

Council on Veterans Programs

Meeting Minutes – December 14, 2023 | 11:00am

In-Person at Wisconsin Veterans Museum with a Virtual Option

Council Members Present:

Paul F. Fisk	American Legion Dept. of WI
Michelle Matuszak	American Red Cross
Dale Wiegand	AMVETS
Coln Moten	County Veteran Service Officers Assn.
Kim Queen	Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.
Phillip Landgraf	Marine Corps League
Roger Fetterly	Military Officers Assoc. of America
William Lobeck	Military Order of the Purple Heart
William Sims	Nat'l Association for Black Veterans, Inc.
Scott Griffith	Paralyzed Veterans of America
Nellie De Baker	Polish Legion of American Veterans
Michael Ayers	The Retired Enlisted Association
Carolyn Morgan	United Women Veterans
Michael Furgal	VFW Department of Wisconsin
Vern Larson	Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.
George Banda	Wisconsin American GI Forum
David Zien	WI Assoc. of Concerned Veteran Org.

Absent:

Larry Hill	Disabled American Veterans
William Hustad	Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans, Inc.

Others Present (not inclusive):

Jason Maloney – BOVA
Mark Mathwig – BOVA
Pat Beggs – BOVA
Jordan Tilleson – VFW
Karl Stuvengen – American Legion
Damon Dorsey – Nat'l Assn Minority Vets

WDVA Staff Present:

Joseph Hoey, Asst. Deputy Secretary
Dawn LaFond, Executive Assistant
Jeremy Lyon, DVB Deputy Administrator
Colleen Flaherty, Comm Director
Shannon Miller, Public Affairs
Mindy Allen, OLC
Shannon Miller, Public Affairs
Kevin Hampton, Museum
Melissa Doud, Tribal Liaison
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Vice Chair Paul Fisk called the meeting to Order at 11:00am on behalf of Larry Hill who was absent due to illness. Roll call was taken, 16 members in attendance, a quorum was present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Introduction of other in-person attendees was given:

- BOVA Board Members: Jason Maloney, Mark Mathwig and Pat Beggs
- WDVA Staff: Joey Hoey, Dawn LaFond, Colleen Flaherty, Shannon Miller and Melissa Doud
 - New DVB Division Administrator: Jeremy Lyon
- Other attendees: Jordan Tilleson, Karl Stuvengen
- New COVP Member: Michael Ayers
- Senator Testin was not available

Assistant Deputy Secretary Joseph Hoey provided an agency update to the Council:

- First round of grants awarded to recipients for the ARPA-Ancillary Mental Health and ARPA-Veterans Emergency Services totaling \$474,000,000:
 - Kenosha Human Development Services
 - Next 18, Inc.
 - Stein Counseling & Consulting Services, Ltd.
 - The Family Resource Center
 - The Wellness CoOP, Inc.
 - Trauma Life Consulting, LLC
 - Washington County Wisconsin
- The second round of all three ARPA Mental Health grants (Community-Based Organization, Ancillary and Emergency Services) have been announced and are open. Application period closes 01.11.2024.
- Annual Entrepreneurship and Non-Profit Grant recipients notified and will be publicly announced soon.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Joseph Hoey provided a legislative update to the Council:

- The current session is coming to a close in February 2024.
- [SB251/AB231](#) removing inactive groups from statutes establishing membership of COVP and adding three (3) reps from student organizations was signed into law.
- [SB 416/AB 424](#) removing requirement that CVSO applicants take a civil service test in order to receive WDVA CVSO Grant has passed the Senate. The Assembly is expected to take up and pass the bill soon.
- [SB 546/AB 580](#) allowing admission of spouses to DVA nursing homes if veteran is not already admitted. Currently, state law requires veteran to be a resident before spouse can be admitted. Bill has a chance to pass this session.
- [SB383/AB385](#) allowing Hmong soldiers who fought in Laos in support of U.S. forces to indicate his or her veteran status on a Wisconsin operator's license or identification card. Bill has a chance to pass this session.
- [SB102/AB102](#) reducing the eligibility threshold to claim the veterans and surviving spouses property tax credit from 100% to 70%. Looks unlikely to become law this session.
- [SB 8/ AB 26](#) funding for UW Missing In Action Recovery And Identification Project. Introduced but not passed in previous sessions. Supporters believe it will pass this session. Both Senate and Assembly Committees voted unanimously in support of the bill.
- [SB 633/ AB 678](#) designating and marking I 90 from the Minnesota-Wisconsin state line in La Crosse County to the intersection of I 90 and I 94 in Monroe County as the Ho-Chunk World War II Code Talkers Memorial Highway. Supporters hope it will pass this session.

- [SB 249/ AB 243](#) designating and marking the entire route of STH 80 as the Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial Highway was signed into law.

WDVA Website Update provided by Colleen Flaherty:

- WDVA website is in the process of being revamped which will be more of a useful tool and intuitive.
- Options for both mobile and computer will allow for a better experience with all features accessible.
- Infrastructure will be simplified as well as visually compelling.
- Information would likely include proposed legislation.
- ACTION: COVP will have its own website and will need feedback and approval, along with testing to be completed by each organization, including spouses and dependents, in April 2024.

Melissa Doud, WDVA Tribal Liaison, provided an update on 2023 Tribal Consultation:

- Identified the progress and relationship building between Secretary-designee Bond and the tribes where he visited every tribe in 2023 as well as the November 2023 Tribal Consultation. During his visits he was taught how to offer tobacco.
- A \$50,000 Transportation Grant was recently awarded to Lac du Flambeau.
- ACTION: A map was provided showing where each tribe was located where COVP Members in respective areas are encouraged to visit with the TVSOs, attend events in their respective areas and attend the annual Tribal Consultations.

Member reports from American Red Cross, American Legion, AMVETS, Marine Corps League, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Polish Legion of American Veterans, The Retired Enlisted Association, VFW of WI, Vietnam Veterans of America, WI GI Forum, WI Association of Concerned Veterans provided.

- Assistant Deputy Secretary Joseph Hoey provided answers to questions from the October 2023 meeting with respect to the membership reports.

Public Comments:

- None

Future Agenda Items:

- Review and approval October 12, 2023 and December 14, 2023 minutes
- Review COVP by-laws

Next Meetings:

- March 14, 2024: WDVA Central Offices, 2135 Rimrock Road in Madison, WI

- June 20, 2024: King Veterans Home, N2665 County Road QQ, King, WI
- September 19, 2024: TBD
- December 19, 2024: TBD

Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Gunner Furgal, seconded by Nellie De Baker and carried on a vote to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 12:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Fisk, Vice Chair