

Meeting - Veteran's Service Committee & Commission Minutes

Committee: Veteran's Service Committee & Commission

Date: Monday February 27th 2023

Time: 10:00 A.M.

Place: County Board Room #107

Call to Order

Chairman Chaney called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and read the agenda.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chaney, Bocek, Spaude & Papapetru

Others Present: VSO Robert Koplien & Board Chair Cindy Gretzinger via TEAMS

Approve Agenda

Motion by Gretzinger to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Chaney, all present voting AYE.

Motion carried

Approve Minutes of prior meeting

Motion by Bocek, to approve minutes of the Thursday September 8th 2022 meeting, seconded by Gretzinger, all present voting AYE.

Motion carried

WDVA CVSO Grant Updates

VSO reports that on January 3rd of this year he applied for the annual WDVA Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Grant for amount of \$9350. VSO explains that annual grant assists the county as a salary/wage offset in regards to budget assistance. VSO also states that he also will be applying for an additional supplement grant through the WDVA for the amount of \$14228.00. VSO reports that Forest County has completed the required MOU – Memorandum of Understanding regarding use of ARPA State Recovery Funds. VSO reports that this grant will enhance improvement of office services for outreach, advertisement and upgrades. VSO states that grant funds have to be expended by December 31st 2024.

Donations Update

VSO reports that he's received two donations this year. VSO explains that all of these donations are deposited into a non-lapse account that he uses to assist needy veterans, dependents and survivors. VSO report that the account balance is \$1960.00

Forest County by the Numbers

VSO reports that in 2021 Forest County had 888 The number of living veterans, or widows/widowers receiving Federal VA benefits. VSO states that \$5.37 million in compensation and pension benefits that the Forest County Veterans Service Office facilitated in 2021 from the federal Veterans Administration alone. VSO also reports that 450 Forest County veterans used the VA health care in 2021 and \$7.26 million of VA medical benefits utilized.

VSO also states that \$122,634 of property tax credit refunded to severely service-connected Forest County Veterans and widows (75 filers) of for fiscal year 2021.

VSO additionally reports Forest County CVSO Office received 569 veteran related phone calls & had 205 office visits in 2021.

References – National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics & WI Department of Revenue

Multi County Expo News

VSO states that he's one of many counties participating in a Multi-County Veterans Expo on APRIL 28, 2023. At the HODAG DOME, 863 HODAG DOME DRIVE, RHINELANDER, WI, FROM 9:00 AM-3:00 PM.

VSO reports that numerous veteran related vendors will be on site to answer benefit questions.

Vietnam Memorial Wall

VSO report that May 18th - 21st Nicolet College is hosting The Wall That Heals exhibit which features a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The replica is 375 feet in length and stands 7.5 feet high at its tallest point. VSO states that The Wall would be placed in the Nicolet College field and be available to the public 24 hours per day for four days.

PACT Act Update

VSO reports that since The PACT Act law was enacted his office has seen an increase of office traffic.

VSO additionally explains that The PACT Act has brought changes in regards to expanding and extending eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras. VSO states that more than 20 new presumptive conditions for burn pits and other toxic exposures additionally add more presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation.

Public Comments

NONE

Adjournment

There being no further business, Motion by Gretzinger to adjourn, seconded by Chaney, all present voting AYE. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.