

DATE: October 7, 2026

TO: Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

FROM: Darlene McMartin, Chair, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

SUBJECT: Quarterly Commission Meeting

The Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs quarterly meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Wednesday, October 7, 2026, at Whitehill Auditorium at the Iowa Veterans Home, 1301 Summit Street, Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

AGENDA

- **Call to Order**
- **Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence led by Commissioner Perry**
- **Welcome and Introduction of Guests**
- **Roll Call**
 - **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Darlene McMartin, Chair (Public At Large), Joella Perry, 1st Vice Chair, Wayne Co and the IDVA Women's Program); Scott Miller, 2nd Vice Chair, Becky Dirks Haugsted (VFW), Todd Jacobus (IDVA), LtCol Joel Sage (IANG), Robert Suesakul (MOPH), Dennis Jones (MCL), Reggie Richardson (ROA), and David Grimm (DAV)
 - **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT ONLINE:** Gregory Paulline (VVA)
 - **COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT (EXCUSED):** David Wilkins (AMVETS) and Randy Johnson (AMLEG)
- **Commissioner Updates**
 - **Darlene McMartin (Public At Large)**
 - New GDX report is out
 - Discussed the need for the focus on the Veterans we have and serve now, not the ones that we may lose in the future.
 - **Becky Dirks Haugsted (VFW)**
 - Current State Commander is Robert Quinn from Riverside
 - VFW currently has over 110 posts in Iowa
 - **Robert Suesakul (MOPH)**
 - Current Commander is Jack Hanson
 - **Reggie Richardson (ROA)**
 - Primary challenge of their organization is finding new young members
 - Six Soldiers that passed in March in Kuwait, were all 103rd Sustainment Command (Reserve Component)
 - **LtCol Joel Sage (IANG)**
 - Appointed to the Commission in April 2026
 - IANG has 35 locations across the state
 - Just over 7000 Army Guardsmen and just under 2000 Air Guardsmen
 - 45% of Iowans that serve will serve in the Guard
 - **Dennis Jones (MCL)**
 - 10 Detachments in Iowa
 - State Commandant in Iowa
 - **David Grimm (DAV)**
 - New State Commander Shala Chevalier
 - DAV has completed its legislative priorities for the 2027 year
 - **Scott Miller (PVA)**
 - Represent all Veterans that have spinal cord injuries or diseases such as ALS or MS
 - Chapter President is Gerald Santos and Vice President is Dan Nichols
- **VA Regional Office- Heidi Rhodes**
 - New Director Update
 - Director Aaron Filsinger will begin in November
 - Shawn Bohn will remain Acting Director until November

- Veterans Service Center
 - Claims Completed
 - FY 2026-31,282
 - FY 2025-34,570
 - Current lowans receiving awards (compensation, pension, DIC)
 - August 2026: 62,941 recipients for \$126,163,270
 - FY 2026 through August: \$1,318,880,624-14.7% increase over same period in 2025
- VR&E
 - Actively serving 1,363 Veterans across the state
 - Services delivered from five locations (Des Moines, Sioux City, Mason City, Cedar Rapids and Davenport)
 - Managing a 98% active caseload meaning Veterans are staying engaged, progressing, and achieving successful rehabilitation and employment outcomes
- **VA Medical Center- Iowa City Update- Heath Streck**
 - Milestones/Awards
 - In September, ICVAHCS hosted the National Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic
 - 240 participants
 - 464 volunteers
 - Events
 - Stakeholder meeting-November 12, Iowa City VA Medical Center 3W101A
 - West Burlington Ribbon Cutting
 - November 9, 2026
 - Patient Satisfaction
 - VSignals
 - Outpatient Trust Scores for the period of 7/1/26-9/30/26
 - ICVAHCS 94.7%
 - VISN23 94.8%
 - All VA 93.3%
 - Facility Updates
 - Lease Projects
 - New West Burlington CBOC- planning for an 11/9/26 ribbon cutting
 - New Davenport CRRC-Contracting, expected completion Dec 2028
 - Pilot Iowa City CLC-Contracting, expected completion 2027
 - ICVAHCS Center for Development and Civic Engagement Needs List:
 - Volunteer Drivers (Quad Cities critically low)
 - If interested, VHAIOVVolunteer@va.gov
 - Non-perishable food items
 - 20 sleeping bags
 - 20 camping tents, single or 3-person sizes
 - Toenail clippers
 - Water bottles
 - Monetary donation for the women's clinic
 - Tracphones
 - Gift cards for program support
 - Shoes, Size 11-13
 - Can openers
 - Warm winter clothing items
 - Lightly used clothing items can be donated at the Cedar Rapids or Davenport CRRC
 - ICVAHCS Mental Health
 - New Director of Mental Health, Dr. Kyle McGinty
 - Decreased new patient wait times by 50% since March 2026
 - Currently onboarding new providers which will help decrease the patient wait times in Decorah, Quincy, Quad Cities, Coralville and the main facility
 - ICVAHCS Suicide Prevention Initiatives
 - 2026 VA National Suicide Prevention Annual Report was released analyzing date from 2001-2024
 - 6,488 suicides among Veterans in 2024 and the average per day was 17.7
 - ICVAHCS Homeless and Under-served Veterans Support

- Valor Pointe was successfully opened and fully housed. 15 units are not allocated with Veterans receiving onsite support and case management
- HUD VASH- Currently managing 260 HUD VASH vouchers
- Veteran Tiny Home Community-Moline, IL-Homeless Program team is participating in planning meetings with the organizers of the upcoming 30-unit income based Veteran Tiny Home Community. Once units become available, ICVA will support with appropriate referrals for eligible Veterans
- Community Resource and Referral Centers
 - Currently operate two CRRCs (Cedar Rapids and Davenport)
 - Offer walk in services such as mental health and substance use appointments; housing case management; food pantry; showers, clothing closet, household goods; vocational rehabilitation; assistance with housing and job searches; enrollment support; legal system support; filling out paperwork for SSI/SSDI/Medicaid/SNAP; and connections to community services
- Street Outreach Teams
 - Conduct street outreach to Veterans residing in places not meant for human habitation like encampments and parking lots where people are living in their cars
 - Anyone can request street outreach by contacting the CRRC, or the Homeless Hotline 1-877-4AIDVET (1-877-424-3838)
- CRRC Needs
 - Earmarked homeless donations can be directed to CDCE. Please write “homeless” in the memo line to ensure donations go toward food pantry and clothing closet needs
 - Men’s clothing (sizes M,L,XL) Shirts, sweatshirts, pants, underwear (boxer briefs), socks and coats
 - Footwear: Tennis shoes and boots (sizes 8-12)
 - Cell phones and phone cards
 - Gift Cards (\$5-\$20) particularly to gas stations
- **VA Medical Center- Central Iowa Update-Sarah Fredrickson (for Lisa Curnes)**
 - Associate Director of Resources and Operations
 - Staffing
 - Onboarded two new urologists, Chief of General Surgery, vascular surgeon, Chief of Specialty Care, Chief of Mental Health, occupational medicine primary care chief, two primary care nurse PR actioners and two radiologists
 - Still working to fill vacancies for allergy section, psychiatry, two additional mental health nurse practitioners, pulmonary, gynecology, tele-neurology and a physiatrist
 - Patient Wait Times
 - Mental Health
 - VA target is 20 days
 - VHA national average is 15.1
 - Central Iowa VA stands at 15.7
 - This should decrease as the new mental health providers are onboarded
 - Specialty Care
 - VA target is 28 days
 - VHA national average is 40.3
 - Central Iowa VA stands at 26
 - Primary Care
 - VA target is 20 days
 - VHA national average is 26.1
 - Central Iowa VA stands at 19.3 days for new patients and 3.8 days for established patients
 - Construction
 - Steam Tunnel Project
 - Ensures that the entire campus has main steam and chilled water piping
 - Expands 925 square feet of serviceable tunnel
 - Essential for a future new foundational services building
 - South Side
 - Almost completed
 - North Side

