

## **LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of January 22, 2014**

Meeting was opened in due form by Chairman Ebner. A roll call of officers was taken showing the chaplain excused and all other officers present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were presented along with the minutes of the December 18, 2013 special meeting. All questions pertaining to the minutes of those two meetings were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

New business: The January 2014 Service Officer's Report was presented. All questions pertaining to the Service Officer's Report were answered. Motion was made by Nick Nekrosius and seconded by John Duback that the Service Officer's Report be accepted as presented. Motion Passed.

A discussion ensued between the delegates pertaining to the etiquette of a flag presentation to a family at a burial. After a spirited debate as to proper procedure, Superintendent Rue stated that the burial detail should always honor the requests of the family as long as their request is not disrespectful to the US FLAG CODE Etiquette. All present were happy to accept that view.

Motion was made by Jerry Fuchs and seconded by Larry Graham we adjourn. Motion passed.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Delegates Larry Graham, DAV Chapter 86; Nick Nekrosius, American Legion Post 526; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Jerry Fuchs, American Legion Post 570; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Jim Nanowski, American Legion Post 33; and Alternates John Duback, American Legion Post 33; and Bob Riley, American Legion Post 235 and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237

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**SERVICE OFFICERS REPORT**

**MARCH 2014**

WWII, Mendota awarded A&A 6/13 – 12/14 \$31,158

Vietnam, Ottawa awarded 100% w/SMC and Spouse 12/11 – 12/14 w/back pay  
\$103,890

Vietnam widow, Marseilles awarded \$1000 from state for burial benefits

Vietnam, Marseilles awarded 20% 1/13 – 12/14 \$6,192

Vietnam widow, Marseilles awarded \$1000 from state for burial benefits

Vietnam, Ottawa awarded 60% 8/12 – 12/14 \$29,151

Vietnam, LaSalle awarded 70% 9/11 – 12/14 with back pay \$51,168

TOTAL VA Benefits March 2014 \$223,559

Social Security 0

**TOTAL BENEFITS YEAR TO DATE \$494,959**

SERVICE OFFICERS REPORT

JANUARY  
2014

Vietnam, Marseilles awarded 70% 5/12 -12/13 \$24,567

Vietnam, Mendota awarded 70% from 50% on appeal 1/10 – 12/13 \$22,104

Vietnam widow, awarded DIC on appeal 12/08 – 12/13 \$71,290; \$2000 burial benefit from USDVA and \$1000 from the State of Illinois burial benefit

Vietnam widow, Marseilles awarded accrued VA benefits, DIC, burial benefits and State of Illinois \$1000 for a total of \$13,699

Vietnam veteran, Sheridan awarded 40% from 20% on appeal 3/12 – 12/13 \$5264

WWII veterans, Ottawa awarded housebound pension 12/12 – 12/13 at \$1249 monthly total \$16,022

Son awarded accrued benefits from deceased parent \$1165

Gulf, Earlville awarded 10% 3/12 – 12/13 \$2691

Iraq, Streator awarded 50% with 3 dependents 12/12 – 12/13 \$21,130

Vietnam widow, Wenona \$1000 State of Illinois

Vietnam widow, Streator \$1000 State of Illinois

Vietnam, Spring Valley awarded 100% IUE 12/11 – 12/13 with one dependent \$76,225

WWII, Ottawa awarded Aid and Attendance \$2/13 – 12/13 \$12,243

TOTAL VA Benefits .	JANUARY 2014	\$271,400
SOCIAL SECURITY		0

## **LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of March 26, 2014**

Meeting was opened in due form by Chairman Jim Ebner. A roll call of officers was taken showing Vice-Chairman as being excused and all other officers present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were presented to the delegates. All questions pertaining to the minutes were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

New Business: Service Officer's Report was presented for the month of March. All questions pertaining to the Service Officer's Report were answered. Motion was made by Nick Nekrosius and seconded by George Mason that the Service Officer's Report be accepted as presented. Motion passed.

