

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting

September 18, 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,	Excused
	Rodger Seidel,	Present
	Samuel Gray,	Present



Calhoun County Administration in attendance:

Calhoun County Administrator/Controller, Kelli Scott
Calhoun County Assistant Administrator, Brad Wilcox
Calhoun County Corporation Counsel, Richard Lindsey
Calhoun County Commissioner, Jim Haadsma

Calhoun County Support Staff:

Calhoun County Senior Services Manager, Carl A. Gibson, Ph.D.
Calhoun County Budget Analyst, Pam Kline
Calhoun County Finance Analyst, Jeryl Schoepke

Citizens' Time:

None

Reading of the September 11, 2013 Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes:

Following review, Mr. Dave Martin made a motion to accept the September 11, 2013 Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes as presented, Mr. Sam Gray 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:

None

New Business:

Calhoun County Assistant Administrator, Brad Wilcox provided clarification of the Cost Allocation Plan numbers provided during the proposed phase planning of the 2014 Budget and the actual number that will apply to the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs 2014 Budget. Mr. Wilcox stated that the initial planning number provided for the Cost Allocation Plan was approximately \$48,000.00. Upon review, the Calhoun County Finance Department was able to better develop a better Cost Allocation Plan that is approximately \$26,000. Mr. Dave Martin requests additional clarification of individual budgetary line items and how the numbers are derived. Calhoun County Administrator Kelli Scott states that the County hired an outside group as most counties do, that creates a Cost Allocation Plan that charges back indirect costs for central services to all of Calhoun County's Special Revenue Funds, Grant Funds, anything outside of the General Fund. Administrator Scott expressed that this has to be done consistently to show that the Federal Grants are being charged the same consistently on a per unit budget as Special Millages such as Senior Millages and the Veterans Affairs Special Millage; a cost allocation plan is only applicable when there is Special Revenue Fund, Grant or Funding Source. The amounts provided for the Cost Allocation Plan are recalculated every year. The outside group had to try to arrive at a number that takes Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox's time into consideration along with all of the different roles and responsibilities that Mr. Wilcox has, and try to split the cost of his time per those roles. Administrator Scott stated that Mr. Wilcox's direct supervision of four departments to include Calhoun County Veterans Affairs was split four (4) ways with each department being charged twenty-five (25) percent and that other services such as Human Resources, Corporate Counsel, Finance, etc. are spread out to each department based on the number of employees. Mr. Martin expressed to Calhoun County Administrator Kelli Scott, that he would like to see line item 805.080 Professional Services Cost Allocation more detailed as to the breakdown of each charge. Mr. Martin reminded Administrator Scott that he has Veteran's requesting information on the Cost Allocation Plan and that he is having a hard time explaining it. Administrator Scott agreed that while the ballot language did not detail every single cost, in order to develop a better strategy in flexibility of development of broader Veteran's services and at some point, when the Special Millage funds are available and better outreach is being facilitated there should be a discussion regarding all of the fees

and break downs in order to show all of the positives. Administrator Scott stated that she believed that if the Cost Allocation Plan was better presented and/or explained as although the Special Millage will fund the operation of the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office, the office will still be supported by Calhoun County and charged accordingly for the services and space provided by the County as it is required. Mr. Arnold Arquette asked if Calhoun County Administration charges the State of Michigan for the use of office space that is provided to the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund. Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox responded no, Calhoun County is not allowed to charge the State for the use of office space provided to the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund. Director Scott C. Losey, stated that the State of Michigan used to pay for office space provided to the Trust Fund many years ago, however, that is no longer the case.