- Majority of the construction now affects the north side and the main entrance area
 - Come in off 36th Street or utilize the parking ramp off Euclid
 - Completion expected end of FY27
 - Lab Expansion
 - New incoming equipment requires more square footage
 - Histology, molecular testing, microbiology and general laboratory
 - Halls and Walls
 - Flooring and roofing on first floor of main building is being renovated
 - Will carry into FY28
 - Building 25
 - Design phase is almost complete
 - Construction to begin end of 2027, but likely 2028
- Suicide Prevention
 - Suicide Prevention Team attended 332 outreach events
 - Reached 9,309 people
 - Handed out over 12,800-gun locks
 - 477 opportunities with Veterans experiencing a mental health crisis
 - New version of suicide screening went live August 31, 2026
 - September was Suicide Prevention Month, pushed out a social media campaign, increased the number of events attended and kicked off the safe storage kit.
 - Safe Storage Kit
 - Contains mitigation tools for veterans considering suicide.
 - Contains literature on lethal means, safety and resources for Veterans in need
 - Handed out at outreach events, and every Veteran discharging from acute psychiatric units
- Homeless Veterans
 - As of August 31, 2026, permanently housed 209 homeless, achieving 122% of the FY26 goal.
 - Of the 209, only 2.9% returned to homelessness
 - Three of the six have been replaced into housing
 - VA Central Iowa has engaged with 112 unsheltered Veterans
- Electronic Health record is being updated and will go live July 2027
 - Veterans can best prepare for the go live by using the secure messaging to refill and renew your prescriptions early and update any information in DEERS
- Trust Rating
 - Veteran satisfaction score is at 92.7%
- **Presentations:**
 - **Dr. Levi Sowers- Iowa City VA Vision Center**
 - Dr. Sowers is a PhD scientist at the University of Iowa and the VA since 2014
 - VA Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Visual Loss
 - Directed by Randy Carton
 - \$1.2 million per year organization within the VA research paradigm that focuses on vision loss and other related diseases
 - Now bring in \$2.8 million to focus on VA related research
 - 11 core investigators; 19 associated investigators (mostly associated with the U of I) and 18 trainees
 - Innovation and Areas of Research
 - Biomarkers
 - Using AI driven techniques to look at ocular imaging and advancing early detection monitoring and personalized treatments for diseases that are associated with vision loss
 - Headache
 - Using the advantage of looking to the back of the eye to assess how TBI affects brain function
 - Advanced automated tele medicine assessments at home
 - Utilizing 3D soundscapes for people with low vision
 - Vets First Podcast
 - Research based conversation with Veterans

- <https://news.va.gov/72413/vets-first-podcast-s1-e-formation-of-vets-first-podcast/>
 - 33 episodes and have reached 1.2 million Veterans
 - VA Iowa City is center for excellence for headache medicine
 - Veteran engagement panel of 12-15 low vision Veterans meet quarterly
- **Tonya Cook and Frank Robey-Iowa State Fair veterans memorial**
 - Veterans Memorial Walkway-Phase I of project
 - Completed and opened for Iowa State fair 2026
 - Walkway grass will be replaced by brick pad
 - Brick will be marketed and sold by the Blue-Ribbon Foundation.
 - In between brick pads will be perennial plantings
 - Planning on placing 24 light poles
 - Tops of the light poles will have laser cut insignias of the six branches
 - Solar bench at the beginning will be removed and replaced with 2-3 benches
 - A new descriptive sign will be placed at the bottom and the top of the walkway
 - 2027 goal is to place eight flag poles at the top, on for each branch of the military, US flag and the Iowa State Flag
 - Multiple benches will be placed at the top of the walkway so that people can sit and enjoy the view of Des Moines and the Fairgrounds
- **BG William McClintock- Fallen service member memorial**
 - Currently located in the rotunda area by the USS Iowa
 - Currently houses around 95 pictures of those that gave the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives since 9/11
 - Moving the memorial to one of the four main display behind areas. Current area would be used to depict the former Governors of Iowa.
 - New display will not have room for all the pictures, but it will have the names of all of those lost
 - Suggesting that the photos be donated to the Iowa Veterans Home to be placed on display
 - Timeline is December for breakdown of the display and transfer to the Veterans Home
 - Gold Star Museum does not currently have the space for it with the opening of the Army Nurse display
- **Iowa Association of County Veteran Services-Dustin Peterson**
 - Benefits
 - As of August 2026, 13,383 Iowa Veterans are rated 100% service connected.
 - Represents a 5% increase, or 635 additional Iowa veterans rate 100%, since May 2026
 - Compared to August 2025, the number of Iowa Veterans rated 100% service connected has increased by 2,312
 - In August, 55,830 Iowa veterans and eligible family members received \$114,694,871 in monthly disability compensation, pension and DIC payments.
 - Compared to August 2025, this represents an increase of \$14,998,968 in monthly payments
 - Veterans 100% service connected continue to represent Iowa's largest disability rating population with 13,383 recipients, or approximately 24%.
 - The second largest rating population is Veterans rated at 10%, with 10,328 recipients, or approximately 18%
 - DIC recipients increased from 5,095 in August 2025 to 5,445 in August 2026, an increase of 350 surviving family members
 - Veterans receiving service-connected disability compensation averaged \$2,054 per month in August 2026. This represents an increase in \$176 per Veteran per month compared to August 2025
 - Veteran Population Projected to Decrease
 - Iowa's Veteran population is projected to decrease by approximately 40,000 Veterans between 2024 and 2034.
 - Data from the VA projects the national Veteran population will decline at an average annual rate of approximately 1.6% from 2025 to 2053.
 - Iowa's Veteran population is projected to decline at 2.3% annually
 - Iowa's projected rate of Veteran population decline is approximately 44% greater than the national rate
 - Education
 - IACVS currently has 141 CVSO members

