

BAY COUNTY VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY OCTOBER 15, 2019

Meeting called to Order by Chairman Vaughn Begick at 3:00 PM, followed by roll call.

Present at meeting: Vaughn Begick, County Commissioner; Marilyn Lazarz, Troy Stewart, Mike Pergande, Craig Goulet, Director of Administrative Services and Jim Barcia, County Executive. Absent Jon VanTol.

Minutes: **2019-24** Motion made by Troy to approve 7-16-2019 and 9-17-2019 minutes and supported by Marilyn; 3 YEAS, 0 NAYS.

Citizens Input: Cindy Starkweather (US Army Veteran and AMVETS Officer) spoke about establishing a Bay County Veterans Food Pantry, along with Mark Smith, named Veterans Helping Hands and seeking funding. The food pantry would deliver food and necessities to Bay County home bound Veterans, Veterans and will be available to the general population.

Petitions and Communications: a) Food Bank: Discussion on the Bay County Veterans Helping Hands food bank took place. Email from Cindy Starkweather sent to Committee members and received. Vaughn stated funding is always a question and he did not know if state grant funding is available to support the food bank. State grants are usually for computers and building supplies. Grants have stipulations and then there is the Bay County Veterans millage fund. There are always strings attached with reporting, documentation and registered vendors. Jim commented the millage funding is for indigent Veterans and the Veterans food would have to be separate. The Governor has veto federal funding but will arrive to an agreement to restore the funding. Corporation Council will be addressed on what the legal aspects are for funding the pantry. The food bank is a 501C3 according to Mark Smith and the I Support the 1% Food Pantry in Saginaw does not help homebound Veterans and the Veterans wife/kids cannot pick up the food. The Veteran is the only one that can pick up the food. Troy said the 1% food pantry in Saginaw should join forces with Bay County and he read the Rules/Regulations of the Emergency Relief Fund. Mark commented the 1% Food Pantry in Saginaw will not. Mike mentioned he does not know if there is a need for it and named a few local food pantries. The Veterans Office staff gives out food vouchers and there are many other food pantries locally. Vaughn said vendors would have to be registered with the County and would have to check our millage funding for a line item and Corporation Council. The basic cost is the cost of the food. Cindy stated it will cost \$1500 for the initial cost to start. It will be opened Wednesday and Thursdays. The back portion of Village Hall will be donated for the food pantry and refrigeration available for perishables. Marilyn wanted to know how it will be maintained. The maintenance of the food bank will be through fund raisers and the food/necessities will be separate from the Veterans and general population per Cindy Starkweather. They will also set up a website and cross-check with other food pantries so the

person is not going from one pantry to another for food. They are also receiving donations of food from several local agencies. "We are here to help our Veterans." Vaughn stated it is hard to project at this time if there is a demand. The Committee will look into this issue more and readdress. b) Veteran Affairs Office Update: Craig stated the Veteran Affairs Office is 99% complete and the staff is operating out of the new office. There will be an open house date to be scheduled.

Reports/Resolutions: None

Old Business: a) Driver Cell Phones: Craig said the driver's cell phones would cost \$25/\$30 per month and subject to FOIA. Fred Zippler pays out of his pocket for the 2 cell phones 29.01/phone/month and after 2 years \$24.01. He had paid the first cell phone bill of \$151.94. **2019-25** Motion made by Mike to reimburse Fred Zippler \$58.02 per month for his cell phones expenses for 2 years that support the drivers' transportation program and to revisit the drivers' cell phone issue when his contract expires. Supported by Marilyn and motion adopted by a voice of: 3 YEAS, 0 NAYS. Fred carries the transportation master cell phone which the County pays for the phone at \$49.50/month. b) Thomas Duncan Yuill: Mark Kaczmarek had requested the personal records of Mr. Yuill from the National Archives Records Center in St. Louis with a cost of \$70 to obtain his records. The record will go to Mark's office. Committee to wait for the records.

New Business: Mike made a recommendation for Amber, Corporation Council and Craig to research cost for making a full-time and part-time position for the Bay County Veterans Affairs Office staff that is currently contractual.

Fred Zippler commented the Veterans Affairs Office is not taking applications for the Michigan Trust Fund and there is a lack of applications for Bay County. Mark Kaczmarek will check into this issue. Mike commented the Veterans Office staff is contractual and the contract states specific tasks for them. All additional duties should be added to the contract.

Bruce Douglas stated the homeless shelter in Bay County is being funded 100% thru a Gift Thrift Shop on Henry and Midland Street. We are not being recognized and there is no advertisement. He has heard nothing from the Veterans groups to help.

Miscellaneous: None

Announcements: None

Motion to adjourn meeting at 3:40 PM.