

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

The meeting was called to order on Monday, May 09, 2016 at 1:30 p.m. by committee chairman Jim Jansen, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed for the veterans associated with the Langlade County Veterans Office whom have passed away since the last committee meeting.

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

Others Present: John Zenkovich, Mary Lex, Bernard Deisinger, Marie Schuh, Dan Kamps, Robert Graupner, Steve Bradley, Al Werwie and Tom Matucheski.

Agenda Item #4. Approve the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting held April 11, 2016.

Motion by Larry Poltrock to approve the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting held April 11, 2016. Motion seconded by Richard Schuh. All ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #5. Approve Budget Summary.

Motion by Richard Schuh to approve the budget summary report. Motion seconded by Larry Poltrock. All ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #6. Public Comment on Agenda Items and consideration of requests for items to be added to future meeting agendas.

Agenda Item #7 Public Comment.

Bob Graupner commented on White Lake's Centennial Celebration for Memorial Day will have the Honor Ceremony by the Lake Pavillion. Also the American Legion Post in White Lake had their elections and Bernard Deisinger is now the commander.

Tom Matucheski commented that the American Legion Post 3 is putting on the Memorial Day parade this year. It will start at the Hudson Street Bridge at 8:00 then onto Eastview Medical and Rehab at 9:00 and from there the parade will go to the courthouse. Elections were held at the Phlox American Legion and Dave Jorgenson is now the commander.

Phlox Memorial Day celebration will have Pastor Birch as the guest speaker.

John stated that he will be the guest speaker at the White Lake Memorial Day celebrations. Judge Rhode will be the guest speaker at the Antigo Memorial Day celebration.

Steve Bradley announced that the American Legion Post 3 will have flag disposal service on Tuesday, May 10 at 1:30 if there is rain beforehand.

John stated that the City of Antigo has placed a white box at the entrance to the cemetery which will have extra flags in for family members to place on the veterans graves that were missed by the volunteers who put out the flags for Memorial Day.

Flags will be placed on Tuesday evening, May 23, before Memorial Day on Queen of Peace and the City of Antigo. Saturday morning, May 28, before Memorial Day flags will be placed at Bohemian and Elmwood Cemeteries. John Szigat has been organizing this and has been in contact with volunteer veterans and the Boy Scouts which should avoid having any problems arise.

The flags have all been picked up from our office and Sarah Repp from the City of Antigo has the flags for City of Antigo, Elmwood and Bohemian Cemeteries. Mike Piller has the flags for Queen of Peace Cemetery.

John stated that the county spent about \$2500 on flags for this year.

Marie Schuh stated that the American Legion Auxiliary of Elcho had the 9<sup>th</sup> District Spring conference which served 80 people from the district. It was held at the Jack LaMar Pavillion and they did a wonderful job with the food. Two of the units in the district received awards, Phlox and Antigo for achieving 85% of membership in 2016. Everyone who attended had a great time.

#### Agenda Item #8 Veterans Issues and Office Updates

John stated that the office has been busy and many veterans are stopping in after hearing the radio advertisements and reading the Primetime articles which means they are having a good effect on the office. The office will be closed this Friday, Mary has PTO and John has military duty.

John commented that Dale Oatman stopped in to share with John that Dale attended a meeting with Secretary John Scocos , This meeting was attended by the service officers from American Legion, Purple Heart, VFW, DAV and WDVA. Dale questioned why the CVSO organization was not invited and Scocos was non committal why that was the case. The CVSO organization offices in the state do 70% and more of the claims sent into these service organizations. Regionalization is still a topic for the next legislative session. This means there will be one representative in a region. Secretary Scocos stated that it is not his office that is working on this to become effective, it is the Wisconsin Counties Association. This would of course save the counties money because the state will pick up the cost of running these regional offices. John does not agree with this and will contact the representatives in the state to voice his opinion and would like for our committee to also raise concerns with the WCA about keeping our local offices open throughout the state to better serve the veterans in each community. The majority of the veterans are in the more populated lower half of the state so that is where the majority of the regions would be located.

Steve Bradley stated that previously when this bill was brought before the legislature he called Tom Tiffany and Mary Czaja and received a reply that this bill would not go anywhere and they would do everything to stop it.

John commented that he did not get such a good response from Tom Tiffany's office.

John stated that the service veterans receive from all 72 counties in the state is very important and believes what the veterans require will not be met from regional offices. The only service organization which is behind this is The Purple Heart Association. Our office will make sure the message gets out in advance so it gives veterans a chance to voice their opinion on this matter. John stated he had more upsetting news in regards to the Veterans Travel Grant our county receives from the state. Secretary Scocos is looking at expanding DAV van service as a replacement to our current transportation grant. The DAV van service is a great tool for some counties but for a county like us where the majority of our veterans travel to Rhinelander or Iron Mountain it would mean sitting in a van for the entire day waiting for all the veterans in the van to complete their appointments. This would be the only option for veterans who cannot drive or have no vehicle to get to their appointments. Right now our office is able to reimburse a veteran either 20 or 40 dollars for their trip from the grant and the county's general fund. If a veteran has 30% disability or more or is in receipt of non service connected pension he/she will get

reimbursement from the VA. We now get about \$2500 from the state for this grant and the remainder of \$6000 comes from the county budget.

John stated that he just received a flyer for a Memorial Ruck Run in honor of Sgt. Ryan Jopek. This will take place on May 28, 2016 at Council Grounds State Park in Merrill. Money raised will be for the Ryan Jopek Scholarship Fund at Merrill School. An e-mail with this flyer will be sent to all the commanders for the local posts today.

Agenda Item #9. Set Date for June Meeting and Tentative Date for July

The committee scheduled the next meeting for Monday, June 13 at 1:30 pm. Larry Poltrock, committee member, has been excused from attending the June meeting. July's meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, July 11, 2016 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 2:15 p.m.

Submitted by,  
Mary Lex