



# McHenry County Veterans Assistance Commission - Public Meeting MINUTES

March 19, 2025, 5:00 PM  
County Board Conference Room  
Administration Building, 667 Ware Rd., Woodstock, IL 60098

Members Present: Charlie Morgan, Robert Dorn, Dan Chwalisz, Ray Martin, Don Smolinski, James Koch, William Richards, Charles Chapman, Ken Hauser, John Widmayer, Ed Chambers, Matt English, Daniel Vital, Carl Kamienski

Members Absent: Eugene Boxleitner, Nicole Bruno, Joe McLachlin, Joe Nolan, Scott Kaphingst, Johnny Eskridge, Patrick Conley, Neal Donner, Rick Prescott, Michael Breslin, James Pierce, Dennis Foutch, Peter Lockinger, Joe Kalisek, Patrick Finlon, Mathius Carter, Adam Frank

---

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:04pm by Sr. Vice Chairman Ed Chambers. Ken Hauser gave the Invocation.

- 1.1 Roll Call of Officers - Superintendent Michael Iwanicki called the roll of officers. Motion to accept members online from American Legion Post 171.

**Mover:** Daniel Vital

**Second:** Charles Chapman Approved

- 1.2 Officers Opening Remarks - None.

- 1.3 Minutes Approval - Motion to accept the February Minutes as presented.

**Mover:** Dan Chwalisz

**Second:** Don Smolinski Approved

## 2. SUPERINTENDENT'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Superintendent Iwanicki reviewed the financial report and reconciliation. Don Smolinski asked about the amount differences for salaries which were due to having 3 paydays in January instead of the typical two. Motion to accept the Superintendent's report as presented.

**Mover:** Charles Chapman

**Second:** Ken Hauser Approved

### **3. PRESENTATIONS**

#### **3.1 VAC Foundation**

Ken Hauser spoke about the financial assistance requests. A car repair was granted for \$1,000; the second request was denied.

The Foundation financial report is included in the meeting packet for review.

Superintendent Iwanicki informed the Foundation that the balance of the VAC Inc. Bus Fund is \$.20. This amount will be transferred to the Foundation Bus Fund to close out the account.

### **4. INTRODUCE GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS - None.**

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT - Superintendent Iwanicki shared a video from the Secretary of the VA regarding events taking place at the Federal level.**

### **6. CORRESPONDENCE - None.**

### **7. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **7.1 E-Board Meeting - None.**

#### **7.2 By-Laws Committee - None.**

#### **7.3 IACVAC Delegate - None.**

#### **7.4 Five-Year Plan Committee - None.**

#### **7.5 Superintendent Selection Committee (ad-hoc) - The timeline for the active search will begin in June for 30 days and will be closed in July. Interviews will take place in July with a possible selection made in August.**

#### **7.6 Superintendent's Report**

7.6.a IACO / IACVAC Conference - This meeting is coming up May 14-16 in Springfield.

7.6.b Community Outreach - Keema will be attending the Willow Creek Church community resource program every other Friday. She has met with the Housing Authority and Sr. Care Volunteer Network. VSO Tara Guy will be attending the monthly Suicide Prevention Task Force meetings.

### **8. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **8.1 Office Entry Doors Remodel Update - The County Board approved the entry door remodel by Carmichael Construction. There is no set date at this point but once all materials are ready, they will begin construction.**

#### **8.2 Status Request for Proposal - Promoting the VAC - The Request for Proposal is being finalized for submission to the County to obtain quotes for a marketing consultant.**

#### **8.3 Social Services Update - None.**

#### **8.4 VAC Five-Year Plan – Consultant - The Request for Proposal has been submitted to the County to obtain quotes for a consultant.**

8.4.a Survey to Posts and Agencies - A survey is being generated to send out to the Posts for ideas and feedback.

8.4.b Commission Open Discussion - Discuss with your Post members about any services they'd like to see expanded or added.

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

- 9.1 Upcoming Staff Training - Our new VSO, Fernando Ceron, will be taking the NACVSO accreditation course at the end of April.

VSO Anna Marchese and Social Service Aide Keema Ward will be attending the IL Association of General Assistance Caseworkers in E. Peoria on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Assistant Superintendent Keith Duggan will be attending National training to conclude his Advocacy training.

- 9.2 Post Service Officer Training - Superintendent Iwanicki is working on the agenda for a 5-hour session that gives Post members knowledge of VA benefits.

- 9.3 SON - POL 2025 Table Update - Commission approval is required every year for the updated tables set by the government. Motion to accept tables as presented.

**Mover:** Charles Chapman

**Second:** Dan Chwalisz **Approved**

- 9.4 Veterans Dental Program - We previously managed a restorative dental program that ended in 2012 due to the McHenry County Housing Authority obtaining funds that included a special fund for Veterans dental. They no longer have the category for Veterans so Superintendent Iwanicki has been in touch with them to see if they would be willing to administer the program again if we provide the funds. He suggested \$25,000 for the program and \$2,500 to pay for administration for a total of \$27,500. Don Smolinski asked which line item these funds would be pulled from. The funds will be pulled from the main veterans assistance fund and can be linked to medical services or our wellness program. Motion for \$27,500 to be moved from the appropriate line item to fund a Veteran Dental Program.

**Mover:** Dan Chwalisz

**Second:** Ken Hauser **Approved**

## 10. GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

Ed Chambers mentioned that two positions are scheduled to be voted on in April. The positions are Sr. Vice Chairman and Sargent at Arms. Please have the recommendation of nominations ready.

Combined Veterans of McHenry County is reminding us of the Great Lakes Naval Station Thanksgiving Day meal. You can support or take part in this event.

There are several dates set for Adult Mental Health First Aid. Spread the word and sign up for a class!

Ken Hauser spoke with a Chiropractor out of Crystal Lake who would like to help Veterans with their chiropractic needs. He will discuss the matter further and report back next month. Bill Richards stated the doctor may want to investigate becoming a Community Care provider.

The National Vietnam Veterans Day event will take place on March 29th at the Administration Building in Woodstock. We'll also be presenting Joe Kersten's plaque at this time. Come one, come all.

The American Legion and VFW are looking to expand the e-gaming program so have partnered with The Other Side which gives them access to event space there. They are also partnering with ThePhoenix.org which is a national organization that works with addiction issues. They offer group meetings with various activities (camping, crossfit, etc.). There is a large social media platform to help reach at-risk veterans.

American Legion Post 491 is also hosting a Vietnam Veteran get together at the post in McHenry. Motorcycle raffle tickets are still available with the drawing taking place on April 19th.

Gary Sinise and the Lieutenant Dan Band will be playing at Cantigny on July 12th.

The movie, Brothers After The War, is a true story of two brothers dealing with PTSD. The American Legion is in talks to bring the movie here as they also have a therapy portion that goes along with it.

**11. BENEDICTION** - Ken Hauser gave the Benediction.

**12. ADJOURNMENT** - Motion to adjourn.

**Mover:** Charles Chapman

**Seconder:** Daniel Vital    **Approved**