



Andrew Tangen, Superintendent
Sherry Kruse, Assistant Superintendent
Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County
501 N. Riverside Dr, Ste 106
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September 15, 2021

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: 20

Special Guests

- Mr. Phillip Deruntz (Lake County Health Department) was present

Approval of minutes of previous meeting-May 19, 2020

- Issue with previous minutes raised. Barry Desfor incorrectly listed as the delegate for American Legion Post 911. Donald Castella is the delegate for American Legion Post 911. Correction to minutes completed and minutes revised.
- Motion made by Delegate Patterson.
- Seconded by Delegate Nickerson
- Motion to approve previous minutes passed.

Superintendents Report

- Writ of Mandamus Update
 - VAC of Lake County forced to file another writ of mandamus against the Lake County Board for failing to pay for the VAC's attorney's fees. We were successfully able to get the Lake County Board to continue paying for the VAC attorney's fees.
 - We are still working on the first writ of mandamus and it has now been five months since the reply brief has been filed. It is still being processed by the appellate court.
- Suicide Awareness
 - The Veterans Crisis Line has had a massive jump in numbers of Veterans calling in.
 - A Lake County Veteran committed suicide on 9/13/21. He was very active in the Veteran community, including service organizations. He is the fourth Veteran in Lake County to commit suicide in the past 3.5 weeks.
 - The VAC is working on developing positive corrections and solutions, one of which is to use our certified Mental Health First Aid Trainers (Chief of Staff/Senior Veteran Service Officer John Murray and Veteran Service Officer Jillian "Summer" Padoan) to intervene as soon as possible.
 - If a district or post wants mental health first aid training, COS/SVSO Murray and VSO Padoan are authorized to train local responders, so your post membership can be mental health first responders.



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- Outreach/Media
 - Superintendent Tangen has been doing radio interviews to try and spread the word about the Veteran suicide issue and the services that the VAC can provide.
 - He has stressed to everyone the importance of “if you know a vet, talk to a vet” and wants to make sure that delegates and their posts know that there are services available to Veterans who are having a difficult time, especially with the recent news of Afghanistan.
 - A meeting with all Lake County post commanders will be planned (date and place TBD).

- NACVSO Conference
 - Superintendent Tangen and COS/SVSO John Murray attended the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers (NACVSO) in Washington DC to meet with elected officials.
 - Burn pit legislation will happen this year and delegates are encouraged to get OIF/OEF Veterans to sign up for the burn pit registry.
 - VAC helped several house members with legislation that Governor Pritzker signed into law. Specifically, anyone who was discharged due to LGBTQ status (with bad paper), will get an automatic discharge upgrade. The next step is for Veterans with PTSD/TBI related issues who received bad paper discharges to get assistance with their discharge upgrades.

- VAC Operations
 - Due to restrictions instated by Governor Pritzker, the VAC has returned to virtual and telephone appointments only. There will be no in person appointments or walk-ins until further notice.

Superintendents Report Complete

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

Old Business

- Nothing to report

New Business

- Nothing to report



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Report by Officers

Delegate Klauser (American Legion Post 867):

- Post 867 held two very successful fundraisers, Mundelein Days and their 18th annual golf outing.
- We are requesting that everyone keep Pete Kristan, a Legionnaire for 67 years and a WWII combat veteran, in your thoughts and prayers, due to sudden medical issues.

Delegate Castella (American Legion Post 911):

- Post 911 Color Guard led the Wauconda Memorial Day Parade and were the strongest lobbying organization for having the Memorial Day Parade.
- Post 911 is open every day for bar services, limited food services, and video gaming.
- Post 911 members attended both the Illinois and National American Legion Conventions where they discussed the importance of buddy checks and ways to reach out to other Veterans.
- Members participated in the Wauconda 9-11 ceremony at the Wauconda 9-11 memorial.

Delegate Voit (VFW Post 8741):

- Post 8741 got permission from the Village of Libertyville to conduct Poppy Day.
- Post 8741 participated in a 9-11 memorial service, where the base commander from Naval Station Great Lakes was the main speaker.
- Coffee and donuts are available to Veterans.

Delegate DeReu (MOAA):

- Thanks to all who sponsored and participated in the Al Lynch golf outing. The outing was successful, with a net proceeds of about \$27,000.
- Federal news-the big issue is COLA, projected to be 6%, but Congress may put a cap on it. The Military Coalition (TMC) is prepared to fight this.
- Lovell FHCC is giving out third vaccine shots, but only to those Veterans classified as “health compromised”.
- MOAA is meeting on September 19th at Dover Straits. IDVA Director will be the speaker. ROA and AUSA are invited as well.

Delegate Dutkovich (ROA-Fort Sheridan Chapter 48):

- There will be a convention on October 21-24th, in Memphis, TN, celebrating 100 years.
- ROA will continue to meet with MOWW, MOA, and AUSA at Dover Straits.

Delegate Rock (Lake County Council-Navy League of the United States)

- The Navy League of the United States was formed to support the sea services.
- We present the Navy League Award at recruit graduation every Friday morning. If anyone would like to attend as a guest, please let me know.



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Motion to Adjourn

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

**Next meeting will be held on Wednesday November 17, 2021 at the American Legion Post 771,
Gurnee**