

LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission

# MONTHLY REPORT

February 2023



Prepared By:  
Christa Hammers  
Superintendent

# AGENDA

## MEETING 3/22/2023

---

- I. Call to Order & Salute to the Colors
- II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
- III. Chaplin's Prayer
- IV. Roll Call of Officers
- V. Reading & Approval of the Meeting Minutes
- VI. Public Comment
- VII. Superintendent's Report
  - a. Office Activity
  - b. Office Events
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
  - a. Nominations/Elections of Officers
- X. For the Good of the Commission
- XI. Closing Prayer
- XII. Adjournment

# Meeting MINUTES

2/22/2022

Call to Order & Salute to the Colors

President Chuck Erb called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Delegates & Alternates Present

Greg Stock - Am Legion- Marseilles / Bill Luther - VFW - Ottawa / Paul Siembab - MC League - Oglesby / Lance Sires - Am Legion - Marseilles / Elton Murphy- VFW - LaSalle/ Kenneth Harden - Am Legion - Ottawa / Gary Graffis - AmVets - Ottawa / John Duback - AmVets - Ottawa / Jack Leininger - Am Legion - Marseilles / Roscoe Mazur - Am Legion - Oglesby / John Koehler- Am Legion - Oglesby / Dennis Znaniacki - Am Legion - Peru / Other: Andy Ruggerio- Peru Memorial Group

## Officers Present

President – Chuck Erb  
Vice President – Harold Olsen- Excused  
Guard – Bill Paterson  
Chaplin – Jim Ebner

## Employees Present

Christa Hammers – Superintendent  
Lissa Olson - Assistant Superintendent  
James Sturtevant- VSO- In-Training- Excused  
Emily Hackler- VSO - In-Training  
Kelli Rietgraf - Administrative Assistant

# Meeting

# MINUTES

Meeting started at 5:00pm.

Approval of Meeting minutes as presented:

Motion by Bill Luther and seconded by Lance Sires. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment - None

Superintendent's Report

Christa discussed Events that the office has coming up. The Veterans Expo 2023- held on May 18th from 11-3 out at the IL Valley Regional Airport. Partnered with TBM this year and hoping to have a great turn out. Hines is coming out for a Registry Exam for Burn Pit Veterans. Also, Caregiver support is putting on a knitting class in April. Both flyers attached.

Christa also discussed training coming up. James went and received his PIV Card. (excused today due to this) Emily is to take basic benefits in April and Kelli will take the intro course in March.

Christa then discussed the update to the General Assistance program. Working with Project Headspace and Timing for additional monies for our Veterans to cover "extras" our assistance does not.

Christa then went over that we have to have the OMA Certificates for each Del/Alt by March 1st. Along with the paperwork for who is each posts representatives. Please make sure these are timely.

Christa discussed the January claims summary. We have already hit over \$1 million in benefits for our Veterans and Families. We continue to see new Veterans daily and hoping to get James & Emily up to speed so we can lessen wait times for appointments.

Christa made everyone aware that this is Chuck and Jim's last meeting in their official capacity. They have both done wonders for our office and we are grateful for their time that they have given to our Veterans & Families.

Christa then went over the fact that elections will be held at the next meeting- make sure you are present if wanting a position.

# Meeting

# MINUTES

Superintendent's report was motioned for approval by Dennis Znaniacki and seconded by Lance Sires. Motion passed unanimously.

### Old Business

OMA Certificate Reminder: Need to be a copy in office by March 1st.

### New Business- None.

### For the Good of the Commission

Dennis Znaniacki brought up that the Vietnam/Desert Storm/9.11 Wall will be in Peru August 24-28, Asked VAC to set up a table. - Christa Agreed that would be a great idea and the office would be in touch.

Elton Murphy stated that LaSalle VFW is hosting burger night on 2/23 and they are having a car show for Memorial Day.

Jim Ebner shared that there is a wild game feed at the Oglesby Legion on Sunday Feb 26 and the doors open at 11. Also that the VA Home is preparing poppies and they need volunteers to make about 17,000 more.

Bill Luther shared that the Ottawa VFW is hosting a fish fry every Friday through lent. Lissa shared that on April 18th her and Emily will be in Sandwich for a outreach event. Also, Todd Volker from Habitat is still looking for volunteers to help build.