- Recently hired CVSOs were able to attend NACVSO's Basic Benefits Course
- Next Basic training will be offered Feb 23-27, 2027
- IACVS continues to provide monthly virtual single subject training sessions focused on federal and state Veteran programs and benefits
- **Mike Olson-Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs-Legislative Update**
 - Rule Making Process
 - Executive Order 10 mandates that every agency go through its administrative rules and take out redundancies, makes updates to ensure compliance and that they are easy to understand and in compliance with current Iowa Code
 - IDVA has 17 chapters in 801 that represent our department IDVA is down to the last 4 chapters
 - Chapter 10 (Iowa Veterans Home)
 - Regulatory Analysis Meeting
 - October 9, 2026 10:00 am
 - Chapter 14 (Trust Fund)
 - Regulatory Analysis Meeting
 - November 18, 2026 3:00pm
 - Notice of Intended Action Hearing
 - January 15, 2027 10:00 am or 2:00 pm
 - Chapter 15 (Commemorative Property)
 - Regulatory Analysis Meeting
 - October 9, 2026 10:00 am
 - Chapter 17 (Veterans License Plate Fund)
 - Regulatory Analysis Meeting
 - October 22, 2026 9:30 am
 - Completed (Adopted and Filed)
 - Chapter 1 (Organizational Procedures)
 - Chapter 7 (County Commission of Veterans Affairs Fund and Training Program)
 - Chapter 11 (Injured Veterans Grant Program)
 - Chapter 14 is under review as there are some benefits that the Commission has been providing that the rules allowed that do fully align with Iowa Code
 - While this is being considered by legislators, IDVA will remain paying out claims as they have been doing
 - All Regulatory Analysis and Notice of Intended Action hearings are posted on our IDVA public calendar
 - Chapter 35A.13(8) Lists the benefits that are available to be paid through the Trust Fund
 - Chapter 14.4(1) Travel Expenses for caregivers directly related to medical care
 - Would like to expand the definition of who a caregiver can be; currently only allows for Veterans and spouses
 - Chapter 14.3 Underemployment assistance
 - Code only states unemployment assistance
 - Chapter 14.4(5) Expenses related to the purchase of durable medical equipment that allow a Veteran spouse or dependent or the unremarried spouse of a deceased Veteran to remain in their home.
 - Code only specifies Veterans
 - Chapter 14.4(7) Ambulance and emergency room services for Veterans and emergency lodging for immediate family members
 - Code specifies you must be in a trauma related situation, the rules do not
 - Chapter 14.4(8) Emergency expenses related to vehicle repair or a onetime replacement vehicle, housing repair or temporary housing
 - Code authorizes repair of a vehicle but not purchase
 - No Veteran will lose benefits as the Commission will continue to pay under the rules and guidelines they are operating under currently
- **Recognition of Harold Tackett and Dan Gannon**
 - Iowa State Fair Parade coordinators
- **Todd Jacobus- Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs Update**
 - **Recognition of Dan Gannon & Harold Tackett.** In 2013, President Barack Obama officially designated the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War to span a 13-year period from May 28, 2012 through November 11, 2025. We have held numerous events in Iowa

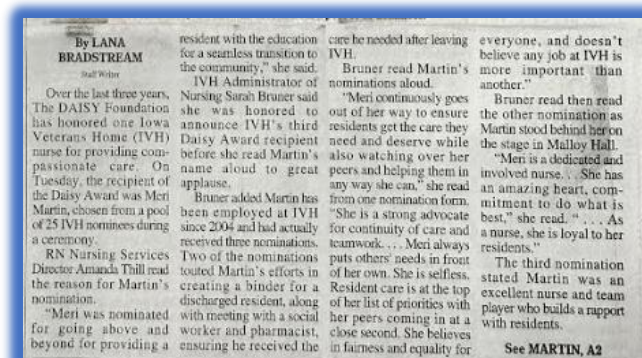
honoring Vietnam Veterans throughout this period. Both Dan Gannon and Harold Tackett have been key coordinators of the Iowa State Fair Veterans Parade throughout this entire 13-year period. When they started Dan was a Commissioner on the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs and Harold was a Master Sergeant working for the Iowa National Guard. They continue even though both of them are no longer working in their former capacity. Thank you for your incredible work!



- **Thoughts As We Prepare for 2027 Legislation Session.**

- On September 24, 2026, 9 of 13 Commissioners (Becky Dirks Haugsted, Dave Grimm, Todd Jacobus, Dennis Jones, Darlene McMartin, Greg Paulline, Joella Perry, Robert Suesakul, and Dave Wilkins), and 11 of 13 organizations (all but PVA & ROA) participated in the 2027 Veterans Legislative Discussion at Whitehill Auditorium. Kellie Meyer captured notes summarizing input from participants. Commissioners have those, and others can get them from Kellie.
- In October 2022 when I was hired as Commandant, Iowa was ranked #44 of 53 states and territories in terms of the VA disability compensation and pension dollars per veteran coming into the state. Today, Iowa ranks #47 of 53. The importance of #47 to me translates into under-served Iowa veterans - - - many of whom likely do not know that they are under-served.
- In the State of Iowa, the access point to the VA disability compensation system is through our 99 county veteran service offices and our 147 county veteran service officers - - - all of whom are hired by county boards of supervisors and overseen by their 3–5-member county commission of veterans affairs. Where a veteran lives in Iowa appears to make a difference, as the average veteran living in the #1 county in Iowa receives \$6,500 more than the average veteran living in the #99 county.
- It was this issue that we discussed in detail last month. Bottom line is that the easiest thing for the IDVA to do would be to do what we've always done – accept where we are and acknowledge that the counties own the filing responsibility. My premise – the premise of the Department – is that we need to do something different than what we've done before, and it is in that spirit that we've moved forward. We appreciate the input, perspectives, and thoughts from all parties.
- **IDVA Meeting with American Legion.** On Friday, August 21, 2026, Kellie Meyer, Karl Lettow, and I met with Iowa American Legion leaders (Commander Don De Kock, Commissioner Randy Johnson, Former Commander Darrin Alderson, Adjutant John Derner, and Service Officer Shane Pankonen, at their headquarters in Des Moines. I want to share with all present how much I appreciate the American Legion asking to meet with us, sharing their thoughts and perspectives with us, and asking me to organize a meeting where stakeholders could share. Thanks to the American Legion for spending this time with us

- **Meri Martin IVH 2026 DAISY Award Recipient.** On September 22, 2026, the Iowa Veterans Home community gathered in the Malloy Leisure Resource Center to announce our 2026 DAISY Award Recipient. Congratulations to Nurse Clinician Meri Martin! The presentation of this award reflects the exceptionally high professionalism. To put this achievement into perspective, only 28 (7%) of our 117 licensed nursing staff and 276 certified nursing assistants were chosen as DAISY Award nominees. Out of all those incredible candidates, you were recognized as #1. What a great accomplishment. We are fortunate to have Meri on-board at IVH!



