## POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY COMMISSION OF VETERAN AFFAIRS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Monday February 12 @ 3:00 PM

(Tentative space for 'Teams' virtual meeting contact information)

MPR Room Pottawattamie County Veteran Affairs Building

## **AGENDA**

- Pledge of Allegiance Meeting called to order at 3:00 PM by Chairwoman Holly Collins. All in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Roll Call Holly Collins, Chairwoman; Jim Murray, Member; Dr. Dan Kinney, Member; Andrew Dewey, Ex-Officio Member; Office Personnel: Peggy Becker, Administrator; Sam Pettit, Caseworker II; Rebekah Adair, Administrative Assistant. Attending via Microsoft Teams: Mick Guttau, Member.
- Additions/Corrections none
- BOS Updates Brian Shea: The board is currently working on the budget. The new entrance to courthouse is open.
- Commissioner Updates none
- Guest Speaker Jeremy Scarbrough with Habitat for Humanity

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- Approval of the minutes for Rescheduled Monthly Meeting January 18, 2023 Motion to approve made by Mick Guttau, Member. Seconded by Dr. Dan Kinney, Member. All in favor. Aye 4, Nay 0. Motion carries
- → Approval of assistance given for January 2024: No Assistance Requested
- **Routine Office Reports** (New Format to be discussed in New Business)
  - o Budget 2023-2024: Should be @ 58% currently @ 50%: (Peggy)
  - Facility Update: (Peggy)
    - MPR Usage: Routine Usage by VFW, County Departments and Community Agencies VFW has outgrown the room; our capacity is 40.
    - Vinyl Military Branch Artwork Vinyl artwork is now complete.
    - Building Signage Update Council Bluffs now has a VA urgent care clinic, so proper signage is now
      a priority. There will be no funds for signage until the next fiscal year. VSO will purchase a banner
      with the updated name for the building. We are waiting for confirmation on cost.
  - O Website Usage: (Sam) Numbers have trended down recently, but that trend is county wide. Neapolitan Labs updates have been processing on time. Rebekah has been working with the website managers to get everything updated and prepared to go live in March.
  - Federal County Assistance Report for January 2024: (Peggy) Peggy Becker clarified with the Commissioners
    on their expectations for numbers reporting. Email numbers have increased, and VSO personnel are now
    tracking number of client contacts as well as number of overall contacts. The Commissioners would like to see
    all of the numbers in order to track trends across a longer period of time.

	January	Previous Month December
Walk Ins:	170	180
Calls:	421	336
Total:	591	516
Clients:	500	

County		State		Federal				
New Clients	11	Driver License Application	1	Total Fed Forms 173 of these were				
Pantry/Clothing	8	License Plate Application	3	Benefit Application	42			
Grave Marker		Hunting/Fishing License		Intent to File	15			
E/Mail I/O	247	MTE/DMTE	1	Headstone Application	1			
Appointments	58			Home Loan Certificate	2			
				SF-180	1			

o Pending Space for Office Production Report (Discussion New Business)

Claim Status	<u>Jan</u>	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	<u>Jul</u>	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	<u>Total</u>
Pending	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Partial Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full Denial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

# POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY COMMISSION OF VETERAN AFFAIRS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Continued	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Could Not Determine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

### OLD /UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- ➤ Budget Presentation BOS on schedule for January 23, 2024: (Peggy) VSO budget presentation went well.
- > Spring School Update: (Peggy) At present, only Andrew Dewey is going, but two hotel rooms have been booked in case more decide to attend.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Meeting with Chamber of Commerce (Holly & Peggy) Peggy Becker reported that the focus of the meeting was on employment. The Chamber offered to meet with the VSO but the targeted demographic are young people just entering the workforce. Advertising may not serve veterans in our area. Our membership has not been advantageous.
- ➤ CPR/First Aid Training (Peggy) Class will be offered in the VSO on March 13, from 8:30-12. All staff and Commissioners are invited, but attendance is not mandatory.
- Agenda Template Changes/Rearrangement: (Peggy) The proposed changes will make for easier reading. Reports will be moved to the top (budget, facility, website usage, etc), The format can be adapted later, as necessary.
- Office Status Report (Peggy)
  - Teams The office has been using Teams more. There has been issues with meeting attendees on teams being able to hear everyone. The Commissioners/VSO Staff now have a team. MPR usage is now labelled on that calendar. All posts will be sent to email inboxes. All commission meeting documents will be uploaded. Mick Guttau reported that he has been impressed with quality of information available on teams during this trial period. Office will fully transition to Teams beginning July 1, 2024.
  - O Production/Claims Status Update The spreadsheet caseworkers are using was created by the previous director and Sam Pettit, Caseworker, has modified and updated the tracking system. Currently, 3 Caseworkers have 50 pending claims. Numbers will fluctuate as time progresses and data tracked is not veteran unique but is service based. Commissioners questioned if the information being tracked included out of county veterans and if there is additional labor that will negatively affect county citizens' tax dollars. Peggy Becker reported that the additional work is negligible as staff regularly try to refer clients back to their county of origin.
- ➤ Donna Barry The Republican Committee Convention meeting at IWCC will have a pantry donation of canned goods as well as a monetary donation.

**Public Comment (3-minute limit)** – Brad Powell reported that he has been mentoring new veterans in the Veteran Court system and their team has been working well. Peggy Becker reported that she has reached out to the attorney and it has been determined that VSO personnel cannot assist as previously expected.

Mick Guttau, speaking not as a Commissioner but as a client, commented on the professionalism of his caseworker in processing his claim and keeping him apprised of each step. He appreciates the thoroughness and professionalism of VSO office personnel.

CLOSED SESSION AS ALLOWED PER CODE OF IOWA CHAPTER 21.5, 1(A)February ASSISTANCE REQUESTS
0 Request for Assistance

OPEN SESSION ADJOURN NEXT MEETING March 11, 2024