



Winnebago County Veterans Affairs Commissioners Board Meeting

Monday, January 27, 2025 – 10:00 am

Winnebago Co Health Department Board Room

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge

Present: Commissioners Steve Bosma, Dave Peterson, Troy Thompson and Veteran Service Officer (VSO) Mary Lou Kleveland

2. Review and Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes

The November monthly meeting minutes were reviewed. There were no December minutes as the December meeting had to be cancelled due to a lack of a quorum. Thompson motioned, seconded by Peterson to approve the November minutes. All in favor. November minutes were approved.

3. Veteran Services Officer Report

- a. Monthly VA numbers: VSO shared the statistics for November & December 2024 for Winnebago County and the state of Iowa.
- b. County Outreach Efforts – For November & December 2024, VSO had two meetings with Congressional representatives, attended several Veterans Day events, visited Timely Mission Nursing Home and attended the Home Base Iowa celebration for Lake Mills.
- c. Review Monthly Expenditure Report for Approval - The Commissioners and VSO reviewed the expenditures for November & December 2024. Thompson motioned and Bosma seconded to approve the November & December expenditures. All in favor. The November & December expenditure reports were approved and the Commissioners signed off on the report.

4. Old Business

- a. Development of FY 2025-2026 Budget for Veterans Affairs – VSO advised that the compensation board recommended that raises should be 3% for Winnebago County employees.

5. New Business

- a. Review of policies – Retention of records & Financial Assistance Approval & Denial Letters; Claims with no action from veteran - . VSO presented a copy of a record retention policy that county employees could utilize. After review, the Commissioners agreed that the VA office should utilize the policy for retention of records for this VA office. The financial assistance approval & denial letters were reviewed, and an addition was made to the denial letter. VSO advised that she had been experiencing lack of action on the part of some veterans regarding completion of their claims. VSO stated that with the number of cases she had (average of 60-70) that she lacked the time to “chase after” the veterans and was not doing so because the claim belongs to the veteran. It is the responsibility of the veteran to provide the requested documentation for the claim and to provide that documentation to VSO. Commissioners asked how other counties handle this issue and VSO advised that other counties have the same policy. Commissioners advised that they understood this current situation and that if VSOs workload decreases then VSO should reach out to these veterans with a reminder about needed action on their claim.

Bosma motioned and Peterson seconded regarding adoption of all of these policies. All in favor. Policies adopted.

- b. KIOW – Ads regarding upcoming changes with ratings for hearing loss/tinnitus & interview with Mark Skaar – VSO advised that ads had started running on KIOW the first weekend of January 2025. VSO also advised that Mark Skaar had interviewed her regarding the upcoming hearing loss/tinnitus changes. VSO stated that the interview has played multiple times and provided further information on the upcoming changes.
- c. Financial Assistance Requests – VSO presented a request for assistance for dental work costing \$1,500. The request was discussed and the limit is \$750.00 for assistance. VSO explained that the balance had to be paid per the dental office before the dental work can be completed. VSO reached out to the veteran and veteran stated he had no ability to pay the balance and that the dental office refused to do a payment plan. Commissioners decided that Winnebago County VA could assist with \$750.00 with the condition that the dental office had to have already received the balance of the \$1,500.00 from the veteran and that the dental work should be completed before VA will make payment. Thompson motioned to provide assistance with conditions, Bosma seconded. All in Favor. The financial assistance request was approved with conditions. The second financial request was payment for a utility bill that was scheduled for shut off. This request was an emergency request. VSO advised she had sent an email to each Commissioner regarding the circumstances of the request and had asked for input. Commissioner Dave Peterson called VSO and discussed the request. VSO and Peterson were in agreement of helping with the current utility bill as past due bills cannot be paid through VA assistance.
- d. Next Meeting Date: February 24, 2025 at 10:00 am at the Winnebago County Courthouse

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

veterans@winnebagoountyiowa.gov

641.585.5736 office

641.585.5737 fax