



Veteran Assistance Commission of Will County

Kristina McNichol – Superintendent
 Glenwood Center 2400 Glenwood Ave. Ste 110 Joliet, IL 60432
 Ph: (815)740-8389 Fax: (815)740-4329



9 Feb 2021 Commission Meeting 7:00 PM

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-18 issued by Governor Pritzker, meetings will be held via videoconference/telephonically through the ZOOM Meeting platform. VAC Will County Board Members will be attending meetings remotely and the general public is strongly encouraged to do the same. If a member of the public would like to attend the meeting virtually, please send an email to vacwc@willcountyillinois.com and a link will provided.

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

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

- III. Introduction of Guests and/or First Time Attendees:
- IV. Minutes of Previous Meeting (10 Dec @ 7:00pm)
 - A. Motion: Member
- V. Superintendents Report:
 - A. Financial Assistance Report Calendar Year 2020
 - a) Total Assistance Provided: \$90,189,62
 - 1. Shelter: \$63,300; 166 Invoices
 - 2. Electric: \$8935.30; 140 Invoices
 - 3. Gas: \$4864.46; 79 Invoices
 - 4. Water: \$4964.86; 140 Invoices
 - 5. Personal Needs: \$8075; 256 Invoices

- 6. Food: \$50; 2 Invoices
- 7. 330 Individual Clients
- B. Financial Assistance First Qtr 2021
 - a) Shelter:
 - b) Electric:
 - c) Gas:
 - d) Water:
 - e) Personal Needs:
 - f) Food:
- C. Award/VSO Productivity: FY2020
 - a) 968 New Veterans; 1125 Already enrolled
 - b) 3840 New VA Forms
 - c) Estimating 10M+ in new awards 2020
- D. Project 165 Report Valerie Tawrel
- VI. New Business
 - A. By-Law Discussion/Review: Atty. Lisa McGlasson
- VII. Old Business
 - A. CARES Funding
 - a) Will CO Executive Committee Presentation
- VIII. For Good of the Commission/Public Comment
- IX. Executive Closed Session per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) – “appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body”
 - A. Roll Call

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- B. VAC Staff Dismissal
- C. VAC Staff Compensation
- X. Return to Open Meeting
- XI. Discussion/Comment

- A. Motion on recommendation(s) during Executive Closed Session5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) – “appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body”
- XII. Motion to Adjourn:

VAC Executive Committee Meeting
3/9/2021
7PM
2400 Glenwood Ave STE 110 Joliet IL 60435
VIA Zoom



Veteran Assistance Commission of Will County

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In accordance with Public Act 101-640, effective June 12, 2020, and the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation issued by Governor Pritzker on January 8, 2021, meetings will be held via videoconference/telephonically through ZOOM platform. Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County Board Members & Delegates will be attending meetings remotely and the general public is strongly encouraged to do the same.

The public is invited to comment or pose a question, or request ZOOM link by email at VACWC@WILLCOUNTYILLINOIS.COM At the Public Comments portion of the meeting, emails will be read into the record.

2021 Schedule of VAC of Will County Meetings Second Tuesday of Every Month

Jan 12	Holiday Break
Feb 9	7PM VIA ZOOM
Mar 9	7PM VIA ZOOM
Apr 13	7PM VIA ZOOM
May 11	7PM VIA ZOOM
June 8	7PM VIA ZOOM
July 13	7PM VIA ZOOM
Aug 10	7PM VIA ZOOM
Sept 14	7PM VIA ZOOM
Oct 12	7PM VIA ZOOM
Nov 9	7PM VIA ZOOM
Dec 14	7PM VIA ZOOM

The VAC of Will County does plan on returning to an "in-person" meeting schedule when it is safe to host gatherings, and will continue to host ZOOM for veterans that would like to participate with the Commission.



