

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
CLUBHOUSE HOTEL & SUITES FARGO, ND

May 5, 2021
10:30 AM

Meeting called to order by Chairman Dean Overby. Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence observed for POW/MIAs, those serving overseas.

ACOVA Roll Call:

Present:

Dan Brown	Dean Overby	Murray Strom (remote)
Roy Fillion	Dave Rice	Jim Verwey
Dave Hilleren	Tom Ryan (remote)	Glenn Wahus
Gary Maddock	Marlin Schneider	Hal Weninger

Absent - Excused:

Richard Belling

Absent

Mamie Havelka

Guests:

none

Committee members moved across the hall for introductions to the Veteran Service Officers who were in training sessions. Introductions of ACOVA and VSO's were done. Chairman Overby discussed the role of the ACOVA and appreciation for VSO work and their good working relationship. Mary Vetter-VSO association president discussed the work and roles of the Veteran Service Officers and appreciation for the working relationship with the ACOVA. Commissioner discussed NDDVA role and good working relationship with ACOVA, NDVLC and VSO's. Look forward to working with all the new VSO's. Committee returned to their meeting room.

ND DVA Report – Commissioner Lonnie Wangen
PowerPoint presentation

12:00pm Committee broke for lunch

1:00 PM Committee Reconvened.

Mark Johnson, Veterans Home Administrator

Legislative Session: There was confusion with some of the Veterans Home bills. One bill dealt with a resident who leaves and doesn't come back in 96 hours. At that point, the Veterans Home has to charge the resident for their leave. Residents have to pay back the per diem amounts for time gone. The Legislature put two weeks in succession even though the Home wanted it separated. Legislature removed some of FTE's but overall, the Home did fairly well. They received equity funds for the nurses which is very good.

75 staff members and 9 residents had COVID; it went through the building 3 times. About 94% of the residents and 48% of the staff have received vaccinations. Veterans Home has received a lot of additional federal funds, upwards to \$400,000. Recently they received a check from the VA stating they qualified for additional funding so \$516,000 went into their account. Veterans Home already has authority to spend money, however the funding needs to be used for COVID purposes, i.e. updating humidifiers, floor cleaners, floor scrubbers. The Veterans Home has additional dollars to do the Memorial Garden, which will be where the old building was located. Annual Golf Tournament will be held on June 11th at Mapleton Golf Course to raise money for the Veterans Home Foundation.

Subcommittee meetings held.

Chairman Overby discussed the Veterans Home Governing Board. Greg Sieman has put in his resignation. There is an open position at this time, the terms are for three years.

Motion by Jim Verwey to approve February 2021 minutes, 2nd Hilleren. Motion carried unanimously.

Subcommittee Reports:

Appeals Subcommittee – report by Dan Brown. Appeal hearing held April 15, 2021. Committee upheld Commissioner's decision.

Motion by Gary Maddock to accept subcommittee minutes, second by Roy Fillion. Motion carried unanimously.

PWTF Subcommittee – Report by Dan Brown

- Discussion on requesting State Treasurer or a representative (such as Ryan Skor) to attend the next ACOVA meeting and talk about the interest earnings for 2021-2023. Improving communication with the State Treasurer's Office is a goal of the committee.
- Committee is seeking an understanding on how the PWTF investment process works and how principal growth and spendable interest earnings are determined.
 - Biennium transfer of PWTF spendable income:
 - Can treasure keep interest earnings invested? If so what are pro's and con's?
 - would this provide better rates than CD's in the 410 account?
 - would the spendable income be safe or at risk of loss due to economic down-turn?
 - transfer quarterly or as requested?
 - Reserve fund?
 - Revisit the reserve fund in the PWTF
 - Risk to the reserve fund?
 - Availability of reserve funds upon request from ACOVA
 - Investor of PWTF-Private entity (Edward Jones) vs. vs. State Investment Board or others?
 - Pro's and Con's of both
 - Can donations be made to grow the Principal of the PWTF?
 - From Veteran Gaming funds?
 - Other fund raising?
 - Patriotic License Plates fees and Income Tax Checkoff funds.
 - Can and are these funds invested for spendable income earning?
 - Can and are these funds tracked separately to show their impact?

