



Winnebago County Veterans Affairs Commissioners Board Meeting

Monday, September 23, 2024 – 10:00 am
Winnebago Co Health Department Board Room

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge

Present: Dave Peterson, Troy Thompson, Steve Bosma and Mary Lou Kleveland

2. Review and Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes

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

3. Veteran Services Officer Report

- a. Monthly VA numbers: Mary Lou shared the statistics for August 2024.
- b. County Outreach Efforts – Mary Lou shared that the 3rd Home Base Iowa recipient was celebrated by Winn-Worth Betco, the Forest City Community and the Winnebago County Veteran Affairs Office. The recipient was thrilled with the grant and gifts which he and his wife received. Mary Lou was unable to attend the Scarville HBI celebration. Melissa Michaelis wrote an article about Scarville becoming a HBI community, and Melissa stated that Mary Lou has become an integral part of the HBI program. The article is on the Winn-Worth Betco blog.
- c. Review Monthly Expenditure Report for Approval - The Commissioners and Mary Lou reviewed the expenditures for August. Thompson motioned and Bosma seconded to approve the August expenditures. All in favor. The August expenditure report was approved and the Commissioners signed off on the report.

4. Old Business

- a. Office closed week of October 14th for training; Code of Ethics Review – Mary Lou will begin training on Monday with a First Aid Mental Health Class and then will attend Fall School by the Iowa Department of Veteran Affairs. There was no further discussion needed regarding the Code of Ethics.
- b. IDVA Fall Training for Commissioners – Thompson and Peterson will attend the Commissioners training on Monday, October 14th.
- c. Winnebago Co Financial Assistance Request – The utility bill for the veteran has been paid for October and Mary Lou has made arrangements for payment of the November and December bills as well.

5. New Business – VA New and Emerging Information

- a. VA New and Emerging Information – Winnebago County welcomed its 3rd HBI recipient. More details are documented under County Outreach Efforts.
- b. New Winnebago County Financial Request – Mary Lou presented a new financial request for assistance with rent. However, the veteran has a general (under honorable) character discharge on his DD214. The current policy states assistance can only be given to veterans with an honorable discharge. Mary Lou explained that there were extenuating circumstances resulting in the general discharge. The commissioners and Mary Lou discussed the policy and character of discharge at

length. After discussion, the commissioners recommended a policy change that would allow financial assistance for a veteran with a general character of discharge. However, the veteran must be pursuing an active disability compensation claim to be considered for the financial assistance. Bosma motioned for this policy change and Thompson seconded. All in favor. Policy change is approved. Mary Lou explained that the veteran had to leave his job because his medical conditions prevented him from being able to perform his duties there. He has submitted a disability compensation claim and is waiting for a decision from the VA. He wants to find work that does not require manual/physical labor and Mary Lou will refer him to IowaWORKS for assistance in finding a job. Peterson motioned and Bosma seconded to pay the \$450.00 rent for September for this veteran. All in favor. Motion passed.

- c. Winnebago County Prior Financial Assistance Request – Mary Lou stated that a veteran who had previously received help in May and June with utilities was requesting more help because his mom has a shutoff notice. The family has not paid the utility bill since Winnebago County VA provided assistance for May and June. This situation was reviewed in great detail. Peterson motioned and Bosma seconded to not provide any further financial assistance to this veteran. All in favor. Motion passed. In addition, there was discussion regarding financial assistance needing to be in the veteran's name and not another family member. In this case, the utility bill is in the veteran's mother's name but she is not charging him rent to live with her. Thompson motioned and Peterson seconded for a policy change to the Winnebago County Financial Assistance that any assistance must be in the veteran's name. All in favor. Policy change is approved.
- d. Next Meeting Date: October 28, 2024 at 10:00 am at the Winnebago County Courthouse

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

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