



Veteran Assistance Commission of Will County

Kristina McNichol – Superintendent
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DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE GOVERNOR'S RECENT DISASTER PROCLAMATION, THE NUMBER OF COVID-19 CASES IN WILL COUNTY AND THE CDC GUIDELINES REGARDING COVID-19, THE VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION of WILL COUNTY (VACWC) HAS DETERMINED THAT IN-PERSON MEETINGS ARE NOT PRACTICAL NOR PRUDENT. THEREFORE, ALL MEETINGS OF THE VACWC BOARD SHALL BE HELD VIA VIDEO AND/OR AUDIO UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

The public is invited to comment or pose a question by email at vacwc@willcountyillinois.com or speak during the public comments portion of the meeting, the emails will be read into the record.

Please email vacwc@willcountyillinois.com for a link to attend the meeting via WebEx.

- I. Call to Order:
 - A. Pledge of Allegiance
 - B. Opening Prayer:
- II. Roll Call of Attendees:

VAC Commission		
Attendee Name	Title	Status
Jack Picciolo	President	P
Nicholas Barry	Vice President	P
Denise Williams	Secretary	P
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	P
Jim Singler	Chaplain	A
Tom Mlynek	Member	E
Janet Blue	Member	P
Steve Benicke	Member	P
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	P
John Kestle	Past Chairman	P
John York	Past Chairman	A
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	P

- III. Introduction of Guests and/or First Time Attendees:
 - A. Jim Clausen, VFW 367, 18th Dist. VFW Quartermaster
- IV. Minutes of Previous Meeting 11 Jan @ 7:00 AM
 - A. Motion: Barry, Benicke

Roll Call Vote		
Attendee Name	Title	Status
Jack Picciolo	President	
Nicholas Barry	Vice President	Y
Denise Williams	Secretary	
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	

Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	

V. Superintendents Report:

- A. Award Log: McNichol-new awards 2022 ytd, \$1.1mil.;
- B. Project 150 Report: 2/2/2022 \$64,684.71 remain; 5 new applications in progress; various fundings for emergency shelter/services, i.e., rental, water, heat still available, use those funds before ESG grant;
 - a) Emergency Shelter: \$31,800 (ESG-CV funded)
- C. Financial Assistance Report: Five (5) Veterans
 - a) Shelter: \$1400
 - b) Gas: \$0
 - c) Electric: \$90.51
 - d) Personal Products: \$0
 - e) Food: \$0

Motion/Roll Call Vote: Martinka, Benicke

Roll Call Vote		
Attendee Name	Title	Status
Jack Picciolo	President	
Nicholas Barry	Vice President	Y
Denise Williams	Secretary	
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y
Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	Y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

VI. New Business

- A. DCEO 2022 Appropriation \$250,000.00-Dept of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
 - a) Discussion-McNichol –expenses were gym equipment, architectural services for 1300 Copperfield buildout, van; build out is still in discussion at Will County Board; we are able to use some of these funds for electronic/computer/tech items for current office to include a stand alone VAC website that would allow for making direct appointments by veterans, ability to facilitate 2-way communications with clients electronically through a website; also wrap the transportation vans; add office space to 2400 Glenwood space due to delays in 1300 Copperfield buildout, space/option is available in building;
 - Blue asked for protocols for getting quotes –
 - McNichol advised we contact the State to see who has already gone through the bidding process/been approved, use them
 - Picciolo asked if there are restrictions on what the grant can be used for

- McNichol advised yes, specific amounts for specific uses
- Discussion on if a motion is needed/useful, Koch advised motion must be for a specific amount or up to a specific amount
- McNichol/Koch advised can schedule a meeting once exact dollar amounts are known through bids/requests
- Picciolo stated to table discussion

B. EFSP Phase 39/ARPA-R Application due 2/18/2022-Emergency Food & Shelter Program

- a) Emergency Shelter-McNichol advised this is a different, more manageable grant/funding source, does not expire until 2023
- b) Motion to submit application for \$45K-Blue, Barry

Roll Call Vote		
Attendee Name	Title	Status
Jack Picciolo	President	
Nicholas Barry	Vice President	Y
Denise Williams	Secretary	
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y
Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	abstain
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

C. VACWC Vacant Position

- a) Discussion-McNichol reminded homeless manager resigned in November, states we received one applicant; McNichol/Solum advised since have discussed need for this position vs an Executive Assistant, EA position has more utility and need, position would alleviate administrative tasks from current staff;
 - Horne asked if position would be posted through County
 - McNichol advised yes, also through other job boards, etc
 - Barry asked at salary range-
 - McNichol advised current market range is \$55k-to \$83k, suggests \$55k-\$70k, stated this position would not be as linear as a program manager, would also function as liaison between staff and board, would allow McNichol and Solum to help alleviate work load on VSO's as both are VSO's
 - Blue stated this would afford current staff to focus more on veteran-facing work
- Motion-Horne, Barry

Roll Call Vote		
Attendee Name	Title	Status
Jack Picciolo	President	
Nicholas Barry	Vice President	Y
Denise Williams	Secretary	
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y

Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	Y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

D. IGA with County Executive Office – Draft Attached

- a) Discussion-McNichol stated IGA addresses discrepancies between VAC staff/County staff i.e., Ethics Officer cannot address VAC staff due to VAC staff not County employees; stated VAC has been asking for an IGA since 2014-15,
 -Chris Wise, SA office states he was involved in 2018;
 -McNichol advised 2 drafts are boilerplate based on DuPage County, second, highlighted draft is needs/VAC specific, designed to address our needs
 -Blue asked if VAC has an attorney
 -McNichol stated no
 -Horne stated we do need our own attorney, in the past we have had the need and were required to contract, county attorneys are employees of the county, cannot expect them to work for us/our needs, best interests first
 -Picciolo advised may need to schedule further board meeting for this discussion
 -Picciolo stated to table

Motion to table IGA, discussion to hire attorney- Horne, Blue.

