

APPROVED
4-8-15 CD

Veterans' Affairs Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 4, 2015

- I. Call to Order by Chairperson Michael Quinn at 11:34 AM
- II. Roll Call
Members Present: Bill Becker, Michael Seals, Michael Quinn
Members Absent: Michael Jones, Audree Morrison
Others Present: Aaron Edlefson, Brien Brockway, Lucinda Stinson, Courtney Davis
- III. Citizens' Time
Chairperson Michael Quinn opened the floor for sharing. No comments, questions or issues were brought forward. Citizen's time was closed.
- IV. New Business
Coordinator's Report
Will be submitting letter of resignation on Monday; Accepted the position of Director for the Calhoun County Veterans Service Office. Resignation Letter will be shared with the Committee at next meeting for their acceptance.

Committee Discussion and Planning
Discussion of financial differences between Calhoun County and Kalamazoo County. Calhoun County has a millage to support operations of the office (Director, Service Officer and Administrative Assistant of present; adding one other position soon). Ranked 17th in State for Veterans Services used and Veteran numbers; Kalamazoo is 8th

Committee is interested in beginning to plan for a millage in Kalamazoo County. Would like to construct a plan to provide with their recommendation for the millage to the County Board for consideration. Millage would provide greater funding for County Veterans and support for the Veterans Service Office; would replenish County general fund for use in other needed areas. Next committee meeting to include a financial reporting of the current state and use of funding for the Veterans Service Office; then next steps for planning will be discussed.

Discussion of what County to County Collaborations would look like in the future. Would be necessary for Kalamazoo to pass a millage in support of Veterans Services to make this a reality. Future items for consideration would be identifying what committee make-up, administrative relationships and office locations and proximities for service delivery and a unified Veterans Service Office would look like and entail.

Immediate Transition Needs

Committee recommendation made to reevaluate the Coordinator Position by HCS Administration before reposting. Recommendation to have Don Jarzambek return to support the office in a temporary/interim capacity (90 day employment of a retiree); Mr. Jarzambek to be invited to the next committee meeting.

Committee Asked that Aaron Edlefson allow for open lines of communication between new Kalamazoo Office Staff and himself after he transitions to Calhoun County. Immediate focus on training and support for New Veterans Service Specialist, Brien Brockway; Upcoming State and National trainings are being planned for and Sue Weir will be volunteering at the office for the next few weeks to allow for adequate office support to accommodate training and transitions needs.

Veterans' Stand Down event planning will continue; Don Jarzambek will be a consultant and assist in organizing this year's event.

Commissioner Michael Seals expressed great commendation and gratitude, on behalf of the committee, for the dedication, professionalism and work that Aaron Edlefson has contributed and invested in the Kalamazoo Veterans Service Office. Aaron's ability and knowledge has been critical to the operations of the office in the midst of transitions and turmoil of past months.

Request of the committee to have Aaron attend the County Board of Commissioners' meeting on April 21st; Commissioner Seals will have Veterans put on the agenda.

V. Other Items of Discussion

Committee motioned that the By-Laws be revised to allow for committee members to participate by phone/teleconference/electronic media for up to 2 regularly scheduled meetings per calendar year and for special meetings as needed. This would be allowable for attendance and for voting purposes.

Motion made by B. Becker

Motion Carried by unanimous committee vote.

VI. Motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting of the committee. Chairperson Michael Quinn adjourned the committee at 12:21 PM.