

Veterans Service Commission
Minutes of Meeting August 24, 2016

The meeting of the Dodge County Veterans Service Commission (VSC) was called to order by Chairperson Caine at 8:58 a.m., August 24, 2016 in room 253 of the Dodge County Administration building, 127 East Oak Street, Juneau, WI.

Members present: Chairperson Chester Caine (Lowell), Vice-Chairperson Robert Patrouille (Waupun), and Dennis Johnson (Watertown)

Members absent: None

Others present: Andy Miller, Dodge County Veterans Service Officer & VSC Secretary

It was motioned, seconded, and approved unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2015 VSC meeting. Johnson stated a desire to discuss some items in the minutes later in the meeting.

Caine stated that he wished to remain on the VSC for another three year term. Miller stated that he would submit the memo to County Board Chairman Kottke around December 1, 2016 to take care of reappointment.

VSC elections were held. Patrouille motioned to nominate Caine for Chairperson, seconded by Johnson. Johnson motioned to nominate Patrouille for Vice-Chairperson, seconded by Caine. Voted unanimously and approved.

The proposed VSC and VSO budgets were discussed. VSC budget would stay the same and VSO budget would decrease by about \$400. Members asked about and discussed the grave flags and markers and their costs, as well as non-productive pay, and how something like lift chairs and wheel chairs were covered. Johnson mentioned that there is a storefront in King that says they can repair automated chairs. After all questions that VSC members had were answered to their satisfaction, a motion was made and seconded to approve the VSC budget as proposed. It passed unanimously with a roll call vote. The budgeted amount is \$8,000 with no balance applied. The VSC was in unanimous support of the VSO budget.

While specific communications were not printed, a discussion about services occurred after Miller summarized for the commission the positive and negative communications that have been received by the office.

Upon a motion made, seconded, and carried, the VSC convened in closed session at 9:33 a.m. for the purpose of review of personal, financial, and medical history information over which the VSC has jurisdiction and exercises responsibility in accordance with Section 19.85(1) (f) of the Wisconsin Statutes, (Report of distribution of VSC funds to include denials were distributed and then collected from VSC members). Johnson asked if there were any veterans who continuously came in to seek aid. Miller stated that there were a few who did at the beginning of his hiring, but that they were informed that they couldn't use the VSC as a supplemental income. Miller also stated that any who are in dire straits are offered budget and financial counseling. Patrouille commented on and Miller confirmed that most of the veterans only seek help one time, or for one thing. Miller stated there are a few exceptions, but that is true for the most part. Commission members were given a redacted version for their reference to take with and the report with names and addresses was collected up by Miller at the end.

Upon a motion made, seconded, and carried, the VSC reconvened in open session at 9:48 a.m.

Miller briefed the new CVSO grant process and discussed how it has changed over the last year, along with measures that can be taken to ensure that Dodge County can continue to receive the full \$13,000 each year until it is no longer available.

Under agenda item of commission members matters not subject to adoption:

A review and discussion was made of the rest of the material provided by Miller: Federal and State expenditure reports and new veteran letters and flyers. Johnson asked about how the Combat Veterans Court is working and if any feedback has been received. Miller stated that there have been three veterans who have been referred and mentored through the program since he came on board and has heard good things from each. Patrouille asked how the addresses were obtained for the mailings to new veterans. Miller informed the commission that a memo requesting them must be submitted to the VA with a listing of zip codes for getting the right locations.

Johnson stated that he still needed the company that the county uses for obtaining flags. Miller gave him the company name and will forward the company information to him.

Johnson handed out a letter from Yvonne Dueterhoeft, Jefferson CVSO, talking about the privatization of VA health care. He also handed out a mini-flyer for the Watertown Military Show. Miller informed Johnson that DAV would be interested in having their van at the show next year.

Johnson also requested that agenda item 14, "Public comment", be moved to the beginning in case there are any members of the public that want to make a statement but not stay for the duration of the meeting. He pointed out this was already discussed last year and was in the minutes. Miller stated he would ensure the next meeting would be corrected.

No public was present for comment.

