



Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County

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 veteransassistancewillco.org



December 3rd, 2024

**Commission Meeting
 Cantigny VFW Post 367
 826 Horseshoe Dr Joliet**

6:10PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Invocation

ROLL CALL ATTENDEES:

POST	DELEGATE/ALTERNATE	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
AL 5 Harwood Joliet	D: Joseph Kelley A: John Honiotes		X	
AL 13 Marne Plainfield	D: Rick Todd A: Raj Pillai	A		
AL 18 John Olson Lockport	D: Mike Meyers A: Frank DiGiovanni			X
AL 52 Romeoville	D: Steven Daley A:Ernie Breitbarth		X	
AL 191 Lester Smith Wilmington	D: A: Frank Mlyniec	A		
AL 241 Buffalo Soldiers Joliet	D: Michael White A:	D		
AL 392 Peotone	D: Robert Krueger A: Rick Bolanowski	D		
AL 935 Manhattan	D: Robert Angone A: Lisa McGlasson	D		
AL 1080 Joliet	D: Tony Arellano A: George Madden	D		
AL 1288 Bolingbrook	D: Larry Shaver A: Wayne Macejak	D A		
AL 1977 New Lenox	D: Mark Razny A: Patrick McLeod	D A		
VFW 367 Cantigny Joliet	D: Jim Clausen A: Dennis Havranek	D A		
VFW 725 William Martin Mokena	D: Paul Cravens A: James Hogan	D		

VFW 5422 Malcolm J Mayo Wilmington	D: Wally Wink A: Scott Durano		X	
VFW 5788 Lockport	D: Keith Carberry A: Mark Bowman	A		
VFW 5819 Lemont	D: Kenneth Griffin	D		
VFW 5917 Bolingbrook	D: John Davin A: Gregory Palmer		X	
VFW 9545 Harry E Anderson New Lenox	D: Clarke Christiansen A: Donald Ibarra		X	
VFW 2199 Stone City Joliet	D: Kevin Pomykala A: Larry Smith	A		

- Need a pro temp for judge Advocate for Lisa. Motion for Mark Razny for pro temp in Lisas absence. All voted yes for it.

II. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND/OR FIRST TIME ATTENDEES

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES PREVIOUS MEETING

- A. Commission Meeting September 24th, 2024 (open)
- B. One correction to be made to update VSO name to Amy Benson
- C. Motion Paul Cravens & 2nd: John Daven

VI. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- A. Award Log
- B. Financial Assistance
 - a. Housing Wednesday family members can come in to housing secured to get housing secured.
- C. Veteran Problem-Solving Court
 - a. 35 veterans helped.
 - b. 5 veterans graduated from the solving court program
- D. Mental Health Coordinator
 - a. 19 veterans have received clinical services
 - b. Community engagement with Hines and fellow agencies withing the county.
 - c. Participated in City of Joliet active threat and mental wellness program. Covered mental health and suicidal behaviors. There was also after care set up to help people who witnessed the issues like mass shooting. The Joliet Fire Department leads
 - d. Veterans day presented to duly health and their providers on mental health. Provided information on the VA benefits that are available in the case the veteran does not go to Hines.
- E. Motion to File Superintendent’s Report
 - a. 1st: John Daven 2nd. Robert Krueger

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. 1300 Copperfield Building Update
 - a. Meeting 12/3/2024 with the firm that was hired for the project. A new roof and windows are

- required. May need a boiler since the water has not been turned on.
- b. The third and fourth floor will wait.
- c. 1st floor is the gym and only needs cosmetic enhancements
- d. Rehab the building just to what we need to move in
- e. 2nd floor will be 70% of the floor for the administrative office
- f. The bulk of the money will be going to fixing the pipes and the building
- g. \$250,000 grant from the state which is for infrastructure
- h. Looking for federal money as well to help
- i. County will provide 4 million: 1 million for the roof, 1 million for all of the windows and the other 2 million will be on infrastructure
- j. Estimated to move in some time in 2025
- B. Financial Assistance Policy Review Update
 - a. Eric there was one meeting to meet one on one with the various members.
 - b. Mark Razny wants to get wrapped up after the 1st of the year with getting the sub committees together.
 - c. There is not a presentation to make at this time.
- C. Superintendent Annual Review Committee Update
 - a. Several peer reviews were received by Larry to see if there were any changes from the prior year. All reviews were positive and excellent.
 - b. Point for the committee to address that Jen remain in her position.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. 2024 Governor Report
 - a. Vet Pro is the new system that is being used so the report will look different from the prior year.
 - b. This is due by 12/31/2024 to the governor
 - c. The numbers reflect the great work that everyone has done.
 - d. Office visits went from 1347 in 2023 to 3148 in 2024. There was a 134% increase.
 - e. New veterans went to 1375
 - f. The job for a driver was posted on the county website. Also looking to add a second driver
 - g. There was a decrease in eligibility for veterans to get a ride.
 - h. Outreach has increased through various events.
 - i. Let Eric know if you would like him to come out to your post to help with anything.
 - j. The difference between the total forms filled out and the total documents uploaded is due to forms being generated and not uploaded at the time. Or if there is a form that was entered but not submitted.
 - k. The numbers for total communications capture everything entered into the system.
 - l. The total awards paid out in 2023 was \$12,796,088.99 and as of date 2024 is \$28,081,297.73
 - m. To get the financial assistance the veteran needs to join a low-cost program to help offset.
 - n. Total of \$27,370.62 was provided in assistance.
 - o. Financial assistance policy revamp will help to provide more money to the veterans.
 - p. Emergency assistance requests: 45% Referrals, 55% Financial Assistance and 6% Claims.
- B. 2024 Budget
 - a. Salaries and Benefits and Commodities. There are still funds available to provide to veterans.
 - b. Asking the commission to reach out to community members that need help to come in.
 - c. We are in FY 2025 now since FY 2024 closed in November.
 - d. Went over in the Salaries and Benefits with the new VSO. The money was in there for the salary and not the benefits. They had to take money from FY 2025 to cover the benefits.
 - e. Will need to go to the county and ask for more money to cover the salaries.
- C. 2025 Budget Amendment Request

- a. Request is to go to the county for (3 FTE): FTE VSO, FTE for an admin assist and promote Anna to manager for the office, retro for Rose
 - b. Motion to approve
- 1st: Paul Cravens 2nd: Frank Mlyniec

IX. EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION

- A. Motion to enter closed session:
- B. 5ILCS 120/2 Sec2(c)11: Litigation
 - a. 5ILCS 120/2 Sec2(c)1: The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific individuals
 - b. 5ILCS 120/2 Sec2(c)21: Approval of closed minutes, September 24th, 2024
- C. Motion to return to open session.
- D. Motion to approve items discussed during closed session.

X. FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMISSION

- A. Commission President Updates
 - a. Great success so far and through various conversations the Will County VAC is the way to go.
 - b. The last year we have put this VAC back together
 - c. Recommendation to the committee to reappoint and keep status quo with Jen Solum till next year. She has done a great job and has managed the VAC excellent.
 - d. Mark Bowman would like to make a motion to retain Jen as Superintendent. 2nd: John Davin
 - e. 1st: Paul Cravens 2nd: Larry Smith
- B. 2025 Post Delegate/Alternate Appointments
 - a. Must be submitted by March 1st. They will be mailed out by the end of the year. Will also be emailed to the post so there is no questions. Need back by mid-February.
- C. 2025 Election for Commission Officers will be during the annual meeting March 2025
- D. Recurring Outreach

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

XII. MOTION TO ADJOURN

- A. 1st: Robert Krueger 2nd: Frank Mlyniec