

**MINUTES**

**JANUARY 16 & 17, 2004**

**1:00pm**

**COMFORT INN  
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Brad Maasjo.

Roll call:

Members **PRESENT:**

Brad Maasjo

Carl Bloomquist

Rudy Jenson

Rick Ryan

Ken Vatne

Daryl Beard

John Coyne

Orletta Kilen

Gary Skarphol

Robert Volk

Gene Bernhardt

Larry Dakken

Ted Krogen

Paul Smathers

Members **ABSENT:**

Gerald Balzer

**Others in Attendance**

Ray Harkema, Commissioner, Veterans Affairs

Neal Asper, Administrator, Veterans Home

Veterans Coordinating Council members

Gordy Smith and Becky Keller, State Auditor's Office

Eric Monson, NOVUS

Joe Novak, Governing Board

Minutes of October 24, 2003 meeting.

*Motion by Smathers to accept the minutes as written, second by Kilen. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Guest Speakers:**

Rob Keller, Public Affairs Office, National Guard. Update on activities of Guard members serving overseas and statistics on Veterans Cemetery. Funding for the Cemetery grant tabled until 2005-2006.

Wanda Hodenfield, VA CARES Coordinator & Facility Planner. Final report from the CARES Commission should be released by the end of January. Update on activities at Fargo VA.

Gordy Smith, State Auditor, Performance Report on the Department and the Administrative Committee. A draft audit report is tentatively scheduled for the end of March.

Tim Knoll's, Job Service North Dakota

Handout, "Post War Trust Fund Assistance Stats for North Dakota's Veterans, January 2004. Job Service will be submitting a proposal for PWTF monies for committee action at the next meeting.

Jerry Meske, Veterans Employment & Training

Working under a continuing resolution which ends January 31, awaiting Congressional action on their budget. Discussion on sending letter regarding the loss of D.V.O.P. and L.V.E.R. positions due to reduced funding.

Secretary Jenson assumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**Report on Legislative Budget Section Meeting – Commissioner Ray Harkema**

Chairman Maasjo and Commissioner Harkema attended the meeting on January 14, 2004 along with Eric Monson, NOVUS. The committee listened but took no action on the request for assistance in funding a strategic plan.

**Veterans Home Report – Neal Asper, Administrator**

- Update on new policies being implemented at the Veterans Home.
- VA Survey went well. The State survey conducted showed only one deficiency - water temperature too high. Action taken to correct deficiency right away.
- The residents are not happy about the rent percentages or the charge for private rooms.

**Joint Issues with ND Veterans Coordinating Council – Bob Hanson, President, NDVCC**

Discussion between ACOVA members and Council members on working together in the next legislative session. State Commanders received letter from Chairman Maasjo on ACOVA activities and nominations for July 2004 committee appointments.

*Motion by Smathers to support a N.D.V.C.C. resolution on the concept of paying a Bonus to those serving in conflicts, second by Bernhardt. Motion carried unanimously.*

Update from N.D.V.C.C. on the organized trip to Washington, D.C. for the World War II Memorial dedication.

#### **Appeals Committee – Rudy Jenson, Chair**

An applicant to the Veterans Home is appealing his denial of admittance. The appeals committee will hear the appeal.

#### **Department of Veterans Affairs Report – Commissioner Ray Harkema**

- C.V.S.O. Spring Conference will be held April 19-20-21, 2004 in Bismarck.
- Loan Program Update [REPORT PROVIDED]  
Committee recommends the reason, “not an emergency” be removed for disapproval purposes. The one loan given this designation will be reclassified.
- Grant Program Update [REPORT PROVIDED]

#### **Veterans Home Governing Board**

- Performance appraisal completed on Neal Asper, Administrator.

#### **Veterans Home Strategic Plan - Eric Monson, NOVUS.**

*Motion by Bloomquist to accept the strategic plan as presented, second by Smathers. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Motion by Smathers to recess the meeting until 8:00am the following morning, second by Vatne. Motion carried unanimously.*

Chairman Maasjo reconvened the meeting at 8:00am Saturday, January 17, 2004.

#### **Post War Trust Fund Report as of December 31, 2003**

Approximately \$9,000 remained in donations from the gazebo project. The Veterans Home Governing Board voted to return the money back to the Postwar Trust Fund.

#### **Strategic Plan for Department and ACOVA Report by Chairman Maasjo**

The bid from NOVUS is \$20,000 - \$25,000. Other bids will be solicited to get cost comparison. Eight years ago, the Veterans Administration granted \$65,000 to the Veterans Home for construction costs. The grant is now funded and the Veterans Home is in receipt of the money. The Veterans Home needs

Emergency Commission approval for spending it. Some of the money could be diverted to pay for the strategic plan.

***Motion by Smathers to go to the Emergency Commission to receive spending authority for the funds, second by Skarphol. Motion passed, one nay – Beard.***

### **Dental Hardship Emergency Grants – Chairman Maasjo**

Cass County dentists have been helping improvished veterans with dental problems by doing pro bono work. Discussion on how the committee can get other dentists throughout the state to participate. Chairman will contact state dental association for their input.

### **Subcommittee Structure/Assignments/Performance Evaluation – Chairman Maasjo**

- Discussion on replacements for those members leaving the Governing Board. Names put forward: Daryl Beard, Norris Braaten, and Orletta Kilen. Committee to decide on new members at April meeting.
- Appeals Committee: Rudy Jenson, Gene Bernhardt, Rick Ryan, Gary Skarphol, Bob Volk.
- Department subcommittee: Rick Ryan, Orletta Kilen, John Coyne, Paul Smathers, Carl Bloomquist, Jerry Balzer, Gary Skarphol.
- Postwar Trust Fund: Gene Bernhardt, Ken Vatne, Paul Smathers, Ted Krogen, Jerry Balzer
- Working Group for Budgets: Brad Maasjo, Gene Bernhardt, Jerry Balzer, Neal Asper, Ray Harkema

### **Performance Evaluation on Administrator of Veterans Home, Neal Asper by Governing Board**

***Motion by Jenson to approve the performance evaluation as completed, and work on improving the evaluation form for next time, second by Ryan. Motion carried unanimously.***

Discussion on vacant position within the Department. Consensus of committee is for department to fill position since alternative funding for the strategic plan may be available.

### **Time and place for next meeting:**

**April 16 & 17, 2004**

**Comfort Inn, Bismarck.**

***Motion and second to adjourn meeting. Motion carried unanimously.***

Submitted by

Rudy Jenson  
Secretary