

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
QUALITY INN, BISMARCK, ND

July 16, 2020
1:00 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	Murray Strom
Dan Brown	Dave Rice	Jim Verwey
Roy Fillion	Tom Ryan	Glenn Wahus
Dave Hilleren	Marlin Schneider	Hal Weninger
Gary Maddock		

Absent - Excused:

Alan Fehr	Mark Wagemann
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Guests:

Danelle Hopkins, Governor's Office
Brian Bartlett (AMVETS)

Chairman Overby wants to be sure everyone feels safe, to wear a mask if they choose to, and to social distance. Commissioner's Office and CVSO's have been working from home and are starting to return to their office. Veterans have always been taken care of throughout the state.

AG Dohrmann, ND National Guard

Governor's TaskForce – getting ready to give their report, then COVID appeared. Commissioner and Guard have very tight budgets and need to work together this Legislative Session. The Guard appreciates the support given from ACOVA and Legislative Council during last session. Bills concerning active duty that were passed have made a big difference. Guard update: getting troops back from missions, troops getting ready to deploy. COVID – Guard has been helping out at the State Laboratory, at least 60 guardsmen have been out there. Mobile testing sites have been run by the Guard, although they are looking for a civilian solution. Presently Guardsmen are being paid with federal funding, they need to be on for 31 days to get healthcare and education

benefits. They are on duty for 45 days to account for any quarantine time if someone tests positive.

ND DVA Report – Commissioner Lonnie Wangen
PowerPoint presentation

Dani Hopkins, Governor's Office, was at December meeting and is glad to be at this meeting. The new appointments to ACOVA are being worked on and the Governor's Office hopes to have them done soon. For now, all members are still currently serving until the new appointments are made. Committee members are understanding and are willing to stay on ACOVA.

Chairman Overby announced there will be no other speakers and the committee will break into their respective subcommittees.

There is an Appeal Hearing scheduled for tomorrow morning at 8:00am for the DVA subcommittee and the committee will meet at 9:00am on Friday.

Subcommittee meetings held

July 17, 2020
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
Dan Brown
Roy Fillion
Dave Hilleren
Gary Maddock

Dean Overby
Dave Rice
Tom Ryan
Marlin Schneider

Murray Strom
Jim Verwey
Glenn Wahus
Hal Weninger

Absent - Excused:
Alan Fehr

Mark Wagemann

Guests:
Danelle Hopkins, Governor's Office

Chairman Overby reported that appointments need to be made for the ND Veterans Home Governing Board. The two members coming off have said they will serve if re-appointed.

Motion by Jim Verwey, second by Gary Maddock to re-appoint Mary Vetter and Cathy Keogh to the Veterans Home Governing Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Overby reported that the last ACOVA meeting was December 2019 and those minutes needed to be acted on.

Motion to Dave Rice, second by Glenn Wahus to approve the December 2019 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Subcommittee Reports:

Department of Veterans Affairs – report by Hal Weninger
Available funds for PWTF programs are above expectations.

Hardship Grant Policy 412 – Assets

The Subcommittee voted to recommend increasing the cash asset level to \$5,500.

No action taken on CD limits. No action taken on Policy 413 – Income.

Loan program is in good standing. The CD investments and rollovers are done according to plan.

Current budget monies were used to enhance salaries to maintain market value. 2021-2023 Budget request reviewed. All FTE's to be funded 100% from General Fund.

Committee wishes to complement the Commissioner and entire staff for their dedicated work for ND veterans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Motion by Hal Weninger to accept subcommittee report, second by Richard Belling pending the policy change. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Hal Weninger to increase cash asset level from \$4,000 to \$5,500 as stated in Policy 412 – Assets, second by Murray Strom. Motion carried unanimously.

Appeals and PWTF Subcommittee – report by Dan Brown

Appeals Subcommittee – reviewed appeal documentation for hearing set on Friday at 8:00am. Reconvened at 7:45am Meeting Room A for hearing unable to contact Appellate.

Committee is in discussion with Commissioner on establishing Policy & Procedures for the Impact Grant.

Motion and second to accept report Motion carried.

PWTF Subcommittee -- report by Dan Brown

Reviewed Fund 410 and avenues to raise funds. Committee wondered about gaming at Camp Grafton to raise money.

No PWTF requests.

Motion and second to accept report. Motion carried.

Legislative Committee – report by Dave Rice

Discussed handouts provided by Commissioner.

Joined the ND Veterans Legislative Council meeting. Requested a copy of their minutes since the meeting was in progress when the subcommittee joined them.

Motion and second to accept report. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Overby asked Dani (Hopkins) if two names need to be submitted when there is a resignation. She will research it and let Chairman Overby know the outcome.

AMVETS will be submitting Murray Strom's name for re-appointment.

Tom Ryan reported DAV will be submitting his name for re-appointment.

Next meeting to be held
October 29 & 30, 2020 at Steele, ND start time at 1:00pm.

Chairman Overby: COVID has changed everyone's lives. Department employees were still working, some from home but the bottom line is veterans were still taken care of in the State. There are many different ways to keep in contact. Look for emails from Commissioner Lonnie.

Committee members reported they had received email from a former Veterans Home employee. No action taken.

Roundtable Discussion:

Dan Brown: good to get everybody back together and move forward.

Glenn Wahus: continue to work for our veterans; show our support to veterans during this time.

Marlin Schneider: Thanked Lonnie and his crew for their work during this time. Glad to meet up with committee.

Dave Rice: Good to meet with Legislative Council. Their meeting was well attended and they are very organized. Back doing Honor Guard duties at the National Cemetery.

Richard Belling: Good to be back together and see everyone.

Dave Hilleren: Meetings are always productive and we are making positive steps in our meetings. Vietnam Veterans Conference being held at the end of July at Four Bears Casino in New Town. There are campsites available. Everyone is welcome.

Gary Maddock: Thanked everyone. Think about how COVID is changing our veterans' lives. On the Water, Inc – is a group that takes veterans with PTSD to cabins at Indian Hills, August 8th. They have a Facebook page and website for further information.

Hal Weninger: Thanked Chairman Overby for his work, Commissioner Wangen and his staff for their work. He was very interested in Commissioner's report on Veterans Court. Every meeting is a learning process.

Roy Fillion: Enjoyed coming to the meeting. It is a privilege and an honor to serve on the committee. More should be reported on what the Commissioner and office do to take care of our veterans. Thanked Chairman for his leadership.

Jim Verwey: This is a positive organization. Thanked Commissioner for the funeral coins. The families really appreciate receiving the funeral coin.

Tom Ryan: Concur with all the comments of appreciation to the Chairman and Commissioner and Department. It was interesting to sit in on the Legislative Council.

Murray Strom: Good policies, good leadership. We don't want to be a revolving door for employees, he thanked Lonnie for taking care of his staff. Trying to get rifles for Honor

Guard. Talked about TV screen showing “Wall of Honor” in Steele Vets Club. Plans are to have 50 sites for this “Wall”.

Brian Bartlett: Didn’t know what to expect. Realized this committee does a lot of good things, interested in becoming a committee member.

Dani: Thank you for all you do for veterans with all the services and programs. Encouraged committee members to reach out to her for any questions or help.

Commissioner Wangen: Thank you all for your kind comments.

Motion to adjourn, second. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted

Jim Verwey
Secretary