Upon a motion made, seconded, and carried, the VSC adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Andy Miller

Dodge County Veterans Service Commission Secretary

FY16 Status of U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Expenditures in Dodge County, WI (Based on Sep 2016 Population Information)

Year	Veteran Population	Veterans Receiving C & P(1.)	C & P Expenditures	Education & Voc. Rehab	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Unique Patients(2.)
FY14	7,084	924	\$13,210,000	\$1,577,000	\$391,000	\$14,380,000	1,720
FY15	6,979	907	\$13,224,000	\$1,569,000	\$426,000	\$16,919,000	1,764
FY 16	6,875	912	\$14,711,000	\$1,810,000	\$725,000	\$17,508,000	1,851
Change	-104	+5	+\$1,487,000	+\$241,000	+\$299,000	+\$589,000	+87

NOTES:

1. C &P = Compensation and Pension
2. Unique Patients = Non-veterans (dependents, active duty, etc.) utilizing VA health care services
3. USDVA fiscal year runs from Oct 1 – Sep 30.
4. Does not include Home Loan Guaranty money which is not a true expenditure, but a guaranty allowing veterans an easier loan process.

Year	Total VA Expenditures In Dodge County
FY14	\$26,074,000
FY15	\$32,138,000
FY16	\$34,754,000
Change	+\$2,616,000

Data extracted from:

FY14 and FY15 Compensation and Pension by County reports –

<http://www.va.gov/vetdata/Report.asp>

FY14 and FY15 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Reports –

<http://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>

FY16 Status of Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Expenditures in Dodge County, WI

Year	Assistance for Needy Veterans Grant	WI GI Bill Tuition Remission (1)	Retraining Grant	Vet Ed Grant	Property Tax Credit (2)	CVSO Grant
FY14	\$4,060	(51 students) \$196,452	\$0	\$0	(98 eligible) \$289,492	\$13,000
FY15	\$582	(82 students) \$315,864	\$0	\$0	(90 eligible) \$253,445	\$13,000
FY16	\$1,827	(96 students) \$369,792	\$0	\$0	(96 eligible) \$270,341	\$13,000
Change	+\$1,275	+\$53,928	\$0	\$0	+\$16,896	\$0

NOTES:

1. Tuition Remission values are estimates based on equivalent full time, Wisconsin Technical College rate of \$128.40 per credit. Students could attend UW schools at a higher rate. Not a true expenditure, no money is issued, only debt remitted.
2. Property Tax Credit values for FY14 are estimates based on average property tax for Dodge County of \$2,954.00/year per single family home. FY15 amounts are actual rates based on report from WI DOR. FY16 rates are estimated as well. Veterans receiving VA disability compensation at the 100% rate receive a full refund of their property tax from the state.
3. WDVA Fiscal Year runs July 1 – Jun 30.

Year	Total Estimated WDVA Expenditures In Dodge County
FY14	\$503,004
FY15	\$582,891
FY16	\$654,960
Change	+\$72,069

Data extracted from:

Wisconsin Veterans Benefits and Application Tracking System (VBATS) –

<https://services.dva.state.wi.us>

2016 Annual Report

Dodge County Veterans Service Office

TO THE HONORABLE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DODGE COUNTY, WI

Department Overview:

The Dodge County Veterans Service Office is submitting this report covering its activities for the period of January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 for your information and consideration.

Chapter 45.80 of the Wis. Statutes provides for each county to have a County Veterans Service Officer and establishes duties of the Veterans Service Office.

All Dodge County resident veterans and eligible dependents may receive assistance through the services provided. This office provides information on veterans' service-connected disability compensation, nonservice-connected disability pension, vocational training, educational programs, home loan guaranties, life insurance, hospital and domiciliary care, healthcare, combat veteran readjustment counseling, long-term care/veterans' home residency, funeral/burial benefits, employment/job-search counseling, and death benefits to surviving dependents. Approximately 6,979 veterans have been identified as residents of Dodge County.

Chapter 45.81 of the Wis. Statutes provides for each county to have a County Veterans Service Commission consisting of three residents of the County who are veterans appointed for staggered three-year terms by the County Board Chairperson.

The Commission administers the Dodge County Veterans Relief Fund which provides short-term, temporary financial assistance to all resident veterans and their dependents. The Commission investigates claims for financial aid, determines eligibility, and authorizes financial assistance for applicant veterans and dependents. The Commission may delegate administrative duties to the County Veterans Service Officer, who serves as its Executive Secretary.

