**Veterans Services – Commissioner Bi-Monthly Meeting**

**REGULAR MEETING OF November 12, 2024**

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| **Commissioners** |  |
| John McAllister - President | **Present** |
| Christine Santiago Foos – Vice President | **Present** |
| Merlin Reimer - Secretary | **Present** |
| Dave Hyatt - Member | **Present** |
| Richard Ray - Member | **Present** |
| **Veteran Services** |  |
| Brian Galligher Director | **Present** |
| Wm. Piwtorak Social Services | **Present** |
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| **Speaking Guest(s)** |  |
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**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY**: President McAllister at 1731.

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence

Approval of minutes concluding at 1733 hrs.

**MOTION – 24-1112-01** to approve the minutes from the October 28, 2024 meeting.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Hyatt 5-0 Vote** **PASSED**

**Guest Speaker:**

**Stockhands Horses for Healing** – presented by Angie Mack with Tim Funk and Jon Bennehoof. This was an opportunity to update the commission on the progress that has been made over the last couple of years.

1. **Women Warriors** – a group of veteran women meet once a month to help the “sisterhood” flourish in a safe environment of women only veterans.
2. **First Responder Fridays –** twice per month first responders meet and connect talking about recent and past calls that effect their mental health. Having like-minded individuals helps with the healing.
3. **Veteran Fridays –** Twice per month veteran gather for “brotherhood” discussion helping with mental health and life issues.
4. **Off-site Correctional Visits –** visits occur regularly throughout central Ohio to help with Incarcerated veterans. Statistic show that most veterans who get incarcerated do so 2-5 years after discharge.
5. **Combat Veterans Group –** A unique group of veterans that experienced things that required similarly experienced people to talk with to help with mental health. Once such issue is survivors guilt.
6. **Veteran’s court docket-** Two Stockhands people are mentors to the docket. The veteran’s court teams up to allow veterans to work off community service hours and participate in Stockhands programs to enhance the success of the court docket.

This and more cost 450,000 to operate. 40% from program revenue, 50% community support, 10% grant and sponsorship.

Capital campaign – expansion of the services- 5 million dollar goal has received 1.1 million so far. The 2nd arena is breaking ground soon. A Hub – building multifaceted to meet the needs of the programs offered, and then transitional housing are all goals with this capital campaign.

**MOTION -24-1112-02** to move into executive session at 1811 hrs.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Ray 5-0 Vote PASSED**

Discussed 3 financial requests

**MOTION- 24-1112-03** return to public session at 1920 hrs.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Hyatt 3-0 Vote PASSED**

**MOTION – 24-1112-04-01** to approve Veteran REDACTED a waiver for receiving funds for the 5th time in an annual cycle.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Hyatt 4-1 Vote PASSED**

**Motion – 24-1112-04-02** to approve Veteran REDACTED a waiver for receiving funds more than $12,000.00.

**1st Hyatt 2nd McAllister 4-1-Vote PASSED**

**Motion -24-1112-04-03** to approve Veteran REDACTED to receive $1,823.61 to cover rent, and other utilities he is responsible for.

**1st Hyatt 2nd McAllister 4-1-Vote PASSED**

There was no motion for the other two financial assistance requests. The board directed the Social Service officer to connect back with the requestors and offer other avenue to explore to help receive funds.

**MOTION-24-1112-05** to create and Emergency Employee Assistance program to be presented back to the commission as soon as possible.

**1st Hyatt 2nd McAllister 5-0 Vote Passed**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Holiday Cards update:**

The cards were order – Thanksgiving and Christmas and actually arrived 11/11/2024

The gift cards are already here. Over the course of the next few days, 87 cards with

Gift cards will be mailed to veterans that were assisted through our financial assistance program in 2024. The same will happen for the Christmas cards too.

**Bus Trip to Urbana**

The trip went well. 22 Veterans attended and multiple positive comments were discussed. Based upon conversations, MOTT Military Museum looks like the next trip that Veterans Services will offer.

