

# Veterans Assistance Commission of McHenry County

## Minutes of the General Meeting

### August 18, 2011

**Chairman Joe Kersten** called the meeting of the Veterans Assistance Commission to order at 1926 the meeting took place at the Veterans & Family Services 5330 W. Elm St., McHenry IL.

**Chairman , Joe Kersten** led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Chaplain, Roger Lasko** presented the Invocation

**Secretary, Michael Wisniewski called the roll.** A quorum of officers and posts were present.

**Officer's present:** (\*Appointed)

<b>Chairman</b>	Joe Kersten	<b>Sr. Vice Chairman</b>	Ted Anderson
<b>Jr. Vice Chairman</b>		<b>VAC Inc Treasurer</b>	Gerald Raske
<b>Judge Advocate</b>	Ray Rigsby	<b>Sergeant At Arms</b>	Jim Koch
<b>McHenry County Board Rep.</b>	Ed Dvorak	<b>Parliamentarian*</b>	Ray Rigsby
<b>Chaplain*</b>	Roger Lasko	<b>IACVAC Delegate*</b>	Robert Howe Jr.
<b>IACVAC Alternate*</b>	Ray Rigsby	<b>Secretary *</b>	Michael Wisniewski

**Posts Represented:**

<b>American Legion</b>	<b>#119 Fox River Grove</b> Del <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>#171 Crystal Lake</b> Del <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>#192 Marengo</b> Del <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>#253 Richmond</b> Del <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>#265 Harvard</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>#276 Cary</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>#412 Woodstock</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>#482 Union</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>#491 McHenry</b> Del <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>#606 Hebron</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>#673 Huntley</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>#1231 Lake In the Hills</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>AMVETS</b>	<b>#245 Cary-Grove</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Veterans Of Foreign Wars</b>	<b>#4600 McHenry</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>#5040 Woodstock</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>#8249 Harvard</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>#11496 Crystal Lake</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Marine Corps League</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Polish Legion</b> Del <input type="checkbox"/> Alt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>VietNow</b> Del <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Guests</b>	Joe Kotarba, William Richards Jr., Michelle Koch	

**Officers Remarks** – No officer remarks given.

## **Routine Reports:**

**The July Minutes** – A copy of the July Minutes was made available to all Delegates and Alternates. A motion to accept the July minutes was made by Dewayne Raney and seconded by Pat Conley. A unanimous vote passed the motion.

**VAC Financial Report** – A copy of the July financial report was made available to all delegates and alternates.

*The projected VAC budget useage up to the end of July was to be 66.67% of the allotted funds. The actual VAC budget uaeage at the end of July turned out to be 45.53% of the allotted funds.*

A motion to accept the Superintendent's report was made by Randy Granath and seconded by Don Stage. A unanimous vote passed the motion.

**Public Participation** – There was no public participation.

**Correspondence** – 1) The Land Conservancy of McHenry County is offering to provide small oak trees to organizations who are doing landscaping on two dates. The trees will be available on Sunday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. See the enclosed letter for more information.

2) The Warrior Academy is hosting a keynote speaker on their student issues seminar series. The keynote speaker is to be Dr Lonise Bias and she will speak about the issues on the loss of her two sons. The event is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 7:00 PM at the McHenry High School West Campus Main Gym. See the enclosed letter for more information.

## **Committee Reports:**

*Executive Board Meeting* – The Executive Board did not meet since the last VAC meeting.

*By-Laws Committee* – The By-Laws for both the VAC and the VAC Inc. have been updated, reviewed, and approved by the VAC delegation before being submitted to the County Clerk for filing. The By-Law Committee still remains as a standing committee for future By-Law work as needed.

*Corporate Report* – The VAC Inc. held their meeting prior to the VAC general meeting.

*Public Relations Committee* – Ted Anderson reported that the IRS is seeking to revoke the tax-exempt status of a large number of military organization posts because they did not submit the proper paperwork for to retain their tax-exempt status. Local posts are encouraged to check the [www.irs.gov/charities/article](http://www.irs.gov/charities/article) website to see if their post is affected by this action.

