

## **Council on Veterans Programs**

**Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2025 | 10:30am**

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
Colin Moten	County Veteran Service Officers Assn.
Kim Queen	Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.
Phillip Landgraf	Marine Corps League
Don Korte, Jr.	Military Officers Assoc. of America
William Lobeck	Military Order of the Purple Heart
William Sims	National Association for Black Veterans
Scott Griffith	Paralyzed Veterans of America
Nellie De Baker	Polish Legion of American Veterans
Michael Ayers	The Retired Enlisted Association
Jackie Leon	Technical Colleges
Michael Furgal	VFW Department of Wisconsin
Thomas Banner	Vietnam Veterans of America
George Banda	Wisconsin American GI Forum
Matthew Schroeder	WAICU
Michael Panaro	Wisconsin University System
William Hustad	Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans

### **Absent:**

David Zien	WI Assoc. of Concerned Veteran Org.
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### **Inactive:**

United Women Veterans

### **Others Present (not inclusive):**

Senator Andre Jacque  
Malik Staude – WI State Senate  
Patty Banner  
Frank Chapares – AGIF-WI  
Damon Dorsey - NABV  
Al Labelle – DAV  
Yolanda Medina – BOVA District 5  
Mark Mathwig – BOVA District 6  
Chris Hanson – BOVA District 7  
Jordan Tilleson – VFW  
Jim Johnson – American Legion  
Fernando Rodriguez

### **WDVA Staff Present:**

Joseph Hoey, Asst. Deputy Secretary  
Dawn LaFond, Executive Assistant  
Mindy Allen, OLC  
Evan Thompson, IT  
Patrice Gilman, IT

Chair Paul Fisk called the meeting to Order at 10:31am. Roll call was taken, 16 members in attendance; a quorum was present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes from December 19, 2024 were reviewed:

- MOTION: George Banda made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Phil Landgraf; minutes were unanimously approved.

Executive Staff Assistant Dawn LaFond provided an Administrative Update.

- Reminder that COVP Biennial Reports will be due 09.30.2025 and information will be sent in the coming months.
- Appointment/reappointment letters and oaths will be sent in May to Commanders/Presidents of the following COVP organizations whose terms are expiring 06.30.2025:
  - American Red Cross
  - AMVETS
  - Military Officers Association of America
  - National Association for Black Veterans, Inc.
  - Polish Legion of American Veterans
  - Retired Enlisted Association
  - Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.
  - Wisconsin Association of Concerned Veteran Organizations

Senate Veteran Committee Chair Andre Jacque provided information and updates on a number of veteran related bills that he is working on:

- [2025 Senate Bill 134](#): Alternative open enrollment application procedures for residency change based on military orders.
  - A public hearing on the bill was scheduled for 04.03.2025 at 1:30pm in Room 411 South
- [Not Introduced Yet] Expanding eligibility under the veterans and surviving spouses property tax credit to allow those with disability ratings of 70 percent or greater to claim the credit,
  - Stand alone or added as a budget motion
- [Not Introduced Yet] Occupational Licensure Interstate Compacts to create seamless licensure portability for all members of a profession, including military spouses and service members

Assistant Deputy Secretary Joseph Hoey provided updates to the Council covering the following topics:

- Highlights of Governor Ever's FY2025-FY2027 Budget [2025-27 Capital Budget Agency Requests and Governor's Recommendations](#), including:
  - Increased funding for CVSOs/TVSOs
  - Additional GPR dollars for the Veterans Outreach Program (VORP) to remain at the expanded 16 region level versus 11 regions
  - Increased funding for the Operation of the Veterans Housing and Recovery Program (VHRP)
  - Funding for new VHRP Facilities in Chippewa Falls (\$14.3M) and Green Bay (\$10.0M)
  - New kitchen and laundry facility at King Veterans Home (\$101.4M)
  - \$6.2M for the preliminary planning and design of the new Wisconsin Veterans Museum
  - Expansion of the veterans and surviving spouses property tax credit
    - Overview of credit can be found at [Veterans and Surviving Spouses Property Tax Credit \(Informational Paper 14\)](#)
  - \$1M for the University of Wisconsin MIA Project
  - ACTION: ADS Hoey to provide dates, times and locations of public hearings to COVP members and ask that they encourage more veterans to attend the hearings (email sent to COVP members on 03.18.2025 with the dates, times and locations indicated below).