George Mason gave a brief report on the LaSalle Veterans Home. He stated that the Illinois Department of Veterans Director, Erica Borggen attended the quarterly meeting. She stated that Obamacare would have no effect on the LaSalle Veterans Home. She further stated that there will be a new state veterans home built in Chicago, Illinois. All paperwork needed for the project will be completed by March of 2014. They hope to break ground in the fall of 2014. It should take approximately one year to complete the veteran's home and have all of the staff hired so that 100% of their beds can be opened. Our current LaSalle Veterans' Home has only 184 of their 200 beds filled with 25 veterans applicants on the short list and 29 applicants on the long list. The state does not intend to have more than 184 of the 200 beds filled so they won't have to hire the extra needed staff that they budget for annually.

Superintendent Rue stated that at the end of the fiscal year the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs budget must have a zero balance so the additional millions in dollars that weren't spent that fiscal year are turned over to the General Fund for payment of other state bills. George Mason and Nick Nekrosius stated they wished Superintendent Rue were there to ask the pointed questions that are needed. Every time they ask a question that the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs does not want to answer they either ignore the questions or answer them with a lie. On such example is Erica Borggen, Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs telling them that no Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs remaining budgeted dollars are turned over to the State of Illinois General Fund.

A motion was made by Lance Sires and seconded by Howard Gast that we adjourn. Motion passed.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Delegates Douglas Grieve, American Legion Post 260; George Mason, VVFW Post 2470; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Nick Nekrosius, American Legion Post 426; Alternates Bob Riles, American Legion Post 235; John Duback, American Legion Post 33 and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237

## **SERVICE OFFICER'S REPORT**

**APRIL 2014**

Vietnam, Ottawa awarded 10% 2/11 – 12/14 \$7444

Vietnam, Streator awarded 60% with spouse 12/11 – 12/14 \$40,932

Vietnam widow, Marseilles awarded DIC, burial benefits and State of Illinois burial benefit 5/12 – 12/14 \$25,368

Vietnam, Marseilles awarded 40% 9/12 – 12/14 \$15,579

Gulf, LaSalle awarded 20% 3/12 – 12/14 \$8666

Gulf, Princeton awarded 80% 2/12 – 12/14 \$54,141

Korean, Marseilles awarded 100% with spouse 3/12 – 12/14 \$99,561

Vietnam, Princeton awarded 40% w/special monthly compensation, back pay to 12/14 \$29,179

TOTAL VA BENEFITS APRIL 2014 \$280,870

SOCIAL SECURITY 0

TOTAL BENEFITS YEAR TO DATE \$775,829

LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of April 23, 2014

Meeting was opened in due form by Chairman Jim Ebner. A roll call of officers was taken showing the Chaplin and Sgt. at Arms excused and all other officers present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were presented. All questions pertaining to the minutes were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated the minutes would stand approved as presented.

Old business was discussed. Once again there were concerns pertaining to the LaSalle Veterans Home and the lack of staff needed to open up all of the beds. It is hard to understand how the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs can appropriate the monies needed to hire additional staff so that all of our beds can be opened, but yet the Governor elects not to permit the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs to hire the staff needed so the LaSalle Veterans Home can operate at 100% bed full capacity. Those dollars not spent that fiscal year are returned to the General Fund of the State of Illinois at the end of the fiscal year if it hasn't been expended.

New Business: Service Officer's Report was presented. As of April of 2014 our VAC office advocacy work has brought in \$775,829 in financial benefits for the veterans claims that they were representing. All other questions pertaining to the Service Officer's Report were answered. A motion was made by Nick Nekrosius and seconded by Lance Sires that we accept the Service Officer's Report as presented. Motion passed.

