



Winnebago County Veterans Affairs Commissioners Board Meeting

Monday, March 24, 2025 – 10:00 am
Winnebago Co Health Department Board Room

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge

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

2. Review and Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes

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

3. Veteran Services Officer Report

- a. Monthly VA numbers: VSO shared the statistics for February 2025 for Winnebago County and the state of Iowa.
- b. County Outreach Efforts – The ads regarding tinnitus and hearing loss pending changes continued to run on KLOW. The ads will stop on 3/31/2025.
- c. Review Monthly Expenditure Report for Approval - The Commissioners and VSO reviewed the expenditures for February 2025. VSO advised that she had talked to Auditor Karla Weiss and she ran the numbers and advised VSO that there was enough left in the VA budget to pay VSO until the end of FY 24-25. Thompson motioned and Bosma seconded to approve the February expenditures. All in favor. The February expenditure report was approved and the Commissioners signed off on the report.

4. Old Business

- a. Commissioner & VSO Training - VSO advised that she has been taking advantage of national training webinars. VSO is using the \$3,000 Training Grant to pay for the cost of the webinars. There was much discussion regarding the online Commissioner training which Commissioner Thompson had attended in March. As a result of that meeting, the Commissioners advised VSO that they would like a new job description written for the VSO position. VSO advised that several other county VSOs had shared their job descriptions so VSO will refer to that. Commissioners would like to have a draft of the new job description at the April Commissioners meeting. In addition, the Commissioners requested that VSO begin working on a binder of best practices for the office, similar to a standard operating procedure notebook. By doing so, there will be continuity of services if this VSO has to be gone for an extended period of time and/or VSO retires. The new VSO could use the best practices notebook to reference how to carry out activities for the Winnebago County VA office. The Commissioners also advised that they wanted to begin to do an annual assessment of this VSO's job performance. There is also a need to review and likely make changes to the current Winnebago County Veterans Affairs office policy. Thompson agreed to begin working on this document.
- b. New Cell phone and Camera – VSO advised that the outdoor camera has been installed and VSO can see who is at the door from her computer. VSO likes her new cell phone and IT has included VA email on the phone which has been helpful.

5. New Business

- a. Use of remaining budget - There was discussion regarding the use of the remaining \$10,000 state grant allocation before the end of FY 24-25. Suggestions for the use of the remaining budget were poker chips with Winnebago County VA information, entry rug, and a “year at a glance” legal size calendar. VSO advised that she would look into the costs and the ability to make these purchases.
- b. VSO Spring School Training– Office will be closed from April 14-18 for spring school training for VSO. Commissioners advised VSO to put this information on a sign and post it on the door of the office and to also put this information on voicemail and email. VSO will include the VA crisis line number on voicemail and email. Commissioners also advised that if VSO will be gone for an extended period of time (i.e. vacation) then VSO needs to make arrangements for another VSO to handle emergent situations while the office is closed. VSO advised that she would make arrangements with VSO James Welsh at Hancock County. This VSO will do the same when James needs to be absent from his office.
- c. Financial Assistance Request – VSO had contacted the Commissioners regarding a potential emergency request for financial assistance. The Commissioners had responded via text and email, and the Commissioners determined at this meeting that per policy the responses should be by phone only. The Commissioners requested that for the April meeting that VSO should present a proposal for the parameters so that VSO can make a decision on emergency financial requests. This new policy will be discussed at the April meeting with possible consideration of approval of this policy becoming permanent. If VSO is approved to make the decision for emergency financial requests, then the request will be presented and either approved or denied by the Commissioners at the next regularly scheduled meeting. For the emergency financial request that VSO denied after Commissioner input, the Commissioners officially confirmed and denied the financial request as the Commissioners determined that the request did not meet the criteria for financial assistance. Thompson motioned and Bosma seconded to deny the financial assistance request. All in favor. Financial request is denied and VSO will send a letter to the veteran notifying him of the denial. For future financial requests, the meeting may be moved to a closed session to discuss the request and then will return to an open session. This information should be reflected on both the agenda and monthly minutes.
- d. Next Meeting Date: April 28 , 2025 at 10:00 am at the Winnebago County Courthouse

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

veterans@winnebagocountyiowa.gov

641.585.5736 office

641.585.5737 fax