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ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSIONS

RESOLUTION 21-001 THE ASSOCIATIONS SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION

WHEREAS, the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions' members are tasked with providing for Veterans well-being and to enhance the quality of life of the Veterans and their families of the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, as part of providing that welfare, the Legislative Committee will monitor all legislation affecting Veterans and their families in Illinois whilst supporting the following proposed bills; and

WHEREAS, the Property Tax Code should be amended to include an exemption for a surviving spouse who is certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as being a current recipient of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation; and

WHEREAS, Veterans preference requires the Department of Central Management Services to submit an annual report concerning certifications issued to veteran-owned small businesses and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses and requires the Department to conduct a minimum of 2 outreach events per year to ensure opportunities and certification requirements with the State; and

WHEREAS, a taxpayer who has been granted a homestead exemption for Veterans with disabilities need not reapply if he or she has been found by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to be permanently and totally disabled; and

WHEREAS, amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act with regard to the Illinois Veteran grant program, provides that, beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, a veteran may transfer his or her benefits to a qualified dependent if certain conditions are met; and

WHEREAS, provides that, if a veteran with a surviving spouse was in the process of review to receive the homestead exemption for veterans with disabilities, but the veteran died before the exemption was approved, then the application process shall continue and any subsequent approval granted to the veteran shall carry over to the spouse as long as the spouse meets the requirements; and

WHEREAS, department of Financial and Professional Regulation shall reduce all application fees and examination fees by 50% for Veterans; and

WHEREAS, provides that the Homestead Exemption for Veterans with disabilities carries over to the benefit of the Veteran's surviving spouse if the Veteran resided outside of the state but otherwise qualified for the exemption at the time of his or her death and the surviving spouse relocates to Illinois after the death of the Veteran; and

WHEREAS, the Department of State Police shall allow for a non-resident license application if the applicant is employed by the United States Military, permanently assigned in Illinois on Permanent Change of Station or Permanent Change of Assignment orders and who is not a resident of the State but maintains an address in the state; and

WHEREAS, for the 2019 taxable year and thereafter, the exemption for Veterans with disabilities carries over to the surviving spouse of a Veteran who did not obtain the exemption before death, but who would have qualified for the exemption in the current taxable year if he or she had survived; and

WHEREAS, creates the Veterans' Disability Compensation Task Force and provides specified objectives for the Task Force. Provides that the Task Force shall consist of 15 members appointed by the chairs of the Veterans Affairs Committees in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Provides that the members of the Task Force shall be members of different Illinois counties' Veterans Assistance Commissions, Veteran Service Officers, and members of Illinois state recognized Veterans Service Organizations; and

WHEREAS, anyone who purposely misrepresents an animal as a service animal commits a petty offense; and

WHEREAS, amend the School Code and allow a school board to establish a voluntary "Civic Engagement Day" in which a student in the 7th through 12th grade may request an excused absence of not more than one full school day per school year to participate in an organized civic engagement activity or event; and

WHEREAS, amend the State Employee Group Insurance Act of 1971, Counties Code, may not deny a claim from a medical facility operated by the Veterans Health Administration of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs on the basis that the medical facility is an out-of-network provider; and

WHEREAS, create the Veterans Bill of Rights Act and requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to make specified efforts to: (1) increase loans to small business concerns owned and controlled by Veterans or service-disabled Veterans; (2) increase Veterans access to health care coverage and services; (3) take specified steps toward preventing Veteran suicide; and (4) develop and implement a strategy to end veteran homelessness within 3 years; and

WHEREAS, create the Military Service Members Parking Space Act, that each State agency and constitutional office shall, at each location, designate at least one parking space on its property, as near to the front entrance as possible, for use by military service members only; and

WHEREAS, create an income tax credit for taxpayers who are caregivers of a Veteran with a disability that shall be in an amount equal to 5% of the costs incurred, not to exceed \$1,000; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that members of the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions call upon all to distribute this resolution to all lawmakers, local and state officials to support, endorse and pass all aforementioned legislation into law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions does hereby authorize the Legislative Committee and its Chairman to act on behalf of the Association in advocating for the legislation described heretofore.

Passed by the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions on January 15, 2021.

