

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

(A) CALL TO ORDER – Meeting call to order August 13th, 2025, at 3:00 P.M. by Joe Porterfield.

(B) ROLL CALL: Gray Taylor, Jack Baughan, Joe Porterfield, Rhonda Workman, Greg Schmidt - excused, 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 Rhonda Workman to approval of July 9th, 2025, minutes meeting. Motion passed.

(G) PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS: None presented.

(H) PUBLIS COMMENTS: Public comments are limited to 3 minutes per person.

1) Mike Coonan report about his counselling for veterans – he took 5 minutes.

2) 8 veterans took 3 minutes each to tell the board about a great job Mike is doing.

(I) AGENDA ITEMS:

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

(A) Veterans Service Expenditures:

(a) Office Supplies - \$295.31

(b) Contracted Services - \$48,746.00

(c) Travel & Conferences - \$903.13

(d) Vehicle Manut. & Operations - \$3,426.88

(e) Memorial Wall/Expenses -\$00.00

(f) Expo/Expenses - \$1,096.67

(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 - \$7,995.00

(f) Veterans Expo -\$4,775.56

(g) New Freedom/Ride - \$7,922.57

(h) Balance held in Emergency Fund \$48,746.00 as of 07/31/2025

Request authorized for the period ending: 07/31/2025

(2) Directors HR Report for July 9th, 2025: Given by Chris Emmons:

Veterans seen in office -84, logged phone contacts-10, veterans who received emergency assistance-0, Veterans ineligible/denied for emergency assistance-1, and County Burial benefits and letters have been initiated-1, County Burial Benefits ineligible –0. Total expenditures as 07/31//2025 \$8,631.09. Available Balance as of 07/31/2025

\$117,812.73! Total percentage of budget used 40.82%! We were able to service 84 veterans this month, including 14 Service Connected claims, three Supplemental Claims, 3 Higher Level Reviews, No CHAMPVA Application, 4 VA Healthcare Application, 100 personal

interviews and 512 Files Reviews. Additionally, we supported 24 aging Veterans (aged 70 or older) and One female Veterans. Our team maintains an average of 10 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: We received updates that our grant needed corrections and was resubmitted on July 31st, 2025.

Expo Planning: Detailed report to follow this report.

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

NVLSP Webinar on Ratings and Reductions – attended July 23th, 2025.

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

+ **Fair Board President:** Discussed the upcoming Salute to Service event (August 11th, 2025) and provided a \$1,000 donation and volunteered to speak at the event.

+ **Lunch and Fun – Cadillac Senior Center:** Participated in this collaboration with Cadillac Center and Elder Law discussing advance directives for the aging population. We reached 4 Veterans by attending the event.

+ **Meeting with Travis Quillin from MI Works:** Discussed his role in providing employment services to Veterans, and how we can collaborate in the future.

+ **Meeting with Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency Deputy Director, Todd Butler:** Discussed the relationship between the MVAA and county Veteran Service Officer, and how can we collaborate to assist more Veterans.

Administrative Updates: We are assisting with records retrieval for WWI Veterans to complete the memorial wall at the courthouse.

Upcoming Focus: 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: None.

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 Rhonda Workman to approve the Financial and Director Report as given for July 9th, 2025. Motion passed.

(I) **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:** None.

(J) **OLD BUSINESS:** None.

(K) **NEW BUSINESSES:**

+ Joe Porterfield reported that they Mr. Coonan, Mr. Emmons, & Myself had a meeting & they thought the meeting went well!

+ A couple days later after Mr. Coonan sent numerous emails regarding his group. Mr. Porterfield then made a motion to cancel the contract with Mr. Coonan using the 30 day clause in the contract. The motion received no support and so the motion died on the floor.

(L) **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** The board welcomes public input and appreciates adherence to the time limits established. Each period shall be limited to 15 minutes in total. Each person shall be limited to one three-minute comment per period. A group representative shall be limited to one five-minute comment per period.

- + Six people gave a 3-minute speech on support for Mike Coonan counselling.
- + Charles Schmitt spoke about his statement last month – that he was sorry!

EXPO GIVEN BY ERIC STURGEON:

+ Attendance 386 total sign- ins, Veterans 243, Counties Represented 18 counties, 2 states, Top Counties Wexford -137, Missaukee – 33, Osceola – 28.

+ Overall Assessment: Event was highly successful in terms of turnout and veteran engagement, particularly for older veterans. Vendor participation and feedback were positive, with actionable recommendations for improvement in scheduling, vendor selection, and outreach

(M) COMMITTEE COMMENTS: None.

(N) CHAIR COMMENTS: None

(O) NEXT MEETING: September 8th, 2025 @ 3:00 P.M.

(P) ADJOURN: Motion made by Gary Taylor, 2nd by Rhonda Workman to adjourn.

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

Commissioner the meeting was duly closed at 4:22 P.M. Next schedule meeting is September 8th, 2025 @ 3:00 P.M.!

Joe Porterfield
Chairman

Chris Emmons
Director

Jack Baughan
Secretary

Eric Sturgeon
Veterans Service Officers