position. We postponed the hiring of the Paralegal. I met with the College of Lake County who have a Paralegal program to explain our vision with the Paralegal role in our organization. They are excited and willing to assist with recruiting
 - Delegate Ayers mentioned looking at Harper College and response was we working on that, as well as Loyola
- Oracle/Cerner Event
 - Oracle/Cerner hired The Nimitz Group to brief us at the Commission meeting regarding the FEHR implementation. There is an event tonight at the Board Room in Libertyville regarding the same via invitation. John Murray and I will be attending. Parking is challenging by the Board Room
 - Oracle/Cerner and The Nimitz Group wanted a lead veteran advocate group to talk about the FEHR implementation and reached out to us
- Motion to accept the Superintendent Report made by Delegate DeReu
- Motion seconded by Delegate Marciciak
- Motion passed

Unfinished Business

- President Konz spoke about the use of witness slips, how to complete the slips, and how to get the word out to help veterans
 - Delegate Ayers stated we are getting too many witness slips going out
 - Superintendent Tangen stated the General Assembly can cancel and reschedule for the same day give short notice when they want. They do not have to follow the Open Meetings Act. There are too many organizations forwarding the same information. Distribution is a blessing knowing how powerful VFW, AMVETS, AML, etc. to pass legislation and it needs to be more focused. The curse is there are 15 priorities from VFW, and another different 15 priorities from AML, etc
 - We need to harness and ask what the most important top five pieces of legislation for our focus
 - Delegate Honeywell will distribute the information and send to others to screen and pass onto the group

New Business

- Delegate Honeywell stated VFW, Memorial Day on May 4, 2024, in McHenry VFW. We start at 4:00pm

Report by Officers

- Delegate Honeywell District 5 meeting will be Saturday, May 18, 2024, in West Dundee Post, 9:00am is the social and 10:00am is the meeting with district officer elections



Motion to adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by Delegate Hettich
- Motion to adjourn seconded by Delegate DeReu
- Motion passed
- Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am

Next Executive Board Meeting will be held on April 17, 2024, at 9:30 am at the VAC office in Gurnee, IL