



Veteran Affairs

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The Polk County Veteran Affairs Commission held a regular monthly meeting at 1530 hrs on July 18, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vikki Domina, Marty Smith
Assistant County Attorney Mark Taylor Absent
Executive Director Pat Sweeney Present
Deputy Director Michael Mortensen Present
Commissioner James Marren Absent

Minutes:

Mays' minutes approved no objections.

Claims:

Pat discussed the previous two months' claims. Fiscal year 22/23 closed at 96.26% expended. Steady increase in services provided throughout the year, federal claims had a 34% increase from the previous fiscal year.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Domina to approve the previous two months claims.

VOTE YEA: Domina, Smith

Exception Report:

Pat discussed 44 exceptions above the allowable guidelines for the months of May and June 2023.

Keeping Veterans housed is our main priority, Pat thanked the commission and Board of Supervisors for their exceptional support. The exception report is within guideline and ratified.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Domina to approve the exceptions for May and June 2023

VOTE YEA: Domina, Smith

Executive Directors' Report:

Pat discussed our DART program and the increase in ridership. FY 22/23 was our fifth year providing free transportation to Veterans in Polk County with a total of 662,733 rides provided. Pat advised the DART partnership has allowed Veterans the ability to utilize community resources, maintain employment and healthcare services. Chair commissioner Domina very proud of the partnership and thanked the Board of Supervisors for their support to our Veterans community. Due to the success of our DART partnership Pat and Michael have been working with Home Base Iowa to provide our counties returning Veterans employment services. Home Base Iowa is a State wide initiative that "connects Iowa businesses with qualified veterans and their spouses looking for career opportunities. The program also provides resources to help connect veterans and their families with education and in transitioning to a new community."

Pat discussed with the increase in services provided by our office, another fulltime employee is a necessity. Pat and Michael will be working with Human Resources and the Board of Supervisors on obtaining another position.

Pat thanked the staff and commission for their support this past fiscal year and looks forward to another successful year.

Incarcerated Veterans Report:

Deputy Director Michael Mortensen discussed we are still very active with incarcerated Veterans although we do not have accurate reporting from the Polk County Jail. Michael advised for May and June a total of 55 incarcerated Veterans and 90 federal claims had been filed. Commissioner Domina stated it's

a devastation the Jail does not have the support to provide accurate reports to the office. Michael ensured we are still very active with an open line of communication with jail staff and continue utilizing the electronic KITE system for inmate requests.

Augusts' meeting scheduled for August 15, 2023 at 1530 hrs.

Adjournment

Vikki Domina
Vikki Domina, Chairperson