

Minutes of Langlade County Veterans Committee Meeting

The meeting was called to order on Monday, March 09, 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, Marie Schuh, Carlene Nagel and Gary Olsen.

Agenda Item #3. Approve the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting held February 02, 2015.

Motion by Richard Schuh to approve the agenda and approve the minutes from the previous meeting held February 02, 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. WDVA Audit.

John stated that the state of Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs will be conducting an audit of the grant that we receive each year. They will also audit the commission assistance. John and Gary Olsen have submitted all the information that was requested. Mr. Oatman questioned what the grant was used for. Gary Olsen said it is all put into the salary of the Deputy CVSO. It is unknown if they will actually come into the office to do the audit since all that was requested right now has been submitted.

Agenda Item #6. E-mailing Minutes and Agendas

John stated that the office is looking for ways to save money and this would be a way to save on postage and also on paper. Paper copies can be printed for those committee members that are unable to print on their computers. Any veterans organizations that are willing to receive their agendas and minutes by e-mail should contact the Veterans Office to leave their e-mail address. The committee members agreed that this would be a good idea so starting with the May agenda and April minutes e-mails will be sent.

Agenda Item #7 Communications and Public Comment.

Tom Matucheski stated that Sean Duffy had a town hall meeting that he attended at Northcentral Technical College on Friday, March 6. It was a short notice so not many people knew about it.

Agenda Item #8. Outreach Update

John attended the finance committee meeting on Friday, March 6 because of an overage in the 2014 veterans budget due to Mr. Oatman's retirement payout of extended leave. Gary Olsen stated the requested carry forward did not have enough money for the veterans travel. The commission assistance money is required by state statute to carry forward so Gary suggested money that was promised to pay one week of John's salary for the month of December which

was not transferred into the veterans budget be put into the veterans budget to allow the commission money to be carried forward. Finance committee voted and agreed to that suggestion. Money was also needed to put into the veterans travel so Gary averaged the usage over the last few years and asked John how much was needed to be sufficient for the veterans travel for 2015. Gary then asked the finance committee to consider taking the money for Mr. Oatman's payout from the retirement fund where there is extra funds for departments which do not have enough money in their budget to cover a retirement payout. Finance agreed to take a portion of the payout for Mr. Oatman's extended leave from that account which allowed veterans travel to have money carried forward. Mr. Oatman asked if anybody was at that meeting representing the veterans and John responded that he was there to represent the offices' interests. Mr. Oatman said that eventually the CVSO may have to go to county board and request to increase the levy for the veterans travel. Gary responded that this has already been discussed and may be enacted next year's budget. Mr. Oatman said that he had not thought about the buyout when he went before the county board stating the money for John's salary could be taken from the veteran's budget. Mr. Oatman said he did not get his payout check until after the first of the year of 2015 and it should be taken from 2015 budget. Gary responded that the county is on modified accrual and not a cash based system and with modified accrual the county cannot go back at the end of the year. Any expenses that occurred during 2014 have to come from 2014 budget. If Dale had worked just one day in 2015 then the money could come from the 2015 budget. Mr. Oatman said that if he had been given notice of this extended leave payout he would not have said that the monies for John's salary could come from the veterans budget. Gary stated that he tried to meet with Dale to discuss the end of year budget but it was never done. Gary also stated that finance agreed to put in more money than was needed to support the veterans travel for 2015. John stated that with the money from the state grant and the money finance put into the budget there is plenty in veterans travel for 2015. The office also has the ability to lower the amount for each trip if it has to be done. John stated that we do not want to have to do this and he is confident that will not happen. Mr. Oatman said he gave a years notice of his retirement and if he had been told about the extended leave payout he would have backed off on some of the expenditures. John stated that the 2014 budget is not over now with the finance agreeing to the transfers requested by Gary and him. Jim Jansen questioned how many veterans are on the finance committee and Gary responded that county board in itself does not have many veterans. This year there are seven total.

John told the committee that he requested from finance a laptop and wireless printer be purchased for the office. The veterans office has purchased a new software for securing veterans records and this can be done through the internet so when John or Mary go to home visits or nursing homes forms can be filled out and printed right at the time of the visit for the veteran or claimant to sign instead of having to fill them out by hand, put them into the computer back at the office and then taking them back for the veteran to sign thus saving time and submitting the claim earlier. Finance committee approved this purchase. John also stated that he is considering going to Elcho and White Lake to set up an office in the library or veterans organization building so veterans that find it hard to travel can be helped. Jim Jansen asked Dale Oatman if he did this and Dale stated that he did go to veterans homes for a visit. Gary Olsen stated that any veterans home or building that has wi-fi John will be able to do everything right at the time and the laptop and wireless printer are ordered.

John stated that this also means that the office is going paperless and all files will be shredded. Everyone at the meeting can come and pick up their paper files if they desire to keep them.

John stated that he will be in Milwaukee next week for training to become accredited with WDVA and the American Legion.

John stated that the office has been very busy due to many mailings to the veterans during the month of February to include the choice cards, the summary of benefit statement and veterans wanting to have the veteran status on their drivers license which require John to fill out a form stating that they are eligible for this benefit.

John stated that he was at a NECVSO meeting at King Veterans Home on February 20. John picked up some fliers for their open house on May 17 and they were distributed in with the agenda and minutes to all the veterans organizations to be displayed in their clubhouses.

John also stated that the rumor of a waiting list should be quelled. There is no waiting list for veterans who wish to move into any of the veterans homes. King is now Medicare accredited as of the first of March so if veterans end up in the hospital in Waupaca and are required to take rehab or therapy they are now able to be admitted back into King for this. This is a great achievement for King this has been in the works for years. John stated the staff at King is very proud of this accreditation.

John stated that he was on the radio with Gary Hartl at Breakfast at Burger King. John also spoke at the March 3rd Kiwanis meeting held at Refuge and met veterans who will be coming into the office.

John stated that our office is partnering with the Job Center of Wausau and the veterans job outreach program. This is to help unemployed and under employed veterans of Langlade county. We will need to get this message out to our veterans with advertising. Any veteran who is already signed up with Job Center is receiving an email about this partnership. The representative will be here on April 9th and every second Thursday after linking up employers with veterans. They are already in touch with a few businesses in Antigo. There have been veterans who have stopped in looking for jobs . Mr. Oatman questioned whether they hired more DVOPs (Disabled Veterans Outreach Program) workers and more LVERs (Local Veteran Employment Representatives) because that was a problem in the past. John was not sure of that but our representative is coming from Wisconsin Rapids. A disabled veteran just off of active duty is the LVER coming to Antigo. Both of the reps are really excited about setting up some veterans with local businesses such as Amron and Ace Equipment.

John stated that Oscar G Johnson sent a letter out that there is a scam targeting veteran who are receiving prescription pain killers. Callers say they need to refill your pain pills and ask for personal information. John wanted the word to get out to veterans that the VA Hospital will not call and ask for your personal information . If a veteran receives a call and is suspicious ask for a call back number and do not give out any personal information.

Agenda Item #09. Set Date for April meeting and Tentative Date for May.

The committee scheduled the next meeting for April 13, 2015 at 1:30 pm. May's meeting date was tentatively set for Monday, May 11, 2015 at 1:30 pm.

Agenda Item #10. Adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Richard Schuh to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Larry Poltrock. All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Submitted by,
Mary Lex