

MINUTES
South Dakota Veterans Commission Meeting
January 29, 2015
Soldiers and Sailors Building - Pierre, SD

The meeting of the South Dakota Veterans Commission was called to order at 9:00 am (CT) on Thursday, January 29, 2015, by Chairman Birnbaum. The meeting was held in the lower level conference room of the Soldiers and Sailors Building in Pierre, SD.

Chairman Birnbaum noted that all legal requirements as outlined in SDCL 1-25-1 and 1-25-1.1 were met with regard to this meeting.

Roll Call - Commissioners present were: Mike Birnbaum, Helen Parr, KC Russell, and Lori Vosika.

Staff Present: Secretary Larry Zimmerman, Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard, and Audry Ricketts.

Guests Present: Ken Laughlin

Review of Agenda – Chairman Birnbaum asked if there were any additions or changes for the proposed agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Parr, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Consideration of Minutes – Chairman Birnbaum asked the Commission how they wished to handle the October 8, 2014, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Vosika moved approval of the October 8, 2014, Commission meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Russell and motion carried.

Chairman Birnbaum thanked the commissioners for their attendance at the legislative breakfast. He thanked the SDDVA staff for all that they are doing for the veterans and those within our network.

Old Business – Discussion ensued with regard to discussion that had taken place at the last meeting regarding the laws governing locating of a national veterans cemetery. Contact would be made with BHNC Director Srey Austin and a report would be shared with the Commission at the next meeting.

New Business – Chairman Birnbaum noted that the Commission needed to discuss and study their role. Birnbaum reviewed some projects that SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman recommended the Commission consider. Secretary Zimmerman encouraged the Commission to consider a national study on veterans preference. He noted that the results of this study would be valuable information moving forward. Discussion ensued regarding undertaking a nationwide study on veteran preference practices and laws. A motion was made by Commissioner Vosika, seconded by Commissioner Russell, that the South Dakota Veterans Commissioners conduct a veteran's preference study. Motion carried. It was the Commission's consensus to have the study compiled by July 1, 2015. After further discussion, the Commission developed a goal for this mission --- "How can we make South Dakota the best preference state in the nation?"

The Commission also discussed transitional housing needs for younger veterans.

Meeting adjourned at 10:16 am (CT).

Mike Birnbaum, Chairman