



# KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

Minutes of  
**Regular Meeting of Kalamazoo County Veterans Affairs Committee**  
September 26, 2018

**I. Call to Order by Chair**, Bob Hencken at 9:03am.

**II. Roll call**

Members Present: Bob Hencken, Bruce Binns, Maury Kaercher, Arthur Harris, David Brewer

Liaisons Present: Michael Quinn

Others Present: Lauren King, Celia Bañuelos, Jim Rutherford, Beth Ridge, Mark Fletcher, Juan Gonzalez, Lisa Henthorn, Jean Michaud, Meri Tolbert, Mike Kenny

**III. Approval of previous meeting minutes**

Motion made by B. Binns to approve the minutes from the meeting on August 29, 2018. Seconded by D. Brewer. Motion carried.

**IV. Election of Vice-Chairman and Secretary**

Chair B. Hencken requested secretary document exact wording of motions. Requested secretary coordinate with VSO administrative assistant to ensure wording of motions are included in the minutes. D. Brewer was nominated to serve as committee secretary and was unanimously appointed. B. Binns was nominated to serve as committee vice chair and was unanimously appointed.

**V. Financial Review**

*Financial Analyst, Beth Ridge*

Financial report ending August 31, 2018 reviewed. B. Ridge stated Veterans Relief (SSR) line item was increased to \$48,000. Operations line items reviewed and B. Ridge had no concerns regarding the operations budget.

*Burial Benefits*

B. Ridge stated burial line item is over budget. Some funds may be moved from operations to burial since VSO will not be transferring until after December 31, 2018.

Chair B. Hencken stated tenant improvements must be considered. Stated VSO offices are not sound proof and building issues have to be corrected. J. Rutherford recognized issues and stated discussions have begun with Plaza Corp, Administration and Building and Grounds. He anticipates the issues will be corrected within the next 2-4 weeks. Stated staff has the option to meet with veterans in other areas.

**VI. Veterans Service Office Report**

*VSO Coordinator (Interim), Lauren King*

Stand Down took place Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup>. Recognized Celia for her efforts in planning this year's Stand Down. Expressed issue with lack of storage space for surplus and having to pick up items at the VA. 130 veterans attended and Fred Upton presented medal to a WWII Veteran during the Stand Down. Chair B. Hencken suggested discussing the next Stand Down at a committee meeting after the first of the year.

VSO staff attended Military and Veteran Cultural Competency Training.

The State of Michigan announced a County Veteran Service Fund Grant, granting a minimum of \$25,000. A letter has been submitted to the State expressing our interest in applying. Working on letter of intent, requiring BOC Chair's signature, and due by October 17, 2018. Our office would use funds to increase SSR to address housing and assisting with paying for water bills, for example.

VSO data report reviewed.

A request to hire a temporary administrative assistant was sent to HR. M. Tolbert stated the application had to go to the VA Committee. Chair B. Hencken asked if the committee could approve the applicant today to fill the position. Chair B. Hencken moved to hire Paula Jones for administrative assistant, subject to meeting HR's requirements. Seconded by D. Brewer. Motion carried.

**VII. Chairman's Report**

*Committee Chair, Robert Hencken*

Reported that he has not received any new information on the transition other than it may happen January 2019. An issue with certifying M. Fletcher and J. Gonzalez to submit claims with the VA continues to be worked on. He received an employee lease agreement from T. Moored regarding M. Fletcher and J. Gonzalez working with VSO, prior to the transfer, and will discuss under New Business. Will also discuss the appointment of the VSC under New Business.

Attended the Stand Down and was very impressed.

**VIII. Citizens' Time**

Nothing at this time.

**IX. Committee Member's Time**

Nothing at this time.

**X. New Business**

*Proposed transfer of office to KCMHSAS – the Committee's role*

Chair B. Hencken stated he received an email from T. Moored including an employee lease agreement. The agreement would allow M. Fletcher and J. Gonzalez to work with the VSO until the transition is finalized. Chair B. Hencken sent T. Moored an email proposing changes to #4 and #16 on agreement. He requested amending #4 to include "and VSC" and amending #16 to add "and the committee" in addition to the County. Chair B. Hencken prepared motion that was read to the

committee and moved the motion. Seconded by D. Brewer. L. Henthorn stated administration shared proposed changes with J. Patton and awaiting his feedback. J. Rutherford suggested to table the motion until response is received from J. Patton. Chair B. Hencken presented motion regarding employee lease agreement (see attached motion). Committee unanimously agreed and motion approved.

