



June 13, 2023

Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County

2400 Glenwood Ave. Ste 110 Joliet, IL 60435
Ph: (815)740-8389 Fax: (815)740-4329

Commission Meeting
VFW 5422 Malcolm J Mayo
557 W Baltimore St Wilmington, IL 60481



6:00PM

I. CALL TO ORDER 6:07

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Opening Prayer

II. ROLL CALL ATTENDEES:

POST	DELEGATE/ALTERNATE	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
AL 5 Harwood Joliet	D: Joseph Kelley A: Gary Califello	D		
AL 13 Marne Plainfield	D: Lisa McGlasson A: Raj Pillai	D/A		
AL 18 John Olson Lockport	D: Mike Meyers A: Frank DiGiovanni	D: 7:03	X	
AL 52 Romeoville	D: Stephen Benicke A: Steven Daley		X	
AL 191 Lester Smith Wilmington	D: Ken Watt A: Frank Mlyniec	D/A		
AL 392 Peotone	D: Robert Krueger A: Rick Bolanowski	D/A		
AL 935 Manhattan	D: Robert Angone A:	D		
AL 1080 Joliet	D: Tony Arellano A: Ricky Whitley	D		
AL 1200 Monee	D: Janet Blue A: David Batzek		X	
AL 1288 Bolingbrook	D: Larry Shaver A: Wayne Macejak	D/A		
VFW 367 Cantigny Joliet	D: Jim Clausen A: Lou Smith	D		
VFW 725 William Martin Mokena	D: James Hogan A: Paul Cravens	D/A		
VFW 2199 Stone City Joliet	D: Kevin Pomykala A: Ron Adamski		x	
VFW 5422 Malcolm J Mayo Wilmington	D: Wally Wink A: Jennifer Piehl	D		
VFW 5788 Lockport	D: Keith Carberry A: Karen Szykowski		x	
VFW 5819 Lemont	D: Kenneth Griffin		x	
VFW 5917 Bolingbrook	D: John Davin A: Gregory Palmer	D		
VFW 9545 Harry E Anderson	D: Clarke Christiansen	D		

New Lenox	A: Donald Ibarra		
12 Present		We have Quorum	

Pillai notifies members of the public that there will be a closed session. Reviews customary procedures for recognition during a session.

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND/OR FIRST TIME ATTENDEES

Frank Mlynek Lester legion post 191 alternates
Dennis Havranek VFW 367 Cantigny
Historic preservation: Subach George
Katie Rebecca Will County States Atty
Sherwanda Beck-Atkinson representing Will County Executive Office
Katie Deane-Schlottman Will County Board Member
Tim Ozinga, Will County Republican Central Committee Chairman
DuPage County Hon. Judge Don DeWilkins
Heather Falkenthal
Dale Fontana Plainfield Township Republican Organization Chairman
Rick Todd AL Post 13
Duke Conrad
Shiwa (inaudible)
Raj Pillai Sr

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES PREVIOUS MEETING (April 11, 2023)

No objections or correction. Minutes accepted.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- A. Award Log Presented by Erik Papineau
- B. Financial Assistance Presented by Jen Solum
- C. Office Expenditures – New Desks for offices
- D. Motion to File Superintendent’s Report
Motion:725
Second:597
No discussion or opposition.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Appointment of Officers
 - a. Chaplain Jim Clausen appointed by Raj Pillai
 - i. Motion to Approve
Motion: Krueger
Second: Arellano
No discussion
Vote: Voice Vote – unanimous approval: Motion passes.
 - b. Secretary – Raj Pillai asks for volunteers. Heather Falkenthal volunteers
 - i. Motion to Approve
Motion: 725
Second: Davin
No discussion
Vote: voice vote – unanimous approval: Motion Passes
- B. Oath of Office Swearing-In Ceremony of Commission Members
Oath of office administered to all Commission Members by Hon. Judge Don DeWilkins
- C. New Full Time Position Mental Health Care Provider

Mental health counseling for Veterans' support system not eligible for VA Healthcare. Position will also manage well being program. References document included in packet.
Georgakopoulos affirms benefits of in-house Mental Health program as it relates to Pension claims.
Krueger request clarification on eligibility. Solum confirms anyone that is a part of the Veteran's support system. This is intended to fill the gap for individuals not eligible for caregiver support program.
Position salary is based on VA pay scale beginning at \$90k.
Pillai refers to job included in packet.

Motion to search for new full-time position of mental health care providers

Motion: 725

Second: Krueger

Discussion supporting more background in mental health than social workers. By Griffin, Solum Shaver supports need for position based on his experiences with the VA. McGlasson confirms this is not duplicating VA services. Solum Affirms this does not duplicate current programs but will work along with current programs.

