



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

Minutes of
Regular Meeting of Kalamazoo County Veterans Affairs Committee
April 17, 2019

- I. **Call to Order by Chair**, Bob Hencken at 10:03am.
- II. **Roll call**
Members/Liaisons Present: Bob Hencken, Bruce Binns, Arthur Harris, David Brewer (by phone, is on Title 10 orders, can attend meeting by phone and can vote according to public meeting act), Maury Kaercher
Members/Liaisons Absent: Paul Haag
Others Present: Lauren King, Celia Bañuelos, Denise Ulrich, Mark Fletcher, Jim Rutherford, Mike Quinn, Beth White, Lisa Henthorn
- III. **Approval of Agenda**
M. Kaercher moved to approve. B. Binns second. Approved.
- IV. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
Corrections to minutes (see handout). B. Hencken moves to make changes, A. Harris seconds. B. Hencken moves to approve minutes as amended - unanimously approved.
- V. **Veterans Service Office Report**
L. King stated that PIV cards, which gives access to the VA System, have been received. L. King is still waiting on her American Legion Accreditation, but C. Banuelos has received hers. Business cards came in. L. King and C. Banuelos will be attending the State Conference for the Michigan Association Conference Veteran Counselors in Frankenmuth. Brochures have been updated. For data, the number of phone calls has decreased maybe due to having a new administrative assistant and everything not getting documented. Also, the minutes for the meetings will be a learning curve and will work on those. For the month of March there were 5 Trust Fund applications, not 2. This will be updated for the next meeting. M. Kaercher asked what the conference in Frankenmuth will be regarding. L. King says there have been some big changes in the appeals process. This is an opportunity for continued education.
- VI. **Committee Member's Time**
Nothing at this time.
- VII. **Commissioner's Time**
P. Haag is absent due to job duties in Muskegon. M. Quinn was present at last night's meeting.

VIII. Citizen's Time

M. Quinn states that the expansion of committee from 5-7 passed during BOC meeting last night. B. Hencken wanted to know what the process was. J. Rutherford will work with Dina Sutton to send out an email to committee to include process. B. Hencken says to send notice to service organizations, per 192.

J. Rutherford asked if D. Brewer was going to still be a part of the committee. D. Brewer is on a 1-2 year assignment at the Pentagon with headquarters Air Force. He would like to continue to be a voting member of the board. He will be able to attend most meetings over the phone. He will be in contact with B. Hencken if there will be any absences and will be able to fully participate. B. Ridge says that the statute has been amended to approve Dave's participation and to be a part of the quorum. The public must have contact information (whatever the member wants). D. Brewer agrees that email can be given out to be included on the public notice.

IX. Financial Review

B. Ridge says that salaries over target of 25. Flag invoice in, but official count is not. Internal communications are on target which includes phone, internet, remote access and fax. A hot spot has not been activated, but it is still budgeted for the future. Travel invoice happened in March, but will be added in April. Advertising usually happens during the Stand Down and will happen when that event occurs. Building rent is over target. This will be dealt with later in the year. Burial target is still at 25% and we are at 14%. This is typical for this time of year. Veterans relief is under target. 1st rental happened yesterday. J. Rutherford asked if there will be a new portion of the budget to track the additional revenue. B. Ridge says there will be a specific way to track this information. B. Ridge will be working with L. King on this. L. King says the state is waiting for a number and an address. J. Rutherford says it would be beneficial for communications and finance to do a presentation at the next meeting regarding this. B. Hencken says there will also be week reports. M. Kaercher asked what would be the downside of not spending the entire budget. J. Rutherford says if the money is not spent then that will be looked at as if we do not need that much money and it will not be provided for the next fiscal year. We are very responsible fiscally. A. Harris will the veterans relief fund be easier to access? L. King says yes, this will include assistance to other military and to provide additional help in addition to soldiers and sailors relief. We are held to county standards. J. Rutherford says we cannot guarantee the funding source. It may be the same amount or it could change. B. Binns knows of about 200 organizations in the state that can help veterans.

X. Committee Member's Time

Arthur Harris says there will be an American Legion convention in June 2019.

XI. Chairman's Report/"Partnership"

B. Hencken received a letter from the county government counsel's office that states that if the employees were transferred to Community Mental Health then they would lose accreditation. B. Hencken met with Tracie and Jeff to agree that transfer will not happen. The Veterans Service Office and Community Mental Health employees will continue to work together and collaborate.

B. Hencken met with L. King about next year's proposed budget. He would also like to meet with L. King and J. Rutherford to discuss.

XII. KCMHSAS' Time

M. Fletcher mentions the South Bend Veteran Center. Kalamazoo used to be covered by the Veteran Center in Grand Rapids (until the end of February). The South Bend Veteran Center has committed to provide services in Kalamazoo and through telehealth. Seven referrals have been given to the South Bend Veteran Center. Another adapt program will be starting next week. There are 5 families signed up as of now. M. Fletcher and J. Gonzalez trained in Mental Health 1st Aid. There are two mental health first aid trainings scheduled. The first one is at the American Legion in Hastings on May 13th and the second is at the County Building on June 15th. Mental Health 1st aid is an 8 hour training which will touch on signs and symptoms of mental health disorders that someone may be displaying. This informs you how to engage this person and how to communicate better. This also includes substance disorders as well. M. Fletcher also mentioned the program SPAN which stands for Suicide Prevention Action Network. This has community members from all different agencies, organizations and hospitals. One of the groups involved is Lethal Means Safety. Gun shop owners have attended the last meeting. The next goal is to get the Kalamazoo Police Department and the Sheriff to attend meetings. B. Hencken suggested M. Fletcher email committee members regarding meetings, if open.

B. Hencken asked what the status was on the transportation issue. J. Gonzalez is in the process of scheduling the next transportation meeting. L. King mentioned the meeting she had with Kathy from Metro. Transportation was discussed for the STAND DOWN. Transportation will be available for students from Kalamazoo Public Schools. L. King presented a veterans discount to Kathy. Kathy will present to superiors. Vans are available to non-profits. B. Hencken says the Marine Corps League uses the vans.

XIII. New Business

Nothing at this time.

XIV. Old Business

Nothing at this time.

XV. Any other items

Nothing at this time.

XVI. Adjournment

B. Binns moved motion. M. Kaercher seconds. Adjourned at 11:17 am.