

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting

Minutes: October 14, 2015

Veterans Affairs Committee meeting called to order by Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman, Rodger Seidel at 2:38 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance–Moment of Silence.

Roll-call of committee members:

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| • Chairman | Rodger Seidel | Present |
| • Vice-Chair | Jack Hunn | Excused Absence |
| • 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: Two additions: Scene Magazine salute to the Veterans in October, and Annual report to the Commissioners.

Citizens Time: None.

Correspondence: None.

Soldiers & Sailors Review and Applications: Four applications that were approved by the Director were presented to the Committee. Applicant 15-17 came just as we were closing. One night in a hotel was approved for \$50. The next they came with proof that they were working with HUDVASH and VOA and a week at the hotel was approved for \$230 as Application 15-18.

Applicant 15-20 one night at a hotel for \$50 was approved.

Applicant 15-23 had Semco shut off their gas in August. It was approved to assist them with \$151.92 reconnect fee, and the bill.

Applicant 15-19 was presented for consideration by the Committee. The request was for the deductible for the insurance to cover a new water pump and the piping included. The Committee denied. Applicant had sufficient savings to cover the bill.

Applicant 15-21 for consideration by the Committee was a request for a variety of car repairs. Committee approved all of them except a side mirror.

Applicant 15-22 was a request for \$630 to cover a Veteran's rent. Committee approved.

Applicant 15-24 was also for rent \$1184.32 (two months and late fees) and a Consumers Electric bill for \$407.90. Committee approved.

Happy Birthday to the Navy: 240 years old. Cake was served.

Calhoun County VA Administration Update: Summit Point put out an organizational chart of Veterans Affairs and submitted it to Director Edlefson. He suggested several changes. The office team has been busy with Veterans who are on SSI, applying for Pension and sending away for discharge papers. Some have already started to receive Pension payments.

Service Officer Higgins and Director Edlefson attended many events and meetings in the last month:

- Michigan Works and Upjohn institute,
- landlord luncheon given by Community Action,
- County Counselors Fall Conference at Shanty Creek in Bellaire, Michigan,
- KCC Veterans day event planning meeting,
- 1st Battalion Support meeting,
- Senior Services briefing,
- Silver Star Apartments tour,
- Veterans Resource Team
- Region 8 Community Action Team. Of note: Out of 7 counties in the region, only two were represented—Calhoun and St. Joseph.

Minutes from September 9, 2015: Mr. Beam moved to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Gray seconded that motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

Positive Items: Ms. Philo mentioned the good changes in the atmosphere in the office. County Administrator Brad Wilcox pointed out how well it reflected on Director Edlefson's leadership to be part of the presentation for Budget Review with the 26 budgets that Mr. Wilcox oversees.

Old Business: There were some changes suggested for the Soldier's and Sailor's Act at

previous meetings. Mr. Beam moved to accept those changes, Ms. Philo seconded, all were in favor, motion passed.

Discussion ensued concerning the By-laws of the Committee. Ms. Philo suggested a change in the language. Ms. Philo made a motion to approve the by-laws including her changes, pending legal approval. Mr. Gray seconded the motion, all were in favor, motion carried.

New Business: New Service Officer position was discussed. Director Edlefson related that 7 applicants were going to be interviewed on October 29, 2015, by an interviewing group including Mr. Gray and Ms. Philo. They will be using a list of questions previously approved by Human Resources.

There was a discussion concerning the Annual Report to the Commissioners, which the office no longer does.

It was mentioned that Scene Magazine does a Salute to Veterans each October. Possibly next year we could try to be part of it.

Good of the Committee: In support of the Veterans Stand Down and Project Connect, CCVA has ordered Flashlights with office name and information on them. Mr. Gray mentioned he was at Battle Creek Vision meeting last night.

The traveling Vietnam Wall will be at the VA Medical Center soon.

Adjournment: Mr. Gray made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Philo seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned 3:51 pm.

Sam Gray, Secretary
Calhoun County Veterans' Affairs Committee

Aaron D. Edlefson, Director
Calhoun County Veterans' Affairs