**Upcoming Events:**

Nov 22 – The Wall Appreciation dinner for all the volunteers that made this event happen earlier in the year.

Nov 25th – The next commission meeting, VCAS – Veteran Companion Animal

Services will be presenting to the board on what they do and who they serve.

**Location Update (possible move):**

A building was located – move in ready – 60 days or so. It is near the Byxbe Campus and where the new VA clinic will be located. The Veterans commission and the County Commissioners are in discussion on the steps to get more office space and ancillary space for the increase in veteran’s needs in Delaware County. This location is a great location to meet the needs of the veterans today and for future growth. It also allows time to work on a new build for extended life expectancy of many programs that Veterans Services is developing.

**Motion-24-1112-06** The Delaware County Veteran Service Commission (DCVSC) requests the Delaware County Commissioners lease adequate office space for the exclusive use of the Delaware County Veteran Service Commission at 1012 SR 521 for 5-years with the option to purchase or longer lease.  This location meets current and near future needs, is within close proximity to Delaware County government buildings, and the Veterans’ Affairs Delaware Community Based Outpatient Clinic.  As a result, the DCVSC will not be a part of the “Social Services Building” located nearby.  The VSC requests to meet with the Delaware County Commissioners as soon as possible to discuss.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Ray 5-0 Vote PASSED**

Meeting options were discussed. The County Commissioners meet on Mondays and Thursdays. Nov 18th was discussed but the Director – Brian Galligher was directed to speak with the County Commissioners to attain the best meeting to attend to discuss.

**NEW BUSINESS**

It has come to the Veteran Service Commission that Veterans who are ill and require extended stays to hospital or nursing facilities for rehabilitation services currently miss seeing their spouses because some simply cannot drive or have transportation to visit their veteran spouse. In support of enriching the lives of the veterans who are staying in short term or long term facilities would like to see their spouses the request is to enhance the transportation program to allow the spouse of a veteran receive a ride from Veteran Services.

**Motion-24-1112-07** to approve spouses of veterans who are staying in short term or long term medical facilities the opportunity for the spouse to visit their veteran partner as the transportation department has the ability to provide.

**1st Reimer 2nd Santiago Foos 5-0 Vote PASSED**

**NOTE:** Transportation continues to increase in need. Current practice will be to provide the veteran transportation to medical appointments first and then secondly provide the spouse to visit their veteran admitted into short term / long term care facilities. Statistical data will be archived to plan on expanding the programs abilities in the budget year of 2026.

**DIRECTOR’s REPORT**

The 2nd CVSO that was hired and subsequently accepted did not show for his first day of work. Human Resources reached out and found that this Veteran does not want the job any longer. The Veterans Service Commission would like to fill this spot

**Motion-24-1112-08** torepost theCVSO position to find a new candidate to work for Veterans Services.

**1st Hyatt 2nd Santiago-Foos 5-0 Vote PASSED**

**FOXX** – the newest employee is doing well, working with Scott and Rey primarily learning the ins and outs of CVSO work. In between working with other office staff to learn what the office does daily for Veterans. He is in the books studying so when the CVSO class comes around he will attend and become an official CVSO.

**Mash Pantry**

The refrigerator Freezer that was originally authorized to purchase was for purchase from Lowes / Home Depot. These stores will not work within the confines of the rules in place to purchase. It is recommended to go to a commercial grade product that is offered from places that deal in commercial grade restaurant equipment. To attain the same equipment, the cost will increase and most likely last much longer. The request is to increase the amount to $10,000 to cover this expense.

**MOTION 24-1112-09** to rescind **Motion – 24-0812-06** and authorize up to 10,000 dollars to purchase a commercial Grade Refrigerator and Freezer for Mash Pantry.

**1st McAllister 2nd Hyatt 5-0 Vote PASSED**

Part time Intermittent Receptionist

The office is getting busier and busier. When Karen is off, her position limits the effectiveness of the office to serve the veteran community well. When she is off, having someone cover the phone, emails, and ancillary assistance.

The position was posted and 4 people applied. Interviews occurred where they were ranked. The director would like to hire the person that scored the highest in the interviews for this position.