Jim Ebner introduced John Koehler as the new alternate for the Oglesby Am. Legion.

### Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Elton Murphy and seconded by Bill Luther.  
Motion passed unanimously at 5:37pm.

## FEBRUARY:

Veterans Expo 2023:

Update on Vendors/Sponsors from Lissa.

Training:

James received his PIV card and although there were some issues, he finally is able to take some clients. We will have him solo starting May 1st.

Christa and Lissa went to Peoria for the IACVAC winter meeting. We learned about a company that is charging our Veterans for their DD214's. While not illegal- their process is not great. Let your fellow Veterans know that our office can assist them in getting their documents- free.

Office Updates:

Christa is working on getting some quotes for the half wall removal/glass door inserts or door replacements and walling off the employee kitchen area. Waiting on one more before making any decisions on what we can accomplish this year.

We were able to get some swag purchased for our outreach events, coozies, fridge magnets, small flags and small notepads. We refreshed our pens and also ordered some new table covers for our outreach tables. Thankfully, all came in under budget and will last us a long time.

Our office will be attending the Studstill Home, Lawn and Lifestyle Event at the Peru Mall this Saturday- March 25th from 11-4.

Christa and Lissa had a meeting with T-Mobile for a "phone" for Veterans to connect with resources they may need. Mental health, healthcare, transportation- completely customizable. In discussion with how that would work for our office as that was not something we had in budget.



Our Office  
**EVENTS**

Total Percentage	Month Submitted	Through	2023 Amount	Monthly Amount
10%	10/13/2022	Dec-23	\$2,475.52	\$165.92
DIC/A&A	4/19/2022	Dec-23	\$26,666.10	\$1,949.89
DIC	6/7/2022	Dec-23	\$29,066.66	\$1,562.74
80%	9/6/2022	Dec-23	\$30,205.60	\$2,292.15
10%	7/29/2022	Dec-23	\$2,933.44	\$165.92
60%	10/25/2022	Dec-23	\$21,009.65	\$1,440.65
20%	8/10/2022	Dec-23	\$4,707.32	\$327.99
40%	11/1/2022	Dec-23	\$10,608.32	\$825.86
10%	12/28/2021	Dec-23	\$4,001.92	\$165.92
90%	3/9/2022	Dec-23	\$32,450.56	\$2,482.01
70%	8/3/2022	Dec-23	\$ 32,040.75	\$ 1,804.06
Burial	2/2/2023	Dec-23	\$780.00	\$780.00
30%	2/4/2023	Dec-23	\$8,514.87	\$508.05
20%	2/5/2023	Dec-23	\$4,591.86	\$327.99
DIC	2/7/2023	Dec-23	\$20,315.62	\$1,562.74
70%	2/3/2023	Dec-23	\$29,020.74	\$2,047.06
80%	2/9/2023	Dec-23	\$37,658.29	\$2,094.15
DIC	2/14/2023	Dec-23	\$26,516.33	\$1,894.58
MOD	2/14/2023	Dec-23	\$9,687.67	\$9,687.67
10%	2/10/2023	Dec-23	\$2,322.88	\$165.92
40%	2/24/2023	Dec-23	\$11,149.62	\$811.96
50%	2/26/2023	Dec-23	\$14,031.80	\$1,141.82
70%	2/23/2023	Dec-23	\$54,284.72	\$1,977.06
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$415,040.24</b>	<b>\$36,182.11</b>
<b>Year to Date Total</b>			<b>\$1,434,701.89</b>	<b>\$117,115.92</b>

**Group Numbers:**

**PTSD: 23 Flutes for Vets: 14 Senior Resource Group: 15**

Office Visits	80	Initial Claims	29
Phone	667	Appeals	8
Outstation	31	Board Appeals	1
Mendota	9	VA Healthcare	6
Streator	12	Pension/DIC	3
Intent to File	11	Other	101

**OFFICE OVERALL TOTALS:**

We have continued getting grants for submitted claims, bringing our total for FY23 to just under \$1.5 million so far.

We continue to strive to do all that we can for our Veterans & Families.