

WEXFORD COUNTY
 VETERANS SERVICE COMMITTEE
 CHAIRMAN – JOE PORTERFIELD
 DIRECTOR – CHRIS EMMONS
 VSO – ERIC STURGEON

(A) CALL TO ORDER – Meeting call to order July 9th, 2025, at 3:00 P.M. by Joe Porterfield.

(B) ROLL CALL: Gray Taylor, Jack Baughan, Joe Porterfield, Rhonda Workman, Greg Schmidt, Chris Emmons, Eric Sturgeon.

(C) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Everyone stood to recite the pledge allegiance

(D) ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA: None.

(E) APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion made by Gary Taylor & 2nd by Rhonda Workman to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

(F) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR: Motion made by Gary Taylor & 2nd by Greg Schmidt to approval of June 11th, 2025, minutes meeting. Motion passed.

(G) PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS: None presented.

(H) PUBLIS COMMENTS: Public comments are limited to 3 minutes per person. Charles Schmitt: Let me be blunt – there is zero actual PTSD or MST counseling happened in these sessions. Mr. Coonan is a benefits counselor and does not act as a licensed mental health provider.

(I) AGENDA ITEMS:

(1) Financial/Directors HR Report: Given by Chris Emmons.

(A) Veterans Service Expenditures:

- (a) Office Supplies - \$338.95
- (b) Contracted Services - \$48,746.00
- (c) Travel & Conferences - \$1,988.13
- (d) Vehicle Manut. & Operations - \$3,426.88
- (e) Memorial Wall/Expenses -\$00.00
- (f) Expo/Expenses - \$1,596.67

(B) Grant Expenditures:

- (a) Office Supplies - \$205.01
- (b) Contracted Services - \$4,200.00
- (c) Travel & Conferences - \$70.96
- (d) Veterans Grant Expenses - \$0.00
- (e) Promotional - \$8,495.00
- (f) Veterans Expo -\$4,775.56
- (g) New Freedom/Ride - \$8,702.53
- (h) Balance held in Emergency Fund \$48,696.00 as of 06/30/2025

Request authorized for the period ending: 06/30/2025

(2) Directors HR Report for June 11th, 2025: Given by Chris Emmons:

Veterans seen in office -79, logged phone contacts-20, veterans who received emergency assistance-0, Veterans ineligible/denied for emergency assistance-1, and County Burial benefits and letters have been initiated-0, County Burial Benefits ineligible –0. Total expenditures as 06/30/2025 \$24,211.97 Available Balance as of 06/30/2025 \$126,460.12! Total percentage of budget used 36.48%! We were able to service 79 veterans this month, including 11 Service Connected claims, three Supplemental Claims, four

Higher Level Reviews, one CHAMPVA Application, 6 VA Healthcare Application, 103 personal interviews and 435 Files Reviews. Additionally, we supported 60 aging Veterans (aged 70 or older) and seven female Veterans. Our team maintains an average of 20 calls daily, and we receive between 2 to 5 voicemails outside of business hours, which we address on the next business day.

Accreditation Training: We will renew all accreditation in accordance with their respective renewal timeliness.

MVAA Grant: Invoicing for Quarter1- 3 of FY 25 was submitted on June 30th, 2025. We anticipate hearing about our FY26 grant approval by July 15th, 2025. We have requested a 50% advance on our FY26 grant from MVAA.

Expo Planning – nine billboards are currently advertising the event. Flyers will be distributed at multiple locations in early July. We look forward to hosting an exceptional event.

Upcoming Training: Michigan Association of County Veteran Counselors (MVACVC) Fall Conference: September 10-12, 2025. VA Advanced Appeals: Date to be determined.

Networking, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: This month, we held productive meetings with key stakeholders.

Wexford County Veterans Service Committee Chair Meeting: Discussed various topics related to our Veteran Services office and operations. It's encouraging to maintain open communication with the committee and its chair.

New Freedom Advisory Meeting: Participated in this collaboration with new Freedom Ride stakeholders to review our program and plan future steps. This will be a quarterly engagement.

Senior Networking Advocacy (SNAG) Monthly meeting: Attended to strengthen our connections with organizations serving seniors and veterans in our community.

Administrative Updates: We now have access to the Defense Personnel Records Information Retrieved System (DPRIS), enabling us to retrieve records for Gulf War Veterans. A new waiting area has been established in front of our office to ensure privacy for veterans. We are assisting with records retrieval for WWI Veterans to complete the memorial wall at the courthouse.

Upcoming Focus: Continue expo planning as we approach the event date. Organize a Veteran picnic in the fall aimed at engaging younger Veterans and their families. Visit local Veteran Organizations to introduce our team and foster collaboration.

Approval Needed: We have coordinated with the Cadillac High School Girls Golf team to assist with event set-up and tear-down. We seek approval for a \$500 donation to support their efforts. We seek approval to donate \$1,000 to the County Fair Board's Salute for Veterans Dinner, where I will be speaking on behalf of our Veterans Services office.

Conclusion: We remain committed to making a positive impact on the lives of those we serve. Thank you for your continued support and collaboration. Motion made by Gary Taylor, 2nd by Greg Schmidt to approve the Financial and Director Report as given for June 19th, 2025. Motion passed.

(I) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE: None.

(J) OLD BUSINESS: None.

(K) COMMITTEE COMMENTS: None.

(L) CHAIR COMMENTS: Joe thanks to Eric & Chris on a job well done. Also reported that he attended the Citizens award plus reported on taxes for a veteran.

(M) NEXT MEETING: July 9th, 2025 @ 3:00 P.M.

(O) ADJOURN: Motion made by Gary Taylor, 2nd by Greg Schmidt to adjourn.

(P) There being no further business to come before the WCVS

Commissioner the meeting was duly closed at 3:15 P.M. Next schedule meeting is August 13th, 2025 @ 3:00 P.M.!

Joe Porterfield
Chairman

Chris Emmons
Director

Jack Baughan
Secretary

Eric Sturgeon
Veterans Service Officers