Roll Call Vote		
Attendee Name	Title	Status
Jack Picciolo	President	
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Denise Williams	Secretary	
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y
Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	Y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

E. VAC Staff Request for Credit Card Expenditures:

Discussion-McNichol stated County Exec agreed to put some purchases on county credit card, requires expenditures must be discussed/approved in VAC board meetings; McNichol stated to reduce UBER card to \$400 due to grant/monies expiring in Sept. 2022, IPASS increase to \$300 to allow our van to use highways; total \$700 instead of \$1,400.

- Horne asked about IPASS, McNichol advised IPASS no longer funded through cc, BMO contract is specific only to holders of the card must fire anyone who misuses/misappropriates; Wise advised since VAC employees cannot be fired by County, VAC does not qualify to have county cc;
 -Williams asked what VAC needs to do to get our own credit card;

Motion to approve amounts of \$400 for UBER cards, \$300 gas cards, \$40 IPASS-

-Made-Koch, Blue

Roll Call Vote

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Jack Picciolo	President	
Nicholas Barry	Vice President	Y
Denise Williams	Secretary	
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y
Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	Y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

Motion to directive to McNicol to investigate getting our own credit card, place item on emergency/special meeting agenda, President to call
 -Motion-Martinka, Koch

Roll Call Vote		
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Jack Picciolo	President	
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Denise Williams	Secretary	
Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y
Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	Y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

VII. Old Business

A. Marketing Campaign Wrap-Up; Geriann Wiesbrook

- a) Discussion-Blue suggested looking at bringing marketing full-time as a staff given the salary amounts;
 - Williams stated this campaign/content was under a grant, funding for a staff position has to be justified/ratified by the Will County Board;
 - Wiesbrook advised much of the work done until now/present has been creating/recreating templates, managing; stated five people have been committed to project due to workload on short-term/ad hoc; states salaries are divided by five people; stated video editing comes out of her in-house budgeting; stated grant was specific to creation of product and messaging during Covid crisis; stated consultant is also specific to the veteran community, difficult to hire for this skill/knowledge set and services, would probably not be doable/justifiable as a full-time salaried position
 - Blue reiterated she is not questioning work product/this project, just doing due diligence for monies spent

-Motion Blue/Horne

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Amanda Koch	Sgt-At-Arms	Y
Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y
Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y
John Kestle	Past Chairman	Y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

B. DCEO Appropriation \$41,172.29 – Award letter received & Resolution Attached

C. VAC Post Notifications sent 12/23/2021

-Williams advised each entity in Will County eligible is to send a delegate/alternate to VAC, each delegate is to report back to their entity on VAC monthly meetings;

-McNichol advised each Veteran Service Organization is represented by one delegate for that overall organization, i.e, VFW, AL, AMVETS, etc.

-Williams advised 40 letters sent, 6 responses within the 60 day limit

-Koch suggested tracking/contacting units could be a responsibility of an Executive Assistant

-McNichol advised she has five more responses, will forward to Secy. Williams

D. IDVA Scratch Off Lottery Grant

-McNichols advised we are eligible to apply again for this grant but the fund is currently out of monies.

VIII. For Good of the Commission/Public Comment

A. 1300 Copperfield (new office space)

B. Superintendent McNichol elected to IACVAC Executive Board of Directors; Sgt-At-Arms

C. NACVSO President request appointment of Supt. McNichol to NACVSO Executive Board RE: Women’s Vet Representative

-McNichol advised she was on this board in 2017, stated she was asked to accept this appointment, states it will require 2-3 conferences per year, option of delegating someone to attend in her place; appointment expires June 2023

-Motion to allow acceptance of appointment-Blue, Martinka

Roll Call Vote		
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Jim Singler	Chaplain	
Tom Mlynek	Member	
Janet Blue	Member	Y
Steve Benicke	Member	Y
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	Y

John Kestle	Past Chairman	Y
John York	Past Chairman	
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	Y

D. Outreach

- a) Every Tuesday – VAC at Orland Park Vet Center – G. Wiza
- b) Every Monday – VAC at Orland Park Vet Center – A. Georgakopoulos
- c) Every Thursday – Together We Stand, Peer Support Group @ VAC Office
- d) Third Thursday – VAC at Peotone American Legion
- e) Second Monday - VAC at Manhattan American Legion Breakfast
- f) February 8, 2022 – Listen & Learn, Plainfield American Legion
- g) May 21,2022 – Beer & Bourbon Festival, Habitat for Humanity Veterans Build Fundraiser

-Kestle advised Manhattan Post has requested The Wall That Heals traveling Vietnam Wall for 2023

IX. Executive Closed Session – not held

X. Motion to Adjourn: Martinka, Horne

**VAC Executive Committee Meeting
03/08/2022 @ 7AM
VIA WebEx**

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise Williams

VACWC Secretary