- **IVH Continues 5-Star CMS Rating Dating Back to 2016.** The Iowa Veterans Home retains an overall 5-Star Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) rating – including the subordinate categories of health inspection, quality measures, and staffing. A 5-Star rating translates to “much above average” quality of care compared to other facilities. CMS recognizes 5-star facilities for passing state safety and health checks with very few citations or violations, providing high nursing hours per resident each day to ensure personal attention, and maintaining high clinical standards, such as low rates of falls, pressure ulcers, and avoidable hospital visits. This rating is very important, the rating is difficult to achieve, and the rating is quite easy to lose. We retain this rating by each of us fulfilling our duties and responsibilities.

			
Care Compare Five-Star Ratings of Nursing Homes			
Provider Rating Report for August 2026			
Ratings for Iowa Veterans Home (16A002)			
Marshalltown, Iowa			
Overall Quality	Health Inspection	Quality Measures	Staffing
★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★

- **Significant Reduction on Mandated Overtime!** I want to highlight for our entire team that **during the month of July 2026 we had only two forced mandates.** Let me say that again - - - during the **during the month of July 2026 we had only two forced mandates.** We are pulling between buildings to cover requirements. During first two weeks of August 2026, we cancelled 17 volunteers due to pulling from one area to another. This helps people and also makes fiscal sense. We understand that this is inconvenient for those who get pulled, but I feel like this inconvenience is balanced against the requirement to have mandated shifts. I am happy to hear this because “work – life balance” continues to be an area where we want to improve, and reducing mandates is key to that effort!

- **\$1.3 Million Grant for Iowa Veterans Cemetery.** Gavin Sandvig provided an update during the July 1, 2026 quarterly meeting regarding a request that the IDVA had submitted to the USDVA for a grant. Update: On August 28, 2026, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs awarded a \$1,358,525 grant to the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, which will allow us to add 2,160 columbarium niches and upgraded landscaping, including repair of the pump house, at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery. The Iowa Veterans Cemetery performs more than 700 interments annually. With over 12,000 applications already on file for future interments, adding 2,160 columbarium niches ensures we stay ahead of demand and can serve Iowa's 177,922 veterans well into the future. Significant to note is that more than half of our current interments are cremains—3,378 cremains are currently placed across 10 of our 12 existing columbarium walls. This expansion provides critical capacity for the rising preference for cremation. This grant is 100% fully federally funded – bringing federal dollars straight to Iowa's veteran infrastructure with no state tax burden. We anticipate that this project will be complete by 2028.
- **Iowa Homes for Heroes.** Governor Reynolds will join Iowa Homes for Heroes Board of Directors at a ribbon cutting for their second home for a Veteran on Thursday, October 8, 2026 1:50 pm at 4719 Hillsdale Drive, Urbandale, Iowa 50322. The new home will be presented to U.S. Navy Veteran Johnny Mellor during this ceremony. <https://www.dmcityview.com/just-released/2026/10/01/iowa-homes-for-heroes-completes-second-home-for-iowa-veteran/>
- **On-Going IDVA Facilities Projects.** The following projects are either in process or being planned.
 - Repair Water Infiltration in Tunnels at IVH – \$1,300,000 [Complete October 2026]
 - Replace Dack & Malloy Building Roofs at IVH - \$3,200,000 [Complete October 2026]
 - Renovate Dack Building Leisure Resource Center & Gymnasium at IVH – \$40,000 [Completed September 2026]
 - Installation of Columbarium Wall & Repair of Pump House at IVC - \$1,300,000 [2028]
- **IDVA School for Commissioners & BoSs.** On September 15, 2026, Gavin Sandvig notified all County Directors / Administrators of the Commissioner Training taking place on Monday, October 12, 2026 on Camp Dodge. I sent out a reminder of this training to all Directors / Administrators, and Commissioners on October 2, 2026. As of October 6, 2026, 91 individuals registered. We will take add-ons all the way up until the day of the event. This semi-annual training event is offered free of charge, and is intended to introduce commissioners to department leadership, outline Iowa Code changes, review budget planning, discuss the hiring process, provide a county assessor update, closed meetings, public records, HIPAA, ethics, and graves registration. Our hope is that this event will help connect commissioners with each other and establish / reinforce a network of sharing best practices as we all work to support the 147 County Executive Directors / Administrators and Veteran Service Officers supporting Iowa Veterans. We will offer the same training on Monday, April 12, 2027.
- **Fiscal Year 2025 State Audit Report of IDVA.** The Reports of Audit from the Office of the State Auditor are available on their website at <https://www.auditor.iowa.gov/reports/audit-reports>. The Fiscal Year 2025 Audit Report for the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, including the Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown, the Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Van Meter, and the Benefits & Records Office on Camp Dodge, were posted on September 29, 2026. <https://www.auditor.iowa.gov/reports/file/86036.pdf>. **There were no audit findings. I acknowledge the great work of the IDVA staff contributing to this finding - Nathan Wilson (Operations Executive Administrator), Julie Carbajal (Finance Bureau Chief), and the Finance Team. Great work!**
- The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs has had a busy quarter since our last meeting on July 1, 2026.
 - **Major Brad Hovey Interment at Iowa Veterans Cemetery.** On Friday, July 17, 2026, the State of Iowa held military funeral honors for United States Air Force Major Brad Hovey at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Van Meter. Kudos to the entire Iowa Veterans Cemetery team, who came

together to manage the event with great precision and professionalism. The United States Air Force was present in large numbers, and I will never forget the image of two B-52 Strato-fortresses flying over the IVC from North to South and then one vanishing into the clouds in missing man formation. Eight Americans died on that aircraft on June 15, 2026, including Major Hovey.



- **IVH Resident Council Concerns Summary & Discussion.** On July 13, 2026, the IVH Resident Council presented a document that summarized issues and concerns to the IDVA leadership team following their initial quarter serving in position (April-June). I appreciate the time and effort that Council President Richard Running and Secretary Melanie Watson-Powell invested in developing their comments. Instead of meeting with them to talk thru these issues Nathan Wilson organized a meeting with the leadership team on the same day we received the letter, consolidated comments from all of us, and provided a response in a formal letter so that Richard and Melanie could take this back to those they represent and share this with them. I think it is appropriate that all of you are aware of the issues that the Council brought to us, and our response. **See a-g below.**

Council Feedback: Staff is overworked and showing a morale problem.