- 04.02.25 from 10am-5pm at Kaukauna High School located at 1701 County Rd CE in Kaukauna
- 04.04.2025 from 10am-5pm at the Wisconsin State Fair Park located at 8200 West Greenfield Avenue in West Allis
- 04.28.2025 from 10am-5pm at Hayward High School located at 10320 North Greenwood Lane in Hayward
- 04.29.2025 from 10am-5pm at Northcentral Technical College located at 1000 West Campus Drive, Wausau
- Update on VA 2 VAG Perm Rule F2

Council Discussion | Follow-up on Shane Preston's Presentation on Department of Defense's efforts with state policymakers to support military families

- Senator Jacque is working on some of these items:
  - Access to quality childcare
  - Child abuse neglect and reporting
  - Remote driver's license and vehicle registration renewal
  - Concurrent juvenile jurisdiction
  - Military spouse employment and economic opportunities
  - Discrimination protection for military families
  - Occupational licensure and interstate compacts
  - State response to military interpersonal violence
  - Defining Armed Forces in State Policy
  - Open enrollment flexibility
  - State support of military families with special education needs
  - Military community representation on state boards and councils

Member reports from American Legion, American Red Cross, AMVETS, County Veteran Service Officers Association, Disabled American Veterans, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Marine Corps League, Military Officers Association of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Polish Legion of American Veterans, Technical Colleges, University of Wisconsin Systems, VFW Department of Wisconsin, Wisconsin American GI Forum and Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans were provided.

- Upcoming events and requests to support:
  - American Legion | State Convention
    - 07.16.2025-07.20.2025 at Hyatt Regency, Green Bay
  - American Red Cross | [Sound The Alarm Wisconsin: Event Information | Red Cross](#)
    - 04.26.2025 at 8:30a-2:30pm at Milwaukee Safety Academy, Milwaukee
  - AMVETS | State Convention
    - 06.19.2025-06.22.2025 at Oneida Hotel and Conference Center, Green Bay
  - County/Tribal Veterans Service Organizations | Spring Training Conference
    - 05.05.2025-05.09.2025 at Barkers Island Inn in Superior

- Disabled American Veterans | State Convention
  - 06.12.2025-06.14.2025 at Oneida Hotel and Conference Center, Green Bay
  - ACTION: Any disabled veterans or spouses who recently lost a federal job, service-disabled veteran-owned business owners who lost contracts and/or veterans who encounter shortfalls at the VA attributed to reductions in staffing are encouraged to complete survey at <https://www.dav.org/defend-veteran-jobs/> to share their story with DAV.
- Paralyzed Veterans of America | [2025 Assembly Bill 92](#)
  - ACTION: Request for all to contact legislators and thank them or ask them to support/co-author AB92. Information located at <https://wisconsinpva.org/call-action-center>
- Technical Colleges/WACRAO | Military Connected Services Conference
  - 06.12.2025-06.13.2025 at Madison Technical College, Madison
    - ACTION: Registration is open to all to attend at [2025 Military Connected Services Conference](#)
- Veterans Day at the Capitol
  - 04.22.2025 at 9am-3pm at Moring at Monona Terrace followed by Rally at the Capitol
    - ACTION: Registration is open at <https://wilegion.org/its-happening>
- Armed Forces Day Open House
  - 05.17.2025 at 9am-3pm at Fort McCoy Commemorative Area
- Military Birthdays
  - Cake cutting celebrations in the Rotunda of the State Capitol in recognition of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the three branches of the Military formed in 1775:
    - 06.13.2025 at 12pm-1pm | Army
    - 10.13.2025 at 12pm-1pm | Navy
    - 11.10.2025 at 12pm-1pm | Marines
  - Am250 Commission is also planning a big, combined celebration on 06.14.2025 at the Veterans Museum.

#### Public Comments:

- Damon Dorsey commented on federal cuts and opportunities and NABV is interested in working with any group who wants to work on these issues together.
- Chris Hanson commented on the following:
  - Ron Kind's Service Academy Selection Committee has seen a drastic decrease in applications
    - ACTION: Requesting everyone to promote and encourage local schools to inform students to apply. More information at [How to Apply for a Service Academy Nomination from Congress | Military.com](#)

#### Future Agenda Items:

- ACTION: Provide any future items to Dawn LaFond at [dawn.lafond1@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dawn.lafond1@dva.wisconsin.gov) by 05.20.2025

Next Meetings:

- June 19, 2025 – Chippewa Falls Veterans Home
- September 2025 – Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison
- December 2025 – Union Grove Veterans Home

Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Nellie DeBaker, second by Larry Hill and carried on a vote to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 12:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Fisk, Chair