

## **Minutes of Langelade County Veterans Committee Meeting**

The meeting was called to order on Monday, April 13, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. by Chair Jim Jansen and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Members present: Jim Jansen, Larry Poltrock and Richard Schuh.

Others Present: John Zenkovich, Mary Lex, Dale Oatman, Tom Matucheski, Dan Kamps, and Marie Schuh.

Agenda Item #3. Approve the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting held March 09, 2015.  
Motion by Richard Schuh to approve the agenda and approve the minutes from the previous meeting held March 09, 2015. Motion seconded by Larry Poltrock. All ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #4. Approve Budget Summary.  
Motion by Richard Schuh to approve the budget summary report. Motion seconded by Larry Poltrock. All ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #5 Communications and Public Comment.  
Marie Schuh questioned whether the flags for the cemeteries were available. John stated that they are here and ready to be picked up.  
John attended the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs CVSO training in Milwaukee and passed all the accreditation classes. He still has not received the certificates for this accreditation but should soon. John had his fingerprints done in Milwaukee at the time of his training and John and Mary went to Iron Mountain on Friday and Mary had her fingerprints done for the purpose of obtaining a PIV card which will allow access to view federal records for veterans, such as claims status.

Agenda Item #6. Outreach Update  
John stated that the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Representative, Casey Schoettmer, was in the office on Thursday, April 9. There was a tremendous turnout of veterans here to see him. It was a very productive day and Casey set up intensive programs with three of our veterans for this Thursday, April 16, when he will spend an hour and half with each one helping them. Casey will also be back on the second Thursday of next month. Casey was very happy with the number of veterans that he saw.

John gave out information about the Choice Card. Congress has changed the law but it has not become effective yet because it has not been posted to the federal register which is step one of the process. It will actually be 40 miles a veteran must drive to their appointments instead of as the crow flies which it was previously. The VA has their own mileage system similar to Mapquest which will track how far each veteran is travelling to their appointments. The VA will be mailing out the new Choice Card and when the veteran receives it they need to call the number on the back of the card to see if they are eligible for the program. If the veteran qualifies they will be allowed to go to local doctors with pre-authorization from their primary care VA

medical facility. When more information becomes available John will inform the local veterans posts with the new update.

John stated that we are progressing on putting veteran information into our new computer system. John and Mary are taking files and uploading information so that the office will no longer have paper files.

John received information from Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs that a change has been made for what they need to give the CVSO grant. There was a Legislative Audit Bureau, LAB, many counties were getting the grant and weren't in compliance with the law when the CVSO was hired. John needs to supply the information of what procedures were used when he was hired such as copies of the test that was taken and the scores. The tests cannot be given because the state will not release that, so here are the questions and the score sheet. The problem is that they are auditing the last three years and those records from when Dale was hired are not available. Robin Stowe will submit a letter stating that the laws were followed when Dale was hired which means that when our county was given the grant those years it was within the laws.

John mentioned that he will be the speaker at the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Courthouse, he was asked by Mike Piller, commander for VFW Post 2653.

John stated that the VA is trying to pass a bill which will allow a veteran who is military retired and also in receipt of VA compensation 40% or below to receive both. Right now a veteran who receives retirement pay and is 40% or less disabled cannot receive both so the compensation is taken from his retirement check. This is unfair to the veteran and this bill is favored by both political parties which may help it get passed.

John said that the flags are here and ready to be distributed to the caretakers of the county cemeteries for Memorial Day placement.

John was on a phone conference call with Iron Mountain today and was told that the surgery wing of the hospital will be open by June. It is finished and just waiting for inspection. They will not be able to maintain the same level of care that it had previously. When the audit was done they need a surgery level doctor to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and every day of the year. This would mean the doctor would have to be within five minutes of the hospital and always be available which isn't feasible for any doctor. They will change to Ambulatory Care Basic mode of operating. Veterans will not notice any difference because in the case of strokes, heart attacks or other emergencies, they will stabilize you and transfer you to another hospital. So it will not change a lot from what was taking place previously. The emergency department will change their name to Urgent Care which will not change anything, they will still be open 24 hours a day. The main message Iron Mountain VA wants to get out is that they are a rural based hospital and what they do they do really well.

Agenda Item #07. Set Date for May meeting and Tentative Date for June.

The committee scheduled the next meeting for May 11, 2015 at 1:30 pm. June's meeting date was tentatively set for Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 1:30 pm.

Agenda Item #09. Adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Larry Poltrock to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Richard Schuh. All ayes.  
Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Submitted by,  
Mary Lex