

Minutes of Langlade County Veterans Committee Meeting

The meeting was called to order on Monday, May 9, 2011 at 9:00 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, Marie Schuh, Dick Schuh, Steve Bradley, Mary Lex, Carlene Nagel, and Liane Blahnik.

Agenda Item #3. Approve the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting held April 11, 2011.

Motion by Richard Hurlbert to approve the agenda and approve the minutes from the previous meeting held Monday, April 11, 2011. Motion second by Mike Klimoski. All ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #4. Communications and Public Comment.

Steve Bradley reported the Memorial Day parade in Antigo will start at the nursing home and travel to the court house and end with a service around 10:00 am by the Veteran's Memorial at the court house.

Dale Oatman reported flags are being distributed and now that they are back in the office from training, more people can stop to pick them up. Dale reported they plan to meet the Saturday morning before Memorial Day at 8:00 am to put flags up in the cemeteries in Antigo and a group that wants to help would be greatly appreciated. Dale reported sometimes a grave will be missed and a family will contact him. Dale will go put a flag on that grave. Marie Schuh reported that they use a list they compiled, but sometimes they miss one or two, because there is not a marker on the grave. Dale stated he was contacted by a family about a grave missed at the Bent cemetery, but there was not an identifying marker that he was ever in the service. Dale will try to correct those missed as he learns about them. Al Werwie reported he went to the cemetery at Union Groove last week and he suggested others who travel to that area stop in to see this cemetery as it is very amazing. Dale reported the state cemetery at King is as impressive as the state cemetery at Union Groove.

Dale reported he was asked by the committee to see if Menominee Transit would work on transportation for veterans. Dale attended a meeting with them and they will continue discussing veterans who need to travel to Wausau and Rhinelander. This would be an alternative to bringing in a DAV van into Langlade County. Dale continues to hear opposition to the DAV van for the county as this would mean losing the travel grant. Dale reported the travel grant is being utilized monthly as between \$500 and \$800 is being used each month. David Lee reported he will be providing three transports this week. Dale thanks those who are willing to drive others who are unable to drive for themselves, especially with the liability of using their own vehicle. Steve Bradley questioned if a DAV member would have some extended coverage acting as a DAV member helping another DAV member. Dale reported there is none.

David Lee reported the DAV will be sponsoring a brat sale at Copps on Friday, May 27 and Saturday, May 28.

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

Agenda Item #6. CVSO Conference Update.

Dale reported that Mary and he attended last week's CVSO conference in La Crosse. This conference provides the training requirements for Mary and Dale to maintain their accreditations. Highlights from the conference include a possible increase in the travel reimbursement from \$0.0415, based on what congress does up to \$0.45 to \$0.50 per mile. There was an update from Milwaukee's Regional Office and Dale received a direct contact number to be used for emergency cases. The current 800 telephone number connects the caller with any VA Regional Office in the country. The VA is behind 800,000 claims in the US and Wisconsin has a backlog of 55,000 claims. Lennox will provide one free heating unit with insulation in every county in Wisconsin. They are looking to provide this to a veteran who is currently serving and the veteran needs to apply online. Dale attended a session from the Inspectors General Office out of Chicago, who specializes in fraud investigations. Dale reported fraud is a big issue when it comes to travel and there is a test program at five VA facilities where they issue debit cards instead of cash for travel. This program may not make it possible for a veteran to pay for a transport the same day to a volunteer who provided the transport. Chicago is the closest unit of special agents in a five state area. Dale received an update on Tri-Care and five VA hospitals briefed on their services, renovations and expansions. Dale reported the Wisconsin and Federal GI bills were discussed. Dale received some information on phones for veterans that are hearing or sight impaired.

Agenda Item #7. Outreach Update.

Dale reported he attended the board meeting for Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs (WDVA). Dale reported they are down to three board members from the seven, but Governor Walker has submitted four names to get back up to seven. They are in the process of background investigations on these. Governor Walker proposed the building of a new veteran's home in Chippewa Falls with employees being contracted out and not employed by WDVA.

Dale reported there were two Never Forgotten Honor Flights out of Mosinee and they expect two more this year. These flights take World War II Veterans to see the war memorial in Washington DC. The last scheduled flight this year will accept Korean War veterans.

Dale thanked veterans for their patience last week while their office was closed during the conference. Both the spring and fall conferences are worth attending as Dale and Mary are able to bring back information to share with Langlade County veterans. The fall conference will be held in Wausau this year.

Agenda Item #8. Confirm date and time set for next month's meetings and April's committee meeting.

The date for next month's meeting will be Monday, June 13, 2011 at 9:00 am. July's meeting was tentatively set for Monday, July 11, 2011 at 9:00 am.

Agenda Item #9. Adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Mike Klimoski to adjourn the meeting. Motion second by Richard Hurlbert. All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 am.

Submitted by,
Liane Blahnik
Administrative Assistant