



Winnebago County Veterans Affairs Commissioners Board Meeting

Monday, September 22, 2025 – 10:00 am
Winnebago Co Health Department Board Room

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge

Present: Commissioners Dave Peterson, Steve Bosma, Troy Thompson and Veteran Service Officer (VSO) Mary Lou Kleveland

2. Review and Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes

The August monthly meeting minutes were reviewed. Peterson motioned, seconded by Bosma to approve the August minutes. All in favor. August minutes are approved.

3. Veteran Services Officer Report

- a. Monthly VA numbers: VSO shared the statistics for August 2025 for Winnebago County.
- b. County Outreach Efforts – VSO attended the Comin' in Hot Event for veterans on August 2nd. VSO also was interviewed at KIOW for Morning Conversations encouraging veterans to contact the Winnebago County VA to determine benefits and to potentially update benefits. VSO also stressed the importance of utilizing an accredited VSO and not a claims "shark".
- c. Review Monthly Expenditure Report for Approval - The Commissioners and VSO reviewed the expenditures for August 2025. Peterson motioned and Bosma seconded to approve the August expenditures. All in favor. The August expenditure report was approved and the Commissioners signed off on the report.

4. Old Business

- a. Upcoming Virtual Commissioner Training – 9/16/2025 – Thompson attended this online training and said that it was fine. He learned that Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs does not have an Excel PDF report available to Commissioners or VSOs for the Awards by County document.
- b. KIOW Ads & KIOW Morning Conversations – VSO stated that it would be less than \$1,000 to run ads for 30 days from mid-October to mid-November. Thompson suggested that in the ads, it is stated that "I (VSO) am in my office right so call right now and set up an appointment to meet with me." The ads will be run Monday-Friday during the morning as everyone felt that this time frame would be the most effective in reaching the most veterans. VSO will proceed with recording the ads and setting up a schedule with KIOW for the ads to run.

5. New Business

- a. VSO Fall School Training & Commissioner Fall Training –VSO provided the agenda for the Commissioner Fall Training and stated that they should have received an email about the training. VSO had also given them information at the last meeting about registering for the training. Thompson hopes to attend. VSO gave the Commissioners a copy of the agenda for VSO Fall Training. VSO stated that overall, most VSOs are not happy about the agenda as it doesn't look like most of it will provide information that will be helpful for VSOs to file federal benefits for veterans and widows. However, there will be an important vote for Iowa Association of Veteran County Services (IACVS) officers that VSO needs to be present for as well as another meeting.

VSO believes that it is important to attend this training as it is the first training that Iowa Department of Veteran Affairs (IDVA) is doing after the law change that put IDVA in charge of all VSO training. If the training is not worthwhile, then VSO can determine if her time should be invested in future IDVA training.

- b. Quarterly review of VSO job performance – discussion & possible revision of goals – The Commissioners and VSO discussed the past quarter of VSO's job performance. VSO shared that she was uncomfortable doing the customer satisfaction survey with veterans when closing cases. Commissioners emphasized that the most important issue was that VSO follow up with the veteran before closing a case. VSO stated that this was her practice and that she will continue to follow up with the veteran and determine any present needs as well as future needs.
- c. Grave medallions – Review of current policy with possible revision – VSO reported that she needed to order many grave medallions due to many deaths this calendar year as well as providing medallions for graves that have never received a medallion. Bosma stated that the military organizations like American Legion or VFW usually take care of obtaining the medallions for the deceased and wanted to make sure that medallions were not also given out by the VSO. VSO stated she would contact VFW and American Legion to discuss past medallions for duplicates and coordinate future distribution of the grave medallions. Commissioners advised VSO to work within the FY 25-26 budget for grave medallions and purchase what is needed.
- d. Upcoming Veterans Day events & VSO participation policy – VSO shared the various Veterans Day events in Winnebago County on November 11th. VSO stated that she had been invited to the Winnebago Industries program & luncheon for their employees. VSO stated that she wanted to attend this event as it is very helpful in reaching veterans. Thompson suggested that it might be advantageous for VSO to talk to Winnebago Industries about setting up a space for VSO to talk to veterans at Winnebago Industries to make it more convenient for them. VSO advised she could check into this possibility. For the other events, the Commissioners told VSO that as long as the events fell within the parameters of her job description, VSO could determine if her attendance would be valuable in reaching the veterans in Winnebago County.
- e. Financial Assistance Requests – VSO advised that she had approved two emergency requests for financial assistance – one for car repairs and one for rent.
- f. Next Meeting Date: October 27, 2025, at 10:00 am at the Winnebago County Courthouse

Adjournment – Peterson motioned; Thompson seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

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