



Kent County Veterans Services

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DRAFT minutes 7-8-2021

Committee Present: Mary Johnson, Michael Blundell, Mel Bauman, Trish Torres, Jill Wolfe

Committee Absent: John Baxter, Shane Scherer

Staff Present: Martha Burkett, Andrew Lapres, Rachel Wustman, Jacob Calvert

Guests: Michael Hyacinth (Veteran Entrepreneur), Paul Ryan

1. Meeting called to Order/Introductions –
 - a. The meeting was called to order by Veterans Services Committee Chair Mary Johnson at 8:30am
2. Pledge of Allegiance – Committee Member Mel Bauman led those in attendance to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Approval of the Minutes from Previous Month
 - a. Committee Chair Mary Johnson motioned to approve the minutes. Melvin Bauman motioned to approve. Michael Blundell seconded.
 - b. Minutes approved.
4. Success Stories
 - a. KCVS Manager Martha Burkett shared that herself and Committee Chair Mary Johnson went on the Equine Assisted Retreat as chaperones, and that it was a successful retreat.
5. Monthly Impact Report
 - a. Veterans Services Officer Andrew provided an update. 16 fully developed claims were submitted, 72 claims are in development, and 16 claims were awarded, 1 SSR claim was awarded, and 2 burial claims were awarded.
6. Manager's Report
 - a. Veterans Services Manager Martha Burkett stated that KCVS is on track with everything in the budget.
 - b. Martha Burkett shared the draft of the spend plan for 2022.
7. Old Business
 - a. KCVS Manager Martha Burkett brought the proposal for providing Michael Hyacinthe with \$5,000 for the coffee shop. The committee agreed that it should be feasible to scrape \$5,000 from other initiatives to provide for Michael.

8. New Business

- a. Michael Hyacinthe introduced himself and shared an update about the Veteran's Memorial Park coffee shop/art space project.
- b. Committee Chair Mary Johnson discussed the structure of the committee and how it acts as a liaison between the public and Kent County Veterans Services, but expressed that it the public has an issue with KCVS, that it should first be brought to Mary Johnson or KCVS Manager Martha Burkett. Mary also stated that the public may go to Jenny James if they feel they are not getting satisfaction from the committee.
- c. KCVS Manager Martha Burkett shared that she met with Bill Ward from Network 180 to collaborate to provide veterans and their families the opportunity to see a board-certified psychiatrist through Medicaid.
- d. KCVS Manager Martha Burkett shared that KCVS has begun sending out invitations to the Women's Banquet, with attendance capped at 150.
- e. KCVS Manager Martha Burkett shared that she is creating a brochure for the community that lists different phone numbers and benefits available to veterans.
- f. Committee Member Melvin Bauman shared that he would like some info about KCVS put up at the airport.

9. Public Comment

- a. Paul also shared that the Freedom Cruise is coming along and the artist is doing a great piece, and the Grand Haven American Legion is hosting an event for leaders of veterans organizations.

10. Adjournment –Veterans Services Committee Chair Mary Johnson moved adjourned the meeting at 9:31 am.