Michael A. Brooks, President

Kurt V. Daesch, Secretary

TO PROMOTE THE SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO MILITARY VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS



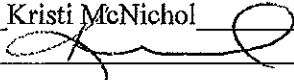
ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSIONS

SURVEY FOR IACVAC 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

- 1.) COUNTY OF Will
- 2.) TOTAL AMOUNT OF NEW COMPENSATION AND PENSION RECEIVED: \$ 8,877,651.13
- 3.) TOTAL NUMBER OF CLAIMS FILED BY CATEGORY:
 - a.) VA SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY COMPENSATION: 491
 - b.) VA NON SERVICE-CONNECTED PENSION: 30
 - c.) VA DEPENDENCY INDEMNITY COMPENSATION: 85
 - d.) VA SURVIVOR'S PENSION: 85
 - e.) VA BURIAL BENEFIT: 65
 - f.) VA HEALTH CARE: 137
 - g.) VA APPEALS (Supplemental Claim, Higher Level Review, and Board of Veterans Appeals): 223
- 4.) TOTAL AMOUNT OF NEW FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PAID OUT: \$ 90,189.62
- 5.) TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW FORMS COMPLETED: 3840
- 6.) TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS ASSISTED: 2020 New Clients: 968 Old VA Clients: 1125
Financial Assistance Clients 303 = 2396 Clients

I report that the above numbers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and are within the parameters defined on the reverse.

Superintendent's Name: Kristi McNichol

Superintendent's Signature: 

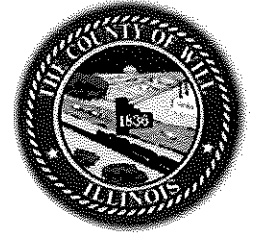
Date: 1/13/2021

Please return survey by December 31, 2020 to zimmermanjacob@co.kane.il.us or by fax to 630-232-5401
TO PROMOTE THE SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO MILITARY VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS



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- I. Call to Order: President Picciolo @ 705 PM
 - A. Pledge of Allegiance: Led by President Picciolo
 - B. Opening Prayer: President Picciolo
- II. Roll Call of Attendees: Secretary Williams

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	P
Tom Mlynek	Member	P
Janet Blue	Member	P
Steve Benicke	Member	P
Vic Martinka	Past Chairman	A
John York	Past Chairman	A
Wayne Horne	Past Chairman	P

- III. Introduction of Guests and/or First Time Attendees:
 Guest – Lisa McGlasson
- IV. Minutes of Previous Meeting (10 Dec @ 7:00pm)
 - A. Motion: VP Berry-made; Second Member Benicke; Unanimous
- V. Superintendents Report: Superintendent McNichol
 - A. Financial Assistance Report Calendar Year 2020
 - a) Total Assistance Provided: \$90,189,62
 - 1. Shelter: \$63,300; 166 Invoices
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5. Personal Needs: \$8075; 256 Invoices
 6. Food: \$50; 2 Invoices
 7. 330 Individual Clients
- B. Financial Assistance First Qtr 2021 –
- a) Shelter:
 - b) Electric:
 - c) Gas:
 - d) Water:
 - e) Personal Needs:
 - f) Food:
- C. Award/VSO Productivity: FY2020
- a) 968 New Veterans; 1125 Already enrolled
 - b) 3840 New VA Forms
 - c) Estimating 10M+ in new awards 2020

McNichol advised just over \$80M total in VA award claims; advised new system will track when each veteran was filed for intent, filed FDC, award received timeline. Advised both VACWC and County have new reporting/accounting systems, reports not yet available; advised will send email with quarterly report numbers asap.

Motion to approve Superintendent report: Made, Member Benicke; 2nd Member Mylnek; Unanimous

D. Project165 Report Valerie Tawrel

Tawrel advised currently 8 veterans, 2 community members currently housed in hotels; 3 females, 7 males; 9 have been housed including 4 families; member Janet Blue has been involved w/assisting one of the females; Tawrel advised 3 most recent admissions had been sleeping in their car; VSO Solum advised eviction moratorium has not yet been lifted; Tawrel advised received 6 inquiries re: impending evictions; Horne inquired re: cold shelter assistance from cities/county, Tawrel advised Daybreak is providing 9p-8a emergency cold shelter; Tawrel advised congregate shelter thru CoC are ongoing conversations, advised limited space;

