

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Regular Quarterly Meeting of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs Meeting
Wednesday, July 10th, 2019 beginning at 10:00 a.m.
Iowa Gold Star Military Museum
7105 – NW 70th Avenue
Johnston, IA 50313-1824

Present: Dan Gannon
Elizabeth Ledvina
Chuck Connors
Orene Cressler
Steve Hyde
Kenny Lloyd
Darlene McMartin
Greg Paulline
Mary Van Horn
Gary Wattnem
Carol Whitmore

Staff: Steve Lukan, Executive Director, IDVA
Timon Oujiri, Commandant, IVH
Mari Mielke, IDVA – Recording Secretary
Karl Lettow, IDVA – Public Information Officer

Guests/

David Thornburg, DAV	Patty Hamann, Cedar County VSO
Judy Johnson-Mekota, Iowa City VAMC	Savanah LaKose, Iowa City VAMC
R. Bruce Beeston, VVA	Dave Allen, Senator Grassley’s Office
Beth Grabau, Vets In Agriculture	Brenda Safranski, Senator Ernst’s Office
Mitch Holmes, Cass County VSO	Mike Mortensen, Polk County VSO
Jon Schneider, Iowa PVA	Chris Oliver, Wright County VSO
Bob Bird, Sen. Rep. Caucus Staff	Dean Brand, ARNG Funeral Honors
Kristi Catrenich, Des Moines VAMC	Gail Graham, Des Moines VAMC
Bruce Voigt, Director VARO	Rod Derringer, VARO

Presenters: Bob Holliday, Iowa Gold Star Military Museum
Carol Grant – Capitol Complex Planning Commission

NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE ‘UNAPPROVED’ UNTIL ACCEPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT THE NEXT MEETING.

APPROVED: Elizabeth Ledvina Date: 10-2-19
Elizabeth Ledvina, Chair, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

Call to Order:
Meeting Chair Gannon called the meeting to order at 10:00.

Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence:
Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Gannon and followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call:

All members were present. Chairperson Gannon introduced the newest members of the Commission: Carol Whitmore representing VFW, Darlene McMartin representing the Member at Large and Gregory Paulline representing VVA. Two new organizations have been added to the nine member Commission, which is now also representing the PVA Commissioner Kenneth Lloyd and the Iowa County Association being represented by Orene Cressler Pocahontas County VA Director.

Welcome/Introductions of Guests:

Chairperson Gannon welcomed everyone in attendance and asked guests to introduce themselves.

Presentation:

Chairperson Gannon introduced Bob Holliday Board Chair of the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum. Mr. Holliday gave the Commission a short briefing about the Museum and thanked the Commission for all that they do for the Veterans in the great state of Iowa. Also the Commission has two of its quarterly meetings (January and July) in this great conference room at the Museum. We have a capital campaign going on now to build an auditorium for hosting terrific programs.

Chairperson Gannon introduced Carol Grant with the Capitol Complex Planning Commission. Ms. Grant updated the Commission with more information regarding the maintenance and responsibility of the monuments on Capitol Complex and once again is addressing the Commission asking for \$15,000 to continue with the maintenance of the military monuments that the Commission supported last year.

The Commission will review her request during the business portion later in the meeting.

Commissioner Gannon discussed the Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) Retreat that took place at Honey Creek Resort this summer and wanted just to remind folks that the Commission helps fund that outreach program. They are survivors that have lost their spouses through combat and other serious issues. SOS received \$42,000 the last fiscal year from the Commission.

Iowa ANG Funeral Honors Update

Update by Dean Brand with the Iowa ARNG Funeral Honors.

VA Regional Office Update

Director Bruce Voigt gave an update about the Agent Orange law and the presumptive conditions that would qualify to getting service connected.

Iowa City VA Medical Center Update

Director Judith Johnson-Mekota gave an oral report and update.

Des Moines VA Medical Center Update

Director Beth Graham gave an oral report and update. Also a written report was submitted.

IDVA Office Update

Mr. Lukan gave an update of the department's activities since the last meeting and has requests for monies from the License Plate Fund that were presented later in the meeting.

IVH Update

Update was provided by Commandant Timon Oujiri. He introduced a proposed rulemaking to the Commissioner related to amending "County of settlement" in 801 - 10.41(35D) to "County of residence." IVH submitted written information prior to the meeting showing the "Notice of Intended Action" to the Commission indicating that the Commission needs to approve this intended action.

Commissioner Wattnem made a motion to approve the proposed amendment change. Commissioner Ledvina seconded the motion; motion carried; approved unanimously.