Gen. Kelly confirms position would work to refer to outer agencies for services outside scope of position. McGlasson comments on collaboration with other county services available
discussion by Shaver, Watt, Davin

Vote: Roll Call Vote 11-1 Nay Vote by AL 191

- D. Request for Office Therapy Dog Training Expenditures Reimbursement: Requested by Jen Solum
 - a. Motion to Approve
Motion: 725
Second: Krueger
Vote: roll call Vote – Unanimous approval: Motion Passes
 - b. Motion to accept Dog as emotional support animal for VAC
Motion: McGlasson
Second: Shaver
Voice Vote - Unanimous approval: Motion Passes
- E. FY2024 Budget – Solum reviews Budget handout
 - a. Motion to Approve
Motion: 725 Hogan
Second: 9545 Christensen
No discussion
Vote: Roll Call Vote – unanimous approval: Motion Passes
- F. Nomination of Superintendent Solum for Delegate of Illinois Association of County Veterans Service Officers (IACVAC) to the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO)
 - a. Motion to Approve
Motion: Krueger
Second: Kelley
Discussion by
Vote: voice vote – unanimous approval: Motion passes

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Re-Establish By-Law Review Committee as standing committee:
Pillai references email in packet.
 - a. Motion to Approve
Motion: Christensen
Second: 725 Hogan
No discussion
Vote – Voice Unanimous: Motion passes.
- B. Statement of Economic Interest and Open Meetings Act Compliance for Commission Members
Instructions will be sent to commission members for compliance with state law.

- C. VACWC Policies and Procedures in Accordance with 330 ILCS 45/Military Veterans Assistance Act Presented by Jen Solum: MVAA requirement for office policies produced by staff or Atty. Atty will cost \$2500-5k.

Discussion by Christiansen, Shaver, Solum, Krueger

Motion to outsource Procedures manual to Josh Herman Policy not to exceed \$5k.

Motion: Krueger

Second: Christensen

Discussion by Davin, McGlasson, Shaver, Solum

Vote: Unanimous approval: Motion Passes

IX. Executive Closed Session:

- A. Motion to enter closed session:

- a. 5ILCS 120/2 Sec2(c)21: Approval of closed Minutes, April 11, 2023

- b. 5ILCS 120/2 Sec2(c)11: Litigation

Motion: Davin

Second: Clausen

Vote: Voice Vote – Unanimous approval: motion passes

- B. Motion to approve items discussed during closed session.

Motion: Krueger

Second: Clausen

Vote: Voice vote unanimous approval: motion passes.

- C. Motion to accept minutes as corrected

Motion Davin

Second.

Accepted with no discussion.

- D. Motion for PJM to provide VAC with memorandum of options.

Roll Call Vote unanimous: Motion Passes

X. FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMISSION

- A. Commission President Updates

Presents report by Raj Pillai

- B. Introduction of New VSOs

- a. Brandon Peterson – started on Apr 10

- b. Keri Wright – Started on Apr 10

- c. Jeffrey Walsh – starts on Jun 20

Also introduces current staff members Joe Martin, Elisa Medina, Amy Georgakopoulos, Erik Papineau

- C. Office Construction Updates

- D. National Association of County Veteran Service Officers Annual Conference 2023 Recap by Erik Papineau

- E. VACWC/Joliet Police Battle Buddy Outreach Picnic September 9th Presented by Erik Papineau

- F. Women Veterans Conference Sisterhood of Service June 3rd attended by Amy and Jen

- G. Recurring Outreach

- a. Every Tuesday: VSO Georgakopoulos Outreach at Orland Park Vet Center

- b. Every Thursday: Together We Stand Peer Support Group at VACWC Office Joe Martin

- c. Second Monday: VSO Papineau Outreach Manhattan American Legion 935 Breakfast

- d. Every Third Thursday: VSO Papineau Outreach at Peotone American Legion 392

- e. Every Third Friday: VSO Papineau Outreach at Wilmington VFW 5422

- f. Every Thursday: Rotating VSOs Outreach at Joliet CBOC

- g. Every First Monday: VSO Georgakopoulos at Blueberry Hill Café Homer Glen

- H. VACWC Calendar: www.veteransassistancewillco.org

- a. Jun 30-Jul 5: Manhattan Vietnam Memorial Wall

- b. June 10: Heroes, Hogs, and Hotrods in Manteno

- c. Aug 23-27: Will County Fair
Amy received a call from Mike Bonomo for Homer Fest. Solute to soldiers. Want Veterans to attend in uniform from every generation.
- I. Upcoming Events to post on VACWC Calendar from the posts.
- J. Shaver addresses commission expressing gratitude to commission members.
- K. Pillai

XI. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion: Krueger

Second: Davin

Mike Myers sept 26 at sept

Vote:

**Next Meeting Will Be Held On
September 26, 2023, 6:00pm**