

APPROVED MINUTES
South Dakota Veterans Commission Meeting
January 13, 2016
RedRossa - Pierre, SD

The meeting of the South Dakota Veterans Commission was called to order at 9:00 am (CT) on Wednesday, January 13, 2016, by Chairman Ross. The meeting was held in the Prairies Room of the RedRossa Italian Grille 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.

Chairman Ross commended the SDDVA staff for their coordination and hosting of the Korean Ambassador Peace Medal ceremony.

Roll Call - Commissioners present were: Jim Ross, Mike Birnbaum, Helen Parr, KC Russell, and Kella With Horn.

Chairman Ross welcomed Commissioner With Horn to the Commission and asked her to provide the Commission with her personal history and interests.

Staff Present: Secretary Larry Zimmerman, Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard, Audry Ricketts, Program Manager Steve Oliva, and Field Officers Will Huffmon, Kevin Bowen, Kevin Swanson and Mike Maske.

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 November 16-17, 2015, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Russell moved approval as presented, seconded by Commissioner Birnbaum and motion carried.

Legislative Update – Chairman Ross called on SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman for the legislative update. Secretary Zimmerman reviewed the list of legislative items the service organizations were discussing. He noted that he knew of legislation that would be introduced regarding veteran's preference and tuition.

State Veterans Home Update - Chairman Ross called on SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman for an update on the state veteran's home. Secretary Zimmerman noted that move in day was today! He briefed them on policy change for a smoke free campus, nursing bed moratorium, census, bio mass plant, staffing challenges, and time frame for future open house.

SAMHSA Update - Chairman Ross called on SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman for an update on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Secretary Zimmerman briefed the Commission on the background of SAMHSA and the vision for this virtual resource. He noted that he and Adjutant General Reisch would be meeting with the Governor to discuss the proposal.

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 on the discussions and attendance at the legislative roundtables that were held in Sioux Falls, Rapid City and Watertown.

VA Directors Updates – Chairman Ross called on Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard to review and summarize the VA Director’s reports.

Old Business – The Commission discussed the VABHHCS Hot Springs EIS, veteran’s preference, veteran’s choice, and insurance issues related to HIS/VA/private insurance providers.

New Business – None

A motion was made by Commissioner Birnbaum, seconded by Commissioner Parr to adjourn. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 11:17 am (CT).

Jim Ross, Chairman