

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2009**

Members Present: Lardizzone, Carroll, Corsa, Evans, Harden, Kitson, Lank, Newstadt, Spitzfaden, Timberman and Wasson

Members Excused: Smith and Thompson

Staff Present: Davila and Reid

Guests: Charles M. Dorman (Director, VA Medical Center), Louis Wright Jr. (DAV HSC), Al Carter and James Collins (SOS), Ron Sarg (MOAA), David Rich (DOL), Betty Lou Evans (American Legion Auxiliary), Mo Morris (American Legion), Lelia White and Vivian Starnes (DAVA)

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nation's Flag.

Chairman Lardizzone opened the meeting by introducing the guests.

Mr. Reid provided the current Delaware Veterans Home pre-application with annotated corrections for the Commission to review.

MOTION BY KITSON TO ACCEPT THE DELAWARE VETERANS HOME PRE-APPLICATION AS CORRECTED FOR THE NEXT PRINTING, SECONDED BY HARDEN, MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Reid provided the Veterans Home monthly update and reported the balance of the Delaware Veterans Home Fund at \$113,502.47. He answered questions about the Home discussion followed. He distributed the latest version of the Veterans Home donation list for the Commission to review.

MOTION BY CARROLL TO ACCEPT THE CURRENT DELAWARE VETERANS HOME DONATION LIST, SECONDED BY KITSON, MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Kitson questioned why the Veterans Home Carnival was still scheduled for May 30, when at the previous meeting it had been agreed that the event would be rescheduled to another date. Mr. Reid explained the circumstances and discussion followed.

Mr. Dorman discussed the precautions the VA was implementing because of the current Swine (H1N1) Flu outbreak. He also reported on senatorial visits, announced that the Annual Veterans Summit is scheduled for May 11, 2009, and indicated that it is possible that Secretary Shinseki will attend. Mr. Dorman also briefed on the Wilmington VA performance measures, anticipated future budget, employment status, clinics and category 8. He answered questions and discussion followed.

MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT MARCH COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES, SECONDED BY CARROLL, MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Lardizzone announced the Retirement Luncheon for past Secretary of State, Dr. Harriet Smith Windsor, scheduled for May 11, 2009, at Dover Downs. The cost of the luncheon is \$40 per person; RSVP by May 6, 2009.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Wasson reported that they conducted a Northern Family Advisory Cemetery Committee (FACC) meeting on April 16, 2009. They discussed the current scheduled improvements. The Southern FACC is scheduled to meet on May 6, 2009, 6:00 pm.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Chairman Lardizzone reported that the Joint Veterans Affairs Committee will meet on April 29, 2009, at Legislative Hall and all Commissioners are invited to attend.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Newstadt (JWV) – Their annual poppy sale will kick off on May 1, 2009, which is their primary fundraiser. The bulk of those funds will go to the VA Hospital and the Delaware Veterans Home. Their annual Installation Luncheon is scheduled for May 1, 2009, at Harry's on Naamans Rd. He expressed his displeasure at the lack of medical care available in the current military system.

Corsa (VVA) – Chapter 546, in conjunction with the VFW of Georgetown, is in the process of constructing a building.

Kitson (VFW) – Their State Convention is scheduled for June 5-6, 2009. The Grand Convention for the Military Order of the Cooties is scheduled for June 7, 2009, at the Sheraton.

Evans (American Legion) – The American Legion's three main programs; the Boys State, the Girls State and the Trooper Youth Group, will be held in June. Please contact him for additional information.

Lardizzone (DAV) – May 28, 2009, will be "A Day at the Blue Rocks with DAV". Tickets are \$10 each, please contact him if you are interested. The DAV convention will be held June 26, 2009, at the Sheraton, and June 27, 2009, at the DAV Building in Camden. He was invited to attend the Connecticut Department Convention this weekend. DAV will be hosting the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Bridge on May 30, 2009. The guest speaker will be Chad Moos from DAV National Headquarters, Washington DC.

Carroll (MOPH) – He was pleased with the display of service organization plaques at the Veterans Home. MOPH is in the process of planning their Flag Day Ceremony for this year.

Lank (MOWW) – Due to their financial situation, they will only be able to donate one plaque per year and the first one will go to the Veterans Home. MOWW will be in stand down for the summer months.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Lank inquired as to the status of the Veterans Home donation “thank you” letters and as to why the Chairman’s signature is not on them. Chairman Lardizzone indicated that the issue would be addressed at the meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

Commissioner Carroll reported that legislation has been passed to designate I-95 through Delaware as part of the Purple Heart Trail. Efforts are being made to determine the signage. On May 24, 2009, the DAV is co-hosting the 20th Anniversary of the National Memorial Day Concert in Washington, DC. If you are a DAV member, there are seats available up front.

Commissioner Kitson brought up the issue of the Delaware Veterans Home not being fully occupied; partly because there is a rate difference between private and semi-private rooms. He suggested that the issue be presented to the Secretary of State that all rooms be charged the same rate in an attempt to increase the Home’s occupancy.

MOTION BY KITSON TO SUGGEST DESIGNATING ALL ROOMS AT THE VETERANS HOME BE CHARGED THE SAME RATE, REGARDLESS WHETHER THEY ARE SINGLE OR DOUBLE OCCUPANCY, SECONDED BY SPITZFADEN, MOTION CARRIED.

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Commissioner Spitzfaden questioned the limitations of services being provided at the Veterans Homes. Discussion followed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: MAY 26, 2009 (10:00 AM)

**LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE**

ADJOURNED