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Director, Scott C. Losey, stated for the record, that the approximate \$400,000 revenue total for the 2014 Budget does include the approximate \$40,000 to \$45,000 Veteran's Relief Surplus Fund that is currently being used to fund Calhoun County Burial. Director Losey cautioned that next year the number would be smaller simply because as it is used, there would not be the same amount of money to be carried over to the next budget year. Administrator Scott delineated that none of the other indirect cost allocation departments have a problem with growing their fund balance as their millages are sufficient to cover their costs. Mr. Martin requested clarification of building and maintenance fees. Mr. Wilcox and Administrator Scott agreed that building and maintenance fees covered everything from the use of maintenance staff to all operating costs that are associated with the Toeller Building, to include the building and grounds, any repairs, utilities, etc. and both explained that the cost is allocated on the amount of square footage that the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office occupies. Calhoun County Administrator, Kelli Scott expressed that the message to the public should be that the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office now has secured dedicated funding for ten (10) years, that essentially doubles the amount of funding received in the past and allows the fund to grow and services to be enhanced. Colonel Rodger Seidel stated that perhaps verbiage should be authored to help clarify what he perceived as voter concern. Colonel Seidel and Mr. Gray requested the original ballot language from Corporate Counsel Richard Lindsey. Counsel Lindsey stated that it was always the intention to remove the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office from the General Fund and to replace the funding of the office with the Veterans Special Millage. Mr. Dave Martin requested a break down of the Cost Allocation Plan that he may use to answer questions that he has received from the public. Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Director, Scott C. Losey stated that he had previously discussed with Colonel Seidel, the utilization of the temporary service that Calhoun County uses so that Director Losey and Service Officer, Kristina Higgins can begin to develop plans to address the significant backlog while continuing the effort to fill the newly created position. Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox delineated that the Veterans Special Millage also fully restores Calhoun County Burial benefit and thus allows for eligible Veteran's and

their families to be taken care of and outreach to continue. Director Losey agreed with Mr. Wilcox that the outreach process was a critical part of the advocacy that the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office provides especially to Surviving Spouses who may be eligible for additional federal benefits. Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Arnold Arquette called for a vote on the 2014 Budget. Colonel Rodger Seidel made a motion to accept the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs 2014 Budget as presented, Mr. Dave Martin seconded the motion. By a roll call vote of 4-0, the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs 2014 Budget was approved as presented.

Good Of The Committee:

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Director, Scott C. Losey voiced concern that as a department head who must answer to two (2) separate sometimes opposing figure heads, being Calhoun County Administration and the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee, he would like to request information as to the chain of command for situations where the office is placed between Committee directive and Administrative directive. Calhoun County Senior Services Manager, Carl A. Gibson, Ph.D., stated that he is in a similar role as Director Losey, where Senior Services are also a millage funded department that has an advisory committee and answers to County Administration. Mr. Gibson expressed that in his opinion the millages are secured funding sources and essentially job security as it takes staff out of General funding budget cuts. Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee member, Mr. Sam Gray extended his appreciation to Calhoun County Leadership for making themselves available to answer questions and provide clarification. Director Losey inquired who the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee reports to. Administrator Kelli Scott delineated that the Board of Commissioners appoint the individual committee members and thus the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee is an advisory committee to the Board of Commissioners. Corporation Counsel Richard Lindsey, opines, that advisory capacity would be more appropriate that report and goes on to state that the Committee along with County Administration and the Board of Commissioners are all in supervisory positions of the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office. Mr. Arquette asked if Director Losey answered to the Veterans Affairs Committee. Administrator Scott stated that Director Losey is a Calhoun County employee. Corporation Counsel Richard Lindsey, once again, reminded the Committee that the Committee's role is as an advisory capacity to the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs department which Director Losey is a part of. Colonel Rodger Seidel expressed that he and Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox had discussed the creation of defined roles and responsibilities. Mr. Seidel referenced that as Veteran's who are used to following defined roles and protocol, coming into an environment such as the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee were there is question as to roles and definitions is difficult. Calhoun County Administrator Kelli Scott expressed that as a county employee any time that Director Losey had questions or concerns that he was welcomed and encouraged to reach out to either the Administrator or Assistant Administrator. Director Losey acknowledged that while he admittedly knows that Assistant Administrator Wilcox is his

immediate supervisor, the Special Millage and all of the new procedures have been and will continue to be a learning experience for everyone.

Adjournment:

Mr. Martin made a motion to adjourn the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee meeting at or about 3:50PM. Mr. Arnold Arquette seconded the motion. By a roll call vote of 4-0, the September 18, 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