**MOTION 24-1112-10** to approve to hire Kimberley Lemons as a part time intermittent office staff to cover when Karen is off.

**1st Hyatt 2nd Reimer 5-0 Vote PASSED**

Cemetery Position – Part Time intermittent

The director would like to post this position and have them on board by Jan 1st 2025.

**MOTION 24-1112-11** to approve to post for a part time intermittent position that will be responsible to identify and annotate the deceased veteran’s name, cemetery’s name, and location in that cemetery. This will be done to all cemeteries throughout Delaware County.

**1st McAllister 2nd Hyatt 5-0 Vote Passed**

Margo will continue to work on the parade with the assistance of Veteran Services Staff. She is working on creating a 501 3c. Veteran Services and the City of Delaware (if willing) will become the primary sponsors of the parade. In doing so, it will lessen any liability Veteran Services will have in the parade. The discussion was to up the support from 7K to around 10 K when this 501 3c is created.

**GOOD FOR THE ORDER:**

Delaware Rotary will be sponsoring an upcoming Honor Flight in 2026.

**NEXT MEETING:** Nov 25, 2024 is the next scheduled meeting - 1730 hrs. – At 91 N. Sandusky (Veterans Services).

**Motion – 24-1112-12** Motion to adjourn the meeting at 2048 hrs.

**1st Hyatt 2nd Santiago-Foos 5-0 vote**  **PASSED**

**Veterans Services – Commissioner Bi-Monthly Meeting**

**REGULAR MEETING OF November 25, 2024 REDACTED**

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| **Commissioners** |  |
| John McAllister - President | **Present** |
| Christine Santiago Foos – Vice President | **Present** |
| Merlin Reimer - Secretary | **Present** |
| Dave Hyatt - Member | **Present** |
| Richard Ray - Member | **Present** |
| **Veteran Services** |  |
| Brian Galligher Director | **Present** |
| Wm. Piwtorak Social Services | **Present** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Speaking Guest(s)** |  |
| Veteran Companion Animal Service VCAS |  |
|  |  |

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY**: President McAllister at 1730.

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence

Approval of minutes concluding at 1733 hrs.

**MOTION – 24-1125-01** to approve the minutes from the November 12, 2024 meeting.

**1st Hyatt 2nd Reimer 5-0 Vote** **PASSED**

**Guest Speaker:**

Veteran Companion Animal Services (VCAS) Tom, Josh and Lucy presented:

This organization provides Rescue dogs with a veteran: 1st year expenses are free.

Service area is about 2 hour drive time from Delaware.

The match based off behaviors of the dog that complement the living conditions of the veteran.

They do provide a Therapy Dog Certification – Veteran can pay it forward and heal from their own personal issues such as taking the dog to the VA or Children’s hospital.

They are seeking to expand – want to own a facility that provides day care facilities, a veteran’s café, and ability to provide training to the dogs and the veterans.

They are seeking satellite offices maybe in Cleveland, Dayton or even Indianapolis.

So far, 16 dogs have been matched for 2024.

Costs:

Standard – Crate, food, Grooming, Flea and Tick.

Medical is 3000-3500 on average for the dog.

Training is provided quarterly.

**MOTION -24-1125-02** to move into executive session at 1752 hrs.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Hyatt 5-0 Vote PASSED**

Discussed 2 financial requests

**MOTION- 24-1125-03** return to public session at 1803 hrs.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Hyatt 5-0 Vote PASSED**

**MOTION – 24-1125-04-01** to approve Veteran REDACTED annual request to go over the $12,000.00 threshold.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd Hyatt 4-1 Vote PASSED**

**Motion – 24-1125-04-02** to approve Veteran REDACTED with $1,061.00 to cover the cost of his monthly rent.

**1st Hyatt 2nd Reimer 4-1-Vote PASSED**

There was no motion for the other financial assistance requests. The Social Service Officer and the veteran will need to connect to confirm that the need still exists.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Holiday Cards update:**

Thanksgiving cards with Meijer gift cards were sent out to all financial assistance clients in 2024. The 2nd round of cards for Christmas have been filled out and will be sent right after Thanksgiving is completed. Should be in the mail on Dec 2nd.

