

Veterans' Committee Minutes  
July 2, 2012 – 3:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman M. Johnson; Supervisors Rowland, Lucia, Hargrave, Wright, Richardson, Lewza, Collyer, Sausville, Southworth and Wood; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Andrew Davis, Veterans; Press.

Chairman M. Johnson called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**On a motion made by Mr. Hargrave, seconded by Mr. Richardson the minutes of the June 5, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mr. Davis gave a brief overview of the Educational Benefits for Veterans as follows:

**Vocational Rehab**

This program is often called an education benefit, but it isn't, it is an employment benefit. If a Veteran is wounded, either mentally or physically to the point that they can no longer do the job that they were originally trained to do the VA will retain them, with no dollar limit as to how much they will spend to retrain them.

**GI Bill**

This is one of the greatest pieces of social legislation ever to come forward in this country, he said. This bill has been updated, but is still in existence in its original form, called Chapter 30 with many variations including Chapter 35, which is survivor and dependence educational assistance. If a Veteran is found to be completely disabled their children can go to school under the GI bill until the age of 27.

All education benefits with the VA last 36 months, which are broken down into 9 month school years to cover four years of school.

Recently, in 2009, President Bush signed in the post 911, Chapter 33 GI Bill which was supposed to be the long awaited update based on active duty time. If you spent three years on active duty after 911, you are 100% eligible for the post 911 GI Bill. What this will pay for in New York State is up to \$18,000 a year in tuition and a monthly housing stipend that can go up to \$3,000/mo., if you live in Manhattan, and \$1,500/mo., if you live in Saratoga County. The calculation that is used is the highest in-State tuition rate.

How the program works is, the Veterans enrolls in school and the school verifies that, in fact, they are enrolled. Mr. Davis's office makes sure they are eligible and then payments begin. The tuition goes directly to the school from the VA and housing and books go directly to the Veteran.

### **New York State Veterans Tuition Award**

Mr. Davis said New York is fortunate to have a New York State benefits package, with three types of awards in terms of State benefits. Here in New York State if you are a combat Veteran the State will pay 98% of your tuition at an in-state school or equivalent to a private school. Mr. Davis said Federal benefits have an expiration date of 10 to 15 years from the date of discharge. State awards go forever, he said.

### **State Regents Award and New York State Military Recognition Scholarship**

Available to children of deceased or permanently disabled Veterans.

### **VREP – Veterans Re-employment Program**

This program came out of the Vow to Hire Heroes' Act signed by President Obama. The Department of Labor and the VA have gone together to offer retraining to Veterans who are expired on their other education benefits.

Mr. Davis said the Revolutionary Run for Veterans will be a 3 ½ mile run in the Village Of Schuylerville, on November 10<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9:00 a.m. at Fort Hardy Park. There was a \$3,000 donation from GE as well as a promised 150 runners, with each of them running at \$30/ea. After speaking to the Cross Country Coach in Saratoga Springs a promise has been made for 50 to 75 runners. Mr. Davis said currently they have twenty six volunteers, but they are in need of additional volunteers. Posters will be distributed to all Supervisors to be displayed in their Town Hall.

Mr. Richardson said on August 11<sup>th</sup> Mechanicville will be honoring 51 people who were killed in action at the High School Auditorium. The event will begin at 2:00p.m.

Mrs. Johnson said passage was received for the renaming of the 9P Bridge to the Saratoga County Veterans' Memorial Bridge; however, passage of the highway was not approved due to an error in the directions. She said that would be submitted again next year.

Mr. Collyer said the Town of Providence is going to have a Veterans' Memorial at town Hall on Saturday, July 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. dedicating a monument with Veterans' Director, Andrew Davis as guest speaker.

Mr. Wood said he will be making arrangements to have signs made for the new Saratoga County Veterans Memorial Bridge and a special unveiling ceremony to be announced.

**On a motion made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Hargrave the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Sansom