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LASALLE COUNTY VETERANS
ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

MONTHLY REPORT

AUGUST 2022 / PREPARED BY CHRISTA HAMMERS

MEETING

8/24/2022

- 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. New Hire Introduction
 - c. Office Events
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
 - a. PACT Act Passing
- X. For the Good of the Commission
- XI. Closing Prayer
- XII. Adjournment



AGENDA

Meeting MINUTES

07/27/2022

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 / Tom Troutman- VFW- Mendota / John Duback - AmVets - Ottawa / Lance Sires - Am Legion - Marseilles / Dennis Znaniacki- Am Legion - Peru / Elton Murphy- VFW - LaSalle / Other: Andy Ruggerio- Peru Memorial Group / Roscoe Mazur- Am Legion - Oglesby

Officers Present

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

Employees Present

Christa Hammers – Superintendent
Lissa Olson - Assistant Superintendent
Beth Caldera - Receptionist

Meeting MINUTES

Approval of Meeting minutes as presented:

Motion by Harold Olsen and seconded by Bill Patterson. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment - None

Superintendent's Report

The office has increased in the number of claims- totaling 43 initial claims and 29 intents submitted in June. Up from only 29 initial claims in May. We are still well over where we were last year for compensation numbers for our Veterans and Families.

Christa discussed the Vietnam Pinning Ceremony and its success.

Christa discussed the interviews. We have went through the applications so far and have a few more to go in order to proceed with any candidates. We have interviews the week of August 1 and will be interviewing 9 total in hopes of finding a suitable fit.

Christa also discussed the group numbers being down since a lot of the members are hit hard by inflation, they are taking a few weeks off here and there.

Christa discussed the wonderful donations received from TBM Avengers, Connecting Point Computers and Veteran Michael Hooper for our Programs and Events. Also went over the programs that we are looking to start- Service Dog and Christmas for Veterans/families and the VA Home. Also, refreshed on the PTSD/Workout Program.

Lissa briefly discussed the Health and Wellness fair that we have coming up August 17- from 1p-4p. That will bring in many vendors focusing on whole body wellness. Also discussed new training for those who don't process claims that the IACVAC is putting together.

Christa briefly went over that our fire extinguishers were out of date/recalled and we had those fixed and updated and new signage for the outside of the office.

Lastly, Christa went over the PACT Act and how it is back in the Senate and hopefully passing to the President soon.

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

Meeting

MINUTES

Old Business - None

New Business -

Jim Ebner presented his guest- Roscoe Mazur- stating that he was going to be taking over for him come next election cycle.

Elton Murphy asked if the VFW could put money towards the Christmas Program that the VAC was arranging with the VA Home. It was agreed that this would be possible.

Commission went into closed session to discuss salaries for employees-
Motion to go into closed session made by: Harold Olsen and seconded by Bill Patterson.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to come out of closed session made by: Dennis Znaniiecki and seconded by Elton Murphy. Motion passed unanimously.

Commission discussed the budget. Approval for this years budget/resolutions:
Motion made by Lance Sires, seconded by Harold Olsen.
Motion passed unanimously.

For the Good of the Commission -

Dennis Znaniiecki stated that IDOT was hiring for "snowbirds" and stated that there are full-time positions available if anyone knew of anything.

Elton Murphy stated that the VFW was having a Burger Fry from 5-8 in LaSalle, every fourth Thursday.

Lissa discussed the term lengths and when we would be sending out for information on new delegates/alternates.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Elton Murphy and seconded by Dennis Znaniiecki.
Motion passed unanimously at 5:53 pm.

July Office Activity			
Office Visits	78	Initial Claims	50
Phone	538	Appeals	27
Outstation	13	Board Appeals	0
Mendota	5	VA Healthcare	2
Streator	8	VA Pension	4
Intent to File	3	Other	546

Health & Wellness Fair- August 17 2022:

We had quite a few entities out for our Veterans/Families. They were HWAVE, Hines Eligibility, Maitri Path to Wellness, Hero Nutrition, Flutes for Vets, Tranquility Massage, Acres of Peace, St. Margaret's Dietician and M Mind and Body Yoga.

This event was put on by our office to get the word out for our Veterans/Families to understand that there are many different ways to get ourselves healthy, not just with therapy/medication. It was a great event- hoping to do something more soon.

New VSO Update:

We have a new hire- James Sturtevant, Navy Veteran and he will give a brief introduction to himself and what he hopes to accomplish/learn here with us.

Group Numbers: 14 PTSD 2 VR&E

Signage:

The business that we ordered through had a part break on one of their printers- so there is a delay in the processing of our order. We hope that it gets fixed and completed soon, but they didn't give a definitive timeline.



Our Office
OVERVIEW

July Claims Summary				
Total Percentage	Month Submitted	Through	2022 Amount	Monthly Amount
100%	8/11/2021	Dec-22	\$ 76,080.46	\$3,332.06
Burial	7/11/2022	Dec-22	\$ 1,128.00	\$1,128.00
90%	6/13/2022	Dec-22	\$ 24,617.69	\$1,903.13
MOD	5/5/2022	Dec-22	\$ 3,517.84	\$3,517.84
Burial	5/5/2022	Dec-22	\$ 2,000.00	\$2,000.00
DIC	5/5/2022	Dec-22	\$ 26,520.40	\$1,437.66
100%	2/22/2021	Dec-22	\$ 65,951.63	\$3,636.17
10%	4/21/2022	Dec-22	\$ 2,442.24	\$152.64
10%	5/3/2022	Dec-22	\$ 2,136.96	\$152.64
30%	4/29/2022	Dec-22	\$ 6,105.63	\$467.39
100%	9/21/2022	Dec-22	\$ 69,289.94	\$3,915.42
70%	5/18/2022	Dec-22	\$ 25,948.64	\$1,659.95
70%	7/26/2022	Dec-22	\$ 22,949.25	\$1,529.95
40%	4/6/2021	Dec-22	\$ 15,685.89	\$673.28
10%	7/12/2022	Dec-22	\$ 1,831.68	\$152.64
80%	4/12/2011	Dec-22	\$ 204,732.12	\$1,926.43
40%	2/9/2021	Dec-22	\$ 8,079.36	\$673.28
		Total	\$559,017.73	\$28,258.48
		Year to Date Total	\$3,868,327.47	\$232,455.31

OFFICE OVERALL TOTALS:

We have exceeded any goals that we had previous years and continue to do everything we can to get our Veterans/Families the benefits they are eligible for. We had the highest overall in 2019, totaling just over \$2.9million. With last years total being just over \$2.6 million. We have far surpassed that this year, with no intentions of "easing up".

Programs:

Completed the Application for the Service Dog Program. You will find a flyer attached. This program is mainly run off of donations and benefits Veterans that are looking to get a dog trained with a Partner Program to be a Service Animal.



Our Office
OVERVIEW

NEED TO KNOW:

We have training again in September, this time in Peoria. We will be out of office from September 19-23. If anyone would like to come in and discuss their claim or has questions, please take these dates into consideration and we will be happy to assist you as soon as possible. Our office will be open- with Beth and James available to answer any questions they can or relay any immediate needs.

Legislation Update:

H.R.3967

Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021

We have attached a overview of the new information regarding this bill, put together graciously by the VAC of Sangamon County.

(330 ILCS 45/) Military Veterans Assistance Act

There is a trailer bill in the works. This bill will hopefully alleviate the issues that some counties are having with the "grey" areas of what exactly is run by the VAC and the Counties separately and what the County shall provide to the VAC. This should be presented in the veto session in November.



Update On
LEGISLATION