



Andrew Tangen, Superintendent  
Sherry Kruse, Assistant Superintendent  
Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County  
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November 17, 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: 26

### **Special Guests**

- Karyn Davidman Congressman Schneider Representative
- Laurie Moss Congresswoman Underwood Veterans Advisory Counsel; District 10 Legion representative

### **Approval of minutes of previous meeting-September 15, 2021**

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

### **Superintendents Report**

- Budget
  - County board passed and approved budget requested, increased funding by ~\$200k, budget up to ~\$900k. No new programs approved. Currently 7 funded staff (8 total). Eviction Moratorium ended, anticipate many veterans in need of assistance for housing/rental/mortgage. VAC is funded and required by law to provide this assistance. Posts are recommended to send vets in need to VAC to request financial assistance and/or evictions. Must comply with application and meet requirements for approval. Clarified financial assistance is required all Article 6 assistance in public aid code. Assistance for Veterans, Families of Veterans, & Families of Deceased Veterans.
- Writ of Mandamus update
  - Tangen 2 settled, attorney fees paid by county. Tangen 1 still pending at Illinois 2<sup>nd</sup> District court of appeals. Has been 7 months since last contact regarding no formal hearing needed.



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- Illinois House committee

- Superintendent Tangen testified in front of Illinois Senate House Committee on HB ??? regarding oversight and reporting ability in cases of Illinois Veterans Homes or Service Offices under IDVA. This is a legislature response to LaSalle Veterans Home COVID crisis. Law is written of 4yr appointment by Governor and confirmed by Senate. Elected will be director of Veterans Accountability Unit for oversight and investigations of any malfeasance. HB has passed House and Senate.
- Superintendent Tangen testified with Kane County Superintendent as subject matter expert for Veterans assistance and shortcomings in IL in front of Il House Committee.

### Superintendents Report Complete

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

### Old Business

- Delegate DeReu: Budget pushed for junior enlistment support. This week Tribune and Daily Herald had 2 articles for available food pantries and assistance. Housing allowance provided from DOD is counted as income therefore disqualifies from public assistance. Congressman Schneider introduced bill and provided assistance to many Veterans.

### New Business

- Delegate DeRue: Ft. Sheridan cemetery transferred to VA Dec 2019. Officially now National Cemetery, new interments are only cremation, unless plot already precured for spouse for casketed burial.
- Superintendent Tangen: Reports received that PTSD program at FHCC Lovell being combined with the drug and alcohol unit were not successful, and there have been many complaints. Since 1981 VA had world renowned inpatient PTSD program. During pandemic, all inpatient programs were shut, and when re-opened combined with other inpatient programs (ie. Substance use programs). This has subsequently led to several veterans leaving program due to not needing the substance counseling and not getting proper PTSD treatment. Severe impact regarding local Veteran suicide attempts and death by suicide. The issue has been brought up to MajG Yukiyama, Military Outreach NFP for veterans suffering with PTSD. Asking posts to talk to vets dissatisfied with the inpatient treatment programs to provide evidence to director.
- Superintendent Tangen: Mental Health First Aid for Veterans will be 2/26/2022 held at Antioch VFW post. Invite veterans service organizations throughout the county. Help in the fight against Veterans mental illness and suicide. Sign up available.
- Superintendent Tangen: January new delegate forms will be sent out. Must be filled and returned within 60 days by law.

### Report by Officers



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Delegate Nelson (PGA- HOPE Ambassador Illinois Section) (Post 867):

- Planning underway for 2022 PGA HOPE program. Expect to host 5+ clinics, plans and registration announced early 2022 for Spring, Summer, and Fall clinics. PGA Hope is America's flagship military program that introduces golf to Veterans to enhance physical, mental, social and emotional well-being. Developmental 6-8wk curriculum is taught by PGA professionals trained in adaptive golf and military cultural competency.

Delegate Ayers (MCL Detachment 1395):

- Marine Corps League Detachment 1395 hosted breakfast for the Veterans History Project on Veterans Day.

Delegate Geary (AML Post 911):

- Wauconda American Legion Post 911 (sons) held their annual "Breakfast with the Vets" on Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>. All veterans had a free buffet breakfast.
- Our Wauconda Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) held their monthly "Meals for All". They usually charge \$1 for a full dinner; this time Veterans were free. It was a full turkey dinner sponsored by Wauconda Lions Club. The dinner was held at Post home.
- In December our "sons" will have their annual "Breakfast with Santa".
- We recently had a flag retirement ceremony. Worn and tattered flags were ceremonially retired by reverently burning.
- This past Saturday we invited 14 families of Veterans to our post to present to them the Veteran photo banners that were posted on Main St. light poles from Memorial Day to Veterans Day.
- Post 911 visited 3 Elementary Schools on Veterans Day and spoke to 5<sup>th</sup> Graders about Veterans and Veterans Day.

