

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
South Dakota Veterans Commission Meeting
October 18-19, 2016
American Legion Post 8 - Pierre, SD

The meeting of the South Dakota Veterans Commission was called to order at 1:00 pm (CT) on Tuesday, October 18, 2016, by Chairman Ross. The meeting was held at the American Legion Post 8 (520 S. Pierre Street) in Pierre, SD.

Chairman Ross 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: Jim Ross, Mike Birnbaum, Helen Parr, KC Russell, and Lori Vosika.

Staff Present: Secretary Larry Zimmerman, Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard, PIO Audry Ricketts, and Interim Program Manager Kevin Bowen.

Guests Present: Charles Quinn (Hughes County VSO) and Lucas Martin (LRC Staff).

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

Consideration of Minutes – Chairman Ross asked the Commission how they wished to handle the January 13, 2016, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Russell moved approval as presented, seconded by Commissioner Birnbaum, and motion carried.

SDDVA Update – Chairman Ross called on SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman for the SDDVA update. Secretary Zimmerman reported on the following items: new CBOC for southeastern South Dakota, VA Call Center proposal for Hot Springs, Republic of China badge, new SAA brochures promoting OJT program, military funeral honors program and funding, SDDVA/Veterans Council legislative reception, rededication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, State Fair, VA grant received by Corner Stone Mission, veterans preference and habitat for humanity.

Legislative Update – Chairman Ross called on SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman for a legislative update. Secretary Zimmerman reported on the those issues that the Veterans Council might be bringing forward – East River cemetery and nursing home and the issue of increasing the bonus that the CTVSO Association was considering moving forward.

Veterans Council Update – Chairman Ross called on Commissioner Parr for a South Dakota Veterans Council Update. Parr reviewed some of the legislative issues that the Council had been discussing and reported that they would be hosting legislative roundtables in Sioux Falls, Rapid City and Watertown. She also updated the Commission on the veterans building at the State Fair.

State Veterans Home Update - Chairman Ross called on SDDVA Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard for an update on the state veteran's home. Pollard updated the Commission on census, application process, fees for living at the Home, workforce challenges, telehealth, campus footprint, and the endowment.

SDJF - Chairman Ross called on SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman for an update on South Dakota Joining Forces. Secretary Zimmerman briefed the Commission on the history, vision and mission of the initiative, as well as potential outreach event and partners we are shopping for.

VA Directors Updates – Chairman Ross called on Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard to review and summarize the VA Director’s reports, as well as the reports from the Regional Office and the Black Hills National Cemetery.

The meeting recessed at 4:30 pm

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am on Wednesday, October 19,

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

Staff Present: Secretary Larry Zimmerman, Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard, Audry Ricketts, and Interim Program Manager Kevin Bowen.

Deputy Secretary Pollard briefed the Commission on reports that the Department received from the Department of Health.

Old Business – Chairman Ross asked Secretary Zimmerman to update the Commission on veterans preference. Zimmerman noted that the Department developed a video message with the school administrators to share with the schools regarding veterans preference. The Department also attended county and municipal statewide conferences to educate their respective memberships on veterans preference. He noted that the Department works closely with Department of Labor and Department of Human Relations with regard to the State hiring veterans.

Commissioner Birnbaum noted that the SDDVA staff is more involved than they ever were and appreciated all that the Department is doing and how they have grown. The Commission echoed Mike’s message.

New Business – The Commission discussed their terms on the Commission. Chairman Ross noted that Governor Daugaard had reappointed K.C. Russell to the Commission.

Election of Officers – Chairman Ross noted that the Commission needed to select new leadership for the Commission. Chairman Ross then opened the floor for nominations for chairman. Commissioner Birnbaum made a motion to nominate Helen Parr for chairman; Commissioner Russell seconded the nomination and motion carried. Chairman Ross then opened the floor for nominations for vice chairman. Commissioner Birnbaum nominated Lori Vosika for vice chairman, and made a motion that the nominations cease. Commissioner Russell seconded the motion and motion carried.

A motion was made by Chairman Ross, seconded by Commissioner Vosika to adjourn. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 10:30 am (CT).

The next meeting will be held Thursday, January 12, 2017, at 9:00 am in Pierre, SD
Jim Ross, Chairman