**Assisting spouses:**

Transportation has updated their services on the request of the commission and will work toward incorporating these changes in a more permanent manner with the expansion of the service. The VSC would like spouses to be a part of the transportation services.

Currently Veterans are the priority and they must schedule three days in advance to their appointment. If there is availability, transportation will implement the opportunity to take veteran spouses to visit their spouse residing in a nursing home. If this need remains within the county, Delco Transit may be used whereas Veteran Services will provide bus passes. Unfortunately, with the current availability of vans, drivers, and the demand of rides, taking spouses will be a case by case opportunity. This may be incorporated fully in the 2026 budget.

**See motion 24-1112-07**

**Hospital (Grady and future Delaware Co. Hospital)**

Veterans admitted to provide some type of connection. This prospect failed to be fruitful in 2024 due to loss of communication from Grady Hospital staff. This will be re-evaluated and worked on early 2025.

**Location Update (possible move):**

The VSO has expanded its services and continues to need more space for their personnel to continue to provide professional services to their clients. A leasable building was found to be a great fit for what veterans services would need to have for a 3-5 year lease. The cost would be around 150,000 per year to lease with a potential option to buy.

Delaware County Commissioners have been contacted regarding the need and they offered to place the VSO in the Public Defender’s Office that will be vacated this winter. The County Commissioners are also looking at erecting a new building near the Byxbe Campus known as the Social Service building that would house Job and Family services, Dept. of Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health, and Veteran Services. The estimated completion date is the summer of 2027. Note the original discussion stated 4-5 years.

All of the options were discussed with the end result of a motion for future discussion with the County commissioners.

**Motion-24-1125-05** the Delaware County Veteran Service Commission (DCVSC) attest to the following:

1. The space offered at 10 Court Street, previously the Public Defenders Offices, is not suitable for the operations of Veteran Services to assist Veterans who are Delaware County Residents.
2. Renting/ leasing the building/ office space located at 1012 SR 521 with an option to purchase continues to be the best option for Veteran Services to continue to be have a suitable space for Delaware County veterans to visit and to receive expanding services.
3. The DCVSC continues to be open to discuss and leave the option to collaboratively work in developing a suitable space within the proposed Social Service Building that will be built on the Byxbe campus within the Delaware County Commissioners’ proposed timeline.

**1st Santiago-Foos 2nd McAllister 5-0 Vote PASSED**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**MEETING:**

Dec 12 at 1300hrs – a meeting at the large conference room at the Byxbe Building will occur to discuss in more detail the Social Service Building to most likely include a buildout timeline.

**PEARL HARBOR:**

Pearl Harbor ceremony – Winter Street Bridge this Sunday Dec 1st at 1215 hrs.

**Veterans Residing in Nursing Homes:**

Discussed identifying how many veterans there are at each nursing home and provide something for them for Christmas. Examples – reading material, word games, etc.

This was pushed off to Outreach to see if this request can be attain in 30 days.

**DIRECTOR’s REPORT**

The appreciation dinner for the volunteers that helped with the wall went off and was well attended. The commissioners who attended had nothing but positive comments including liking the table center pieces designed by the outreach officer – Kim.

Additionally Heath was identified as well as being quite helpful to veterans attending the event. Specifically, assisting Veteran John Crouse.

**MOTION – 24-1125-06** To approve up to $10,000.00 to cover the cost of the appreciation dinner for the volunteers that help with the “Wall that Heals”.

**1st Hyatt 2nd Ray 5-0 Vote Passed**

**GOOD FOR THE ORDER:**

Have a great Thanksgiving with friends and family

**NEXT MEETING:** Dec 9th, 2024 is the next scheduled meeting - 1730 hrs. – At 91 N. Sandusky (Veterans Services).

**Motion – 24-1125-07** Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1934 hrs.

**1st McAllister 2nd Ray 5-0 vote**  **PASSED**