Leadership & Regulatory Response: We acknowledge the observations regarding our hardworking staff. To provide transparency on current operations, in June, there were 344 missed shifts, which were mitigated by 168 volunteered shifts and 3 forced mandates. Currently, our nursing staff operates at 80% capacity, with active recruitment for 8 RNs, 14 LPNs, 19 CMAs, and 35 CNAs. It is important to note that this 20% vacancy rate does not account for our temporary staffing pool, which currently includes 35 temporary CNAs and 9 temporary RN/LPNs. Operationally, management has initiated robust recruiting efforts and nursing mentorship programs, including an on-site CNA program that is steadily improving our staffing levels. Under CMS regulations (42 CFR § 483.35 - Nursing Services), facilities are federally mandated to maintain sufficient staff to meet resident needs, and we remain deeply committed to prioritizing recruitment and evaluating shift distribution to ensure full compliance and alleviate the strain on our dedicated hourly staff.

Council Feedback: Administration exercises punitive measures toward hourly staff for taking sick days, including for out-of-control diseases like Influenza and COVID-19, which has led to some staff coming to work sick and potentially spreading diseases to the resident population.

Leadership & Regulatory Response: This is a critical risk-management concern closely guided by CMS regulations (42 CFR § 483.80 - Infection Control), which strictly require facilities to maintain an infection prevention program prohibiting employees with communicable diseases from having direct contact with residents. Human Resources has established attendance policies developed with staff input to support a safety-first culture that aligns with these federal mandates. While these policies may appear strict, they are fundamentally designed to protect our residents, ensure equitable treatment, and prevent undue strain on staff who must cover unexpected absences. Federal labor laws require us to enforce these policies consistently to prevent any appearance of preferential treatment. Management recognizes the delicate balance required here and remains committed to evaluating these protocols to ensure both fairness and utmost safety.

Council Feedback: The Council recommended checking suggestion and Resident Council boxes more frequently, and increasing responsiveness by engaging residents during lunch to assess needs. There needs to be more transparency for both the Resident Council and administration higher-ups.

Leadership & Regulatory Response: Management frequently holds town hall meetings specifically for residents to voice compliments, concerns, and complaints – though attendance is currently low. Operationally, the Insights suggestion boxes are checked on a regular basis and issues are processed; however, many submissions are unsigned or relate to highly individualized issues rather than broader facility matters. We encourage residents to sign their cards so we can provide direct follow-up. For immediate concerns, residents have multiple avenues for assistance, including Social Workers, Supervisors, Nursing Service Directors (NSDs), Bureau Chiefs, Administrators, and the Commandant, all of whom are available via phone, email, or in-person meetings. Management asks that residents work directly with the appropriate department heads to reach a resolution, rather than seeking alternative answers from multiple staff members, to ensure consistent and accurate information is provided across the board.

Council Feedback: Residents are tired of laundry ruining their clothes. The current policy requiring a receipt for replacement is costly and frustrating.

Leadership & Regulatory Response: CMS regulations (42 CFR § 483.10(i) – Safe Environment) require facilities to treat residents' personal property with respect and provide safe and proper handling of laundry. We take this responsibility seriously. The state has an established procedure, managed by social workers and finance, to replace clothing items that are distinctly damaged by our laundry services. Please note that while this process cannot cover items damaged prior to washing or items experiencing natural wear and tear, we remain committed to ensuring facility-damaged items are addressed appropriately through the official channels.

Council Feedback: Dietary needs to listen to residents better to reduce food wastage. The double-check system needs drastic improvement because residents receive too little, completely wrong requests, or not what they requested at all.

Leadership & Regulatory Response: The Food Service Bureau has recently transitioned to a new software system, and we are actively working to resolve the initial implementation challenges. IVH strives for 100% meal order accuracy; however, the sheer volume of custom tray builds, combined with highly specific and varied dietary restrictions, presents a significant operational challenge. We ask for your patience and grace as our dietary staff works diligently to refine this new system and ensure residents consistently receive high-quality, accurate meals on time.

Council Feedback: The pharmacy is too slow, and improvements in speed are needed.

Leadership & Regulatory Response: CMS regulations (42 CFR § 483.45 – Pharmacy Services) require the timely provision of pharmaceutical services and medications to residents. IVH is proud to be the only nursing home in the state with an in-house pharmacy. As a result of this dedicated resource, our response times to medication changes are, on average, faster than any other nursing home facility in Iowa. We will, however, continue to monitor our workflows to ensure maximum efficiency.

Council Feedback: Residents witness employees complaining about staffing and treatment by administration. The facility is experiencing a "brain drain," and staff perceive that administrators received large pay raises at the expense of hourly workers.

Leadership & Regulatory Response: Fostering a positive, professional workplace culture is essential. Management agrees that it is inappropriate for staff to discuss internal grievances in front of residents, and leadership will reinforce professional communication standards. Regarding compensation, IVH is a state-run facility, which means all wage structures and increases are public information and are strictly monitored and processed through the Department of Administrative Services. The perception that administrative raises are funded at the expense of hourly workers is structurally and legally impossible under this state system. We will work on improving internal communications to clarify how state wages are distributed, ensuring our staff feels

valued and informed. The Iowa Veterans Home is proud to be a five-star CMS facility. Management continuously strives to make IVH the best place to live and work, ensuring both our residents and staff are fully supported.

Nathan Wilson presented a signed letter responding to each of these issues to IVH Resident Council President Richard Running and Secretary Melanie Watson-Powell on July 14, 2026. Very well done.

- **RAGBRAI in Marshalltown.** On July 22-23, 2026, for the fifth time in RAGBRAI's 53-year history, the City of Marshalltown was an overnight stay on the riders' trek across the state. We were grateful to host many of them on our campus. Our staff did a wonderful job taking donations for pie. The Iowa Army National Guard flew a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to Valor Field, and both residents and riders had an opportunity to experience that first-hand. We are grateful to our IVH staff who made the effort to make this day extra special for residents. George Trent wrote a poem that was printed in the July 23, 2026 edition of the Times-Republican. <https://www.timesrepublican.com/opinion/your-view/2026/07/remembering-ragbrais-rhythm/>



- **IVH Employee Nominated for Major Songwriting Award.** Jim Coppoc served on the IVH Activities Team as a Music Therapist for several years. What a great person! I saw this article in the July 2, 2026, edition of the Times-Republican. Jim wrote this song, “*Soldier for a Son*” a few days before his son deployed to Syria in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Listen to this song and see if your eyes are still dry. <https://youtube.com/shorts/3UqTe8OIT0k?is=-qT1Ptj0r36F1uTW>. (Jim’s son fulfilled his mission and returned following his deployment with the 1st Battalion 133rd Infantry earlier this year.)

