



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

Minutes of
Regular Meeting of Kalamazoo County Veterans' Affairs Committee
March 28, 2018

I. **Call to Order by Chair**, Bob Hencken at 8:58am.

II. **Roll Call**

Members Present: Michael Quinn (via phone), Bob Hencken

Absent: Tom Burton

Others: Mike Hoss, Lauren King, Celia Bañuelos, Jim Rutherford, Beth Ridge, Ron Kendall

III. **Review of previous month's minutes**

B. Ridge proposed changing the word bylaw to policy/procedure, in 1st paragraph of page 3, so sentence would read "L. King reads amended policy/procedure and presents amended motion."

Motion made by B. Hencken to approve the minutes from the meeting on December 13, 2017 with corrections. Second by M. Quinn. Motion carried.

IV. **Citizen's Time.** Chair B. Hencken opened the floor for citizen's time. Nothing at this time.

V. **For Consideration**

A.) Financial Review

Financial Analyst, Beth Ridge

Year end financial report for 2017 reviewed. Stated expenses were under budget at the end of the year. Stated funds were added to SSR's original budget of \$35,000 to total \$53,500 and ending the year less than \$53,500 but more than was originally budgeted. Stated salaries were not actually over budget for 2017. R. Kendall asked what happens to remaining funds. B. Ridge stated funds are not carried over.

Financial report ending February 28, 2018 reviewed. Stated \$26,479.66 has been spent, which is 14.1% of total budget of \$188,200.

Soldiers and Sailors

R. Kendall asked why 41% of SSR already used this year. M. Hoss explained this in the VSO Report to follow.

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Burial Benefits

B. Ridge explained that if Veterans died during the previous year then funds are applied towards the previous year's budget.

B.) Veterans Service Office Report

M. Hoss provided a summary of the budget.

M. Hoss explained why 41% of SSR has already been used. He said that many eligible veterans choose to receive both of their allowed \$100 food vouchers early in the year.

M. Hoss stated salaries were reduced since were not used but the office was not fully staffed. Stated salaries are a fixed line item. Stated line item may change once office is transitioned to KCMH.

M. Hoss stated Rent line item will change after the move.

M. Hoss stated Burial & SSR will not be transferring to KCMH but will stay with the County. Stated Burial was reduced to \$15,000 since only \$15,000 of the \$17,000 allocated was used.

M. Hoss talked about letter from Judge Bell sent to Service Organizations.

J. Rutherford stated KCMH is currently working with County's finance department. Stated he envisions funding will go to KCMH, disbursements will go through Service Officers that will then report disbursements to Judge Bell.

Discussion occurred regarding whether the \$220,000 payment to KCMH included SSR and burial benefits. No firm conclusion was reached.

J. Rutherford stated a written contract is under way and stated he has not seen any contract. Stated the County Attorney and KCMH Attorney are working on the contract. It was stated Amber Beebe was no longer employed by the County as of yesterday, 3/27/18, and any questions regarding Amber could be directed to Beth White.

M. Hoss informed the change in office status from Act 192 to 214 upon transition to KCMH.

M. Hoss reviewed office reports. Stated "H" on reports stands for housing, "G" for Gas Card, and "A", "B", "C" or "D" for Food Vouchers. Stated \$5100 cleared through office for Burial does not reflect on financial report since it was allotted to 2017.

M. Hoss stated numerous Peacetime Vets come in to the office seeking SSR and office cannot assist since policy prohibits assisting Peacetime Vets. Stated current policy was signed by the former VA Committee Chair and former HCS Director. M. Hoss clarified that he was advocating for Peacetime Vets that served from '75-'90 and not for those discharged with less than honorable conditions. Stated a person can have a purple heart and not be considered a wartime vet. B. Hencken asked M. Hoss if he and B. Ridge would be able to come up with a budget if a change to policy was made. Discussion ensued as to maintaining SSR after transfer. J. Rutherford stated it was only an assumption that the County would maintain SSR. B. Hencken stated the County would have the authority under 214 to authorize how funding is spent. J. Rutherford stated he would have to consult with County Administration regarding any changes to policy that would have an impact on the budget due to the transition. Also stated that any adjustments to the budget must go through the BOC.

Soldier/Sailors Relief Fund Policy, Section 8.01, Effective Date: 11/3/14, Revision Date: 12/29/14, 1/13/16 was reviewed. M. Hoss proposed changing policy to say "all veterans who served". R. Kendall read new law regarding the term Veteran and suggested to delete "2.c.i. Served during times of war or military expeditions as prescribed in Michigan Act No. 190 of 1965, Section 35.61." J. Rutherford suggested to begin motion by saying "Seeking admin approval to amend...". Motion made by B. Hencken to amend policy to include Peacetime Veterans. Second by M. Quinn. Motion carried. J. Rutherford reiterated he would not sign policy until vetted through County Administration. B. Hencken stated he would type and sign motion. Motion, signed by Chair Hencken, is attached to meeting's minutes as requested by Chair Hencken. Motion was emailed to Jim Rutherford on 3/28/18.

C.) County Board Task Force and Transition

J. Rutherford announced the transition (VSO to KCMH) will coincide with the physical move (of HCS) that will take place the middle of July 2018.

VI. Any other items

M. Quinn stated he went to a presentation related to the Bills in the House. R. Kendall stated the new Bills in the House were specific grants to help counties. M. Hoss stated Kalamazoo would be allotted \$93,000 if governor passes Bills.

VII. Commissioner's Time

Nothing at this time

VIII. Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting, motion carried. Chair B. Hencken adjourned the meeting at 10:20am.