McNichol advised United Way of Will County Emergency Food and Shelter grant from FEMA is available; WCVAC applied for additional \$60k reimbursement for non-congregate housing, put monies in separate line item to track, intent to use for SSVF eligible veterans for cap of 30 days; will then transfer to Project 165 if eligible; none of these expenditures involve regular housing budget; VAC is paying \$2550 per month per room; location is Quality Inn, 135 S. Larkin, Joliet IL

VI. New Business

A. By-Law Discussion/Review: Atty. Lisa McGlasson

McGlasson advised results of By Laws –

Article II – changed to “promoting the welfare of honorably discharged members of the military and their families”; this change allows for greater freedom

Section 3 - removed the word "indigent"; this change allows greater freedom
Section 5 – incorporate the Statute; allows any changes to be incorporated without making changes to the ByLaws

Article V – membership

-language of the Statute is broader, allows for more freedom of inclusion;

McGlasson – 'other organizations' inclusion; any organization that comes forward will then be allowed a vote

Section 3-incorporated language from the Statute to further delineate, clarify and open membership to 'other' organizations

Section 5-clarify one vote per person/delegate; rewritten for clarity

Section 6-edited for clarity; requirement of "honorable discharged veteran" not supported by the Statute;

Horne advised original language chosen intentionally, suggests allow for exceptions;

McGlasson suggested change to "member in good standing of their organization" or similar language; Horne cautioned reefing too open, value of requiring organizations to prove their commitment;

McGlasson advised as it is currently written an organization of active-duty Guardsmen would be ineligible; advised Congressional/State charter/recognition is required, minimum of 15 members;

McGlasson suggested language, "approved by President/Board"

Section 7-removed 'require a vote to replace a delegate'; changed gender pronouns

Article VII – Officers

Section 1-remove specific calendar dates from By Laws

Horne advised historically date was aligned with County budget

Section 6 – clarity re: fiscal year

-added "relationship to eligible veteran" to accommodate family members who do not have a DD214 of their own

Article VIII – Executive Board

Section I-clarified three (3) members

Section II – added – "The list of Executive Board..."; placed responsibility for maintaining list on Board

Section 11- trainings, Open Meeting Act, etc. required of completing, maintaining of Board members; Secy. will provide requirements, track completion

Section 12- requirement of Board members, Attorney General

Article IX-Standing Committees

Section 1- added "members"

Section 2-"All committees, including ad hoc committees, shall include a VAC staff member to provide administrative support and ensure statutory compliance of the committee"; to address potential financial, record keeping requirements, etc.

Article X-

Section 1 -adjust language re: "honorably discharged veteran" requirement for appeals; statutory requirement will be checked

Section 3 – adjust language re: campaign/conflict membership

Article XI – Meetings

Section 1-remove specific days of the week from By Laws

Section 6-remov specific month from the By Laws

Section 7 -removed; covered previously in By Laws

Article XII – Superintendent

Section 2-added-“Assistants will be employees of the VAC...”

Section 10-expand language to address conflicts of interest, outside activities, etc.

Section 13-added – “as evidenced by a certified DD214 submitted prior to appointment”.

Article XV – added, “reviewed annually”

Motion to table discussion to next meeting: Made, Horne, 2nd Berry; unanimous

VII. Old Business

A. CARES Funding

a) Will CO Executive Committee Presentation

McNichol advised will present at Exec. Committee on 2/11/21 re: next round of CARES funding; mental health, building, marketing; was \$2.7M; removing \$465k for mental health from the request due to other organizations covering mental health; VAC will focus on ‘veteran-centric’ marketing; re: building, \$1.5M for a new building, will adjust request for a turn-key building instead, if \$1.5M will be used for 4 buildings scattered around the county;

VIII. For Good of the Commission/Public Comment

Janet Blue discussed an Iraqi veteran starting a Cooperage, asked about grants;

McNichol referred to Amanda Koch; Williams advised this may fall better under Our Patriots; Williams also advised will speak w/Janet separately

