

COLUMBIA COUNTY VETERANS' SERVICE COMMISSION

Approved Meeting Minutes of

The Regular Meeting of January 6, 2017

Meeting called to order at 8:37 am.

Attendance was taken and those present were: Norm Bednarek, Chair; John Van Wie, Commissioner; Keith Miller, Commissioner; Richard Hasse, CVSO & Executive Secretary.

It was certified that the agenda was properly posted and the meeting properly noticed. There were no changes to the agenda. The agenda was approved on motion by Miller, seconded by Bednarek. Motion carried.

The minutes from the last regular meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved on motion by, Bednarek seconded by Van Wie. Motion carried.

The Commission's expense report since the last regular meeting was reviewed and no additional expenses had occurred or were documented since the last regular meeting. Approval of the report was motioned by Bednarek and seconded by Miller. Motions carried.

Hasse presented the Commissioners with a news article which mentioned that Sen Baldwin was once again appealing to the Federal VA to investigate the quality of care and safety standards at the WDVA Veterans Home at King. Since the VA's previous June 2016 response to her previous inquiry, several items of evidentiary value at the King Veterans Home have surfaced and/or been presented to her that led her to the conclusion that the previous response was inaccurate, at best.

Hasse also presented the Commissioners data received from the University of Wisconsin System (UWS) which provides the total numbers of foreign and out-of-state Undergraduate/Graduate students who have attended the UWS schools since 2010, listed by country or US state of residence. The data also lists the number of veterans who have attended the UWS schools during the same time period. Hasse also stated that he intends to request the data on the number of the same sets of student demographics attending UWS schools who receive grants or tuition remissions. Hasse stated that since the next State Biennial Budget period is fast approaching, he wants to prepare himself and fellow CVSOs with sufficient data to guard against any reductions to veterans education benefits.

Hasse mentioned to the Commissioners that several other CVSO offices provide one-time financial assistance to veterans when their lack of financial management skills places them in difficult situations. These offices also require a commitment by the applicant to obtain financial management assistance from the Wisconsin Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS). The Commissioners agreed that this would be a good idea to pursue and Hasse promised to obtain more information to discuss formally at the next meeting.

Hasse reported to the Commissioners that he had submitted the CVSO Grant reimbursement certification letter to the WDVA for probably the last time and only for the remaining authorized use for salary offset. He stated that if the CVSO Grant is returned to the previous configuration of a block grant, he may reapply. At this time, the rules are too subjective, irregular, unpredictable and difficult to understand, from one period to the next, and the time expenditure needed to process the applications is not, in the end, an efficient or cost-effective investment of taxpayer dollars.

Hasse mentioned that Eric Carpenter and Jan Jansen, President and Secretary/Treasurer of the Portage Association of the U.S. Bowling Congress presented the CVSO office with a check for \$1,060 to help support veterans programs in Columbia County. The money was raised by conducting 50-50 raffles during the association's normal league. The approximately 250 members of the association participated to raise the funds to help our local veterans in need.

Hasse mentioned that he had taken a tour of the new CVSO office space in the new building and stated how spacious and accommodating the new facility will provide for the CVSO functions and operations. The Commissioners expressed interest in being provided a guided tour of the facility and Hasse stated he would contact Chair Gove and request a tour for the Commissioners.

Bednarek mentioned that the American Legion Youth Government Day will occur on Wednesday, April 19th.

The next meeting date was scheduled for Wednesday, February 8th, 2017 at 8:30 am.

There being no other business before the commission at this time, Van Wie motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Miller. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 9:20 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard E. Hasse, Columbia County Veterans' Assistant Service Officer
and Executive Secretary, Columbia County Veterans' Service Commission