Later in the meeting IVH had their License Plate Fund requests directed to the Commission for approval.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the quarterly meeting of April 3 were approved unanimously. The minutes from the Trust Fund conference call meetings of April 4, May 2, and June 6, were all approved unanimously.

Old Business

Chairperson Gannon distributed a list of the Commission's sub-committees showing the members and chairperson of each sub-committee.

Discussion of the License Plate Fund Uses.

IDVA Executive Director Steve Lukan has a request of License Plate Funds to support the following: 13 HP SB Pro Desk top computers totaling \$10,306; 13 Microsoft Office Standard 2019 software totaling \$3,477.37; and one Ricoh C4500 Printer, scanner and copier for \$6,375. All desktop computers are pushing over 5 years old, some are 10 years old running on Windows 7. DPD/IT our IT support services guidelines recommend replacing desktop computers and upgrading laptops every 3-5 years. In January 2020, Microsoft will no longer support Windows 7 operating systems.

After discussion of the Ricoh printer/copier, Commissioner Ledvina made a motion to approve the request for a Ricoh Printer/Copier at the cost of \$6,375. Commissioner Hyde seconded the motion; motion carried; approved unanimously.

After discussion on the request for 13 HP SB Pro Desk top computers totaling \$10,306, Commissioner McMartin made a motion to only support two computers and two Microsoft Office used by the IDVA for the Trust Fund Administrator and IDVA Recording Secretary at the cost of \$2,200. Commissioner Wattnem seconded the motion; motion carried; approved unanimously.

IVH Commandant Oujiri is requesting monies from the License Plate Fund to acquire three more "It's Never 2 Late Mobile Flex Lite" units for use of the residents at IVH as a technological tool to engage Veterans and spouse in activities to meet their personal interests and needs. Along with three more 12 month – subscriptions for use with the Mobile Flex equipment for a total of \$39,000.

Commissioner Ledvina made a motion to grant the request for use of License Plate Fund to support the \$39,000 request. Commissioner Cressler seconded the motion; motion carried; approved unanimously.

Chairperson Gannon discussed another use of the License Plate Fund to helping restoration needs for the Veterans Monuments at the State Capitol Complex as discussed at the July 2018 meeting approving the written criteria and policies for the Vietnam Wall and the upkeep of various other veteran memorial monuments.

At the October 2018 Commission meeting a motion was made to approve giving \$15,000 for the restoration needed for the monuments on the State Capitol Complex. The Capitol Complex Planning Commission is again asking for \$15,000 for continued restoration needs.

After discussion of this request Commissioner Hyde made a motion to donate \$15,000 to the Capitol Complex Planning Commission for the veteran's monuments restoration efforts. Commissioner Lloyd seconded the motion. Roll call was taken with Commissioners Ledvina and Wattnem with nay votes and Commissioners Connors, Cressler, Gannon, McMartin, Paulline, Van Horn and Whitmore with yea votes. Motion carried.

New Business

The Commission discussed the possibility of creating a standard application process for uses of the License Plate Fund. Commissioner McMartin proseed using an application for any veteran function in the State that benefits the veteran community. She will report on the progress of the application at the October meeting.

IVH Commandant Oujiri for an adjustment change to Chapter 10 for applications to the Iowa Veterans Home coming from the county VSOs. Currently it states "the following items shall be attached to the applicant before it is forwarded to IVH. An affidavit signed by two members of the county commission of veterans' affairs and is notarized by the appropriate county official attesting to the best of their knowledge and belief that the applicant is a resident of that county and the applicant is eligible for entering the Iowa Veterans Home."

The Commandant would like to propose a change to that that the VSO is the one who can sign that document. After discussion by the Commission, Commissioner Ledvina made a motion to approve the proposed revision. Commissioner Cressler seconded the motion; motion carried; approved unanimously.

Elections

After discussion Commissioner Cressler nominated Commissioner Elizabeth Ledvina as the new Chair. Commissioner Wattnem seconded the nomination. All approved the nomination unanimously, and Commissioner Ledvina accepted the position.

After discussion Commissioner Wattnem nominated Commissioner Chuck Connors as 1st Vice Chair. Commissioner Ledvina seconded the nomination. All approved the nomination unanimously, Mr. Connors accepted the position.

After discussion Commissioner Ledvina nominated Commissioner Steve Hyde as 2nd Vice Chair. Commissioner Wattnem seconded the nomination. All approved the nomination unanimously, and Mr. Hyde accepted the position.

Public Comment

Mike Mortensen, President of the County Association talked about possibly changing language in the Administrative Rules about the amount of hours each county VA office is open to serve their veteran community.

Next Commission meeting

The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2, beginning at 10:00 at the Iowa Veterans Home in the Malloy Leisure Recreation Center in Marshalltown.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.