

**NORTH DAKOTA VETERANS COORDINATING COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 24, 1999**

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Fenstad. Opening ceremony was performed. Roll Call of organizations was taken. At this time a presentation was made to the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery Trust fund from a local family.

Jerome Krejci made a motion to accept the minutes as printed, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dave Schmidt, passed.

Evans presented the Financial Report a copy is attached. Motion by Krejci to accept the report, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dale Ronning, passed.

OLD BUSINESS: Dave Schmidt gave a report on the Veterans Preference issue. At this time he went through the Kliniski bill. Various changes were recommended; 1<sup>st</sup>: written examination- we had previously discussed this issue. We would recommend that it be changed to "Written/Practical Exam". 2<sup>nd</sup>- definition of a veteran drops a war time requirement. Based on previous motion we are recommending that wartime Veterans receive lifetime preference, and peacetime Veterans would receive a ten-year limit on Veterans Preference. 3<sup>rd</sup>- concern on the paragraph about certified list, we are recommending that verbiage be inserted to insure that everybody understand that the highest examination grade after the Veterans Preference Points have been added.

The committee felt that there was no need to re-invent the wheel in this matter. We should work with the author on this bill a try to get a workable product. Evans asked if any discussion was held on the priority of service issue. None was held. Concern was also noted on the 180-day active duty issue. There was also discussion on agencies fine tuning job descriptions to cater to individuals. Evans also noted that there should be a change on when the veteran needs to prove veteran status/disabled veteran status. Discussion followed on this issue. It was noted that Kliniski is willing to present this bill only if the Council is unanimous. Schmidt made a motion to send a letter to Kliniski thanking her for the copy, noting that we are reviewing it, the committee will fine tuning it, who to contact, and we want to meet with her in the future on presenting the bill. The motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Randy LeKander, more discussion was held. The motion passed unanimously.

Doug Kenyon, Director Fargo, ND VAMC/RO gave a report on activities at the Fargo VA.

Bob Hanson, Legislative Committee Representative, reported on the Veterans Cemetery License Plate promotion program. He had talked with the AG and received confirmation that they would try to assist us in printing a simple brochure for inserting in to the Veterans Cemetery mailout. It was noted that the cost if any would be minimal. Bob noted that it was discovered that North Dakota is the only state not recognizing the Purple Heart recipients, it was also noted that in discussion with DOT they have administrative authority to produce this plate. They would be willing to make the change and add the Purple Heart logo, as soon as the Council gave its unanimous support. The committee is making six recommendations:

1. The council approves the use of the Purple Heart as another choice for the Cemetery License Plate program, and immediately informs the DOT.
2. Work with General Bjerke on the layout and the printing of the solicitation insert.
3. Use the Purple Heart Plate as the sample plate.
4. As soon as DOT has a design ready that we make every effort to publicize statewide the addition of the Purple Heart Plate, and the other designs.
5. If the General's offer to print this is accepted by this group, then Post War Trust Fund monies are used to pay for the printing.
6. Give this committee the go ahead to develop this brochure, with the council officers giving final approval of final layout and wording.

Bob Hanson made a motion to accept the recommendations as stated. The motion was 2<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion followed on the type of publicity suggested. Evans reported on the radio promotion PSA that was produced by Ken Anderson's son in Lisbon. Evans moved to amend the motion, to also accept a final draft of the radio PSA in addition to the above six recommendations, motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Schmidt. Amendment passed.

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Further discussion was held, and it was noted that the Legion had their booth at the State Fair, but no CVSO's were there to help. Dave cautioned us that we need to be sure that the Purple Heart is verified before receiving the plate.

Vote on the motion as amended passed.

A motion by John Mullen recommending that the Purple Heart License Plate application needs to be verified by County VSO's, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Robert Volk, motion passed.

Bob Hanson recommended that the handout from the July meeting be tabled until the next meeting and that it be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Veterans Cemetery Update: Cemetery Manager Phil Miller went over the Cemetery guidelines. He discussed pre-registration, he went over the summary sheet of internment's at the Cemetery, the need to pre-dig 60 graves for the winter months. Questions were asked about different internment's. Bob Hanson asked about donations to the Cemetery. It was noted that the listing only shows those that have donated to the Militia Foundation. It was noted that the Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs has donated nearly \$400,000 and is not listed on the Donation Wall. It was suggested that it be changed to reflect the donations to the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery. Phil noted that the Militia Board is meeting to address this issue. It was also noted that any and all donations to the Cemetery should be recognized as such.

Administrative Committee Chairman, Tom Moe: Brought greetings from the Admin. Committee. Tom discussed the need to hire a lobbyist. He complimented the volunteers who have done this in the past. He stated that we need to come up with dollars to fund this position. Discussion followed on how best to fund this position, who would be best suited for the job, what would be required of the individual.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Hanson complimented the committee on the Veterans Preference work done so far. Harry Komprood of Grand Forks Job Service spoke to the Council members. Discussion followed on how Veterans Preference is being applied and how we feel it should be applied.

Update on Governor's appointment to the Work Force Development Board. Bob and Dave will finalize a draft letter and report at the next meeting.

At this time discussion was held on the layout of the agenda. It was recommended that the council members meet with the Administrative Committee to see how they operate, then we break out to complete our business. Discussion included ways to write up a joint agenda.

Commissioner Ray Harkama presented his operations report. He explained the two-year enlistment, criteria was discussed. The commissioner also stated that the committee has granted him final say on grant applications also. He also went over the PWTF appropriations. Dependent eligibility for grants was discussed. The commissioner also explained the actions of the DOD in identifying MIA remains. He noted the upcoming VSO training session to be held in Fargo this coming week.

Tom Moe, chairman Administrative Committee reported on actions of his committee. April meeting is set for April 28<sup>th</sup>. Agenda planning needs to be taken care of. Tom Moe then presented his contribution towards funding a lobbyist, \$50. He encouraged all to match, come up with a way to fund this project. Ken Anderson, Commandant Veterans Home presented his report. He discussed the population of the Home, went through the Gazebo project with National Guard help, Home activities, nurses salary. A motion by Schmidt to request \$1,000 from PWTF for license plate promotion, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Evans, motion passed. John Mullen reported back that the Administrative Committee has approved our request for funding of the License Plate Promotion. A concern about whom will be distributing the discs. Evans will assemble a listing and distribute the discs accordingly.

Next meeting will be in Bismarck, December 10<sup>th</sup> Doublewood Inn. Further discussion on the April meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:39pm.