VETERANS SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Douglas County Board of Supervisors
Thursday, June 6, 2019, 1:00 p.m., Courthouse Room 207C,
1313 Belknap Street, Superior, Wisconsin

Please call the Chair or County Clerk’s Office (715-395-1569) if you cannot attend.

MEMBERS: Marvin Finendale, Chair  Jill Fortin
Dennis Dalbec   Glen Erickson
Mary Lou Bergman   Ron Leino
Eual Moore   Clint Mattson, Alt.

AGENDA
(Committee to maintain a two-hour meeting limit or take action to continue meeting beyond that time).

1. Roll call.
2. Approval of minutes from the April 4, 2019, meeting (attached).
3. Informational items:
   a) Veterans Service Officer report (attached);
   b) Veteran village (attached); and
   c) Veteran Housing and Recovery Program.
4. Future agenda items.
5. Adjournment.

cc:   Ann Doucette Susan Sandvick Shelley Nelson (Telegram)
      Brian Erickson County Board Supervisors Douglas County Website

NOTE: Attachments to agenda available in County Clerk’s Office for viewing or copying. Action may be taken on items on the agenda. The County of Douglas complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you are in need of an accommodation to participate in the public meeting process, please contact the Douglas County Clerk’s Office at (715) 395-1341 by 4:00 p.m. on the day prior to the scheduled meeting. Douglas County will attempt to accommodate any request depending on the amount of notice we receive. TDD (715) 395-7521.

Posted: Courthouse, Government Center, Telegram copied

Name  5-30-19
Date
Meeting called to order by Chair Marvin Finendale.

ROLL CALL: Present – Marvin Finendale, Jill Fortin, Eual Moore, Glen Erickson, Clint Mattson, Ron Leino, Mary Lou Bergman. Absent – Dennis Dalbec. Others present – Brian Erickson, Mark Liebaert, Pat Ryan, Kaci Lundgren, Committee Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Moore, second Fortin, to approve minutes from the December 6, 2018, meeting. Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL:
Veterans Service Officer Report: Working on after-hours routine with DAV transportation services for van driver to stay at drop off location until ride for veteran arrives. Veteran Expo will be April 23rd; more space needed between booths. Potential veteran advocate group can gain resources from vendors at expo; group would provide advice and recommendations to veterans in need.

Veteran Village: Potential parcels available for village location requested from City of Superior Planning; nothing received yet. Possible options for village include: tiny houses with one main administrative house; one large apartment building with other service buildings; old train car boxes transformed into homes; a skilled nursing home; an assisted living facility; and/or hiring nurses to provide assistance in homes. Donated land may be available. Funding can come from a variety of sources, dependent on what is being built; Habitat for Humanity may be interested in assisting. Concept will be addressed with Wisconsin DVA secretary for input and suggestions.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Moore, second Bergman, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

Submitted by,

Kaci Jo Lundgren, Committee Clerk
VSO UPDATE:  May 30, 2019

**Transportation Services** – I continue to monitor the successful transfer of VSO Transportation Services to the DAV. Since the transfer on January 2, 2019 our office has paid a total of $36,500 in fees as of April 30, 2019 in support of cab fees to/from the Twin Ports Clinic. One problem was identified and a solution put in place. No other problems have been identified to the VSO regarding the transfer of services.


**Outreach Efforts:** – Continuing with our outreach efforts with an attempt to find veterans and notify them of our office and what services we provide.

Completed Events:

1) Out Reach at the Bong – March 2019
2) Douglas County Fish & Game League Show – March 2019
3) UWS Veterans Expo – April 2019
4) WDVA Forum – Bong Veterans Historical Center – May 7, 2019
5) Memorial Weekend Saturday – Veterans Kickoff to Summer at the Bong (May 25, 2019)

Future Events:

1) Bongs Boundary Waters Canoe Trip – week of July 8, 2019
2) Vets on the Lake, Barkers Island Marina (July 27, 2019)
3) Walk for the fallen – Eldorado Bar, Oliver, WI (August 3, 2019)

**VORP Office Lease** – Ken Grant of WDVA identified a probable delay in finalizing the lease agreement due to legislature budget delays. The HHS committee will be deciding during their May 30, 2019 special session whether to approve a two year no cost lease to support the VORP program.

**Veterans Village** – WDVA Secretary-designee Mary Kolar was the guest speaker at this year’s UWS Veterans Expo. Prior to the Expo ceremony the Douglas County Board Chair, Douglas County Veterans Advisory Committee Chair, Douglas County American Legion Commander and several other veteran group organization representatives along with the Douglas County Veterans Service Officer met with Sec Kolar to present a proposed vision of the Douglas County Veterans to create a Veterans Village to provide necessary service to veterans in Douglas County and NW Wisconsin. Upon completion of the meeting the secretary requested a digital version of our vision was delivered to her on May 1, 2019 which I provided copies to the May HHS Committee meeting for their review.

