



Kent County Veterans Services

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Minutes 05/11/2023

Present: Mary Johnson, Melvin Bauman, Chris Kamps, Reginald Howard, Phil Yeiter

Excused: Jill Hinton-Wolfe, Mike Blundell

Staff: Ryan Grams

Guests: Cal Brinks, Finance, Taylor Hooper, WXMI Channel 17

1. Meeting called to Order at 0900 by Mary Johnson.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of minutes from April 2023 meeting. Motion for approval by Chris Kamps, seconded by Mel Bauman.

Approved by committee
4. Presentation from WXMI Fox 17 by Taylor Hooper. Advertisements are shown as successful in reaching out to veterans. The station is also adding "Veterans" as a category to its Pay It Forward program.
5. Success stories: Veteran called KCVS asking for assistance with getting a root canal. Veteran was turned down by My Community Dental as they stated they were unable to do the root canal in house and he would need to go to another office to get the help. Which in turn required the veteran to pay for the procedure out of pocket. Veteran spoke with KCVS Supervisor Ryan Grams, who turned the veteran to Emergency relief supervisor Amanda Lake. Veteran went ahead with completing the SSR application and returning the required documents. Veterans application was complete, but we had to find a dental office that would fill out and return a W-9. After some work, both Amanda and the veteran found an office to complete the procedure for the veteran. Veterans procedure was completed on May 30th.
6. Monthly Impact Report

- a. Ryan: April was a busy month. PACT act claims are high.

7. Monthly Activity Report:

- a. Ryan: The current budget is on track for this fiscal year.

8. Old Business

- a. MVAA Grants, Ryan: Applications for the MVAA grants for 2024 have been completed.
- b. Staffing: Ryan: The office is still interviewing for the position of clerk. Currently we are in the second round of interviews.
- c. Bylaws: Mary: An answer was received from Jennifer James re: whose verbiage should be used for bylaws, P.A. 192 or the Board of Commissioners? It was stated that the Board used the Public Act as their guideline. At this time, we will leave the bylaws as revised and to be presented to the Advisory Committee at the June meeting for approval.
- d. Hero's Corner: Reggie: The enterprise will be moving to a new building in June. Building is very large and will be able to offer new activities as well as those already being used. Building is at 4809 Eastern Ave., on the corner of 48th St. and Eastern.

9. New Business

- a. Results of Female Veteran Poll: Tabled until June meeting,
- b. Mary: Just attended the Second Annual MVAA Leadership Summit in Traverse City. Diversity was discussed at length. The following underserved groups were identified:
 - 1. Women Veterans
 - 2. LGBTQ
 - 3. Tribal culture

Martha and I will be exploring communication avenues to these groups.

10. Community Activities:

Ryan: List from Rachel:

- a. Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan Committee meeting
- b. On Air News Segment with WOODTV
- c. Art Workshop with Hero's Corner
- d. Art Workshop at VA Clinic
- e. Art Workshop at KCVS
- f. Farm Visit open to all veterans and families
- g. Speaking engagement at the Brooks Retirement home in Cedar Springs
- h. West Michigan Veterans Coalition Meeting
- i. Popcorn at VA Clinic
- j. Stand Down planning meetings
- k. Networking with other counties at the Spring conference with the MACVC
- l. Lunch meeting with three counties to discuss our success with Operation Green Light and other outreach events.

11. Meeting adjourned at 0940 by Mary Johnson

12. Meeting transcribed by Mary Johnson

