

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting

Minutes: June 10, 2015

Veterans Affairs Committee meeting called to order by Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman, Rodger Seidel at 2:33pm.

Pledge of Allegiance–Moment of Silence.

Roll-call of committee members:

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| • Chairman | Rodger Seidel, | Present |
| • Vice-Chair | Jack Hunn | Present |
| • Secretary | Samuel Gray, | Present |
| • Member | George “Rob” Beam, | Present |
| • Member | Trena Philo | Present |

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Office Staff:

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| • Director | Aaron Edlefson | Present |
| • Service Officer | Kristina S. Higgins | Present |
| • Administrative Assistant | M. Luann Cape | Present |

County Administration Staff:

- | | | |
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| • County Assistant Administrator | Brad Wilcox | Present |
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Agenda Changes: None.

Citizens Time: Applicant 15-02 was in attendance to further present his case that was denied at the May 7, 2015 meeting, discussion ensued. The Committee reminded him that they need to see proof in writing that he has a job that requires transportation. They further reminded the Veteran that they would consider two weeks in a local hotel close to the job and transportation there. It was requested that he research bus tickets and rental car possibilities. The Veteran was encouraged to re-apply. The office would draft a letter delineating the above, to be sent to the Veteran.

Calhoun County Administrative Updates: Director Edlefson presented the updates by way of Power Point. To fulfill one of the goals of the Strategic Plan, the Office Staff have been collaborating with several other organizations this last month.

Kellogg Community College was contacted about the possibility of providing a scholarship for a Veteran. A couple of different ideas are being considered as to how to facilitate this.

Director Edlefson and Service Officer Kristina Higgins participated in the VA Peer support group at Battle Creek's VAMC. They also met with the Battle Creek Police Department, and State of Michigan Representative Maturen in Lansing. The entire office staff met with Representative Bizon at the CCVA office. Several other Community Organizations were contacted and meetings attended.

Director Edlefson met with the Administrative Directors of seven nursing homes in Battle Creek.

Several upcoming outreach events are scheduled: Nine local Service Organizations, Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, Marine Corp Reserve Center, Haven of Rest and the Cereal City Festival on Saturday, June 13th.

Director Edlefson updated the Soldier's and Sailor's Relief Fund application and rent statement. He gave an update having to do with new proposed changes in the Michigan Trust Fund's Laws.

Proposed budget line items were presented including: Relief fund, Office Renovations, Veteran Scholarship, the CCVA website, promotional items, survey, Veteran's ID program, technology, Veteran's Treatment Court, and training for Office staff. An annual expenditure report was given.

Mr. Beam stated that the presentation was excellent.

There was a review of the by-laws.

Director Edlefson confirmed that the office has Vetraspec.

Minutes from May 7, 2015: Mr. Beam moved to accept the minutes as written. Ms. Philo seconded that motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

Veterans Relief Applications: None.

Old Business: County Assistant Administrator, Bradley Wilcox shared that County Controller/Administrator, Kelli Scott, wrote an article for Scene Magazine that included a large portion about the CCVA office changes. A future press release is being prepared.

Mr. Gray brought a Veteran to the office to send away for his discharge and discuss an emergent need. The office helped him with obtaining his discharge and then he was referred to Southwest Michigan Veterans' Relief Fund, since he did not meet some of the requirements for the two funds available through the CCVA office.

New Business: One of the objectives of the Strategic Plan is to improve the County VA website. It is next in the plan for Director Edlefson and County Assistant Administrator, Brad Wilcox. Ms. Philo and Mr. Gray are also part of that sub-Committee.

Chairman Seidel wore an example of a long sleeve shirt with the Veterans' Affairs County logo on it. He had it made at Adam's Shirt Shack for around \$25. They have the embroidery pattern available there. It was \$8 for the embroidered logo.

Good of the Committee: The Cereal Festival is Saturday, June 13th. Mr. Gray will be the Grand Marshall in the parade Friday night.

Adjournment: Mr. Beam made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Philo seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed. Meeting adjourned 4:03 pm.

Aaron Edlefson
Director, Calhoun County Veterans' Affairs Office

Jack Hunn
Vice-Chairman, Calhoun County Veteran Affairs Committee