**Recruitment for ACVSO underway** – Human Resources along with the Veteran Service Office has conducted testing for the position of Assistant County Veterans Service final selection of individuals selected to move forward to the interview process is expected within the next couple of weeks.
VSO Status

Veterans Service Advisory Committee
June 6, 2019

Veterans Service Office
Douglas County, WI

Brian Erickson
Veteran Service Officer
1316 N. 14th Street, Rm 385
Superior, WI 54880
715-395-1332
Brian.Erickson@douglascountywi.org
# Douglas County Veteran Service Officer - Financial Management

**Objective:** The Douglas County VSO will: responsibly manage limited resources and ensure budgeted funds meet the needs and purpose of the Veteran Service Office.

**Key Initiatives:** To ensure we are within our target budget for CY19.

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<th>Actual Monthly</th>
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~ Pending 2019 April final updates

**VSO Operating Costs**

- **Target =** $83,724.00
- **Actual =** $61,586.62~
- **Variance =** $22,137.38~
## Douglas County Veteran Service Officer - Financial Management

**Owner:** Brian Erickson  
**Objective:** The Douglas County VSO will: responsibly manage limited resources and ensure budgeted funds meet the needs and purpose of the Veteran Service Office.

**Measure:** Financial Management  
**Key Initiatives:** To ensure we are within our target Revenue for CY19.

### Revenue

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# WDVA, CVSO Grant + Van Donation Fund

### Revenues to Date
- Target = $10,000.00
- Actual = $10,272.35
- Variance = 272.35
The Douglas County VSO will responsibly manage limited resources and ensure budgeted funds meet the needs and purpose of the Veteran Service Office.

**Key Initiatives:** Monitor Transportation costs for CY19.

**Objective:**

**Measure:** Financial Management

**Owner:** Brian Erickson

**Veteran Transportation Expenditures**

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<td>$36.50</td>
<td>Variance = $1963.5~</td>
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~ Pending April 2019 final Updates
### Douglas County Veteran Service Officer – Veteran Contact

**As of: May 1, 2019**

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<th>Owner:</th>
<th>Brian Erickson</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Conduct Outreach in order to serve the nearly 3700 veterans in the county and ensure Claims for Benefits are being provided to those that are eligible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measure:</td>
<td>Veteran Contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Initiatives:</td>
<td>Monitor monthly Veteran Service Office Contacts Along with Compensation claims filed.</td>
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#### Number of Veterans Contacted

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- Total New Veterans Contacted 2019 = 58
- Total Veteran Contacts in 2019 = 817
- Claims decrease from 2018 = 5%
Home of Heroes

The Veterans Village of Douglas County
Potential Property

Veterans Service Advisory Committee
June 6, 2019

Veterans Service Office
Douglas County, WI
Fairgrounds Parking Lot Site
Location: Tower Avenue across from Fairgrounds.
Approximately 30 Acres, Sanitary sewer, water & electric available
Parkland Industrial Park
Location: Near Hwy Z and Cty Road E intersection
Approximately 100 Acres, Sanitary Sewer and Electric available, no water
South Shore Property
Location: Shore of Lake Superior, Near Moccasin Mike Road
Approximately 135 Acres, No Utilities
Home of Heroes

The
Veterans Village of Douglas County

Veterans Needs in Douglas County & Northwest WI.

It is proposed that the Douglas County Veterans Advisory Committee begin an in-depth analysis in support of Veterans health and housing needs within Douglas County, the City of Duluth and southern St. Louis County, MN and our neighbors in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn Counties.

I, as the Douglas County Veteran Service Officer, believe there is a great need to create a Veterans Village within Douglas County. This Village, nestled in the north woods of Wisconsin, will become a Life Care Community for Veterans and be comprised of:

1. Independent Living Apartments; and
2. Assisted Living Facility; and
3. Skilled Nursing Facility; and
4. Tiny Houses; and
5. Mental Health/AODA In-patient Facility; and
6. Veteran Organizations Community Center to include:
   Meeting Rooms
   Social/Event Hall
Land

Both rural Douglas County and the City of Superior are blessed with natural landscapes providing appealing sites for a Veterans Village. Vacant and available properties owned by Douglas County or private parties are located within the City of Superior and rural Douglas County. The selected sites are located within main transportation routes and will provide Veterans an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and fresh northern Wisconsin air and beauty of which we all are accustomed.

Staffing

We have both the Veteran population and the ability to provide a facility with qualified staff member’s right here in the Twin Ports.

Qualified staffing is available from local colleges and universities in the Twin Ports area such as: Lake Superior College (LSC), College of St. Scholastica (CSS), University of MN-Duluth (UMD), University of WI-Superior (UWS) and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC).