AMVETS Post #269 offered space in their booth at the County Fair for the VAC. Jane Dorfner and Cheryl Kirsch spoke with between 60 and 80 veterans about VA Benefits. Thank you AMVETS #269 for allowing VAC Service Officers work with you at no charge to the VAC!

*Report of IACVAC Delegate* – The upcoming IACVAC Seminar will convene at Bloomington, Illinois on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and both the IACVAC Delegate, Robert Howe Jr. and the IACVAC Alternate, Ray Rigsby are planning to attend the seminar.

*Superintendents Report* – 1) The usage of VAC transportation is up compared to the 2009 transportation useage report.

2) The VAC and the IDVA will hold a seminar on the VA Pension and Aid & Attendance Benefit and how veterans can apply for these benefits. The seminar is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, September 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM at the McHenry Villa.

3) The University of Illinois focus group is planning to do a research study to determine what the most pressing needs for veterans in McHenry County are. The study will occur at the Woodstock VFW #5040 on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010 starting at 7:00 PM and involve a sampling of veterans from the WWII era up to veterans who have recently left the military service.

**Chairman Joe Kersten opened the floor to Old Business**

- 1) The VAC will get the third degree examination of the VAC Budget Proposal by the McHenry County Budget Committee and Human Relations Committee on August 25<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will begin at 9:00 AM at Conference Room "A" at the County Government Center.
- 2) The VAC wishes to extend a "Bravo Zulu" thank-you to the AMVETS organization for sharing their booth at the recent McHenry County Fair. The VAC was visited by 60 to 80 veterans seeking information on veterans benefits and other related topics.
- 3) The VAC participated in a Senior Fair on August 11<sup>th</sup> and spoke with both veterans and their family members about veterans benefits. Some 40 attendees talked with the VAC.
- 4) The VAC Superintendent, Mike Iwanicki will be attending VSO Recertification training from August 31<sup>st</sup> through September 3<sup>rd</sup> at Bloomington, Illinois. He will also teach a couple of blocks there!
- 5) The NACVSO National Conference for 2013 is pending. The Illinois NACVSO wants to host the event in Chicago and with the local VSO's providing support.

**Chairman Joe Kersten opened the floor to New Business**

- 1) *The VAC was awarded a Transit Grant of \$3000.00 for vehicle fuel and maintenance costs. This will be applied over the 2011 budget cycle*
- 2) *The VAC is submitting a request for a grant for \$10,000.00. This grant would come out of the Veterans Lottery Pot and be used to expand the VAC Outreach Program from 2 days a week to 3 days a week.*
- 3) The VAC wishes to submit a grant to cover the costs for obtaining medical opinions from outside medical sources to address medical condition arguments used in filing VA disability claims by the VAC staff in behalf of clients. Development of this grant is still on hold

**Chairman Joe Kersten opened the floor for the good of the association.**

- 1) The State of Illinois has passed legislation which now allows the State of Illinois Lottery System to expand the Veterans' Lottery to year round sales and will allow veterans organizations to sell veterans' lottery tickets through their local posts. The rules pertaining to the sale of Veterans' Scratchoff Tickets by veteran organizational posts are being finalized and will be published soon.
- 2) IDES Veterans Representative, Mike Ruffner is a contact for sending correspondence to local newspaper editors pertaining the hiring of unemployed veterans by local businesses and possible benefits to the hiring businesses in regards to taxes and such. Mike Ruffner can be contacted at IDES at telephone # 1(815)338-7100 or at michael.ruffner@illinois.gov.
- 3) The AMVETS #269 post will be open during the weekday so that veterans from the Iraq War and Afghanistan War eras can use the post computer for job searches. Please contact Ted Anderson at 1(815)219-0917.

**Chaplain, Roger Lasko presented the Benediction.**

Meeting Adjourned by Chairman Joe Kersten at 2008.

*Michael F. Wisniewski*

Respectfully Submitted

Michael F. Wisniewski - Electronically Signed