

**Veterans Service Commission
Of Hamilton County
July 24, 2024**

Meeting called to order at 10:00 am July 24, 2024, by Commission President Jean Wilson

All in attendance rose for the Pledge of Allegiance led by President Jean Wilson.

Attendance Roll Call taken:

In attendance were:

Commissioners: Mr. Headen, Mr. Rowland, Mr. Staniford, Mr. Watson, and Mrs. Wilson also
Executive Director, Orlando Sonza, Administrative Assistant, Pam Minser
WCPO camera and Veteran Raphael Prophet.

Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Mr. Rowland, duly seconded by Mr. Staniford.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – yes, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries

Minutes:

Motion made to approve the minute as published was made by Mr. Staniford, duly seconded by Mr. Rowland.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – yes, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries

Old business:

Transportation:

Mr. Sonza presented the brochure for the transportation options. Brochure explains the eligibility, and documentation that is required for each type of transportation.

A motion was made to approve the transportation eligibility requirements as published in the Medical Transportation brochure was made by Mr. Staniford, duly seconded by Mr. Headen.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – yes, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries

Veterans Appreciation Resource Event Update:

Mr. Staniford and Mr. Sonza both gave updates on the success of the Veterans Appreciation Resource Event

Mr. Staniford discussed starting to plan for the 2025 Veterans Appreciation Resource Event. Stated that the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioner's will not provide the financing the event for 2025.

Mr. Sonza stated he will confirm that the BOCC will not fund all or part of the next Resource Event. Also suggested that training of new employee and the potential move that may happen in 2025 that we wait for awhile on planning the next event and that it should not be planned or led by a commissioner. The entire staff at the commission should be involved in planning of the next event. Mr. Staniford stated that companies who may make donations for the event would want to make these donations at the end of the fiscal year, something that should be considered.

Mr. Sonza discussed a partnership with AUSA for next years event. They have corporate sponsor in place for their event which brings in 2000 to 3000 Veterans a year, this is their 3rd year for this event at Sawyer Point. Something for the board to consider moving forward with next year's event.

"Operation, Thank You"

Mr. Sonza discussed the possibility of sponsorship for Operation Thank You. The fireworks for Operation Thank you will cost \$10,000.00. Mr. Sonza asked the board to consider sponsoring some of the cost. He asked the board to consider sponsoring \$5,000.00.

A motion was made was made to approve \$5,000.00 to sponsor "Operation. Thank You" was made by Mr. Watson, duly seconded by Mr. Rowland.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – yes, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries

Mobile/Hybrid work ability

Mr. Sonza discussed that the ability for working mobile and hybrid is in the works. Discussion with Conexio and the ordering of needing equipment has begun.

A motion made to order beck up equipment to prevent any down, cost of hybrid/mobile equipment not to exceed \$10,000.00, was made by Mr. Staniford, duly seconded by Mr. Rowland.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – yes, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries

Dental care

Mr. Sonza discussed the dental program and the fine tuning of the program. This will be a reimbursement payment or a direct payment to the vendor. No type of cosmetic dental care will be considered. Any financial request \$2,500 or more will have to appear before the board of commissioners. A cap of \$10,000 for the remainder of 2024 budget year. This will be presented to the board once fine-tuned.

Staffing

Promoting within the office and developing department heads for financial, service work, and outreach. Mr. Sonza asks that we consider promoting within first before opening outside of the office. The need for these department heads is for consistency, accountability, and for training of new employees as the officed continues to grow.

Motion made to promote within the department for the three positions made by Mr. Staniford, duly seconded by Mr. Rowland

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen -yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – yes, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries.

New business

Monthly legislation updates on Veteran issues will be provided each month to the board, to keep them updated on any pending legislations. (copy attached to the minutes).

Power point presentation presented by Mr. Sonza to the board to see what the VSC of Hamilton County brings to the County using the 2023 VA Geographic Expenditure Report (copy attached to the minutes).

iHeart Radio Contract

Mr. Staniford presented the contract from iHeart Radio regarding advertising VSC services during the upcoming 2024 Bengals season to the board for consideration. Mr. Sonza has submitted this contract to the Hamilton County Prosecutor's office for review and any red lining that may be needed.

Motion to have the Executive Director sign the iHeart contract with the Board's pre-approval to move forward with the advertising plan not to exceed the advertising amount stipulated in the contract so long as Mr. Sonza agrees with the Prosecutor's Office contract revisions. Motion made by Mr. Staniford, duly seconded by Mr. Headen.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – no, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Majority vote – Motion carries.

Contract Negotiation

Executive Director Sonza asked the Board to clarify that all contract negotiations should be done only by the Executive Director on behalf of the Veterans Service Commission with the Board having final approval authority.

Motion to have the Executive Director be the sole authorized party to negotiate all contracts on behalf of the Veterans Service Commission and then present them to the board for a final decision. Motion made by Mr. Headen, duly seconded by Mr. Rowland.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – no, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries.

Open forum:

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Rowland, seconded by Mr. Staniford

Roll call vote:

Mr. Headen – yes, Mr. Rowland – yes, Mr. Staniford – yes, Mr. Watson – yes, Mrs. Wilson – yes.

Unanimous vote – Motion carries.

Next meeting will be changed to Thursday August 8, 2024, at 10:00 am.

Minutes approved by:

Jean Wilson, President

Richard Headen

Steven Staniford

Jerry Rowland

Urulee Watson