



DOUG BURGUM, GOVERNOR  
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

# ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

**CHAIRMAN**

Dean Overby  
Wahpeton

**SECRETARY**

Jim Verwey  
Valley City

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS  
QUALITY INN, BISMARCK, ND

February 18, 2021  
1:10 PM

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:

Richard Belling	Dean Overby
Dan Brown	Dave Rice
Roy Fillion	Tom Ryan (remote)
Dave Hilleren	Murray Strom
Gary Maddock (remote)	Hal Weninger (remote)

Absent - Excused:

Mamie Havelka	Jim Verwey
Marlin Schneider	Glenn Wahus

Guests:

Thomas Beadle, State Treasurer

Glenn Wahus's son passed away two weeks ago. The Committee extends their sympathy to the Wahus family.

ND DVA Report – Commissioner Lonnie Wangen  
*PowerPoint presentation*

Presentation to Cathy Halgunseth for her 40 years of service with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Thomas Beadle, ND State Treasurer**

Mr. Beadle was elected State Treasurer in 2020. He previously served as a State Representative for District 27 from 2010 – 2020.

- Talking with Edward Jones Representative in shifting some of the Postwar Trust Fund investments
- Received CD rates from Bank of North Dakota, looking into other entities for a better return. Specifically for Fund 410 and 368.
- Focus and goal is to be a good steward of the PWTF and in being responsive to the wishes of the Committee.
- Supports ACOVA request of investing contributions to PWTF generated from the Income tax Check off and Patriot License plates to create spendable income rather than principal growth of PWTF.

Chairman Overby talked about the Committee's goal in taking care of ND veterans and if the Treasurer would be willing to meet and talk with the committee on this subject.

Treasurer Beadle reported there will be transparency going forward and discussing a long-term forecast for veterans' needs by the ACOVA and Commissioner would be helpful. Overall the forecast for the Fund looks good going forward. He understands the responsibility of being a fiduciary for funds. Treasurer. Beadle was an Economics major at Concordia College.

The Committee and Commissioner are looking forward to working with Treasurer Beadle. They felt it was a very good first meeting.

Chairman Overby stated that Mark Johnson, Administrator, ND Veterans Home, is unable to attend the meeting, there is an inspection going on at the Home.

**Subcommittee meetings held.**

February 18, 2021  
9:00 am

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

ACOVA Roll Call:

Present:

Richard Belling	Dean Overby
Dan Brown	Dave Rice
Roy Fillion	Tom Ryan (remote)
Dave Hilleren	Murray Strom
Gary Maddock (remote)	Hal Weninger (remote)

Absent - Excused:

Mamie Havelka	Jim Verwey
Marlin Schneider	Glenn Wahus

Guests:

Dan Stenvold, ND Veterans Legislative Council

Chairman Overby thanked Commissioner Wangen and Cathy for the work being done in keeping the Department running during the COVID shutdown.

Chairman Overby reported there is an opening on Veterans Home Governing Board. He would like someone with a financial background, such as a banker, to be appointed to the Board. He asked the committee members to help with finding someone for the Board.

*Motion to approve the July 2020 minutes by Dave Hilleren, second by Dave Rice.  
Motion carried unanimously.*

**Subcommittee Reports:**

**PWTF & Appeals Subcommittee** – report by Dan Brown

Reviewed PWTF Fund 410 account and the CD's still available for Department's use. Reviewed State Treasurer's Report with information regarding the State Patriotic Plate and Income Checkoff funds. The committee would like the license plate and income checkoff funds to be invested in CDs. A goal of the subcommittee would be within the

next five years to be able to access spendable income of \$500,000 per Biennium from the PWTF interest earnings. No requests for PWTF funds.

No appeals before the subcommittee.

***Motion by Dan Brown to accept subcommittee report, second by Dave Hilleren.***

Melvin Norgaard Fund – reports sent monthly by State Treasurer’s Office to Veterans Home, Chairman and Commissioner. Chairman Overby feels there should be more involvement by the Veterans Home regarding the Fund.

***Motion carried unanimously.***

Hal Weninger said he received a letter from the State Auditor’s Office about the Department’s audit that will be starting soon. He would like the committee to receive the Department audit when completed. Commissioner Wangen stated he could send it out to the entire committee.

**Legislative Subcommittee** – report by Dave Rice.

There was not a quorum to hold a meeting.

