MINUTES

Quarterly Meeting of the
Missouri Veterans Commission
Held, pursuant to notice
May 3, 2010 — 10:00 AM
Jefferson State Office Building, 205 Jefferson Street,
1st Floor State Board of Education Room,
Jefferson City, MO

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

In attendance: Chair John Comerford; Vice Chairman Emmett Fairfax; Member Nancy Nelson; Member Frank Barnitz; Member David Pearce; Member Barney Fisher; Member Jason Kander;

Absent: Member Paul Connors; Member Joseph Frank; Ex-Officio Member Dalton Wright

C. Introductions

Guests and staff present:

1. Guest: David Unterwagner; Dewey Riehn; Frank Prosser; Robert Osborn; Bob Wonnell; Jessie Jones; Harold Menzel; Larry Daniels; Danny Braun; Arvid West; Dan Ferrell; William Byington; Michael Elmore; Sallie Houser-Hanfelder; Stephen Gaither; Lee Smith; Raphael Wahwassuck; Tom Chandler; James & Kathryn Whitfield; Jack Matthews; Harry McLane
2. Staff: Larry Kay, Executive Director; Bryan Hunt, Deputy Director; Jill Talken, Executive Secretary; Omar Davis, General Counsel; Kim Cleeton, Director Homes Program; Stan Baughn, Director Cemetery Program; Doug Meyer, Director Veteran Services Program; Tim Norton, Director Facilities Operations; Julie Miller, Fiscal and Administrative Manger; Melissa Wilding, Ombudsman; Daniel Bell, Public Relation Office; Kim Harris, Director Human Resources; Becky Wolken, Administrative Assistant

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Commission Meeting minutes February 1, 2010

Commissioner Pearce made a motion to approve the minutes of February 1, 2010 and Commissioner Fairfax seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

B. Commission Meeting Closed minutes February 1, 2010

Commissioner Fisher made a motion to approve the Closed minutes of February 1, 2010 and Commissioner Kander seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Executive Director's Report was delivered by Larry Kay

   A. Budget – Discussed final budget withholdings; since July 2009 the Commission had $1.6 million in cuts, eliminated two positions and had a $12.6 million Home Fund switch GR. Support to Veterans by the House and Senate and the Governor has remained steadfast. The challenges for the Commission is to be more efficient. Commission will work closely with the Office of Administration/Budget and Planning and the House and Senate Budget Analysts to ensure understanding of our financial picture.

   B. Audit – Commission has submitted loss to Bonding Company. Attorney General's Office has filed a civil claim to recover loss plus $5,000 deductible for Bonding Company. Commissioner Kander commended the Commission on their handling of the audit response in a professional and proactive manner.

   C. 2011 Commission Strategic Direction -

      1. Implement the five recommendations of the Listening Post Report: Develop Missouri Guide to Veterans Benefits; Develop Missouri Veterans Outreach Task Force; Develop Joint Veterans Benefit Task Force; Involvement in Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program; and work with Legislature in maintaining solvency in the Veterans Commission Capital Improvement Trust Fund (VCCITF).
      2. Establish processes to synchronize our 2011 Game Plan with VISN 15, VISN 16, VBA and VCA.
      3. Develop Mechanisms with our Veterans Service Partners (MAVO) to communicate our three Joint Key Messages: see a Veterans Service Officer; sign up for VA Healthcare; and join a Veterans Organization.

      Chairman Comerford advised the Commission to follow through with Listening Post recommendations. A motion to approve the Commissions Strategic Direction was offered by Commissioner Pearce and seconded by Commissioner Barnitz. By a voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

   D. State Veterans Cemetery – Fort Leonard Wood – Opening in June 2010. Dedication set for September 13, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. Keynote Speaker: Congressman Ike Skelton.

      Chairman Comerford asked if any Commissioners had information pertaining to legislation on consolidation of state government agencies. No legislation was reported at this time.

2. Program Reports were delivered (Powerpoint presentation) by Bryan Hunt, Deputy Director

Commissioner Barnitz advised the Commission to communicate the planned closure of St. James State Veterans Cemetery with residents and community.

Chairman Comerford inquired whether the St. James State Veterans Cemetery accepts pre-certifications. Stan Baughn, Director Veterans Cemetery Program will review. His findings will be part of the communication plan with the community.

Commissioner Barnitz requested further explanation of percent totals of Veterans Receiving VA Compensation & Pension and Missouri's ranking. He also suggested the Commission find out what the top two ranking states (Nebraska, Oklahoma) are doing on outreach.

The Veteran Services Program recently reviewed efficiencies of travel stops and have cancelled some areas where client numbers are very low. Outreach efforts will continue in these areas.

Commissioner Kander advised that the Commission needs to find ways to educate multiple veterans. Director Kay advised some of this should be accomplished with the implementation of the five recommendations of the Listening Post Report and will be outlined in the 2011 Game Plan.

3. Staff Reports were delivered by Tim Norton, Julie Miller, Melissa Wilding
4. Legislative Update was delivered by Commissioner Pearce

IV. NEW BUSINESS - None to report

V. OTHER BUSINESS

A. David Unterwagner, Veterans Benefits Administration, VA Regional Office St. Louis. Mr. Unterwagner pledged VBA continued support of Missouri Veterans Commission.

VI. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday, September 13, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. in conjunction with the State Veterans Cemetery- Fort Leonard Wood, St. Robert Municipal Center, Council Chamber, 194 Eastlawn Avenue, St. Robert.

VII. ADJOURMENT

With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

Larry D. Kay, Secretary