*Motion by Dan Brown to accept subcommittee minutes, second by Jim Verwey.
Motion carried unanimously.*

Legislative Subcommittee – report by Dave Rice.

Glenn Wahus presented committee report. Reviewed legislative bills from 67th legislative session. Reviewed Updated strategic plan under financial and education sections.

*Motion by Dan Brown to accept subcommittee minutes, second by Tom Ryan.
Motion carried unanimously.*

Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – report by Roy Fillion

Hal Weninger reported on NDDVA committee meeting. Reviewed PWTF grant usage of funds.

July 1, 2021 approve \$50,000 from next biennium PWTF interest earnings for Grant and other approved programs.

Reviewed Grant policy number 415 – Allowable Expenses. Recommend adding rent for long term care facility for those on aid and attendance or Medicaid and adding clarification that monthly expenses less than \$200 does not need documentation. Veterans aid loan program binder and reports reviewed. Reviewed NDDVA 2019-2021 budget is healthy with turn back expected. 2021-2023 budget requests reviewed. Sub-Committee recommended and approved Commissioner HB 1015 action of legislative approved salary increase for commissioner.

Motion by Hal Weninger to approve changes to policy 415, second by Marlin Schneider.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Hal Weninger for Commissioner to receive salary increases at maximum amount set by Legislative Assembly for the 2021-23 biennium, second by David Rice.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Hal Weninger to accept subcommittee minutes, second Marlin Schneider.

Motion carried unanimously.

ND Veterans Home Governing Board Appointment – Discussion on appointment of the open position on the board.

Motion by Dave Hilleren to appoint Roy Fillion to the board. Second by Marlin Schneider. Motion passed unanimously.

Roundtable Discussion:

Chairman Overby shared his gratitude to NDDVA for the great work they are doing in this difficult time. Very impressed with the VSO training.

Jim Verwey. Happy with how NDDVA is operating & returning phone calls.

Dave Rice. Discussed the veteran cemetery running well. Location for national VFW convention is changing venue due to COVID restrictions. Honor Flight of ND and MN grounded until at least August. Will require vaccine when it is continued. Working with the western ND honor flight committee, sharing applicants with the new Western ND Honor Flight.

Dave Hilleren. Mayville ND will host the VVA convention this year July 16th-18, 2021. All invited. Meeting is at 10am Saturday.

Glenn Wahus. Congratulated the committee on work done during the COVID crisis. Thank you.

Hal Weninger. It is great to be here and be healthy. Missed some of the reports from last meeting on the virtual meeting. Enjoy being on the NDDVA subcommittee.

Gary Maddock. 3rd year on this committee. PWTF committee today was very good. Dan Brown did a great job of running the meeting. Thanks to everyone for work during the COVID.

Marlin Schneider. On ACOVA for 3 terms. Not resubmitting name for next term. Thank you for all you have done. Been enjoyable.

Dan Brown. Thanks for all the knowledge on this committee. Thanks to NDDVA staff.

Roy Fillion. Another good meeting. Hotel treated us well. Good idea to meet at same time as the VSO's, great to meet with them. Commissioner's report good and very helpful. Since I am on DAV with 2 term limits this may be my last meeting if name not re-submitted by DAV. Veterans Home Foundation golf tournament in Mapleton June 11th. Starts at noon. Looking for a few hole sponsors. Will get on the NDDVA website. Thanks to Dave Rice on the KFGO Veterans Hour.

Commissioner. Thanked the ACOVA.

Jim Verwey requested NDDVA job descriptions and Org Chart be sent to ACOVA

Tom Ryan. Thanks to Cathy for setting up the virtual meeting option for me. Thanks for all the work of ACOVA.

Murray Strom. Thanked everyone for their work. And for last minute accommodations of the virtual meeting.

Next meeting to be held August 12-13, 2021 in Bismarck, pending availability of accommodations.

***Motion to adjourn by Hal Weninger, second by Dave Hilleren.
Motion passed.***

Respectfully submitted:

Jim Verwey
Secretary