



EDWARD T. SCHAFER, GOVERNOR
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

CHAIRMAN
GERALD P. BALZER
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

SECRETARY
(To Be Determined)

MINUTES OF THE JULY 18, 1997, MEETING OF THE NORTH DAKOTA ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

LOCATION--VETERANS HOME, LISBON, NORTH DAKOTA CONVENED AT 8:00 A.M.

President of the ND Veterans Coordinating Council Kasy Schmaltz opened the joint meeting of the ND Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs and the ND Veterans Coordinating Council with the Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer for POW/MIA's.

Introduction of members of the Association of Counties. They had questions on the Veterans Preference law and if veterans representatives from the Coordinating Council and Administrative Committee could meet with County Commissioners Association and come up with some changes in the law prior to the next legislative session.

Douglas Kenyon, Director of the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reported on Fargo VA. Doug felt they could live through the present VA budget. There was a need for more examination rooms to more efficiently see patients. Possibility of opening more outpatient clinics, such as Bismarck and Lisbon.

Dennis Beknecht reported for Job Service. Job training for service connected disabled veterans, Vietnam Era veterans and recently discharged veterans, with less than 48 months since separation.

Bob Hanson reported for legislative committee on the license plate program for veterans. Design of the plate was discussed and the use of a Veterans Organization emblem or if only a veterans branch of service should be used.

John Mullen was called on to introduce Pat Lindsay to give a report on the Agent Orange Program. This was a project partially funded by the Administrative Committee to assist families of Vietnam veterans with children having disabilities connected to parents having been exposed to agent orange. Pat reported program has been completed and returned balance of the grant to Administrative Committee.

Recess at 11:40 A.M. for lunch.

**SUBCOMMITTEE FOR
VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**SUBCOMMITTEE FOR
VETERANS' HOME**

(To Be Determined)

(To Be Determined)

**RAY HARKEMA
COMMISSIONER
VETERANS AFFAIRS
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**KEN ANDERSON
COMMANDANT
VETERANS' HOME
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**M/G KEITH D. BJERKE
ADJUTANT GENERAL**

**EX OFFICIO
DOUGLAS M. KENYON
VA CENTER DIRECTOR**

**JENNIFER GLADDEN
JOB SERVICE ND**

Reconvened at 1:00 P.M.

State Treasurer Kathy Gilmore was introduced and gave an update on Veterans Post War Trust Fund. Kathy commented on the investment of the fund and noted that there may be need to increase the size of the fund by putting earnings back in the fund to allow for inflation. Kathy introduced Bill Haug who gave a presentation on investing part of the fund for growth so that the fund could provide earnings to cover the inflation factor.

Adjutant General Bjerke reported on the Guards participation in the storm disaster the past winter and flood that followed. Bjerke also commented on the Veterans Cemetery. He was questioned about the grave markers, and discoloration of the stones. This is caused by the wicking or absorption of water by the stones.

Elmer Ekern presented and discussed the new bylaws for the ND Veterans Coordinating Council.

John Mullen reported on the functions and events that had happened on the Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs the last four years.

Joe Novak reported on the law regarding the appointments to the Administrative Committee. The organizations need for submitting more than one name for consideration to serve on the Committee.

Bob Evans commented on the need for support of the Veterans Coordinating Council Members when veterans legislation is being considered in the legislature.

Elmer Ekern questioned what the Veterans Trust Fund earnings could and what the earnings could not or should not be used for.

Meeting recessed at 3:05 P.M. so the Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs could meet separately.

Chairman Balzer called the Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs meeting at 3:15 P.M. After making some comments, Chairman Balzer asked each member to introduce himself and give a short background of himself.

Members present were:

Kent Anderson
Kenneth Vatne
Larry Dakken
Richard Olek
Kenneth Evenson

Rhiny Weber
Paul Aaberg
Donald Weible
Tom Rainsberry
Gerald Balzer

Thomas Moe
Joseph Litzinger
Jim Johnson
Dean Bayer

Absent: James Carlascio

Also present:

Ray Harkema, Commissioner
Ken Anderson, Commandant
Chuck Risch, ND DVA Claims Officer

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Chairman Balzer stated that because a secretary had not been named sub committees would meet as a full committee. He also requested that members send him a note indicating the committee they wished to serve on and that sub committee's would be named at the next meeting.

Moved by Jim Johnson that minutes of March 21 and 22 meeting be approved as presented. Second by Larry Dakken. Motion carried.

* Discussion on motion by Dean Bayer in the minutes of March 21 and 22 to fund the Veterans Cemetery. Was intent that no payments would be made the cemetery maintenance until requested by General Bjerke and then only on a quarterly basis.

Moved by Jim Johnson to approve the results of ballot requesting funding for sub committee on Veterans Affairs programs. Said ballot was 13 to 0 in favor of request. Motion seconded by Tom Rainsberry. Motion carried.

Commandant Anderson reported on the last biennium and on end of biennium cash fund.

Commissioner Harkema reported on his Department, giving a history of and duties of the Department. Commissioner Harkema requested that income limit to qualify for the Grant Program be increased by \$100.00 in each category. He also requested that Grants for dental be increased from \$500.00 to \$700.00, effective September 1, 1997. Moved by Rick Olek that request be granted. Seconded by Tom Rainsberry. Carried.

Commissioner requested permission to attend out of state meeting of National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs. Moved by Larry Dakken to grant request. Second by Rick Olek. Carried.

Larry Dakken commended Commissioner Harkema and Grand Forks CVSO Tom Saddler on the job they did in getting the Grand Forks County Veterans Service Officer back on line.

No report from the National Guard Advisory Committee.

Moved by Jim Johnson that meeting adjourn and Chairman Balzer report to the ND Veterans Coordinating Council. Second by Ken Evenson. Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Tentative date for next meeting: September 12 and 13, 1997, Bismarck, ND.

Submitted by
Paul S. Aaberg, Acting Secretary

July 28, 1997