

Minutes of Veterans Affairs Commission  
February 4, 2026

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

Members present were:

Shelly Howsare

Mike Male

Robin Housley

Absent:

Bruce Jeffries

Michael Stigers

Minutes of the December 10, 2025 meeting were read. Commissioner Housley made the motion to accept with the correction of adding her name to present at the December 10, 2025 meeting, Commissioner Howsare seconded. Approved by all present.

January and February reports were reviewed. Reports were approved.

Old business: none

New business: The Administrator gave an update on the FY26/27 budget. The county is facing an almost \$600,000 shortfall. Tough decisions are going to be made. The BOS asked for offices to bring ideas to the table for the next BOS meeting. The only thing that our budget can change is the salary increase.

The Administrator will present a new budget with the adjustment that we can make to the BOS. If anything comes up during the next BOS meeting the Administrator will reach out to the Commission.

The Administrator then discussed the allocation funds. The Association is wanting to do a commercial promoting the counties and are looking for sponsors. The Commission still has not decided on what to do with the funds. We will wait until April after legislative session is done to see if the bill put forth by the Governor and the IDVA is put through. If so that money will be spent on outreach items as we won't have any of that funding from the county or state.

The Administrator then presented an abundance of information on the SSB3079 and state numbers compared to county numbers. The senate study bill was broken down into issues as the Administrator shared the American Legion's points.

The issue with the matrix or what they are calling matrix, does not take into account all of the non-compensation or pension we do for Veterans. We also get them in the health care system, which helps the county budget by not funding

medical care. We also assist with education benefits, headstone applications, the list goes on. The only thing the state is focusing on is the dollar. It was stated that every Veteran is qualified for compensation or pension. That is not even remotely true or factual as there are qualifiers for each. The state as a whole has 22% of the Veteran population that are peacetime. Cedar County has 30% of the total county Veteran population, which is above the state average.

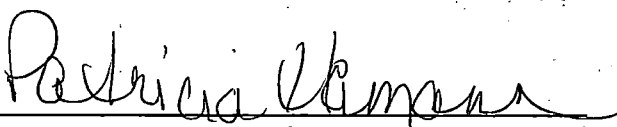
Veterans are not numbers. To incentivize or think to do that because it's going to change the demographics of the Veterans in each county makes no sense. Every Veteran and every county are different.

The Administrator shared with the Commission a letter that was sent from the District Commander about the grave markers, it included a letter from Mechanicsville Legion also. Commissioner Male had sent an email to Wayne Frauenholtz that we had to do a budget amendment and get approved before any items could be purchased. We had just gotten that in December. We still don't know where he came up with plastic markers as we have never issued those.

The Commission have training on February 18, 2026 virtually. This is part of the Association's bi-annual training. The Administrator emailed the link out to the Commission as only some of them have signed up through the website for notifications. The Commission will be able to do this at home, as we've already had our monthly meeting due to the upcoming vacation of the Administrator.

News Releases were shared and numbers compared for December in the report from the Regional office. Discussion was held.

The meeting was motioned for adjournment at 5:45 p.m. by Commissioner Howsare, seconded by Commissioner Housley, approved by all in attendance.

  
Patricia Hamann, Administrator