

Veterans Committee Minutes
April 5, 2022 – 3:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Richardson; Committee Members C. Eric Butler, Sandra Winney and Mo Wright; Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Matt Rose, Audra Hedden, Christine Rush, County Administrator; Michael Hartnett, County Attorney; Frank McClement, Veterans; Michael Prezioso, Mental Health & Addiction; Craig Hayner, County Clerk.

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

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Butler, the minutes of the March 1, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously.

Veterans Service Office Report

Mr. McClement provided an overview of the Report for January through March which was included in the agenda. Mr. McClement noted that van transportation riders are still not back to pre-pandemic levels as some programs, like the Adult Day Healthcare Program at the VA, are still not back up and running. Mr. McClement said that they've started hosting events in-house which have been successful.

Veterans Trust Fund Report

Mr. McClement said the unused funds from last year's grant program in the amount of \$27,314.24 were transferred into the Veteran's Trust Fund for a total of \$142,043.66 which amount will be reduced by the Town grants that remain outstanding.

Honor Deceased Veterans Ceremonies

Mr. McClement said the ceremonies will start back up this month with the Town of Malta nominee in April, Stillwater in May, Waterford in June, Corinth in July and Mechanicville in August.

Partnership with NYLEAP – Post Critical Incident Seminar

Mr. McClement said he and Dr. Prezioso met a Warren County Deputy who started an organization called NYLEAP which hosts Post Critical Incident Seminars. Mr. Prezioso said the New York Law Enforcement Assistance Program's (NYLEAP) model is a three day peer lead seminar with spouse participation and access to clinical care, coping skills and education. Mr. Prezioso said it's a tremendous program that he hopes they can bring to Saratoga County for Veterans with or without prior law enforcement service.

A motion was made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Butler, authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding with NYS Division of Veterans Affairs for distribution of Fresh Connect coupons to Veterans. Unanimous.

Mr. McClement said NYS offers a coupon program to seniors and veterans that can be redeemed at local farmers markets for fresh produce to promote locally sourced food and healthy eating. This MOU will allow the Veterans Service Office to distribute these \$20 coupon booklets to veterans in the County.

Other Business

Mr. Wright said he attended a mental health session at NYSAC where he got an idea from presenter Sara Boerenko to put information about suicide prevention resources on a coaster and he said the County could distribute them to local VFWs and American Legions to help Veterans who may be in need of that information. Mr. McClement said Mrs. Rush in the County Administrator's office and Mr. Prezioso helped designed the coasters on which they put the Veterans Crisis Line phone number, the National Suicide Prevention phone number and the local office of Mental Health phone number. An order of 5,000 coasters was placed at a cost of less than \$700.

Mr. McClement provided an update on the purchase of a new transport van and said a purchase order should be issued in April. The new van is needed because the old van is leaking water due to a prior accident.

Mr. Bulger thanked Mr. Prezioso and Mr. McClement for hosting him, his team and Mr. Chamberlain on tours of their locations.

On a motion by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Wright, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Bridget Rider
Deputy Clerk of the Board