

# Winnebago County Veterans Affairs Commissioners Board Meeting



**Monday, March 27, 2023 – 10:00 am**  
**Winnebago Co Health Department Board Room**

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge**
2. Present: Steve Bosma, Dave Peterson, Troy Thompson and Mary Lou Kleveland.
3. **Review and Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes**

The February monthly meeting minutes were reviewed. Bosma motioned, seconded by Peterson to approve the February minutes. All in favor. February minutes were approved.

  - a. **Veteran Services Officer Report**
  - b. Monthly VA numbers - Mary Lou shared the statistics for February. There were no questions about the numbers for the February activities of the VA office.
  - c. County Outreach Efforts – Mary Lou attended the The Buffalo Center Waffle Feed on Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> and was able to meet members of the Ladies Auxillary as well share that I was available as a VSO in Winnebago County. Information on VA benefits were also available at the Waffle Feed. Mary Lou plans to attend the Leland VFW Breakfast on Sunday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. There are also still plans to work with Troy Thompson in the future to record PSAs to be used at KIOW.
  - d. Review Monthly Expenditure Report for Approval /Approval & Consideration of Future Purchases - The commissioners and Mary Lou reviewed the expenditures for February. There were no questions about the expenditures so Bosma motioned and Peterson seconded to approve the February expenditures. All in favor. All three commissioners signed off on the expenditure report. February expenditure report is approved. Mary Lou requested approval to purchase more business cards from Bison Graphics. Bosma motioned to approve the purchase of business cards and Peterson seconded. Mary Lou also shared that she needs more ball caps for veterans that are given to them on their initial office visit. Molly Winter at MJ Embroidery will be embroidering the caps. Thompson motioned to approve the purchase of the ball caps and Peterson seconded. Mary Lou stated that she also needed to order stick flags to be put on veteran flags for Memorial Day. Bosma motioned to approve the purchase of stick flags and Thompson seconded. Based on the motions for approval, Mary Lou is approved to purchase business cards, ball caps and stick flags.
4. **Old Business**

Approval of expenditures without commissioner approval and revising initial office visit packets – Mary Lou reported that the approval of expenditures now included Mary Lou being able to purchase apparel without commissioner approval and this new addition was approved at the February Commissioner meeting. Mary Lou is still in the process of developing the initial office visit packets.

## 5. **New Business – VA New and Emerging Information**

- a. VA New and Emerging Information – Mary Lou shared the picture of the logo that Mary Lou’s daughter cleaned up and made clearer. The logo is on the top of these minutes as well. WinnWorth Betco is hosting a 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event on May 4<sup>th</sup> and the VA office has been invited. After discussion, it appears that the commissioners and Mary Lou cannot commit to going to the event due to prior commitments. Mary Lou advised that the VA office would be closed the week of April 10<sup>th</sup> so that Mary Lou can attend mandatory training for VSOs in Des Moines.
- b. Upcoming Memorial Day Event – Mary Lou shared that she had been contacted by Riley Lewis regarding the new DenimFest festival scheduled for Memorial Day weekend in Forest City. She also shared that the creators of the festival want to focus on veterans and give back to them. Mary Lou does not know exactly how the VA office may be involved in the festival, but Mary Lou also shared that she really does not have time to participate.
- c. Managing the current workload of this office – Mary Lou shared that it is becoming increasingly difficult to manage her work load as she has 69 cases currently – 56 disability compensation cases and 13 pension cases. In addition, she handles burial benefits, healthcare, pension maintenance and numerous miscellaneous tasks. These cases are extremely time consuming as there is a lot of research and paperwork for disability compensation and pension especially. Mary Lou stated that there have been a considerable amount of walk ins and that veterans and community members were not respecting the “by appointment only” on the VA office door. Mary Lou suggested a sign next to the office on certain days stating that there could be no walk ins and to call for an appointment. The Commissioners felt that this kind of sign would send a negative message to the community. The Commissioners were grateful for this update and suggested that Mary Lou talk to other VSOs at spring school training about how they manage their large number of claims.

**Next Meeting Date:** April 24, 2023 @ 10 am at the Winnebago County Court House.

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

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