

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting

Minutes: August 14, 2013

Veterans Affairs Committee meeting called to order by Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Arnold Arquette at 2:30 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance–Moment of Silence.

Roll-call of committee members:

Chair,	Arnold Arquette,	Present
Co-Chair,	Dave Martin,	Present
	Philip Savage,	Present
	Rodger Seidel,	Present
	Samuel Gray,	Unexcused



Administration in attendance:

Calhoun County Corporate Counsel, Richard Lindsey

Citizens' Time:

None

Reading of the July 2013 Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes:

Following review, Mr. Dave Martin made a motion to accept the July 10, 2013 Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes as presented, Mr. Rodger Seidel seconded the motion. By a roll call vote of 4-0, the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.

Applications for Emergency Assistance from the Calhoun County Veterans' Relief

Fund:

None

Reading of Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Burial Reports:

None

Old Business:

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Service Officer, Kristina Higgins informed the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee members that the file system that was ordered through the Capital Improvement Plan would be installed by Custer Workplace Interiors on August 22, 2013 and August 23, 2013. Both Director Scott C. Losey and Service Officer Kristina stated that the office would be closed to the public while the filing system was being installed, however, the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Agent would still be available to process emergent need funding on the regularly scheduled Mondays and Thursdays. The office would need to be closed to the public for the time period that would allow for the two (2) person staff to empty all of the files, the new file system to be installed and then the time to reload all of the files while still addressing specific deadlines relative to Veteran's claims.

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Director, Scott C. Losey, delineated information relative to planning numbers provided by Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox. Director Losey pointed out that the information provided was merely being presented in advance for potential planning purposes and that the numbers provided were not numbers that would definitively be used in the budget. Director Losey stated that the Committee members should familiarize themselves with the line items and process in preparation of the upcoming 2014 budget process. Director Losey explained that he had received the 2014 budget package from Administrator Controller Kelly Scott to begin initiating the 2014 budget and that the Committee should have the first phase of real numbers for the 2014 budget available at the September 11, 2013 Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee meeting. Mr. Dave Martin expressed his frustration with the proposed \$48,000.00 Indirect Cost Allocation Plan, which he stated in his opinion is in direct violation of the State Law. Mr. Martin continued to question why the Indirect Cost Allocation Plan information and process were not disclosed prior to the Special Millage being placed on the ballot. Discussion ensued relative to Calhoun County Veterans Affairs staff salaries and the projected numbers relative to the Obama Healthcare package and how it may affect the possible hiring of additional staff. Calhoun County Corporate Counsel Richard Lindsey stated that Administration does not currently have definitive numbers at this time. Colonel Rodger Seidel asked Counsel Richard Lindsey if the Veterans Special Millage would be the funding source for Calhoun County's share of the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs staff healthcare expenses especially in light of the projected numbers the media is reporting for the Obama Healthcare. Corporate Counsel, Mr. Lindsey replied yes, the Special Millage would be the funding source as the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office will operate under the Special Millage beginning with the 2014

budget. Corporate Counsel Richard Lindsey delineated that Calhoun County Administration must be fully compliant with Obama Healthcare by 2015 and stated that what would take effect this year was actually the taxes that would pay for the uninsured population. Colonel Rodger Seidel stated that essentially after all of the numbers are bandied around, irregardless of what the actual numbers end up being, the bottom line is that Calhoun County would be paying that amount for the healthcare costs and thus; those costs and numbers are going to be taken out of the Special Millage thereby impacting the operating budget of the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office. Colonel Seidel asked Counsel Lindsey when he expected the Obama Healthcare numbers to become a part of the process, to which Mr. Lindsey replied that he understood it to be at anytime. Colonel Seidel expressed that the additional cost of the fringe benefits, ie, healthcare expense would reduce the Special Millage to a point where personnel would be the line item that would typically be reduced meaning that there would be no funding for the addition of much needed staff. Director Losey, again, reminded the Committee that the numbers being provided currently were not definitive numbers and were being presented only as a means of advance planning. Director Scott C. Losey stated that it was his intention to provide a rough draft of the 2014 budget to each Committee member in advance of the September 11, 2013 meeting so that everyone can familiarize themselves and be prepared for discussions relative to the budget process. Mr. Losey reminded both the members of the Committee as well as Corporate Counsel Richard Lindsey that this would be the first budget to be prepared under the new Special Millage and that he himself would undoubtedly have questions during the process. Director Losey reiterated that while Calhoun County Administration provides information and numbers for quite a few of the line items, there are additional line items that the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee as well as the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs staff do have purview over now as a result of the Special Millage and those items need to also be addressed. Once again, Mr. Martin expressed his frustration and dismay at the Indirect Cost Allocation Plan and voiced that in his opinion it is in violation of the State Law. Calhoun County Corporate Counsel Richard Lindsey stated for the record that he disagreed with Mr. Martin's opinion.

Director Scott C. Losey addressed his ideas in reference to the possibility of additional staff. Director Losey recommended that the position should be advertised as temporary part-time with the potential to become a full-time employee. Director Losey also reminded the Committee that there is currently additional funds available through the Veteran's Relief Surplus that could be utilized to assist in bringing a much needed additional person. The Committee recommended that a job description be created with the assistance of Human Resources and that the position be advertised as expeditiously as possible in an effort to bring additional assistance so that the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs staff may begin to address the significant backlog.

New Business:

None

Good Of The Committee:

None

Adjournment:

Mr. Martin made a motion to adjourn the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee meeting at or about 4:05PM. Mr. Phil Savage seconded the motion. By a roll call vote of 4-0, the August 14, 2013 Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee meeting was adjourned.

Arnold Arquette

Chairman, Calhoun County Veterans' Affairs Committee

Scott C. Losey

Director, Calhoun County Veterans' Affairs