

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY  
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats. a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2011, at 5:15 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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**PRESENT:** Bernie Erickson, Sherry Steenbock, Jim Haskins, Duane "Snake" Pierce, Delores Pierce, John Walschinski, Jerry Polus, Joe Witkowski  
**EXCUSED:** Kristen Verhaagh, John Maino, Donald Bettine, Troy Ness

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\*\*Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1174

**1. Call Meeting to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 5:14 p.m. Erickson introduced himself as the new chair of this committee and gave his phone numbers to those present in case they need to reach him for any reason.

**2. Invocation by Jim Haskins.**

**3. Approve/Modify Agenda:**

Witkowski asked that the matters of bylaws and absenteeism be added to the agenda. Erickson indicated that those matters could be discussed under Number 8 of the agenda.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY WITKOWSKI AND SECONDED BY STEENBOCK TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**4. Approve/Modify Minutes of December 7, 2010:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY PIERCE AND SECONDED BY HASKINS TO APPROVE. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**5. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus:**

Polus was pleased to report that he had finally received approval from the Executive Committee to fill the position of Clerk-Typist I. This position will hopefully be filled very soon and will bring his Department back to normal staffing.

Polus also talked about the monthly meetings held at the ADRC on the first Friday of the month. These meetings include a guest speaker followed by free lunch for veterans and spouses/guests. Beth Ann Smith from the Veterans' Medical Center spoke at the last meeting and gave an update on VA healthcare and the new clinic. She informed the group that the contractor for the project should be announced soon and that hopefully the project will begin within the next few months. Veterans currently living in Brown County will be able to transfer to the new clinic and most services that vets are currently traveling to Milwaukee to receive will be available in Green Bay.

**6. Discussion re: Memorial Day and Brown County Fair:**

The specifics for Memorial Day are not set yet. Polus said the United Patriotic Society will coordinate the event and more details will be known at the next meeting. Pierce also indicated that the Vietnam Vets would do their normal ceremony behind the museum at 8:00 a.m. on Memorial Day and then take part in the De Pere parade.

Polus also gave a report on the Brown County Fair. He will ask a representative of the Fair to attend the next meeting for further planning. Polus also reported that in November, 2010 he had e-mailed the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid America regarding availability to perform at the Fair. He finally heard back last week and unfortunately the band is not available. A discussion was held regarding other options for a band and included contacting the Navy band again or the Allouez or Howard Suamico band. Polus suggested putting this matter on the agenda for next month's

meeting when a Fair representative would be present to give some input. Polus indicated that he would call the State to see if the Wisconsin National Guard has a band that may be available. Erickson suggested perhaps contacting the Green Bay City Band or one of the local high schools to perform.

**7. Report from Committee Members Present (Haskins, Pierce, Steenbock, Walschinski & Witkowski):**

Haskins stated that at a recent event at the Vet Center he picked up a book titled "Tears of a Warrior" which is about soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. He had not had a chance to read the book and offered it to anyone on the subcommittee who wished to borrow it.

Walschinski wished to thank Jerry Polus and his crew on behalf of all veterans for all the great work they do for Wisconsin veterans. A round of applause followed.

Witkowski summarized a news article he found in the Press Gazette regarding Frank Buckles, the last survivor of WWI who celebrated his 110<sup>th</sup> birthday on Tuesday, February 1, 2011. Mr. Buckles lives in Charleston, WV and was only 17 in 1917 and drove ambulances in France. He was working for a shipping company in Manila when the Japanese invaded the Philippines in WWII and was captured and spent 3 ½ years in a POW camp. Witkowski felt that it would be great for the Veterans' Subcommittee to send this gentleman a letter of congratulations. The Committee all agreed that that was a great idea and Witkowski will attempt to find an address and the Committee will send something out.

Witkowski then indicated that he read that the Super Bowl was broadcast in 175 countries as well as to Navy ships at sea for soldiers. He then shared a cheer for the Green Bay Packers which he also shared at the Golden Basket prior to the game. His cheer was met with applause and was followed with a cheer from Erickson. Not to be outdone, Witkowski had another cheer he shared with the committee.

**8. Such Other Matters As Authorized by Law:**

Witkowski brought up the issue of bylaws for this subcommittee and questioned if there were any. Erickson said that there is a mission statement for the subcommittee in the County budget book and he felt that that statement would be the closest thing to bylaws. Erickson will bring a copy of the mission statement to the next meeting. Witkowski stated that one of the most important things this subcommittee should do is support Polus in his work. He felt that that should be in some kind of statement so that if a new member comes in it is clear what the subcommittee does. The mission statement will be discussed in further detail at the next meeting.

The issue of absenteeism of committee members was discussed next as well as the topic of the possibility of adding new members, including Delores Pierce, and it was indicated that perhaps a few members could be added. This issue will be added onto the agenda for next month's meeting.

Witkowski stated that the reason he brought the issue of absenteeism up is because he felt that there should be some sort of policy on this. He stated that there are two people that attended only two meetings last year and one person that attended none and there were other times that there were not enough members to form a quorum. His opinion is that if someone belongs to a committee, they have an obligation to be there and be part of the committee.

Erickson asked the recording secretary to check the minutes from the last year and make a list of members in attendance at each meeting.

Polus offered his input and assured Witkowski that while he understood Witkowski's position, he also felt that everyone that attends the meetings has something valuable to offer and he has never sensed any disinterest from anyone on the committee. Polus felt that family circumstances, health circumstances, etc. can affect the ability of a member to show up and the

committee had to respect availability. Further discussion will be held on this issue at the next meeting.

Erickson asked the committee for input as to moving the monthly meetings to the third Tuesday of each month instead of the second Tuesday of each month. The committee agreed to try it for three months and if it does not work out, the meetings will go back to being held on the second Tuesday of the month. Next month's meeting will be held on March 15, 2011.

Erickson also spoke of an event to be held in March. He is a member of the Green Bay Area Great Lakes Sports Fisherman and this club will be setting up a portable fishing pond at the Wisconsin National Guard Armory in March. He stated that if any of the committee members knew any vet who would like to fish, they could let him know and a time would be made available. Erickson also encouraged anyone on the committee who knew of a vet that would like to go out fishing on the Bay or Lake Michigan to let him know and arrangements could be made for that too.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY HASKINS AND SECONDED BY STEENBOCK TO ADJOURN AT 5:52 P.M. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio  
Recording Secretary