A motion was made by George Mason and seconded by Howard Gast that we adjourn. Motion passed.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Delegates Nick Nekrosius, American Legion Post 426; George Mason, VFW Post 2470; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Jerry Fuchs, American Legion Post 570; Alternate John Duback, American Legion Post 33 and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237

**SERVICE OFFICER'S REPORT  
MAY 2014**

Gulf, LaSalle awarded 60% with spouse 8/12 – 12/14 \$31,836

Vietnam, Somonauk awarded 10% 8/11 – 12/14 \$5330

WWII, Dalzell awarded \$90 per month 10/12 – 12/14 \$2340

Vietnam Streator awarded 10 and SMC with back pay 12/14 \$9522

Vietnam widow, Streator awarded burial benefits \$2039

Vietnam widow, LaSalle awarded \$1000 burial benefit from the State of Illinois

WWII widow, Mendota awarded A and A 1/13 – 12/14 \$26,712

Vietnam DePue, awarded 70% with dependent and SMC from 50% an extra \$514 per month \$13,364

WWII widow, Ottawa awarded A and A 5/13 – 12/14 \$21,147

WWII widow, Ottawa awarded burial benefits \$1022

TOTAL VA Benefits May 2014 \$114,312

Total SS Benefits 0

TOTAL Benefits year to date \$890,141

## Minutes of the May 28, 2014 LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission

Meeting was opened in due form by Chairman Jim Ebner. Roll call of officers was taken showing Vice-Chairman excused and all other officers present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. All questions pertaining to those minutes were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated the minutes would stand approved as presented.

Old Business: Once again the delegates discussed the LaSalle Veterans Home and its vacant 20 beds. It was concluded that the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and the governor have no intent of having 100% of the beds filled. Be assured all other state veterans home facilities and future such homes will be operating at 100% beds filled.

New Business: Service Officers' Report was presented. As of May 2014 our VAC office advocacy work has brought in \$890,144 in financial benefits for the veteran claims that they were representing. All other questions pertaining to the Service Officers' Report were answered. A motion was made by Nick Nekrosius and seconded by George Mason that the Service Officers' Report be accepted as presented. Motion passed.

Delegates and Alternates discussed the times and places that their organizations would be holding Memorial Day Services. There is obviously one being held in your area. There is no excuse for veterans not getting out to honor their war dead.

Motion was made by Lance Sires and seconded by Howard Gast to adjourn. Motion passed.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Delegates George Mason, VFW Post 2470; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Douglas Grieve, American Legion Post 260; Jim Nanowski, American Legion Post 33; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Nick Nekrosius, American Legion Post 426; Alternates, Bob Riley, VFW Post 2470; John Duback, American Legion Post 33; and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237



## SERVICE OFFICERS' REPORT

JUNE 2014

Gulf, Wenona awarded 70% with dependents 4/12 – 12/14  
\$52,338

WWII, Ottawa awarded A&A 11/12 – 12/14 \$28,938

Vietnam, Ottawa awarded accrued benefits, DIC, burial  
benefits, and state burial benefits 3//13 – 12/14 \$32,747

Vietnam, Lee Center, awarded 70% 11/07 – 12/14 \$102,244

Vietnam, LaSalle awarded 20% 2/10 – 12/14 \$13,308

**TOTAL VA BENEFITS JUNE 2014 \$229,575**

Social Security 0

**TOTAL BENEFITS YEAR TO DATE \$1,119,716**

## LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of June 25, 2014

Meeting was opened in due form by Chairman Jim Ebner. A roll call of officers was taken showing all officers present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. All questions pertaining to those minutes were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

New Business: The Service Officers' Report was presented. All questions pertaining to the Service Officers' Report were answered. A motion was made by Nick Nekrosius and seconded by Jerry Fuchs that the Service Officers' Report be accepted as presented. Motion passed.

Superintendent Rue told the delegates and alternates that the LaSalle County Board was getting a new computer program with new software. As a result, the 2015 budget recommendation form will not be sent out until the end of July if the new computer software is up and running.

All delegates and alternates gave a brief summation of the Memorial Day ceremonies which were held in their area. It appears that all areas of LaSalle County had adequate ceremonies for those wishing to attend and salute their dead.

A motion was made by Howard Gast and seconded by John Duback that we adjourn. Motion passed.