*Appointment of VSC , VSS, etc.*

Chair B. Hencken stated J. Rutherford opened an internal posting for VSC in May 2018. Committee discussed appointment process and reviewed candidate applications. B. Ridge, L. King and C. Banuelos excused themselves from the meeting during this discussion. Motion to conduct the VSC interviews (see attached motion) was moved, seconded and passed unanimously.

It was announced the VSC interviews scheduled on October 8, 2018 at 9am and M. Tolbert send email to candidates regarding interview.

*Schedule of KCVAC meetings*

Chair B. Hencken presented motion to hold meetings the last Wednesday of each month at 9:00am. Committee unanimously agreed and motion approved.

**XI. Old Business**

Nothing at this time.

**XII. Commissioners' Time**

Nothing at this time.

**XIII. KCMHSAS Veterans Programs**

*Veterans Services System of Care Manager, Mark Fletcher*  
*Veterans Services Veteran Navigator, Juan Gonzalez*

M. Fletcher presented Adapt program information. A grant was received to continue program and is about one month away from starting classes, which are every week for 14 weeks. M. Kaercher asked about recruiting. M. Fletcher explained recruiting is done through community mapping by placing materials in targeted areas. He is working with school-based liaisons in Kalamazoo County to ask if someone in the school is connected to the military.

M. Fletcher stated J. Gonzalez is the local Kalamazoo County Navigator and Mike Hoss is the regional navigator covering eight counties. J. Gonzalez' focus is on homelessness; exploring housing resources; exploring why they become homeless; and jail diversion.

M. Fletcher discussed partnership with SAMHSA, the SMVF technical assistance center and strategic planning/mapping. M. Kaercher asked if known, in regards to military personnel, if substance abuse starts before, during or after military service. M. Fletcher stated he's not sure and varies. J. Gonzalez also agreed that it varies.

**XIV. Any Other Items**

B. Binns suggested a VSO newsletter. J. Rutherford agreed and stated other HCS programs also create newsletters.

Chair B. Hencken announced that the first VSC interview will take place at 9:45am since the committee will review candidate's personnel records at 9:00am.

**XV. Adjournment**

Chair B. Hencken adjourned the meeting at 11:02am.

KALAMAZOO COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MOTION REGARDING EMPLOYEE LEASE AGREEMENT

Kalamazoo County through its County Administrator has requested approval by the Kalamazoo County Veterans Affairs Committee (Committee) of a proposed Employee Lease Agreement (“Agreement”) with Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (KCMHSAS). The agreement provides for the leasing of two employees, Mark Fletcher and Juan Gonzalez, until completion of the proposed transfer of the Veterans Service Office to KCMHSAS, and at no cost to the County. A draft of the agreement was sent to the Committee Chairperson, Robert Hencken, for his review and comment.

The Committee approves the proposed Agreement provided that the draft is modified to make clear that leased employees “shall be accountable to and supervised by the County and the Committee and the Veterans Service Coordinator...” (Paragraph 4 of the Agreement) and that the Committee is added as a possible “party” in Paragraph 16 of the Agreement.

Moved and Adopted on September 26, 2018.

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Secretary

KALAMAZOO COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MOTION REGARDING APPOINTMENT OF  
VETERANS SERVICE COORDINATOR

The purpose of this motion is to establish a procedure for filling the vacancy for the position of Veterans Service Coordinator (VSC) and for filling any other vacancy that may occur as a result of that selection.

1. The Committee recognizes that the Kalamazoo County Department of Human Services previously opened a two-week period for the filing of Internal Transfer Applications by current County employees and two applications were received.
2. The applications were from Lauren J. King, the current Interim VSC, and Brien Brockway, a former Veterans Service Specialist (VSS) in the Veterans Service Office.
3. The Committee concludes that it is unnecessary to expand the search beyond the present applicants.
4. The Committee shall schedule interviews with the two applicants and shall review their current Kalamazoo County personnel records in accordance with the usual procedures for such reviews, and may contact present and former supervisors named in the applications..
5. After completion of the actions described in paragraph 4 the Committee may appoint one of the applicants as VSC and the Committee and the County will offer that applicant the job.
6. If Lauren J. King is chosen as VSC and accepts the appointment a vacancy will occur for the position of VSS. The Committee shall move promptly to fill that vacancy by conducting a two-week search for transfers to that position by current County employees. If that search results in the receipt of one or more applications from apparently qualified individuals the Committee shall follow the same process as described above in paragraphs 4 & 5 to fill the position of VSS. If the Committee determines, after an examination of the Internal Transfer Applications it has received, that there are not apparently qualified applicants the Committee shall post and review the job opening in accordance with the usual Kalamazoo County procedures for open jobs.

Made and Adopted on September 26, 2018.

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Secretary