

Minutes
Vilas County Veterans Service Commission

January 15, 2009

Members Present:

Harold Else
Robert Kriehn
Raymond Johnson

Others Present:

Scott Jensen CVSO
Ron DeBruyne Vilas County Board Member

Meeting called to order by Raymond Johnson at 9:00 am.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of agenda, motion by DeBruyne, 2nd by Kriehn motion passed

Minutes of meeting of September 17, 2008 read and motion to accept minutes by Else, 2nd by DeBruyne, motion passed.

Jensen reported on CVSO Conference with training, accreditation and continuing education credits for accreditation with National CVSO Association. Spoke of next conference scheduled May 4-8 in Marshfield and fall conference September 28-Oct 2 in Wisconsin Dells. Johnson and Else spoke of Vets Service Commission meeting in Waupaca in Sept 2008. Next Vets Service Commission meeting at Waupaca Courthouse 2nd Friday of September 2009. Both stated facilities were excellent and food catered for lunch was very good. Johnson and Else plan on attending next meeting but Kriehn will be at reunion in Dan Diego and unable to attend.

Jensen provided update on new VA benefits. Discussed expanding VA healthcare priority group 8 enrollment. Effective June 30, 2009 income threshold will be raised 10% to allow more over income category 8 veterans access to health care. Should affect about 230,000 previously ineligible veterans. The VA has relaxed requirements for eligibility for hearing aids and glasses. Previously restricted to service connected veterans for hearing loss or eye conditions, Purple Heart recipients, POWs, 10% or higher service connected disabled veterans, or VA Pension eligible veterans. Now all veterans enrolled in VA healthcare system are eligible with referral from primary care provider. Discussion about Pres-elect Obama's pick for Secretary of the VA, Retired Army General Eric Shinseki. Information published states that he will open up benefits for

previously denied veterans, try to do away with discretionary VA funding and lock in 2010 budget right away. He will also try to speed up claims processing and is working for a “paperless” electronic claims processing system. Discussion about affect on CVSO involvement and electronic signatures.

Jensen discussed Hartford Sentinel newspaper article on Congressional Budget Office and new director Peter Orszag, who wrote a report that included ways to save costs in VA system. One proposal was disenrolling veterans with no service connected disability and increasing fees and co-payments.

Jensen discussed upcoming Memorial Day Service and that planning is already underway. Jensen solicited input for a theme for the ceremony or he was planning a WW I theme. Discussion about flag holders and flags for cemetery. Jensen states he has plenty of flag holders and pick them up at his office.

Discussion about Aging and Disability Resource Center and affect on CVSO office. Jensen spoke of coordination with Commission on Aging director who agrees CVSO office could co-locate but remain a stand alone office. DeBruyne spoke of county involvement and scope of operations and concepts.

Motion adjourn by Else, 2nd by Kriehn, Motion carried.

Next Meeting June 17, 2009 9:00 am.

Submitted by Scott Jensen, CVSO