Members present: Delegates Nick Nekrosius, American Legion 426; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Jerry Fuchs, American Legion Post 570; Douglas Grieve, American Legion Post 260; James Nanouski, American Legion Post 33; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Jack Leininger, VFW Post 5506; Alternates John Duback, American Legion Post 33; and Bob Riley, VFW Post 2470; and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237



**COUNTY OF LA SALLE**  
**VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION**

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**MARTIN J. RUE**  
Superintendent  
(815) 433-1761

LaSalle County Courthouse  
Room 103A  
119 W. Madison Street  
Ottawa, Illinois 61350

July 16, 2014

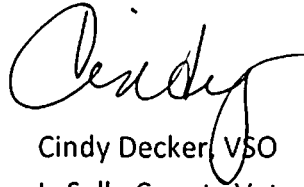
TO: LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission Delegates and Alternates

From: Cindy Decker, VSO

Dear Delegates and Alternates:

I will be leaving for a few weeks on vacation so I won't be calling you to remind you of the monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 23, 2014. Marty will be at the Downtown Courthouse between 4 and 5 p.m. with the meeting starting at 5:00. I'll be back on Monday, August 4 if anyone has any questions.

Sincerely,



Cindy Decker, VSO  
LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission

## **LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of July 23, 2014**

Meeting opened in due form by Chairman Ebner. A roll call of officers showed Chaplin excused and all other officers present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. All questions pertaining to those minutes were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

New Business: The Service Officer's Report was presented. As of July 2014 our veterans and their families have received \$1,326,549 in financial benefits from the service/non-service connected disabilities claims. All questions pertaining to the Service Officer's Report were answered. A motion was made by Jerry Fuchs and seconded by Nick Nekrosius that the Service Officer's Report be accepted as presented. Motion passed.

Superintendent Rue handed out information pertaining to the VA Home Improvement and Structural Alternation Benefits (H.I.S.A.) This program provides dollars for those needing a wheelchair ramp for their home. Those needing the ramp as a result of a service connected disability are entitled to a higher monetary grant than those who need the ramp for a non-service connected disability. Nick Nekrosius requested that the H.I.S.A. information and application be sent to all delegates and alternates.

Each line item of the LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission 2015 Budget Recommendation Forms was reviewed by the delegates and alternates present. Upon completion of the LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission recommendations for appropriations needed in each line item a motion was made by Larry Graham and seconded by Lance Sires that the 2015 Budget Recommendations be passed by those present and presented to the appropriate county board committee for their consideration and support. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Howard Gast and seconded by Bob Riley that we adjourn. Motion passed

MEMBERS PRESENT: Larry Graham, DAV Chapter 86; Nick Nekrosius, American Legion Post ; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Jerry Fuchs, American Legion Post 570 and Alternate Bob Riley, VFW Post 2470; and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237

# SERVICE OFFICERS REPORT

## AUGUST 2014

WWII widow, Ottawa, awarded A&A 5/13-12/14 \$25,907

Korea, Marseilles refund of nursing home charge \$18,163

Vietnam widow, west end, awarded \$10,000 life insurance

WWII, Ottawa awarded A&A with his spouse 12/13 – 12/14  
\$27,105

Gulf, Seneca awarded 100% with dependents 9/12 – 12/14  
\$86,464

Gulf, Marseilles awarded 60% with dependents 2/12 – 12/14  
\$28,536

TOTAL VA BENEFITS AUGUST 2014 \$196,175

SOCIAL SECURITY 0

TOTAL BENEFITS YEAR TO DATE \$1,522,724

## LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of September 24, 2014

Meeting was opened in due form by Chairman Ebner. A roll call of officers was taken showing Vice Chairman excused and all other officers present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. All questions pertaining to the minutes were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

Old Business: Chairman Rue stated that Hines VA Hospital paid for all repairs on the LaSalle VA Clinic's volunteer van and brought a brand new van in to service our veteran's transportation needs to Hines VA Hospital. This saved the county veterans organizations over \$24,000 for said purpose.

