

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
South Dakota Veterans Commission Meeting
October 3, 2017
Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home – Hot Springs, SD

The meeting of the South Dakota Veterans Commission was called to order at 8:30 am (MT) on Tuesday, October 3, 2017, by Chairman Helen Parr. The meeting was held at Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home – Hot Springs, SD. Prior to the meeting, Commissioners were provided a tour of the State Veterans Home.

Chairman Parr noted that all legal requirements as outlined in SDCL 1-25-1 and 1-25-1.1 were met with regard to this meeting.

Roll Call - Commissioners present were: Helen Parr, Jim Ross, KC Russell, Lori Vosika, Kella With Horn and Brooks Schild.

Staff Present: Secretary Larry Zimmerman, Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard, Public Information Officer Audry Ricketts, State Veterans Service Officers Erin Bultje and Tyler Rousselle.

Others present: David Parr and Mike Birnbaum.

Review of Agenda – Chairman Parr asked if there were any additions or changes for the proposed agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Ross, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Consideration of Minutes – Chairman Parr asked the Commission how they wished to handle the January 12, 2017, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Russell moved approval as presented, seconded by Commissioner Ross and motion carried.

SDDVA Update – Chairman Parr called on SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman for the SDDVA update. Secretary Zimmerman began his briefing by noting that Governor Daugaard had appointed Brooks Schild to the Veterans Commission. Zimmerman welcomed Schild to the Commission. Schild replaces Mike Birnbaum on the Commission. Mike had served two six-year terms. Zimmerman presented Birnbaum with a certificate of appreciation. Zimmerman reviewed the legislative items the Veterans Council was pursuing – East River State Veterans Home and Cemetery. He noted that SDDVA is hoping to bring forward some clean-up legislation.

Zimmerman reviewed State Veterans Home census and briefed the Commission on the bio mass plant and the construction of the maintenance building.

Zimmerman briefed the Commission on the Department's WW II veteran's recognition, and also the outstanding partnership we have had with SDPB on numerous veterans programs.

SDJF Update - Chairman Parr called on SDDVA SVO Erin Bultje for an update on South Dakota Joining Forces. Bultje briefed the Commission on the SDJF mission and her vision to carry this out.

Code of Conduct: Chairman Parr called on Deputy Secretary Pollard for a briefing on the State's Code of Conduct requirements. Pollard noted that a finished document would be provided to the Commission at their next meeting.

Veterans Council Update – Chairman Parr provided a South Dakota Veterans Council Update. Parr reviewed some of the legislative issues the Council had been discussing and highlighted the dates of the upcoming legislative roundtables in Sioux Falls, Watertown, and Rapid City. Parr also briefed the Commission on the Veterans Building at the State Fair.

Old Business – None

New Business – None

Election of Officers – Chairman Parr noted that the Commission needed to select new leadership for the Commission. Chairman Parr then opened the floor for nominations for chairman. Commissioner Ross made a motion to nominate Lori Vosika for chairman; Commissioner Russell seconded the nomination and motion carried. Chairman Parr then opened the floor for nominations for vice chairman. Commissioner Vosika nominated Kella With Horn for vice chairman, and made a motion that the nominations cease. Commissioner Russell seconded the motion and motion carried.

The Commission decided to hold their next meeting January 10, 2018, in Pierre from 9:00 am – 12:00 (CT). Topics for the next meeting include: Claims Office Update, Legislative Update, recap Legislative Roundtables, SDJF, Veterans Preference and what our partners are doing, and the role of the Commission. Commissioners asked that written reports be obtained from the VABHNC, South Dakota's two VA directors and the Regional Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Schild to adjourn. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 10:40 am (MT).

Helen Parr, Chairman