

Board on Veterans Affairs

Meeting Minutes – June 19, 2025 at 1:00pm

In-Person at Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls with a Virtual Option

Council Members Present:

Pat Beggs	District 1
Robert Hesselbein	District 2
Christopher Hanson, <i>Chair</i>	District 3
Chris Cornelius, <i>Secretary</i>	District 8
Laura Colbert	Member at Large

Absent:

Tonnetta Carter	District 4
Yolanda Medina	District 5

Vacant:

District 6
District 7

Others Present (not inclusive):

Paul Fisk – American Legion/COVP Chair
Don Korte – MOAA/COVP
Tim Coonrock – CF Resident
Terry Shepardson – CF Resident
Ralph Palmer – CF Resident
Jeff Lemieux – VFW Post 305
Terry Doxtator

WDVA Staff Present:

Joseph Hoey, Asst. Deputy Secretary
Dawn LaFond, Executive Assistant

Chair Chris Hanson called the meeting to Order at 1:05pm. Roll call was taken, five (5) members in attendance; a quorum was present

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

Introduction of other in-person attendees was given:

- Tim Coonrock, Chippewa Falls Resident

Minutes from March 13, 2025 were reviewed:

- MOTION: Bob Hesselbein made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Laura Colbert; minutes were unanimously approved

Executive Staff Assistant Dawn LaFond provided an Administrative Update

- 2025 Public Records and Ethnic training will be provided by WDVA Chief Legal Counsel to those attending the 09.18.2025 meeting. If you miss the meeting, it will be your responsibility to complete the training by the mid-November 2025 due date.
- Folders containing brochures for veterans' benefits are being distributed to all in attendance. Those not in attendance will be sent a package via US Mail.

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

- Senator Jacques bill to expand veterans benefits for Hmong/Lao has passed the full Senate and is out of Committee in the Assembly. Hopefully it will pass and be signed into law soon.
- Legislation to provide matching funds up to \$9M for the War Memorial Center in Milwaukee has been introduced.
- Reported on the status of Governor Evers' FY2025-FY2027 Budget as of June 19th – noting that negotiations were ongoing and subject to change.
 - ACTION: BOVA members can individually contact their local Legislators informing them of their priorities for funding for veterans in the upcoming budget.
 - ACTION: Joey to send a budget update after the Budget is passed and signed by the Governor.

WDVA Website Updates was provided by Joey Hoey:

- ACTION: Review the www.wisvets.com site and provide any feedback on functionality, design, etc. to Colleen.Flaherty@dva.wisconsin.gov.

COVP Chair Report was provided by Paul Fisk

BOVA Chair Report was provided by Chair Chris Hanson:

- Initiated a discussion of how BOVA and WDVA can work together including having BOVA members attend events on behalf of and with Secretary Bond.

Board Member District Reports provided by:

- Patt Beggs – District 1
- Bob Hesselbein – District 2
- Chris Hanson – District 3
- Chris Cornelius – District 8
- Laura Colbert – Member at Large

Upcoming events, requests to support and other information:

- Discounted tickets available to veterans on <https://www.vettix.org/>
- Pow Wows honor veterans

- ACTION: Send flyers for upcoming Pow Wows
 - June 27-29, 2025 | Oneida Pow Wow
 - July 4-6, 2025 | Red Cliff Pow Wow
 - July 11-13, 2025 | Bear River Pow Wow
 - July 17-20, 2025 | Honor the Earth Pow Wow
 - August 1-3, 2025 | Menominee Nation Contest Pow Wow
- Fundraisers
 - VFW Post in Oneida on Wednesdays from 10am-1pm with tacos, burgers, etc.
 - VFW Post 263 in Crivitz, Marinette County from 11am-4pm
 - Cornhole tournament \$50 per team
- UW MIA Project Fundraising
 - Bourbon bottle release fundraiser for UW-MIA Recovery and Identification Project
 - 09.19.2025 from 6pm-8pm at the VFW Post 7592, located at 301 Cottage Grove Road in Madison1 in Cottage

Public Comments:

- Chippewa Falls Resident posed questions on charges for care at the State Veteran Homes. Assistant Deputy Secretary Hoey provided a brief explanation of the funding of the homes.

Future agenda items:

- Update on UW Camp Randall
 - ACTION: ADS Joseph Hoey to reach out to UW
- Tour of State Archives Preservation Facility (SAPF)

Election of Officers:

- Chair: Motion made by Bob Hesselbein for Chris Hanson as Chair, second by Laura Colbert; unanimously approved and accepted
- Vice Chair: Motion made by Pat Beggs for Bob Hesselbein as Vice Chair, second by Chris Cornelius; unanimously approved and accepted
- Secretary: Motion made by Bob Hesselbein for Chris Cornelius as Secretary, second by Chris Hanson; unanimously approved and accepted

Next Meetings:

- September 18, 2025 – Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison
- December 2025 – TBD

Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Laura Colbert, second by Chris Cornelius and carried on a voice vote to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Hanson, Chair