

## WINNEBAGO COUNTY COUNCIL OF VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS

**DATE:** October 10, 2019 @ 9:30 AM  
**LOCATION:** J.P. Coughlin Building  
**PRESENT:** Jeff Bucholtz Judy Steckbauer Ron Griffin  
Francis Mathe Pete Hennes Jeff Murphy  
Bill Trombley Roy Rogers Duane Canon  
James Meinke Dave Mix Rich Martin  
Michael Dart Timber Smith Gary Allen  
David Steinert

### **1. Call To Order**

Jeff Bucholtz called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM and everyone welcomed.

### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Jeff Bucholtz led pledge of allegiance and moment of silence.

### **3. Roll Call/Introductions**

Skipped Roundtable Introductions.

### **5. Old Business**

MVM – Flag retirement facility pretty much done. Still have to come up with how to get ashes out. Picture passed around. There is a drop box for flags.

-MVM Sportsman Raffle Tickets now available. \$50 for 52 weeks of raffles.

### **5. New Business**

Roundtable of VSO events.

Bill Trombley – grant for veteran entrepreneurs. FVTC got 2 grants and is sponsoring 2 veterans. 8 veterans are currently in the class. Explained program. \$2,500 after the training to help defray initial costs. Next session starts Feb. 2020. If anyone interested, contact Bill.

### **6. Informational Handouts & Remarks from CVSO**

-VA Emergency Room Fact Sheet distributed. Jeff asked all to put this up at the individual Posts. Try to talk about at the meetings because steps have to be followed and ER has to code as emergency for the VA to make payment.

-Jeff talked about the letter that went out from the VA regarding smoking on their campuses. The first name on the letter is incorrect on all the letters. There was not a data breach, just some glitch in the system. Another letter that the VA sent out recently regarding HIPPA and the sharing of records with other agency. It is part of the Mission Act and the veteran being outsourced so the private provider and VA can share those medical records. This is about coordinating care for efficiency. No other urgent care facilities have opened up yet and probably won't until Optimum takes over our region. Kind of in a lull on this issue and probably no changes until next year March/April.

-Commissary Exchange privileges have been expanded to certain veterans and caregivers. This expansion includes Purple Heart recipients, former Prisoners of War, veterans with service-connected disabilities less than 100%, caregivers or family caregivers enrolled as the primary caregiver for VA purposes and Medal of Honor recipients. This patronage expansion applies to commissary, exchange, and MWR Category C activities at DOD and DHS installations in the US and US territories and possessions.

-Jeff thanked everyone for pushing the Blue Water Navy issue with their Posts. We saw an influx of people coming in. No final decisions until next year though. We still don't know how the VA will handle retroactive dates. Will it be the date of the law or if previously denied, will it go back to that original denial date? In a lull on this issue.

-The office has seen a lot of reductions in ratings lately, especially when vet asking for a re-evaluation. Jeff believes that this goes in cycles and the current thought process is to reduce. This just can't be blamed on Milwaukee because of the National Work Que the claim can be worked anyway in the country. Jeff is not trying to discourage veterans for filing for increases but we do have to be cautious.

-The VA is also having an issue with approval of pension program applications. This is a program designed to help supplement low income veterans/widows or those that have excessive medical bills. Current processing time is terrible. Office is still waiting on claims from early this year.

**8. Next Meeting Time, Date and Place**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held December 12, 2019 @ 9:30 AM, James Coughlin Building, Meeting Room A. A different benefit will be covered each month and also any new information the office has received. Participation in this meeting encouraged. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Steckbauer