Chairman Rue was asked to be on a teleconference call with V.I.S.N. 12 on October 14, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. He will discuss the need for a policy change needed to activate the veteran's clinics ability to send a medical team to a housebound veteran's home to evaluate his medical needs. He will further discuss the need for VA health service personnel to write letters diagnosing the veteran's disabilities so that veterans can continue their appeal for state or federal benefits. He will also discuss the need for federal housing vouchers for our homeless veterans. Currently those vouchers are limited to Cook County and collar counties to Cook County.

New Business: The service officer's report was presented. As of August 2014 the LaSalle County veterans have received \$1,522,724 in financial benefits thru the VA and Social Security. All questions pertaining to the service officer's report were answered. A motion was made by George Mason and seconded by Lance Sires that the service officer's report be accepted as presented. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Howard Gast and seconded by Doug Grieves that we adjourn. Motion passed.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Delegates George Mason, VFW Post 2470; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Jim Nanowski, American Legion Post 33; Douglas Grieve, American Legion Post 260; Charles Erb, VFW Post 5506; Alternate Bob Riley, VFW Post 2470; and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237

## LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of October 22, 2014

Meeting opened in due form by Chairman Jim Ebner. A roll call of officers was taken showing Sgt at Arms excused and all other officer present.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and all questions pertaining to the minutes were answered. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

Old Business: Delegates discussed the less than 80 percent beds filled at the LaSalle Veterans' Home. Mantino Veterans Home can fill up to 355 beds at 100 percent beds filled, Quincy Veterans Home can fill up to 550 beds for 100 percent beds filled. The soon to be build Chicago Veterans Home 200 bed facility will fill when completed 200 beds for 100 percent full. The LaSalle Veterans Home 200 bed facility is only allowed to fill 178 veterans beds maximum. Something is severely wrong with this picture. Get everyone to contact their state congressman and senator asking that they let LaSalle Veterans Home to fill its 200 bed facility.

Delegates and Alternate discussed their area Veterans Day ceremonies. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Delegates and alternates were reminded that our office should be notified of any change in their posts delegates and alternates to the Commission. November 19, 2014 will be our annual meeting and election of officers for the 2015 fiscal year.

Motion was made by George Mason and seconded by Howard Gast that we adjourn. Motion passed.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Delegates Douglas Grieve, American Legion Post 260; Nick Nekrosius, American Legion Post 426; Jerry Fuchs, American Legion Post 570; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; John Leininger, VFW Post 5506; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 49; George Mason, VFW Post 2470; Alternate William Luther, VFW Post 2470; and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237



***LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission minutes of November 19, 2014***

Meeting was opened in due form by Chairman Jim Ebner. A roll call of officers was taken showing Chairman and Chaplin present and Vice-Chairman and Sgt. at Arms excused.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. Being no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Ebner stated that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

New Business: Superintendent Rue stated that he has been on teleconference phone calls on a monthly basis with V.I.S.N. 12. This is a great opportunity to get questions answered pertaining to VA services and other benefits. It is also a great opportunity to let the VA know what problems the veterans are going through with the VA and an opportunity to work together for a solution to resolve these problems.

Election of officers was held at our annual meeting for fiscal year 2015. The LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission has elected the following:

Chairman – Jim Ebner  
Vice-Chairman - Nick Nekrosius  
Chaplin – Doug Grieve  
Sgt. at Arms – John Duback

The Commission further reaffirmed the election of Superintendent Martin Rue for four more years.

A motion was made by Lance Sires and seconded by Howard Gast that we adjourn. Motion passed.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Delegates Nick Nekrosius, American Legion Post 426; Jim Nanowski, American Legion Post 33; Howard Gast, American Legion Post 549; Lance Sires, American Legion Post 235; Doug Grieves, American Legion Post 260; Alternates William Luther, VFW Post 2470; Chuck Erb, VFW Post 5506; John Duback, American Legion Post 33; and Chairman Jim Ebner, American Legion Post 237