

Minutes of Veterans Affairs Commission
December 10, 2025

The meeting called to order at 4:30 p.m. in the 2nd floor meeting room.

Members present were:

Shelly Howsare

Mike Male

Michael Stigers

Robin Housley

Absent:

Bruce Jeffries

Minutes of the November 12, 2025 meeting were read. Commissioner Stigers made the motion to accept, Commissioner Howsare seconded. Approved by all present.

December reports were reviewed. Reports were approved.

Old business: The pork loin event was discussed. The Commission and VSO all felt it went well again. There were some people disappointed that the hospital wasn't there, but with the shut down it was short notice for them to get someone.

New business: The VSO shared the county personnel handbook with the Commission. There were updates to the credit card amount, vacation/sick time procedure when it involves a holiday the day before or after and a new social media policy. The VSO had concerns initially over the policy as we share multiple different posts about resources and the policy states we are not to promote any entity other than the county. After conferring with HIPAA about the policy, clarification was given from Carosh that what we do wouldn't be a violation.

Discussion was also shared regarding clarification of expectations of the office and management. An addendum was presented to the Commission to further clarify expectations of the office regarding hours, expectations for after hours, holidays, vacations and virtual meeting attendance.

The need for this clarifies what the Commission's expectations are and if there are questions regarding the office, the procedure of how to address was clarified. This came from conversations started by a Board of Supervisor questioning absences during business hours and whether or not time was being reported correctly. Discussion was held. Commissioner Housley made the motion to accept the addendum to the personnel policy and submit it once the minutes have been approved to be put on file in the auditor's office. This should clear

any misconceptions of time spent on Cedar County's Veterans. Commissioner Howsare seconded the motion. It was a unanimous vote by those present.

Commissioner Jeffries requested that there be discussion regarding the recent conversations with the grave markers. Commissioner Jeffries was unable to attend due to a personal matter but had conveyed his concerns with the VSO during an appointment he set up. This has been discussed in previous Commission meetings and between Board of Supervisors and some Legion members. Commissioner Jeffries would like the office to start issuing the older markers that are currently \$11.75 more expensive a piece than the new style as the Board of Supervisors stated in conversation with Legion members that they had no problem funding the more expensive markers.

The VSO put it on the agenda for discussion this month, however in the mean time a budget amendment was already put forward in the county due to unforeseen circumstances in another department. The VSO went ahead and made the changes to the current fiscal year budget to reflect the \$10,000 from the state and an additional \$1,000 for the different markers. The Commission had no problem with the proposed budget amendment nor the purchase of the more expensive markers if the amendment went through on December 16th.

The VSO presented the proposed budget for FY26/27. Discussion was had on the numbers and where increases happened and why. The areas of increase in the administrative section are for postage of \$300 more, education and training as the cost for the national conference will be going up to \$450 and the additional expense in the services to Veterans reflects the grave marker cost increase.

The VSO presented the Commission with information regarding ISAC's salary comparison of full time office. The VSO is one of 4 VSO's in the state that has been in the position for 20 years or more. As they looked through the list they saw a lot of years in service of 0 as those counties all have new VSO's. The VSO gave the Commission a budget with no change to the salary as the Board of Supervisors have not given any direction on that matter yet. The VSO showed the Commission what the salary would be with just the step increase. That would increase the salary by \$874, FICA by \$67 and IPERS by \$83 for a total impact of \$1024 for the fiscal year.

Discussion was held. Commissioner Housley made a motion to at a minimum increase the salary to the next level on the step increase scale. If the Board of Supervisors give direction for something more to include that when the proposal goes to them for discussion, but no less than the step increase amount. Commissioner Howsare seconded the motion, all those present voted unanimously to approve the FY26/27 budget proposal.

Commissioner Stigers left the meeting at 5 p.m.

News Releases were not available as the Regional Office has not sent out November's numbers yet.

The meeting was motioned for adjournment at 5:15 p.m. by Commissioner Howsare, seconded by Commissioner Housley, approved by all in attendance.

Patricia Hamann, Administrator