Dan Stenvold, ND Veterans Legislative Council, reported that they are getting good reports from Jim Nelson.

Commissioner Wangen went through the Legislative Bills that are being tracked by the Department.

Dave Rice reported he will be interviewing Jim Nelson next week on KFGO’s Veterans Hour.

**Veterans Affairs Subcommittee** – report by Roy Fillion

Discussion on PWTF fund account – usage and funds available. Currently spending at \$30,000 a quarter. Fund looks good.

Loan and Grant Policies:

Reviewed Grant Policies #412 (Assets) and #413 (Income) along with income guidelines from ND DHS LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) and US HHS Poverty Guidelines. No action taken by subcommittee.



Reviewed Veterans Aid Loan Program per Commissioner's presentation.

Reviewed current budget and Department's submitted 21-23 budget. No areas of concern.

Subcommittee thanks Commissioner Wangen, Cathy and staff of the Department for the work they do on behalf of veterans.

***Motion to accept subcommittee report by Roy Fillion, second by Richard Belling.***

The two policies need to be reviewed every year so that was taken care of for the year.

Commissioner Wangen discussed the possibility of adding to Grant Policy #415 – Allowable Expenses. There have been some applicants who reside in a long term care facility and are unable to deduct some of the costs of living in that facility. Facilities can break down the cost factors so the applicant could perhaps qualify for a hardship grant. Dan Thorstad, Loan and Grant Officer, will put together information for the next ACOVA meeting for members to consider.

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Murray Strom stated that there have been times Grant Policy #412 has been adjusted to help qualify more veterans for the Grant Program.

**Roundtable Discussion:**

Richard Belling: Good meeting, glad to be meeting again.

Murray Strom: Good to get back together, lots of issues out there to address.

Dave Rice: Fargo VFW now has a kitchen and will be starting to serve food in the bar. Giving Hearts Day brought in \$76,000 for Honor Flight; Received 503c for Honor Guard at National Veterans Cemetery. There are currently 30+ volunteers for the Honor Guard; the Duty Officer puts together a roster from availability information submitted by volunteers.

Dan Brown: Agreed with Murray in getting back together. Williston is working to put together a transportation program since they don't qualify under the Highly Rural Transportation Grant Program. There isn't any real assistance for mental health and substance abuse issues. Department doing an outstanding work in helping veterans.

Dave Hilleren: A lot of issues especially on the Reservation with drug problems, PTSD and suicides. The area has been hit hard by COVID deaths. American Legion Post is very involved in the community.

Dan Stenvold: National level of VVA looked at having an in-person convention but are now looking at a virtual convention.

Roy Fillion: Really good to get together. Good idea to have the equipment to allow members to attend virtually. Good to have the State Treasurer here to visit with on PWTF issue. Veterans Home Foundation Board hosting a golf tournament on June 11<sup>th</sup> at Mapleton as a fund raiser.

Lonnie Wangen: COVID gave the Department a chance to get caught up but then received a big workload of claims once the VSO's offices re-opened. Big turnover in CVSO's over the year, especially in Cass County.

Gary Maddock: Different way to attend a meeting, would be nice to be there though.

Tom Ryan: Great thing to be able to attend meeting remotely. Veterans Court expanded to other issues than substance abuse. Commissioner Wangen said a manual would be put together to help with other issues affecting veterans.

Hal Weninger: Missed some of the meeting yesterday due to technical problems. Thanks to the Commissioner for setting up the ability to meet remotely.

Chairman Overby thanked the three for their on-line attendance. He would prefer to have everyone at the meeting but it worked out well for meeting purposes. Thanked committee members for their work and attending the meeting.

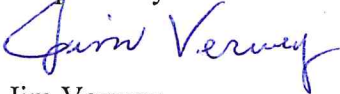
Murray Strom reported that AMVETS will be submitting names for an appointment to ACOVA.

**Next meeting to be held**

Discussed tentatively in May at Steele, ND with a start time at 1:00pm. Commissioner Wangen will check into the possibility of the Committee meeting during the CVSO training conference instead. It will be held in May in Fargo. He will coordinate with Chairman Overby and Bryan Watters who is putting together the CVSO Conference.

***Motion to adjourn by Richard Belling, second by Murry Strom. Motion passed.***

Respectfully submitted



Jim Verwey  
Secretary