IVH employee Jim Coppoc nominated for major songwriting award

TIMES-REPUBLICAN

TRAER — Although local pastor Jim Coppoc's main calling will always be ministry, those who know him know he is also obsessed with creative writing in any form — plays, poems, sermons, op-eds and even the occasional song. Over the past few years, Coppoc has written a number of new songs, including the now-award-winning "Soldier for a Son," written just days before Coppoc's oldest son deployed to Syria last year as part of Operation Inherent Resolve. That song has now earned Coppoc a coveted nomination for a Josie Music Award in the category of "Songwriter Achievement." A selection of lyrics from the song includes: "He was born on a Thursday in a two horse town / Raised him up the best I could, didn't want to let him down / Told him all the stories of great men who went before / Now my son is dressed in camouflage, and he's headed off to war."

In addition to Coppoc's



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jim Coppoc, a Traer resident and pastor who works at the Iowa Veterans Home, has been nominated for a songwriting award for his song "Soldier for a Son."

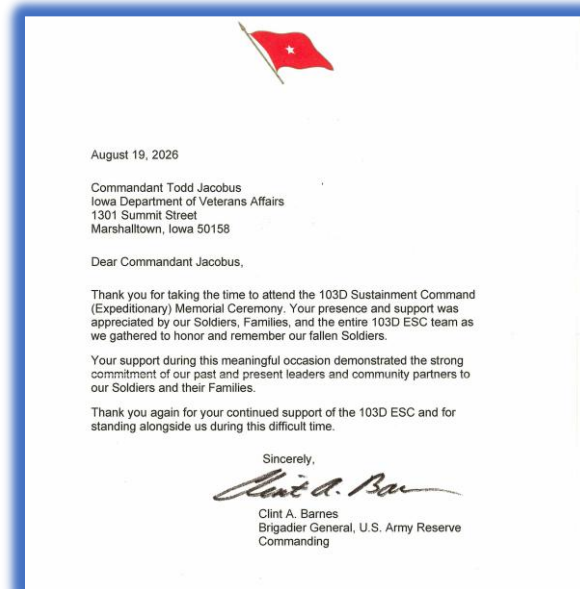
pastoral duties at Ripley United Church of Christ, he is a full-time musician at the Iowa Veterans Home and member of the Cedar Valley-based band, Honey on the Weekend. Coppoc was the recipient last year of an Iowa Music Award for a spoken word performance given at the Oster Regent Theatre in Cedar Falls in spring 2025.

Coppoc sings with the children of Ripley UCC every Sunday morning during a special "Children's Celebration" worship segment.

The Josie Music Awards are the premier music event within the independent music industry, recognizing and celebrating excellence globally. The JMAs honor

exceptional talent, hard work, growth, outstanding bodies of work and contributions by those who inspire us, encourage us and shape the culture of the global independent music industry. The 12th Annual JMAs will be held at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, Tenn., on Sept. 20, 2026.

- Acknowledgment of Former ICVA Commissioner.** Governor Reynolds appointed Carol Whitmore to serve as a Commissioner on the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs in 2018, and was re-appointed in 2022. Carol resigned as commissioner position - where she represented the Veterans of Foreign Wars - in 2023 as she began her duties as Junior Vice Designee of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. Carol is the first Iowan and the first woman to serve in this capacity in the organization's 12- year history. Carol served as the Junior Vice Commander In Chief (2023-2024), Senior Vice (2024-2025), and Commander In Chief (2025-2026), and relinquished the position on Wednesday, July 29, 2026. Congratulations, Carol, and thank you for great leadership and commitment to Iowa Veterans! Look for an announcement for a Governor Reynolds doing a proclamation honoring Carol on Saturday, October 24, 2026, during Harvest Fest 2026.
- 103rd ESC Update & Memorial Service.** Brigadier General Clint Barnes invited me to attend a memorial service on Saturday, August 15, 2026 at 10:00 am honoring the lives ultimate sacrifice of six U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), U.S. Army Reserve, and their families. I was honored to be present with several hundred others at this solemn occasion. These six Soldiers, their families, and many others, were impacted during an attack on their installation in Kuwait on March 1, 2026.



- IVH Recognition!** On Friday, August 14, 2026 I received a call from Dr. Anne Howsare Boyens, President of the Iowa Valley Community College District, inviting the Iowa Veterans Home to be present at an awards ceremony on Tuesday, August 18 for recognition as the **Marshalltown Community College Ambassador of the Year for its role in preparing students for careers in healthcare**. The IVH hosts certified nurse aide students for clinical experience and provides direct instruction, mentoring and skills testing from its professional staff. All of us were represented by **Administrator of Nursing Sarah Bruner, Nursing Services Director Kella Minter, and Compliance Officer Tracy Pieters**. Really nice to see the recognition of these professionals and the great work they do in connecting future workers. All three of our professionals serve as instructors, testers, and certifiers for this program. Thanks to all three of you, and all others, who are actively involved in recruiting licensed staff to serve IVH residents. Your efforts make a difference, and are recognized even by our community.



IVCCD honors faculty, staff and community partners

Times-Republican
Iowa Valley Community College District has recognized its faculty and staff for their dedication and hard work. The awards ceremony was held on Tuesday, August 14, at the college's main campus in Marshalltown. The awards were presented by the college's president, Dr. Zolt M. Thornton, and the college's vice president, Dr. Zolt M. Thornton. The awards were presented to the following individuals:

- Empowering Student Success Award:** Ashley Krummer, Associate Professor, Krummer MCC, received the award for her dedication to her students and her commitment to their success.
- Outstanding Service Award:** Deborah 78-year-old retired teacher and assistant coach and assistant director of residence life at IVCC, received the Outstanding Service Award. Her dedication to her students and her commitment to their success is a true inspiration.
- Life-long Learning Award:** Mike Rottink, Professor, received the award for his dedication to his students and his commitment to their success.
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The Iowa Valley Community College District has a long history of recognizing its faculty and staff for their dedication and hard work. The awards ceremony is a tradition that has been held for many years. The awards are presented to the following individuals:

