

VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION MINUTES

(December 19, 2014)

The bi-monthly Veterans Service Commission Meeting was held on Friday, December 19, 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, Don Goplin, and James Deitelhoff. Citizens present: David Bee, Tom Simonson and County Board Member Gary Peters.

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

Approve Minutes of October Meeting: Motion made by Commissioner Marshall to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2014 meeting and seconded by Commissioner Deitlehoff. Motion carried.

Claims Updates: A Vietnam Era Army Veteran was denied Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss and tinnitus. A Korea Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss, tinnitus, non-service connected pension, and VA health care. This veteran had an appointment within 3 days after request was made at the VA in Madison, WI. A Gulf War Air Force Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for stomach cancer and non-service connected pension. I asked to have this claim expedited since cancer was terminal. Unfortunately this veteran passed away three days after claim was submitted. His spouse came in and applied for Dependent Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and burial benefits. Vietnam Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for Ischemic Heart Disease due to exposure to dioxins. Panama/Gulf War Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss and tinnitus. Peacetime Army Veteran granted 30% Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss and granted 10% for tinnitus with both effective 03/31/2013. Right and left knee and ankle injuries denied. Overall rating is 40%. Vietnam Marine Corps Veteran remains at 100% for prostate cancer and will be reexamined in January 2015. Vietnam Era Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss and tinnitus. Vietnam Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss, tinnitus, COPD and PTSD with anxiety disorder with depressive mood. Vietnam Air Force Veteran was rated at 0% for bilateral hearing loss and denied tinnitus and lung condition effective 06/11/2014. Korea Era Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss and tinnitus and also enrolled into the VA health care system. Gulf War/Peacetime Army Veteran filed an appeal and decision came back granting 10% for lumbar spine strain effective 06/22/2013. This veteran will receive a retro check for \$3,492.40 then \$130.94 monthly. Vietnam Navy Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for PTSD, bilateral hearing loss, tinnitus and adult type II diabetes. Vietnam/Peacetime/Gulf War Army Veteran applied to add spouse to his monetary award since he is now rated at 30%. Any veteran rated at 30% or higher receives extra monies once dependents are added to their award. WWII Army Veteran was granted Non Service Connected Pension effective 05/05/2013. Payment was withheld due to veteran not competent to handle funds. Spouse was appointed as fiduciary and will receive a retro payment of \$10,804.00 then \$543.00 per month. Vietnam Combat Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for prostate cancer and also requested 100% temporary disability during treatment and rehab. Requested spouse also be added to award during this time.

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Claims Update Con t: Vietnam Combat Army Veteran applied for an increase to his 0% Service Connected Compensation for prostate cancer which has returned and he will begin treatments at the VA shortly. Afghanistan/Iraq Air Force Veteran was medically retired after serving 8 months and 20 days active duty due to disabilities. Applied for Service Connected Compensation for Crohn's Disease, small intestine with 3 abscesses, scar on large intestine from colonoscopy, appendectomy, perforated intestine, and terminal Ileitis (inflammation) of the small intestine. Vietnam Era Army Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for bilateral hearing loss. Widow of a Korea Era Army Veteran applied for death pension for herself. Korea Navy Veteran was granted 10% Service Connected Compensation for tinnitus, 0% for right ear hearing loss and denied left ear hearing loss. With previous Service Connected Compensated disabilities overall is increased from 50% to 60% effective 04/01/2014. Vietnam Era Air Force Veteran applied for Service Connected Compensation for residuals from a left elbow injury.

Veteran Service Office 2014 Budget: CVSO Kramer reported on the 2014 budget. Budget is performing as expected. Bottom lines will not be over budgeted amounts set. Commissioner Goplin made a motion to accept the 2014 Budget report, seconded by Commissioner Deitelhoff. Motion carried.

Review and Approve Job Advertisement for Assistant County Veteran Service Officer: The advertisement for the newly created position was reviewed by the commissioners. Motion made by Commissioner Jr. Marshall to approve the job advertisement, seconded by Commissioner Seep. Motion carried and the job will be advertised starting the week of January 5, 2015 in the Richland Observer, Shopping News and the Richland County Web Page for two weeks.

Approve to Transfer Funds from 2015 Budget Office Supply Line Item for Advertising Costs: Motion made by Commissioner Goplin to approve the transfer from the Office Supply line item for advertising costs and send the request to Finance and Personnel Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Deitelhoff. Motion carried.

Recommendation for Replacement for Resigning Commissioner: Commissioner Don Goplin is resigning his position on the Veterans Commission effective December 31, 2014. Three interested candidates attended today's meeting; David Bee, Tom Simonson, and Gary Peters. Each introduced themselves and gave a brief statement on their qualifications to the commissioners. The three gentlemen were excused at this time and the commissioners took a vote and will forward on their recommendation to the County Board Chair for appointment to the Veterans Service Office Commission.

Transportation and Aid Vouchers: Commissioner Marshall moved to go into closed session, seconded by commissioner Deitelhoff. Roll call Vote: Sebranek – Yes, Marshall – Yes, Seep – Yes, Deitelhoff – Yes, Goplin – Yes. Five in favor, none against. The meeting went into closed session. Received travel vouchers for the month of October, November and December. The October travel voucher total was \$480.00. The November travel voucher total was \$150.00. The December travel voucher total was \$115.00. The monies will be taken out of the Soldiers and Sailors Aid Account. A motion was made by Commissioner Deitelhoff to pay the transportation vouchers, seconded by Commissioner Seep. Motion carried.

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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 Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.

Any Other Business: CVSO Kramer briefed the commissioners on the latest Veteran Service Organization Meeting at the Milwaukee VA Regional Office on December 16, 2014. Currently there are 6,367 claims pending. One claim is two years old. The Milwaukee Regional Office has been assigned to take 800 death pension claims per month from Philadelphia, 5,000 compensation dependency claims from Houston and Waco, and a backlog of approximately 2,500 appeals.

Commissioner Seep commended CVSO Kramer on her work on the job description for the Assistant County Veteran Service Officer position.

All the commissioners gave thanks and gratitude to Commissioner Don Goplin for his 30 years of service on the Commission. He shall be missed. Commissioner Goplin thanked the commission for their kind words.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra M. Kramer, CVSO
Veterans Service Office