



Winnebago County Veterans Affairs Commissioners Board Meeting

Monday, September 26, 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 August monthly meeting minutes were reviewed. Peterson motioned, seconded by Bosma to approve the August minutes. All in favor. Minutes were approved.

3. Veteran Services Officer Report

- a. Monthly VA numbers: Mary Lou shared the statistics for August.
- b. County Outreach Efforts –Mary Lou shared that she recorded a couple of ads for K10W which have run in September. Mary Lou shared that there will be no K10W ads in October but they will start again in November. 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 August. There were no questions about the expenditures so Bosma motioned and Peterson seconded to approve the August expenditures. August 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 is waiting on a decision from the VA on one of the cases and Mary Lou will see that case through the end. The other case is complicated and probably is too much for the Hancock VSO to handle. However, this case is on hold because Mary Lou has had no contact with the veteran for quite some time.
- b. Winnebago County Memorial Monument/Wall - Mary Lou shared that she had contacted Jack Caputo about the memorial monument and he was able to provide a lot of information about how the memorial monument was started and how it was financed. He also shared a lot of information about honor flights. Jack also suggested that Riley Lewis has a lot of historical information about Forest City, including Veterans Affairs so it may be helpful to include him in obtaining a new slab for the memorial. The commissioners suggested that Isaiah Schott may be a good resource to purchase a new slab when the time came to do so. Mary Lou suggested that this issue should be tabled for now. This project will require an enormous amount of time and Mary Lou simply does not have the time to devote to the project. Mary Lou's time needs to be focused on providing services to the veterans of Winnebago for VA services. It would be advantageous to have a volunteer(s) involved if/when this project moves forward.
- c. Commissioner Vacancy Update – Mary Lou reported that she received another application. Also, Mary Lou got a phone call from a veteran who is interested but didn't want to complete an application if a female was going to apply and be appointed. Dave Peterson stated that he would contact Deb Bartleson and see if she had any interest in applying. She was previously a commissioner.

5. New Business – VA New and Emerging Information

- a. Miscellaneous Updates – Mary Lou advised the Commissioners that she would be out of the office from October 11th-13th for Fall School. Mary Lou let the Commissioners know that she became accredited with VFW earlier in the month so she is now accredited with all three service organizations. Mary Lou shared that Winnebago County will be participating in the Operation Green Light initiative to honor veterans and to bring light to the issues they face. From November 7th-13th, the courthouse will be lit with green light bulbs. Finally, Mary Lou shared that the cost for the bronze markers and rods that Winnebago Co VA supplies for veterans' graves have increased in price significantly so that will be a big expense in this year's budget.
- b. Flag Disposal – Steve Bosma shared that there was a flag disposal at the American Legion in Buffalo Center. Two hundred and ninety five American flags were burned as well as twelve other flags. There was a good turnout of people for this occasion as well.
- c. New Software Technology Information and Approval to Purchase – Mary Lou advised that she had attended new VSO training in Kossuth County on September 9th. At that training, the VSOs were informed that Vetraspec, the current software program being used by most counties including Winnebago, was going to be unavailable in the future. Because of that, many counties are doing free trials with a company called VetPro. Mary Lou said she had done a demo of VetPro with one of their representatives and liked the features that it had and liked that many of those features would make it easier to do claims. Both Peterson and Bosma expressed concern about this potential change. They stated that the state had wanted the counties to switch to Vetraspec about 4-5 years ago and now another change may be needed. They asked if this was going to happen every 4-5 years. They also asked if the state was mandating this change. Mary Lou was unsure and was unaware that there had been a change 4-5 years ago. Mary Lou stated she would talk to Patty Hamann, the first vice president of the Iowa County VSOs and Commissioners. Mary Lou also advised she would ask Patty if this topic could be covered at the Commissioners meeting at Fall School on Monday, September 10th since the commissioners would be attending Fall School Mary Lou will provide an update on this issue at the October meeting.
- d. Next Meeting Date: October 24, 2022 @ 10 am

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

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