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- ISF Vets Parade.** The Iowa State Fair Veterans Parade on Monday, August 17 was an extraordinary event. There were more **entries** this year than ever before – **110**; more **participants** this year than ever before – **2,000+**; more **attendance** on the Monday of the State Fair this year than ever before – **111,159**. What a day!
 - It was great to have 10 of 13 Commissioners present, including Darlene McMartin, Becky Dirks Haugsted, Dave Grimm, Dennis Jones, Joella Perry, Reggie Richardson, Scott Miller, Joel Sage, and Dave Wilkens representing the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs at this event.
 - U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins was hosted in the morning at the Iowa State Fair by Congressman Zach Nunn, and then by Governor Kim Reynolds during the parade. Secretary Collins was interviewed by numerous media outlets, including Jeff Angelo on WHO 1040 Radio. He spent an hour walking through the assembly area greeting veterans, and thanking veteran service organizations and the Linda and Jeff Hansen Foundation for their work and support. He was quite complimentary of his experience throughout the Iowa State Fair. He shared with me that he had never experienced something quite like this. <https://600wmtradio.iheart.com/featured/jeff-angelo-on-the-radio/content/2026-08-17-92-the-who-morning-news-with-j-an-emotional-appeal-to-veterans-by-va-secret/>
 - Thanks to all team members who invested time and energy into planning this event. It was so well received by everyone with whom I have spoken! Special thanks to Karl Lettow, Jackie Schmillen, Lieutenant Austin Cox and so many other Iowa National Guard teammates, Dan Gannon, Harold Tackett, Kellie Meyer, Emily Lopez, Gavin Sandvig, Ben Dales, John Ralls, etc., etc., etc. It was a great day, and a parade to remember for all time. It was pretty special on the 250th Year of Celebration to see the entry sponsored by the Iowa Gold Star Museum featuring service members wearing uniforms representing eras dating back to the Revolutionary War!
- U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Collins & Rep. Hinson Visit to IVH.** Secretary Doug Collins of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and Congresswoman Ashley Hinson (Iowa 1st Congressional District) visited the Iowa Veterans Home on Tuesday, October 18. I am not aware of a sitting cabinet secretary visiting the IVH in more than a generation. What a privilege to host him.
 - I was proud to introduce Secretary Collins and Congresswoman Hinson to Marshalltown Mayor Mike Ladehoff, Marshall County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jarret Heil, and Marshall County Director of Veterans Affairs Kevin Huseboe as soon as he arrived on campus. I had shared with him previously the great support that we receive from the community, and he was happy to greet community leaders responsible for leading support dating back 138 years!
 - We provided a tour of the facility. Great exchange of information throughout their time on campus. The delegation was quite impressed with the IVH facilities, and even shared that the grounds and buildings looked “pristine”. They greeted many veterans as they walked around campus – all of whom shared great comments about their care here at the Iowa Veterans Home. Job very well done to all!
 - There was a roundtable meeting at Whitehill Auditorium where Secretary Collins and Congresswoman Hinson were joined by State Senator Jeff Reichman and State Senator Kara Warme, State Representative Tom Determann and State Representative David Blom, five ICVA

Commissioners [Darlene McMartin, Dave Grimm, Becky Dirks Haugsted, Joella Perry], and, our VA Partners [VISN 23 Director Judith Mekota Johnson, VA Hospital Des Moines Director Lisa Curnes, Acting Director VA Regional Office Des Moines Shawn Bohn]. Our team laid out our interest in doing a renovation and addition to the Atha Dining Room & kitchen, concerns regarding reimbursements for pharmaceuticals for disabled Veterans at IVH, procurement of durable medical equipment for service-connected disabled residents, advocacy for elimination of 1 of the 2 state veterans home surveys.

Rep. Hinson, VA Secretary Collins lead roundtable on veterans' issues at IVH

By ROBERT MAHARRY
Marshalltown Tribune

United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins and U.S. Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-Iowa) brought a coalition of elected officials and leaders of veterans hospitals and advocacy organizations together inside the Whitehill Auditorium on the Iowa Veterans Home (IVH) campus in Marshalltown on Tuesday morning for a roundtable discussion tailored toward legislative issues regarding veterans and how both state and federal governments can better support those who have served.

Collins, a Navy veteran and current colonel in the Air Force Reserve, represented Georgia's 9th District in the U.S. House from 2013 to 2021 and has held his current post since 2023, and Hinson is running for a seat in the U.S. Senate against Democrat Josh Turck. After participants took turns introducing themselves, Iowa

Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Commandant Todd Jacobus laid out some of his chief concerns and challenges he is currently facing: veterans whose pharmaceutical costs are more than the reimbursable rate at the VA, two annual required surveys at IVH that he feels are redundant, and the VA construction backlog as Jacobus highlighted several pending projects in Iowa, including a renovation of the IVH kitchen.

As he explained that about \$4.8 billion is spent annually on said construction projects, Collins asked those in attendance to guess the average age of a VA hospital — the correct answer is between 60 and 70 years old, though Marshalltown does have a brand new outpatient clinic on East Merle Hibbs Boulevard.

Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs Chairwoman Darlene McMartin raised the issue of toxic exposure at Fort McClellan in Alabama, where she was

stationed, and hoped the department would take action to ensure that individuals in her situation would be eligible for automatic presumptive status. Sen. Kara Warner (R-Iowa), the daughter of a retired Naval aviator, asked about veterans mental health and, more specifically, psychedelic treatments such as psilocybin, ketamine and MDMA, and how the federal government is addressing the topic.

Hinson liked the idea of tailoring the treatments to veterans and lamented "misinformation" while noting the skepticism around using such unconventional treatments to help veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Collins commented that the aforementioned drugs have largely worked thus far, but he noted that ibogaine, a "harsh" treatment, is also frequently utilized.

In consultation with Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Collins continues to explore those treatments and said his biggest concern is ensuring safety while helping veterans in any way possible. Sen. Jeff Reichenbach (R-Kentucky), the chair of the Iowa Senate's Veterans Affairs Committee and a Marine Corps veteran himself, sought assistance in fast-tracking claims for people like his 78-year-old father, who served in Vietnam, and Collins described efforts to streamline the claims process and greatly reduce the number of backlogged cases.

He also sought to dispel the rumor that claims are finalized by artificial intelligence (AI).

"There's always a person who actually does the actual claim," he said, "There's a lot of folks online trying to scare people... AI does not do this."

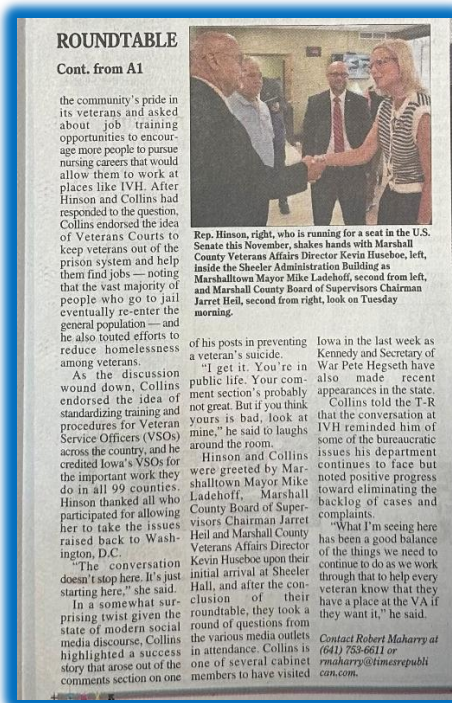
Rep. David Blom (R-Marshalltown) reflected on

See ROUNDTABLE, A3



Participants in a roundtable discussion on veterans' issues at the Whitehill Auditorium on the Iowa Veterans Home (IVH) campus pose for a photo together after the conversation had wrapped up Tuesday morning.
T-R PHOTO BY ROBERT MAHARRY

- Secretary Collins is enthusiastic about organizations and communities that support veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. I was very happy to introduce the Secretary to some of the leaders of this community that is so supportive of the Iowa Veterans Home – Marshalltown Mayor Mike Ladehoff, Marshall County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jarret Heil, and Marshall County Director of Veterans Affairs Kevin Huseboe (all included in the T-R's photo).



