



Winnebago County Veterans Affairs Commissioners Board Meeting

Monday, August 22, 2022 – 10:00 am
Courthouse Board Room

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge

Present: Steve Bosma, Dave Peterson and Mary Lou Kleveland.

2. Review and Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes

The July monthly meeting minutes were reviewed. Bosma motioned, second by Peterson to approve the July minutes. All in favor. Minutes were approved.

3. Veteran Services Officer Report

- a. Monthly VA numbers: Mary Lou shared the statistics for July.
- b. Community Outreach –Mary Lou updated the commissioners about the Home Base Iowa (HBI) program. There will be an event on Saturday, November 12th at Boman Fine Arts Center to celebrate Winnebago County becoming a Home Base Iowa County. Mary Lou stated this was a great opportunity for this office to get more exposure regarding the needs of veterans. Mary Lou also shared that she planned to record a couple of ads for K1OW to be run in September. The commissioners and Mary Lou feel that the K1OW ads are still advantageous for this office and should continue. The commissioners also suggested that Mary Lou do Public Service Announcements (PSAs) when appropriate to bring more exposure to Winnebago County VA. Mary Lou will try to do a newspaper editorial or article in the near future as well.
- c. Review Monthly Expenditure Report Approval – The commissioners and Mary Lou reviewed the expenditures for July. There were no questions about the expenditures so Bosma motioned and Peterson seconded to approve the July expenditures. July expenditure report was approved and both commissioners signed off on the report.

4. Old Business

- a. Hancock County Issues Update – Mary Lou informed the Commissioners that she had completely transferred two of the Hancock Co cases back to their office. The other three cases will be addressed soon – one will be completely done, Mary Lou will be completing one as it is just waiting on a decision and the other one is quite complicated. Chris Oliver will be facilitating the transfer of that case to the new VSO for Hancock County, Tonya Lorentzen.
- b. Winnebago County Memorial Monument/Wall - Mary Lou shared that she had contacted Wayne Johns but that he couldn't remember any of the details about the monument wall project. The Commissioners suggested that Mary Lou try to reach Jack Caputo or Riley Lewis to see if they had any information. Bosma suggested that there may need to be no more city differentiation on the wall. For example, a Forest City veteran would have a name engraved where there was space rather than under a Forest City heading.

5. New Business – VA New and Emerging Information

- a. Commissioner Vacancy – Mary Lou let the Commissioners know that she had attended the Board of Supervisors meeting on 8/23 and shared the application and support information for the

Commissioner vacancy. The BOS approved the start of the process of looking for a new commissioner. Mary Lou shared that press releases regarding the vacancy were sent to the following: KIOW, Channel 2 in Lake Mills, the Winnebago County website, this office's Facebook page and The Summit, Lake Mills Graphic and Buffalo Center newspapers. Mary Lou shared that she had sent letters to the female veterans in the county for the names she found in the hard copy files as well as the digital files. To date, two women expressed an interest but they live in Hancock County so are not eligible. Mary Lou shared that she had gotten one application and had a phone call from another veteran who expressed an interest in filling the vacancy, but both applicants were male. The Commissioners suggested that Mary Lou contact Deb Bartleson to see her interest level in the vacancy as she had been a commissioner in the past.

- b. Financial Assistance - Mary Lou shared that she had received a request for assistance from a veteran who had two outstanding medical bills. Mary Lou stated that his income was minimal and that one of the bills was from an ambulance charge from last summer when he had to go to the hospital by ambulance. Both commissioners decided that it was important to pay both bills so that this veteran could use his minimal income for his day to day living needs. Bosma made a motion to approve the financial assistance and Peterson seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- c. Winnebago County Issues – Mary Lou advised that she realized that she had not received her cost of living raise on July 1st because she had failed to fill out a form for it. Mary Lou didn't understand what the process was to get a raise. The commissioners need to recommend a cost of living raise for Mary Lou. The Commissioners are willing to do so and advised Mary Lou to take this issue to the Board of Supervisors to see what the next step should be.
- d. Next Meeting Date: September 26, 2022 @ 10 am

5. **Adjournment** – Bosma motioned; Peterson second. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

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