VAC Veterans Assistance Commission of WC Washington County

Meeting Minutes, Jun 25, 2026

The Veterans Assistance Commission of Washington County (VAC WC) Meeting was held at the Washington County Court House at 7:03 pm.

Members present: (5)

Larry Harrison, Chairman, Alternate Delegate, AL Post 110
Jane Clarke, Secretary/Treasurer, Delegate, AL Post 110
Steve Elliott, Delegate, VFW Post 5596
Kevin Pierce, Alternate Delegate, Post 233
Matthew Kasten, VAC WC Superintendent

Members Absent: (2)

Lance Carr, Vice Chairman, Delegate, AL Post 233 (absent)
Ken Storck, Alternate Delegate VFW Post 5596 (absent)

Others Present:

Doug Steward, General Counsel

1. Larry Harrison confirmed those present. He asked members to participate in the pledge, and a moment of reflection. He asked for the monthly report from Matt Kasten.

2. Matt provided the VAC WC Superintendent Report. He explained the 66+ claims that are under way are in various stages of assessment due to the nature of the claims. He also reviewed how he determined that his email was hacked and that it affected 3 separate Washington County groups.

Steve Elliott commented that we should note clarity in how we list the email being hacked with the VA and the county. He asked about the liability on that.

Doug Steward noted that we would file with the county if there is an issue or anyone files a claim.

3. Newspaper information is current. Keeps everyone with an eye on what is happening.

4. Matt continued reviewing the report. He will attend the Irvington Homecoming on Friday and Saturday and has reserved a tent for upcoming festivals, including the Hoyleton festival, Washington County Fair, Okawville Wheat Festival, and Nashville Fall Festival. Our banners now look more professional. Eight volunteers successfully helped move the widow. Matt would like to recognize them with certificates of appreciation, possibly under the theme "Hometown Heroes Helping Heroes."

5. Matt was contacted about homeless shelter supplies for veterans. He is going to tour the facility with other superintendents to see if this is to our advantage. It might be something Marion VAMC could use or another group in the area that might have room or time to run a clothes pantry.

6. Budget was discussed briefly. Steve clarified where we are, and Matt confirmed. We are ½ way through the year, and ½ through the budget, so on target.

7. Larry moved to the next agenda item on the AI policy. Matt has more information that he shared. We need to determine what the VAC WC needs, and there is no guidance in the manual, though it might just not be posted yet, or on line. Just like military, may not be current. Using AI the claim process is down to 5 weeks and it used to be a year. Doug confirmed they use it in his office for internal references, not for public information. We can keep use in-house, and then we can use it too. Working 66 claims/people is great, but it is a workload; if can adopt use for at least medical records even it would help and could be a major tool. And we don't have cost yet. Doug noted costs associated and then needed to be HIPPA compliant. Need to review a little more to see specifically what we want and make sure it is compliant. Matt to see different alternatives to see what to use.

8. Possible resolution for the upcoming budget. Matt had talked to Eric briefly, more next week. Larry would like Matt to ask Eric if there is a vehicle available for our use as well. The increase in visits to VETS is not fully forecasted in the budget. Doug explained that we can transfer inter budgeted dollars from to cover that cost. At $500 of mileage, if overspent, we can, mileage, concerned about coverage, 55 or 56.

9. Steve asked where we stand on the office help. Matt confirmed approved but needed to post the job. VA covers the cost. Incumbent has to be a veteran or a child of a veteran. Then there is the question of where we put them in an office. To resolve that Matt is to meet with Eric, and Larry to join. We want to show we are working for the public, VA paying for position, need support through space and vehicle, etc.

10. Larry made a motion to adjourn at 7:38. It was seconded, and all agreed.

//signed//

Jane E. Clarke
Secretary/Treasurer VAC WC