The Department and the IVH received great media coverage VA Secretary Doug Collins Tours Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown,

“VA Secretary Doug Collins tours Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown”, We Are Iowa Local 5 ABC. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3-B_A1Q518

“Sec. Doug Collins and Rep. Ashley Hinson, R-Iowa Talk Veteran’s Needs”, Des Moines Register August 19, 2026, <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/videos/news/2026/08/19/sec-doug-collins-and-rep-ashley-hinson-r-iowa-talk-veterans-needs/91362541007/>

“Improving Care for Iowa Veterans”, KCAU-TV Sioux City, August 19, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxZhVNFMRg>

“Rep. Hinson, VA Secretary Collins Lead Roundtable on Veterans’ Issues at IVH Tuesday”, Times-Republican, August 19, 2026, <https://www.timesrepublican.com/news/todays-news/2026/08/rep-hinson-va-secretary-collins-lead-roundtable-on-veterans-issues-at-ivh-tuesday/>

- **Presentation to ISAC.** On Friday, August 21, 2026, I was invited to participate in a forum with members of the Board of Supervisors during an Iowa State Association of Counties annual conference in Des Moines. I was joined on the 3-person panel by representatives from FEMA and USDA. Pat Sweeney, who serves as the Veterans Affairs Board Member for ISAC, was at the forum and assisted in answer some of the veterans related questions. I shared with ISAC the significant role of the CVSO – they are the most vital, high-return, impactful positions, and an economic engine, as well as a trusted navigator for those who served. Board of Supervisors comments to me included the significance of the \$10,000 allocation, concerns about regionalization, best practices for transitioning CVSOs, measuring stick for the ranking system (#1-#99), can we better engage with non-profits, punishment of counties when veterans move, CVSOs serving veterans in other counties and even other states, state subsidies for CVSOs.
- **Meeting With NAACP.** Slayton Thompson, a Vietnam Veteran, invited me to meet on Tuesday, September 1, 2026, with the Cedar Rapids NAACP Veterans Committee at First Lutheran Church. I

presented for the second time to this organization, and provided an update on the IDVA. They are interested in learning more about the legislative process, how to ensure that veterans for whom they advocate are connected with resources and support, and want to learn more about getting a commissioner position on the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs. Slayton attended the September 24 legislative meeting in Marshalltown.

- **Presentation by LtGen Dardis.** Lieutenant General Ron Dardis, U.S. Air Force, Retired, was the keynote speaker at the Iowa Veterans Home on September 11, 2026 - the 25th Anniversary of the attack on our Nation at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the fields of Shanksville, Pennsylvania, the emergency responders on that day, and the sacrifice of American service members representing our Nation. His speech is available on Youtube at https://www.youtube.com/live/pc2F4yWahGs?is=RKYa_mxYndKD_ubn



- We continue to be grateful to Commissioners who do phenomenal work in support of Iowa Veterans.
 - Becky Dirks Haugsted | becky.dirksaugsted@iowa.gov, +1 (319) 361-2278 [VFW]
 - Dave Grimm | david.grimm@iowa.gov | +1 (319) 239-7210 [DAV]
 - Todd Jacobus | todd.jacobus@ivh.state.ia.us | +1 (641) 750-9399 [IDVA]
 - Randy Johnson | randy.johnson.1@iowa.gov | +1 (641) 510-2425 [AL]
 - Dennis Jones | dennis.jones@iowa.gov | +1 (515) 554-6153 [MCL]
 - Darlene McMartin | Darlene.mcmartin@iowa.gov | +1 (712) 249-5101 [At-Large]
 - Scott Miller | scott.miller@iowa.gov | +1 (641) 799-7943 [PVA]
 - Greg Paulline | gregory.paulline@iowa.gov | +1 (563) 650-3055 [VVA]
 - Joella Perry | Joella.perry@iowa.gov | +1 (641) 223-2121 [IACVS]
 - Reggie “Reg” Richardson | reggie.richardson@iowa.gov | +1 (515) 975-3067 [RO]
 - Joel Sage | joel.sage@iowa.gov | +1 (515) 480-2285 [ING]
 - Robert Suesakul | robert.suesakul@iowa.gov | +1 (641) 820-0773 [MOPH]
 - Dave Wilkins | dave.wilkins@iowa.gov | +1 (515) 480-1673 [AMVETS]
- **Review and approval of License Plate Fund application for the Veteran Stand Down in the amount of \$8,000**
 - **Motion to Deny:** Joella Perry on the grounds of an incomplete application submission for not including a detailed budget and not having raised 50% of the requested funds
 - **2nd by** David Grimm

- Motion to deny carried unanimously
- **Approval of minutes from the ICVA quarterly meeting on July 1, 2026**
 - **Motion:** David Grimm **Second:** Joella Perry Approved unanimously
- **Approval of minutes from the Trust Fund Meeting on July 1, 2026**
 - **Motion:** Scott Miller **Second:** Becky Dirks Haugsted Approved unanimously
- **Approval of minutes from the Trust Fund meeting on August 6, 2026**
 - **Motion:** Joel Sage **Second:** Robert Suesakul Approved Unanimously
- **Approval of minutes from the Trust Fund meeting on September 3, 2026**
 - **Motion:** David Grimm **Second:** Scott Miller Approved unanimously
- **Old business:** None
- **New business:** Veterans Day on the Hill, January 20, 2027, Iowa State Capitol
- **Public Comment:**
 - Rich London, Webster Co VA recommended that the Department provide training to Coroners/Medical Examiners in regards to death certificates and service connection
- **The next Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs meeting will be:**
 - January 6, 2027 at 10:00 am at Joint Forces Headquarters, Enhanced Classroom, 6100 NW 78th Ave, Johnson, IA 50131
- Motion to Dismiss was made by Becky Dirks Haugsted with a second by Reginald Richardson. Motion carried

NOTE: These minutes are considered approved when dated with Chair signature.

APPROVED: _____ **DATE:** _____
 Darlene McMartin, Chair, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs