

Waushara County Veterans' Service Committee

May 12, 2008

Regular Meeting

The meeting of the Waushara County Veterans' Services Committee was called to order at 8:15 a.m., on May 12, 2008, by Fred Kaiser, CVSO, at the North Annex Building, Room 121, 230 W. Park Street, Wautoma, WI.

Call to Order

Roll Call

Members Present: Bill Downie, Wally Petersen, Norm Weiss,

Members Absent/Excused: None

Others Present: Fred Kaiser, Waushara Co Veterans' Service Officer, and Dawn DeBraal, Waushara Co Veterans' Service Administrative Assistant.

Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Norm, 2nd by Wally to approve the agenda. Motion Carried

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Motion by Norm, 2nd by Wally to approve of the previous meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Federal: Economic Stimulus Package, was discussed. Submissions for the stimulus package will be accepted until October 15, 2008, for the one time tax rebate. All checks will be mailed by July 11, for those filing their 2007 taxes by April 15, 2008.

The DOD (Department of Defense) is considering taking Social Security numbers off of Military ID's. Last year they removed the Social Security numbers from medical cards, and replaced them with only the last 4 digits of the Social Security number to help curb identity theft.

Federal G.I. Bill has three new bills before the House, "Post 9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act" H.R. 5740, which would reimburse the cost of a veteran's education up to the highest in-state cost at public universities and colleges. HR5684 will raise G.I. Bill payment rates to \$1450.00 from the current rate of \$1101.00, along with a \$500.00 per month housing stipend. HR5740 would extend the post-service usage of the educational benefits period from 10 years to 15 years.

U.S. Veterans are suing Veteran Affairs claiming lack of care due to the estimated 600,000 plus back log cases. Two non-profit groups filed suit on behalf of veterans contending the VA does not do enough to prevent suicide and provide adequate medical care for Americans who have served in the armed forces.

More Education benefits for Reserve and National Guard through the REAP (Reserve Education Assistance Program)

Women Veterans Programs have grown in light of the 1.7 million women Veterans.

1.7 million Vietnam Veterans served in-country. According to an 8/95 census, 9.5 million American falsely claimed to have served in Vietnam. In an 8/00 census, 13.8 million Americans falsely claimed they served in country. During the time between the 1995 to 2000 census, 711,000 or 390 Vietnam vets died per day.

Local: Memorial Day Activities will include a Sunday Service at West Holden Church, on County Road MM. On Memorial Sunday at 9:45 a.m. The veterans group there has also started a Memorial to Honor all Veterans with a foot locker full of items to be sealed and buried in the cemetery. This will become part of their Veterans Memorial.

American Legion will have a service at Union Cemetery 8:00 a.m. on Memorial Day, Parade to follow at 9:00 a.m.

VFW in Plainfield and Redgranite will also hold events. Watch the newspapers.

“God Bless America Triathlon” will be held again this year on July 4th, 2008. Swimmers will swim on Silver Lake on a course in front of Silvercryst, bike and run around the lake. Volunteers are needed for this event for several short shifts from early morning, until noon. Please call the Veteran’s service office if you are interested in participating in this worthwhile event. The Veteran’s Service Office will be the recipient of any proceeds above the race costs and the money going to our veterans in need fund.

It was decided to purchase good quality American Flags and offer them at a drawing at the County Fair in lieu of trying to purchase separate “Give-A-Ways”.

New Business:

It was decided to extend meetings to every other month, instead of monthly meetings.

Members of the committee then asked questions on the increase in veterans’ suicides. The VA has improved their mental health care, and is trying to address that situation. Also commented on, Ft. Bragg and other military bases that were seen on television in run down condition. The military is currently evaluating this situation, and emergency funds have been contracted to start improvements immediately.

Adjournment:

Motion by Norm, 2nd by Bill to Adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 A.M. Committee Members Bill Downie, Norman Weiss, and Wally Peterson were in attendance to the end of the meeting.

Next Meeting:

July 14th, 2008 at 8:15 a.m.

**Bill Downie, Chairperson
Veterans Service Committee**