Delegate Hettich (AML Post 748, VFW Post 4551, USAR Ambassador IL):

- Mental Health First Aid training scheduled to be held February 26, 2022 at Antioch VFW 0800-1700. POC Marie Honeywell.
- Sailors dinner December 11, 2021 Antioch VFW at 1700hrs, POC Paul Hettich.
- USAR Recruiting Reserve and Recruiting Partnership Council, March 25, 2022 at Westin Hotel, Chicago. POC Paul Hettich

Delegate Castella (AML 911; AML 10<sup>th</sup> District Sr. Vice Commander):

- American Legion motto is "Leave no Veteran behind". The importance of this phrase became clear to me yesterday. I had arranged to pick up a vet friend neighbor and drive him to a Veterans "Cup o' Joe" in Mundelein. When I rang his doorbell and called him on the telephone there was no response. I returned later and again no response. I called Lake County Sheriff for welfare check. Deputies entered his home to find him on the bathroom floor He was transported via ambulance to the hospital and will recover, but had it not been for the buddy check, he may not have been.

Delegate Voit (VFW Post 8741):

- Libertyville VFW Post 8741 participated in Veterans Day Ceremonies at Grayslake Public Library. Libertyville Civic Center with Congressman Schneider, presented Colors at Mission BBQ, Waukegan Airport Dedication, and St. Mary's of Vernon men's club annual Veterans



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Ceremony on November 15, 2021, Larry Klauser was Chairman. Presented Colors at Lake Forest Equestrian event in Lake forest Fund Raiser.

Delegate DeReu (MOAA): be hosting the following events:

- MOAA Meeting, November 2021 Toys for tots
- Congressman Schneider: "Boots to Business" Reintroduced and passed ~470 to 2.
- Newspaper Articles, Re: Jr. Enlisted needing help, food pantries & charities to survive.

Delegate Honeywell (VFW Post 11020/ Jr. Vice dist. 5 VFW):

- VFW Operation Christmas cheer (OCC) still requesting donations for hospitalized veterans. Dec 4 & 5 pack boxes and deliver boxes.
- VOD/Patriots Pen Essay Scholarship is preparing to be judged on district level. Turn in no later than Sat. November 20, 2021 @ VFW Dist. 5 meeting @ Antioch VFW Post at 0900hrs.
- Veterans court of Lake county: Graduation December 3, 2021 (4 clients), and February 25, 2022 (4 clients). Need Color Guard to perform at December 3<sup>rd</sup>. POC Marie Honeywell (VTC mentor) 847-507-5395.
- Midwest Veterans Closet:
  - Turkey Give-Away November 20, 2021 @ 1330hrs @ VFW Post 4600 McHenry; first come, must show military ID.
  - Holiday meal & All fixings Give-Away November 19, 2021 @ 1100-1300, must show military ID
  - Christmas Ham Give-Away December 17, 2021, 1100-1300, must show military ID
- VFW Dist. 4: Service Officer Training, open to all SVO and Interested SVO'S. POC Dutch Degroot for date/time.

Delegate Gallagher (Grayslake AML 659):

- Grayslake Central HS held Veterans Day Program November 11, 2021.
- Poppy sale with local VFW Post totaled \$7500.

Guest Ted Rock (Navy league of the US):

- VACLK Superintendent Tangen and Chief of Staff Murray attended USN Graduation at NTC Great Lakes in October. Invitation stands and is open to anyone to attend in future. POC Ted Rock 630-886-5499 or [ted.rock@comcast.net](mailto:ted.rock@comcast.net)

Delegate Gabriel (AML Fox Lake Post 703):

- We've kicked off operations for hosting 34<sup>th</sup> Annual USMC Birthday Breakfast and kicked off annual Toys for Tots. We raised \$1,500 for this program as well as 4 boxes of toys.
- Post is open and fully operational with all facilities open to members and public.
- Post is able to accommodate 250 persons and kitchen is available for events.
- Post is hopeful that we can resume our annual Burgers & Bikes and Veterans fishing Derby in June and August.



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- October was busy with assistance requested for 6 Veterans, 5 were outside of Post referrals. Assisted 2 other Veterans families with obtaining proper military honors for their deceased loved ones. Approximately 16hrs accumulated providing assistance.

Delegate Dutkovic: (ROA Chapter 48 Ft. Sheridan)

- Last combined meeting w/ MOWW & AUSA on November 14, 2021 for final Holiday Celebration.
- Chapter 48 continues to recruit while ROA membership in general continues to fall
- Future success remains combining meetings with other organizations.
- Assisting with pre-need burial certification with VA for members and spouses.

Delegate Davidson: (MCL Det. 801)

- Will be at Hawthorn Mall by Macy's for Toys for Tots fundraiser November 20, 2021 1200-1600.
- Will be at Gurnee Mills by Bass Pro-shop for Toys for Tots Fundraiser on November 27, December 4 & 11 1100-1600.

**Motion to Adjourn**

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

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