Organization:

Veterans Service Office

Andy Miller – County Veterans Service Officer
Traci Guse – Administrative Secretary III (.5 time)

Veterans Service Commission

Chester Caine – Chairperson (12/01/2019)
Robert Patrouille – Vice Chairperson (12/01/2018)
Dennis Johnson – Member (12/01/2017)

Dodge County CVSO Statistical Performance:

*CVSO Measure of Efficiency in Delivering Federal DVA Benefits		
Total VA Expenditures in County	Return on Investment	Dodge County Total CVSO Expenditure
\$33,902,000	31,049%	\$108,835 (.12% of Total County Expenditures)

* Numbers for VA Expenditures are based on Federal FY2015. USDVA releases expenditure data June of each year for the previous fiscal year.

Dodge County Federal DVA Home Loan Guaranty Program			
Total Loans Closed FY2016/All Years	Average FY 2016 Loan Value	Total Loan Value For All Years	Total Active Loans
99/3,254	\$189,062	\$236,496,104	489

Important County Fiscal Impact Note:

Dollars received by veterans through the Federal or State DVA and infused into a community by the veterans or family members may change hands three times; creating greater financial impact to the surrounding community and a subsequent increase in taxable revenue available to local government. As well, each dollar of VA medical care expenditure utilized by Dodge County veterans is a dollar potentially saved from their personal and/or insurance expense or, is a relief from the expense of utilizing Medicaid or Medical Assistance which can, as a result, provide additional financial savings benefits to local governments.

Dodge County CVSO 2016 Office Activity Data:

Office Communication for 2016

E-Mail	1,814
Phone	1,431
FAX	200
Outgoing Mail	248
Incoming Mail	85
Other	65
Office Visits	609
Home Visits	28

Federal DVA Applications in 2016

Disability Compensation	152
VA Pension	19
Survivor's Pension	20
Dependency Claims	18
Other	175
Total Federal Applications:	384

WI DVA Applications for 2016

Basic Eligibility	29
ANV (Assistance/Health)	2
Prop Tax Credit Eligibility	8
WI GI Bill	23
Vet Ed	5
Driver License Identifier	49
License Fee Waiver	9
Total:	125

Veteran Deaths in 2016

January	10
February	9
March	9
April	11
May	5
June	9
July	9
August	10
September	14
October	10
November	7
December	8
Total:	111

**Dodge County Veterans Service Commission
2016 Financial Assistant Grant Breakdown**

Purpose	Amount
Food & Groceries	\$450.00
Transportation	\$906.00
Fuel & Utilities	\$437.07
Shelter	\$7,081.49
Other Direct Relief	\$783.70
Total	\$9,658.26

Summary:

As a CVSO, it is important to maintain a working knowledge of state and federal benefits that pertain to veterans and their family members. All service officers are accredited with the USDVA through a service organization and CVSOs are no exception to this rule. Since my appointment, I have worked to become accredited through six different veteran service organizations. In addition to initial training, we are required to complete CEUs each year in the areas of compensation, pension, death benefits, appeals, and others. I was elected to represent the southeast region on the CVSO Association of Wisconsin's Executive Committee in October of 2015 and will serve in that capacity until the fall of 2017. I also serve as the chair of the Association's IT committee.

February 1, 2017 will mark the 80th anniversary of Veteran Services in Dodge County. Edward J. Bernges was elected and appointed to the position of County Service Officer on January 20, 1937 and began at the beginning of the following month. Few counties in the country, let alone Wisconsin have had a County Service Officer for as long as Dodge County. Prior to his appointment, Dodge County had a Soldier's Relief Commission in place for the purpose of assisting indigent veterans. In 1959, the title was changed to County Veterans Service Officer and in 1962 the Soldier's Relief Commission became the Veterans Service Commission.

Progress continues to move forward towards becoming paperless with both the VA and WDVA when filing claims. There will continue to be some amount of paper and postage costs for as long as original signatures are required, however. The cost to our budget for postal services has decreased by more than 10% each of the last two years as a direct result of this progress.

The CVSO office has approximately 1,200 remaining deceased paper files that will be scanned and converted to electronic format as time permits.

The CVSO office email distribution list has continued to grow and periodic emails are disseminated through the group. The CVSO Facebook page has also been successful in contacting and staying in-touch with veterans of all ages who are technically savvy or connected to social networking.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andy Miller
Dodge County Veterans Service Officer