

**MINUTES**  
**South Dakota Veterans Commission Meeting**  
**January 9, 2019**  
**Highlands Room – RedRossa Grille - Pierre, SD**

The meeting of the South Dakota Veterans Commission was called to order at 1:30 pm (CT) on Wednesday, January 9, 2019, by Chairman Lori Vosika. The meeting was held in the Highlands Room at the RedRossa in Pierre, SD.

Chairman Vosika noted that all legal requirements as outlined in SDCL 1-25-1 and 1-25-1.1 were met for this meeting.

**Roll Call** - Commissioners present were: Lori Vosika, Brooks Schild, Helen Parr, and KC Russell. Jim Ross participated via conference.

Staff Present: Secretary Greg Whitlock, Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard, Public Information Officer Audry Ricketts, Program Managers Heather Bullerman, Erin Brown, and Erin Bultje.

**Guests Present** – Ken Teunissen (SD Veterans Council) and Ronnie Simonsen (Disabled American Veterans).

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

**Consideration of Minutes** – Chairman Vosika asked the Commission how they wished to handle the October 10, 2018, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Schild moved approval as presented, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion carried.

**SDDVA Update** – Chairman Vosika called on Secretary Whitlock and Deputy Secretary Pollard for the SDDVA Update. Secretary Whitlock and Deputy Secretary Pollard briefed the Commission on the State Veterans Home, SDDVA’s budget, SDDVA’s legislative agenda, CNA scholarship program and the State Veterans Cemetery. Deputy Secretary Pollard reviewed the architectural drawings. Commission members thanked all participants that have worked on the state veteran’s cemetery project. Discussion also pursued on incarcerated veterans, new mental health guidelines, and Operation CARS.

**South Dakota Veterans Council Update** – Commissioner Parr asked Ken Teunissen to brief the Commissioners on their legislative forums that were held in Sioux Falls, Watertown, and Rapid City.

**Old Business** – No Old Business

**New Business** – Chairman Vosika opened the floor for new business – there was none.

**Presentations** – Chairman Vosika called on Sara Bierman, Director of U.S. Department of Labor. Bierman reported on the Department of Labor’s new “Hire Vets Medallion Program.”

**Public Comment** – Chairman Vosika opened the floor for public comment. Ken Teunissen noted that there are over 21,000 veterans ages 40 plus that we need to be concerned regarding nursing care for

our aging veterans. Ken mentioned the concept of a state veterans home in eastern South Dakota. Public comment period ended at 3:11 pm.

Commissioner Schild asked about the Commission's role with Governor Noem. Secretary Whitlock asked the Commission if they felt they were a viable commission. After some discussion, the Commission suggested that a meeting be set up with Governor Noem, Secretary Whitlock and Chairman Vosika regarding the role of the Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Parr, to adjourn. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm (CT).

Lori Vosika, Chairman