

VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION MINUTES

(October 30, 2014)

The bi-monthly Veterans Service Commission Meeting was held on Thursday, October 30, 2014 in the County Board room located on the 3rd floor of the Richland County Court House at 10:00 a.m.

Call to Order: Chairman Sebranek called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Sebranek.

Commission members present: Chairman Sebranek and Commissioners Donald Seep, Buford (Jr.) Marshall and James Deitelhoff. Chairman Don Goplin was excused. Citizens present: None

Approve Agenda and Posting: Motion made by Commissioner Seep to approve the posting and agenda and seconded by Commissioner Marshall. Motion carried.

Approve Minutes of June Meeting: Motion made by Commissioner Marshall to approve the minutes of the August 29, 2014 meeting and seconded by Commissioner Deitelhoff. Motion carried.

Claims Updates: An Army Vietnam Era Veteran was granted Service Connected Compensation at 0% for bilateral hearing loss and 10% for tinnitus effective 04/08/2013. Overall rated at 30% combined with previous disabilities – spouse was added to the award. This veteran will receive \$442.00 per month. An Army WWII Veteran was denied Non Service Connected Pension due to being over income. An Army Peacetime Veteran was not eligible for benefits due to not having 24 consecutive months of active duty service but, could apply for compensation for injuries or illness incurred during time served. This veteran was denied Service Connected Compensation for left and right knee conditions and migraines due to not attending scheduled VA examination and did not show good cause for failure to do so. Spouse of a 100% Service Connected deceased Korean veteran was awarded \$300.00 for burial, \$734.00 for plot and \$850.00 for transportation expenses. Her claim for death pension is still pending. A USMC Vietnam Era Veteran was granted Service Connected Compensation for lumbar strain at 10%, left foot strain at 10%, enuresis at 0%, head scar at 0% effective 02/18/2013. Overall rated at 20% with a retro check of \$4,106.81 and will receive \$258.83 per month. A Vietnam Combat Army Veteran was granted 100% temporary Service Connected Compensation with Special Monthly Compensation for Housebound for prostate cancer. This veteran will receive \$3,199.28 per month effective 04/01/14. Future exam is scheduled for 12/2014. Peacetime and Gulf War Era Air Force Veteran was granted 100% temporary Service Connected Compensation effective 08/30/2013 for left ankle surgery. This will be reduced back to 20% on 11/03/2013 and overall combined with other disabilities will resume 50% Service Connected Compensation on 11/01/13. A Vietnam Era Army Veteran was granted 10% Service Connected compensation for left wrist sprain effective 10/30/2013. Retro check of \$652.76 and then \$130.94 per month. A Vietnam/Peacetime/Gulf War Army Veteran granted Service Connected compensation at 10% for degenerative disc disease, lumbar spine effective 08/13/2013. Denied for unspecified mental disorder due to no diagnosis. Requested claims file be transferred to the Milwaukee Regional Office from the Kansas City Regional Office. Applied for Service Connected Compensation for left knee injury. A Peacetime Navy Veteran received the Notice of Disagreement Appeal Claim decision and was granted 10% Service Connected Compensation for chronic left shoulder syndrome and scar effective 06/28/2012 – date of original claim. An Iraq/Afghanistan Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for PTSD with anxiety disorder with depressive mood. A Vietnam Era Army Veteran was denied Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss and tinnitus. Applied for an appeal using a Decision Review Officer request. Also applied for Service Connected Compensation for left shoulder and elbow injury,

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Claims Update Cont: groin strain, and high blood pressure. A spouse of a deceased WWII Army veteran applied for burial benefits. A spouse of a deceased Vietnam Army Veteran applied for burial transportation benefits and the WI Property Tax Program. A Vietnam Era/Peacetime Army Veteran applied for the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Assistance Needy Veterans' Grant for upper and lower dentures to include extractions. It was approved for a total of \$3,750.00 to use by 12/09/2014.

CVSOA Fall Conference Briefing: CVSO Kramer briefed the commissioners on the fall conference held in Oshkosh, WI. Mr. Duane Honeycutt was one of the guest speakers and is now the new VA Regional Office (Milwaukee) Director. Currently there are 6,000 pending claims, including some claims from other states. Over 5,000 alone are WI Veterans with over a quarter of them brand new and all others are reopened claims. Three years ago Milwaukee saw 45 million claims. As of the end of September of this year there are over 69 million claims that have been processed through the Milwaukee Regional VA Office.

Town Hall Meeting for Faces of Agent Orange: CVSO Kramer briefed that 61 veterans signed in and this does not include spouses and children. We had three presenters as one could not make it for health reasons. The meeting started at 4:00 PM and lasted until approximately 6:30 PM. Many questions were asked and many stood up and told their stories as well. Overall, it was a good turn out with several veterans being from surrounding counties and one widow and her daughter attending from Brown County.

Veteran Service Office 2014 Budget: CVSO Kramer reported on the 2014 budget. Budget is performing as expected. Commissioner Seep made a motion to accept the 2014 Budget report, seconded by Commissioner Jr. Marshall. Motion carried.

Review/Change of Veterans' Service Officer Job Description: CVSO Kramer presented to the commissioners the updated job description for the Veterans' Service Officer. The updated version includes the new VA training and accreditation that is now required of the CVSO. A motion was made by Commissioner Seep to recommend approval and forwarding to the Finance and Personnel Committee on November 4, 2014. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Deitelhoff. Motion carried.

Review/Change of Clerical Assistant II Title and Job Description: CVSO Kramer presented to the Commissioners the new title and updated job description for the position vacant in her department. Motion by Commissioner Seep that the new job title and updated job description be approved and the applicants for this position be given the Civil Service Exam. Motion seconded by Commissioner Deitelhoff. Discussion transpired on whether or not this person should be subjected to taking the Civil Service Examination. Two in favor, Commissioner Seep and Commissioner Deitelhoff, and two opposed, Commissioner Sebranek and Commissioner Jr. Marshall. Motion failed. Discussion continued and the Wis. Stat 45.80 (7) (b) (c) and (8) was read. Since the county does not have a county administrator the individual selected by an appointed Hiring Committee will have to be appointed by the County Board. There also needs to remain a distinction between the Veterans' Service Officer and the Assistant Veterans' Service Officer, with the position of the Veterans' Service Officer being subjected to taking the Civil Service Exam. The Veterans Affairs Administration will test the Assistant Veterans' Service Officer on the guidelines, procedures and Federal Code of Regulation 38 with a must pass test scoring 80% or better. The VSO Assistant will also be given a 6 month probation period by the county. Commissioner Seep made a motion to recommend the title change to Assistant Veterans Service Officer with the updated job description following the guidelines of the Wis. Stat

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45.80 and forwarding to the Finance and Personnel Committee on November 4, 2014. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Jr. Marshall. Motion carried.

Transportation and Aid Vouchers: Commissioner Seep moved to go into closed session, seconded by commissioner Deitelhoff. Roll call Vote: Sebranek – Yes, Marshall – Yes, Seep – Yes, Deitelhoff – Yes. Four in favor, none against. The meeting went into closed session. Transportation vouchers were presented for the month of August and the month of September. Two vouchers were also presented for aid to the commissioners for approval.

Return to Open Session: Motion was made by Commissioner Jr. Marshall to come back into open session, seconded by Commissioner Deitelhoff. Motion carried. Open session.

Next Commission Meeting: The next meeting will convene on December 19, 2014 at 10:00 a.m.

Any Other Business: None.

Adjourn: Motion made by Commissioner Jr. Marshall to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Deitelhoff. Commission adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra M. Kramer, CVSO
Veterans Service Office