

County of Kent Department of Veterans' Affairs



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VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

April 3, 2014 – 8:00 a.m.

82 Ionia NW, STE 380

MINUTES

Paul Potter, Chair
Fred Chambers
Mary Johnson
Harold Mast
Mel Bauman

Present: Mary Johnson, Fred Chambers, Harold Mast, Mel Bauman, Paul Potter, Wayman Britt, Carrie Roy

Guests: None

Absent: Harold Mast

1. Call to Order – Paul Potter called the meeting to order and lead the in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda/Minutes Mary Johnson moved to approve, Mel Bauman seconded. Minutes approved.

3. Staff Report:

A. Financial Status as of 04/01/2014: Ms. Roy reviewed the AFF with the committee. She pointed out the food expense for February shows \$219.00 because the donation from employees at Mercantile bank was posted to that Line item which lowered the actual amount. Total donation was \$330.00. She pointed out that 84% of the budget is leftover for April 1st. She also noted a little over \$15,000 is spent monthly on administrative costs. She noted that expenses are on track and that there are no issues or concerns. Everything is inline with past spending.

B. Emergency Needs and Burials: Ms. Roy reviewed the emergency relief and burial expenses. She noted that there was only 1 rental assistance, almost \$3,000.00 on utilities for 5 people, and \$1,800 for burials for February. No

amount for burials in March because they did not get done so there will be a higher amount for burials in March.

C. Michigan Veterans Trust Fund: Ms. Roy shared a report with the committee showing that there were 30 trust fund applications for the month of February and that she does not have a total for this point, but will have that at the next meeting.

5. Reports:

A. Claims and Recoveries: Ms. Roy referred to the next report regarding claims and recoveries. The Department filed 105 claims in the first quarter, 34 filed in February, 46 filed in March. She pointed out that these are fully developed claims. A lot more informal claims were filed. For 2014 \$58,446.00 per month is being brought in, for an annual of \$608,000.00. She pointed out that \$756,000 is being brought in per month and year to date total annual recoveries are 9 million dollars. Almost reaching 1 million dollars per month being brought in for VA benefits. Ms. Roy stated that she hopes to have more administrative support in 2014 so that she is able to do more outreach which will help the department file more claims.

6. Around the Table: Ms. Roy Shared with the committee that she would like to start a new process for the food vouchers with \$50 gift certificates that would be tracked, which would also streamline the process. The board approved the program. There was discussion on the millage. Ms. Roy stated United Veterans Council voted and will take the lead on bringing the request to the board of commissioners and will advocate for it as well. The board of commissioners appears to be on board but can not do the fundraising portion. A united front as opposed to the splintering of many groups to represent veterans was discussed. Ms. Roy feels that there is too much competition with the splintered groups and is hurting rather than helping our veterans. Board members feel the board of commissioners needs to put millage on the ballot. In last session, board of commissioners stated the board needs to lay out exactly what is needed. More letters of support requested for millage package. June 15th the board will approve millage to go forward. More support is needed prior to June, and constant communication felt would be beneficial. National conference in June was discussed. Honor guard is needed for presidential reception on June 7th and 8th. Ms. Roy will obtain a detailed agenda for the conference. Kent County was

recognized for its service at the Michigan Association of Counties. Veteran Expo was discussed and representation from all sections will be present. It is still a work in progress however.

7. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

8. Next Meeting: May 1, 2014.