

# COLUMBIA COUNTY VETERANS' SERVICE COMMISSION

## Approved Meeting Minutes of

### The Regular Meeting of February 12, 2016

Meeting called to order at 8:30 am.

Attendance was taken and those present were: Norm Bednarek, Commissioner; Keith Miller, Commissioner; John Van Wie, Commissioner; Rich 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 Bednarek, seconded by Miller. Motion carried.

The minutes from the last regular meeting on December 9, 2015 were reviewed. The minutes were approved on motion by Miller, seconded by Bednarek. Motion carried.

The Commission's expense vouchers issued since the last regular meeting and the entire year of 2015 were reviewed. Approval of the expense report was motioned by Miller and seconded by Bednarek. Motion carried.

On motion by Miller, Bednarek was nominated as the Commission Chairman for 2016. Bednarek accepted the nomination. Motion was seconded by Van Wie. Motion carried.

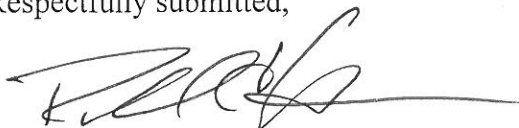
Hasse mentioned that there was nothing new to discuss regarding Federal VA benefits.

Hasse began a discussion with the Commissioners about the recent political developments regarding the legislation drafted by the WDVA and sponsored by Senator Van Wanggaard (R) of Racine and Representative Ken Skowronski (R) of Franklin (LRB 4524, SB 668 & AB 821) which greatly affects the CVSOs of Wisconsin and creates a net effect of denying veterans' access to benefits. The summary of these effects are: Allow counties to optionally appoint a county veteran service officer (currently a mandatory requirement of Wisconsin statutes); Allow counties to join with other counties in a consortium to share one county veteran service officer (requiring travel to a neighboring county, or to a county two or more counties away); Allow counties to appoint a non-veteran as a county veterans service officer (no more "veterans helping veterans"); Eliminate the authority of the county veteran service officer to certify veterans' eligibility for the Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles driver's license veteran identifier; Eliminate the authority of the county veteran service officer to certify veterans' eligibility for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources disabled veterans park pass; Eliminate the authority of the county veteran service officer to initiate on a veterans behalf a mortgage loan or personal loan from the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. Hasse detailed the Assembly Committee public hearing he personally attended at the GAR Hall in the Capitol and summarized the general proceedings and the final determination by the Committee Chair, Rep Skowronski to not hold a vote by the Committee until "more information is gathered." Hasse mentioned to the Commissioners that the bills have not been pulled and are still both pending vote in their respective Senate and Assembly Committees. The Commissioners each expressed their outrage and exasperation at how such a piece of anti-veteran legislation (so damaging and assaulting to the veterans of the State in the dramatic and unnecessary reduction in access it would cause) could even get past the front doors of the Capitol building of a state with such a glowing reputation of great veterans service at the local county level of government. The Commissioners also expressed that they are each available at any time to come to the assistance of the CVSO to express their personal feelings and opinions on this disturbing matter, in any setting and before any audience.

On motion by Bednarek, the next meeting date was scheduled for Friday, March 11, 2016 at 8:30 am. Seconded by Miller. Motion carried. Van Wie mentioned that he will be out of state most of the month of March.

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 9:28 am.

Respectfully submitted,



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