

STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
302 WEST WASHINGTON STREET
ROOM E120
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204-2738



Eric J. Holcomb, Governor
Dennis Wimer, Director

Indiana Veterans Affairs Commission
Friday, July 12, 2019 1:00 PM
Indianapolis, Indiana

Commission Meeting Minutes

General Information and Reviews:

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

- **Present for meeting:** Greg Baker, Richard Caldwell, Jay Kendall, Dennis Wimer, Kevin Coley, CSM James Gordon, Sen Tomes, Mr. Greg Ballard, Rep Macer, Ken Hylton, Chairman Steuterman
- **Absent:** Sen Mrvan, Rep Zent,
- Verified Quorum

Director Wimer introduces Gabrielle Owens as our new General Counsel.
Chairman Steuterman thanks Jason Thompson and Keith Beesley for their service to IDVA.

Modified and approved April meeting minutes. Bottom of first page last line, change Administrative Orders and Protections Act to Administrative Orders and Procedures Act. Baker motion to pass change, Ballard seconds. Commission votes to pass pen and ink change.

Mr. Luke Britt, Open Door Law Discussion

Old Business:

Director Wimer, Review of SBOA/IG Audits:

- MFRF Audit
 - 914 IAC outlines the eligibility for the MFRF being connected to the applicants military service. Discussed how this has impacted the MFRF approvals.
 - IDVA has created policies and a process with the commission to review applications from agency and appeals.

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- TANF Audit
 - Audit found about \$700,000 questioned.
 - By the end of Aug/Sept IDVA and FSSA will have a report out based on the review currently being conducted to review every individual case.
 - Will have a detailed timeline of what we are working on.
- IG Report
 - Looked at all audits and components.
 - Determined nothing was done illegal or unethical.
 - Marion County Prosecutor is still looking at it.

Chairman Steuterman, Policy Review/Approval

- Electronic Communications Policy
Motion to approve Kendall, Baker second - Policy is passed
- Qualifying Military Service Policy
Motion to approve Caldwell, Kendall second - Policy is passed

Customer Service Policy

Motion to approve Baker, Hylton second - Policy is passed

- State Benefit Application Policy
Motion to table policy Ballard approve, Baker second
Edits will be made and brought back at the next commission meeting

ALJ Sandra Jensen, Review Appeals Process and Activities

- Status of current appeals
 - 19 MFRF cases originally submitted
 - Six scheduled for hearing. Two appeared. Issued non final orders to dismiss them. One was voluntarily dismissed by the petitioner and the other three petitioners did not appear.
 - They have seven days to reply. Any notice that is served by regular mail, the statute requires mail time is added (Three days) so it is essentially ten days.
 - Commission will take the final action.
 - Prepare a final order for the commission to sign off on.

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- The remaining 13 cases were set in blocks of time, six for Aug 28 and seven for Aug 29.
- By October have everything ready for Commission to sign.
- Motion to continue process and use Sandra as our ALJ to look at appeals and revisit in October. Kendall motion to continue, Baker second Motion is passed

New Business:

Chairman Steuterman, Commission Taskforce Discussion:

- Three person team to make up taskforce to look at appeals.
- Have five volunteers to ensure there are at least three available to review. Use electronic communications policy to accommodate everyone.
- Motion to come up with five person panel to look at appeals after ALJ has come to a determination Baker moves, Hylton second Motion is passed
- Small taskforce to bring in outside people to get more diverse ideas and representations.

- HB 1257 Process:
 - **IDVA employee MFRF Process**
If an employee wants to submit for funding, the commission has to be the ones to review it.
 - **Greater than \$2,500 process**
Create a taskforce to look at requests for more than \$2,500.
Coley motion to use same five person team to deal with appeals process, Baker seconds Motion passes

- Policy Review:
 - **Veteran Suicide Training Policy**
Want to make it clear that our staff is trained to handle situations that could arise.
 - **MFRF Income Determination policy**
Chairman - Get ideas out there for a more refined policy by October.

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Public Comment:

Jason Murry – State Suicide Prevention Coordinator

- For every six Hoosiers who die by suicide, one is a veteran.
- There were 164 veteran suicides last year.

Kent Morgan – Veteran Advocate

- How many days is the appeals process on average.
- Do we have anything in place to protect the veterans who may be suffering from PTSD. Chairman- we should be able to move faster now because we have a process in place.

Department Reports:

Director Wimer, IDVA Status Update:

- Changes have gone into effect and organization chart is on our website.
- There are two main open positions. Operations Director and Outreach Director
- There were 65 candidates for the Operations Director position.
- Agency structure has changed about 70%.
- MFRF sent a letter to 106 denials letting them know they could reapply. Over the last three months there is a 50% reduction in denials due to a better understanding of the new rules.

Mr. Aichele, Legislative Update:

- Disability Placard is now available.
- Tracked all veteran related legislation and explained to Governor how each bill effects our agency.
- Cemetery grants are being reviewed.

Director Wimer, Division Reports:

- All division reports were sent ahead as pre-reads before today's meeting.

Mr. Tim Dyke, CVSO Report – Please email any questions to Mr. Dyke.

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Chairman Steuterman:

- Chairman Adjourned meeting at 3:08

Erika C. Steuterman

Erika Steuterman, Maj Gen, USAF (Ret)
Chairman

11 Oct 19

Date

Dennis Wimer

Dennis Wimer, Director IDVA

11 Oct 19

Date

Ken Hylton

Ken Hylton, American Legion

11 Oct 2019

Date

Greg Baker

Greg Baker, VFW

11 Oct 2019

Date

Richard Caldwell

Richard Caldwell, AMVETS

11 Oct 2019

Date

Jay Kendall

Jay Kendall, CVSO Representative

11 - Oct - 2019

Date

CSM James Gordon, INNG

Date

Kevin Coley

Kevin Coley, DAV

11 Oct 2019

Date

Greg A. Ballard

Mr. Greg Ballard, Member

11 OCT 19

Date