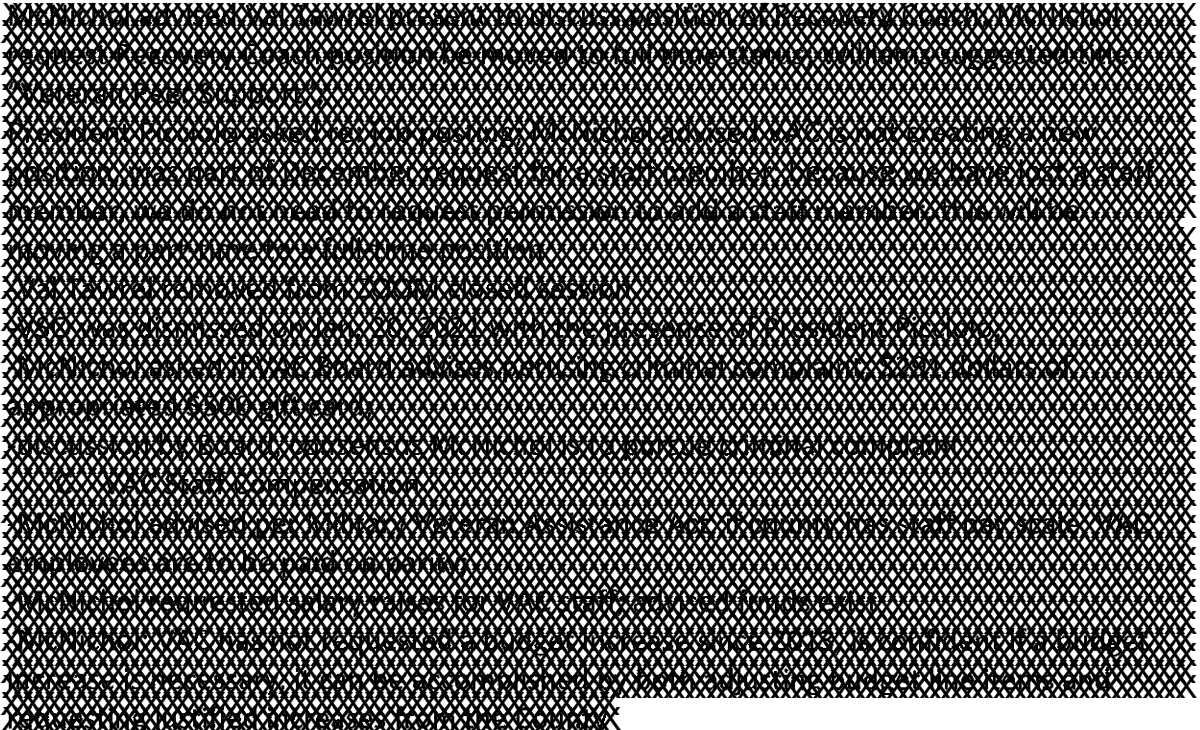
IX. Executive Closed Session per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) – “appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body”

Motion: Williams, Berry; unanimous

A. Roll Call

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

B. VAC Staff Dismissal



- X. Return to Open Meeting-Motion made – Williams, 2nd Horne; unanimous
- XI. Discussion/Comment
 - A. Motion on recommendation(s) during Executive Closed Session5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) – “appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body”
Motion to move “Veteran Peer Support” position to full time to report to Valerie Tawrel; Made-Past Chairman Horne; Seconded VP Berry; Unanimous
Motion to direct Superintendent McNichol to pursue criminal complaint against former VSO; Made – Past Chairman Horne; Second, Member Mylnek; Unanimous
Motion to move \$33,388 to payroll line item to adjust VAC staff compensation; Made – Past Chairman Horne; Second Member Mylnek; Unanimous
- XII. Motion to Adjourn: Made-Secretary Williams; Second Past Chairman Horne; Unanimous

Meeting Adjourned @ 937 PM

VAC Executive Committee Meeting
3/9/2021
7PM
2400 Glenwood Ave STE 110 Joliet IL 60435
VIA Zoom