

Minutes of Langlade County Veterans Committee Meeting

The meeting was called to order on Friday, March 11, 2011 at 8:15 am by Chair Jim Jansen and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Members present: Jim Jansen, Richard Hurlbert and Mike Klimoski.

Others Present: Dale Oatman, Al Werwie, David Lee, Dich Schuh, Marie Schuh, Steve Bradley, Jack Marciniak, and Liane Blahnik. Mary Lex attended part of meeting.

Agenda Item #3. Approve the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting held February 18, 2011.

Motion by Richard Hurlbert to approve the agenda and approve the minutes from the previous meeting held Friday, February 18, 2011. Motion second by Mike Klimoski. All ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #4. Communications and Public Comment.

Dale Oatman reported he attended the northeast CVSO meeting where a staff person from representative Duffy's office was present. They reported comments or questions were not forwarded from Obey's office. Dale suggested veterans who submitted comments or questions, may need to resubmit those to Duffy's office to receive a response.

Dale reported a representative from the new Veterans Center in Eau Claire was at that meeting and they question their ability to open a satellite office in Wausau which would help cover north-central Wisconsin. The Eau Claire Veterans Center provides counseling services for drug abuse or other family problems and they provide some training. Dale reported he has referred a couple of veterans to Vet centers to utilize their expertise for suicide prevention, counseling for family issues, and for helping a veteran to integrate back into a family or social setting. This center is separate from the VA healthcare system, but the center will refer those back who would be qualified for VA healthcare.

Dale reported two people from Tomah gave briefings at this northeast CVSO meeting that their mental rehab project is complete and they are now working on their emergency room area.

Dale reported he attended a meeting in Iron Mountain on Monday where he learned about a pilot program at 5 hospitals across the nation who issue debit cards to pay for travel pay in lieu of issuing cash reimbursement at the cashier's office. This program may be embraced by all VA hospitals so they do not have to keep cash on hand and they hope this will help reduce fraud. Last year Iron Mountain provided \$1.3 million in travel reimbursement.

Dale reported he called Menominee Transit. They do provide transportation to Milwaukee, Monday – Friday. Cost of a round trip out of Menominee is \$40.00 and out of Antigo would be \$60.00. This could be an option for veterans. Transportation to Iron Mountain is only provided on Wednesdays for \$60.00. Unfortunately many of the specialty doctors are contracted to provide services on Tuesday or Thursday, and the transit system will provide rides there on other days, but cost of the trip would be \$120.00. Currently they do not travel to the Rhinelander Clinic or Wausau Clinic. Dick Hurlbert asked about the Green Bay Clinic. Dale reported the Green Bay Clinic has been delayed because of a design issue, and Washington D.C. will need to approve the plans. Ground breaking may come in April and this clinic would be on-line in 2013 for compensation/pension evaluations and out-patient surgery. The Director of Milwaukee reported they will start recruiting key people when they start ground breaking. Dale will set up a meeting with the director of Menominee transit to see about

contracting a lower cost for veterans traveling to clinics in Rhinelander, Wausau, and Iron Mountain. Dale reported that many veterans would rather take their own vehicle because of time. Dale reported the DAV van could come to Langlade County, but we would lose the transportation grant. Dale reported that Milwaukee reported a vehicle may not be available for Langlade County this year because of their tightening budget. Dale asked others to encourage veterans to work through Dale's office to help with transportation issues.

Agenda Item #5. Discuss and approve 2011 Budget Summary report, comp time report, travel pay, and payment of the bills.

The bills, the 2011 budget summary, the travel pay and the comp time reports were reviewed by the Committee. Motion by Richard Hurlbert to approve the 2011 budget summary report, the comp time report, travel pay and authorize payment of the bills. Motion second by Mike Klimoski. All ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #6. Outreach Update.

Dale reported there is a huge renovation going on at Iron Mountain hospital. Most of the primary care providers have been relocated to the fourth and fifth floors. People need to enter on the East entrance and log in on the first floor and they will tell you where to go for your appointment.

Dale reported he met with the committee and the priority list for veteran programs was discussed and it will be provided to Gary Olsen for the next Executive Committee meeting in April.

Dale attend a Town Hall meeting where Secretary Black encouraged all CVSO's to attend the National Women's Veterans Conference which will be held in Wisconsin this year. Dale reported that Mary has also been accredited on issues for sexual abuse or family issues, and many times, women would rather discuss their issues with her.

Dale plans to attend the next County board meeting as the resolution supporting the Wisconsin Veterans Trust Fund will be presented. Dale plans to be available to answer questions the board may have.

Agenda Item #7. Confirm date and time set for next month's meetings and April's committee meeting.

The date for next month's meeting is Friday, April 8, 2011 at 9:00 am. May's meeting was tentatively set for Friday, May 13, 2011 at 9:00 am.

Agenda Item #8. Adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Richard Hurlbert to adjourn the meeting. Motion second by Mike Klimoski. All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 am.

Submitted by,
Liane Blahnik
Administrative Assistant