

Minutes of Veterans Affairs Commission
July 8, 2026

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

Members present were:

Shelly Howsare
Robin Housley
Michael Stigers
Bryan Schroeder

Minutes of the June 10, 2026 meeting were read. Commissioner Housley made the motion to approve the minutes of June 10, 2026 meeting, Commissioner Howsare seconded the motion to approve. Approved by all present.

July reports were reviewed. Reports were approved.

Old business:

New business: Discussion was had among the Commissioners. Commissioner Male will remain the chair and Commissioner Housley the vice chair of the Commission.

The Administrator discussed a situation with a county burial. After discussion was held, based on the situation of time/date of death, policy and failure to comply, Commissioner Stigers motioned, seconded by Commissioner Male to deny the burial if the application is ever submitted. The rules for this program are clear and it's now in a new fiscal year. All those present voted unanimously to deny if an application is submitted.

The Administrator shared the report required by IDVA by July 30th with the supporting documentation for their review. Discussion was had about the expense breakdown for clarification by Commissioner Howsare. Part of the cost was paid for using the county outreach funds. Commissioner Male signed the report and it can be submitted to the state.

The Administrator shared with the Commission the rules regarding the Disabled Property Tax exemption that started July 1, 2026. If there is a detached garage under these rules it is not exempt as it only applies to residence. It also limits county property to .5 acres which is different than the 40 acres previously. Those who had signed up prior to July 1, 2026 are grandfathered into the old policy.

The Administrator asked what goals the Commission has for operations and outreach for the office. The Commission agreed to do the pork loins again. That is a great event. Commissioner Schroeder is going to speak with his brother who

is on the fair board about maybe doing a full Veterans Day at the fair event. The office did a table for 2 years, but the amount of actual Veterans or Spouses stopping by was very little compared to the kids taking all of the items.

Commissioner Stigers brought up the Durant parade on August 15th. Registration is from 8:00-9:30 and the parade starts at 10 a.m. Commissioner Male said he will bring his truck so we can put all of our giveaway items in there for the parade walk. The Administrator will pull together items to give away and purchase candy for the parade.

There was discussion about the newsletter. It is very costly and the Administrator was wondering about producing a monthly bulletin and posting it on the County Website and numerous Face Book pages. We would need to do an article and spread the word about signing up to get emails about postings made by the office. But it would be more current information done monthly.

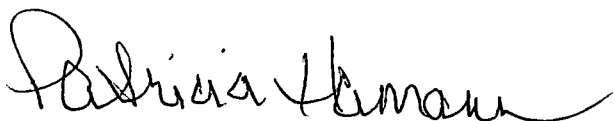
The Administrator brought up discussion about doing a spring event in Durant in conjunction with Scott and Muscatine counties since it has all 3 in it. This would give us 2 outreach events a year and the spring one would be more about services offered by the counties, state and federal governments for Veterans/Dependents.

The Administrator also asked about using funds to get a ChatGPT account for the office. This would be used regularly to disseminate information that is eye catching to the public through social media and the county website. The Commission would like the Administrator to look into any free options, but if they are not suitable, then go ahead and do a subscription to ChatGPT.

The Administrator shared the monthly reports from the Regional Office. Our overall total went up 3 recipients for the total of 342 in the amount of over \$8,231 a month more. We are now at \$668,596 per month coming in from VA federal funds. Last year at this time we were at 322 recipients and \$594,000. This is a 20 Veteran increase and a \$74,596 monthly increase in a year. This also does not include those who have passed or moved out of Cedar County.

The July Beacon from the VAMC was shared with the Commission.

The meeting was motioned for adjournment at 5:30 p.m. by Commissioner Howsare, seconded by Commissioner Housley, approved by all in attendance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patricia Hamann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Patricia Hamann, Administrator