Staffing positions and sources:

- Nursing - CSS, LSC
- CNA’s - WITC
- Social Workers - UW-S, UM-D, CSS.
- Physical therapist - LSC
- Administrative staffing - UW-S, WITC, UM-D, CSS
- Counselors/psychologists – CSS, UW-S, UM-D

Volunteers to include Veteran Organizations and general populous who believe in giving back to those who served this great nation and have made this area “Up North” their home are abundant in this region.

Border State

Superior shares many natural attractions with its neighbor to the north - Duluth, MN. The title of “Twin Ports” region refers to the City of Superior, WI and Duluth, MN. The region possesses a combined population of approximately 112,000 persons and is home to approximately 7,800 Veterans. When you combine the Twin Ports with the rest of Douglas County and its surrounding NW Wisconsin counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn there are an estimated 17,201 Veterans residing in the area. An estimated 54 % of this population is over the age of 62.
This equates to approximately 9,000 veterans in our immediate vicinity whom at some point may need to enter a skilled nursing facility within the next one to three decades.

1 US Census Bureau Quick Facts (Veterans 2012-2016)

**Proposed Superior Veteran Village attributes**

1. **Independent Living for Veterans**

The plan proposes Independent Living Apartment units within the Veterans Village in honor of our Veterans. Presently there are new housing units (both duplexes and apartment complexes) being constructed in the Twin Ports areas which will help relieve the local housing shortage in the coming years. However, these units are not directly related to benefit those in our community who sacrificed to keep our nation free — the Veteran. The Independent Living Apartment units will provide a place for Veterans and their eligible spouse to retire to the Village providing them the opportunity to live in a secure environment. In addition, it affords them the opportunity to be placed on a priority list for the Village’s proposed Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing Care facilities as their needs change.

2. **Assisted Living for Veterans**

The plan proposes Assisted Living Housing made available to those Veterans (and eligible spouse) who does not need the 24-hour skilled nursing care but, who require more care than can be provided from an independent living scenario. The Veteran will have their own kitchen or kitchenette or they can enjoy the camaraderie of dining with others in a shared dining room. There will be a trained caregiver on duty 24-hours a day, seven days a week. This caregiver can also help the Veteran with daily living activities (e.g. bathing and getting dressed). This facility will provide the values of socializing with fellow Veterans and provide a community of interaction with other Veterans where you will once again feel like a part of something as they once did while they were in the military.

3. **Skilled Nursing (State Veterans Home)**

The closest State Veterans homes are located in Silver Bay MN and Chippewa Falls, WI. According to the 2016 US Census approximately 3,595 veterans will reside in Douglas County in 2019. Adding the number of Veterans residing in the surrounding Counties (Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn) that number rises to a total of 10,957 Veterans. Of these Veterans, approximately 5,900 are over the age of 62. It is notable that approximately 54% of our Veteran population residing in the Counties of Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas and Washburn are over the age of 62 and are
either retired or approaching retirement age. The greatest percentages of these Veterans, approximately 74%, are Vietnam or Vietnam era Veterans.

The State of Wisconsin currently has three Veteran Homes:

1) Union Grove
2) King
3) Chippewa Falls

The Chippewa Falls facility is approximately 143 miles from the Twin Ports and is the closest Wisconsin Veterans Home.

The Silver Bay facility is approximately 63 miles from the Twin Ports and is the closest Minnesota State Veterans Home. Note: The Silver Bay Nursing Home admission policy has a MN State residency requirement which states: “Our Residents must be: honorably discharged Veterans who entered service from Minnesota or are current residents, who served 181 consecutive days on active duty, unless discharged earlier because of disability incurred in the line of duty.”

Admission to one of the current Wisconsin State Veteran Homes

According to the WDVA web site on July 1, 2013 the State legislature eliminated the requirement to be a Wisconsin resident at time of application to one of our Wisconsin State Veteran Homes. Out-of-state applicants are now welcome!

Admission to the proposed Veterans Village is based on the following “General and Sub-category Priorities”:

**General Priorities**
- First Priority: Veterans.*
- Second Priority: Spouses of veterans.
- Third Priority: Spouses of deceased veterans.
- Fourth Priority: Parents of veterans who were killed ("or who died or died of wounds") while on active duty.

**Sub-category Priorities**
Within each of the general priorities listed above the following sub-category priorities apply when processing applications for admission:

(a) Provide first priority to eligible applicants who have resided in the state of Wisconsin for more than six continuous months prior to the date of application for membership;
(b) Provide second priority to eligible applicants who are residents on the date of application and who have been residing continuously in the State of Wisconsin for a period of six months or less immediately preceding the date of application for membership; and

(c) Provide third priority to eligible applicants who reside out-of-state on the date of application for membership.

* For the purposes of admissions eligibility, a “Veteran” is defined as:

- A person who has served on active duty during peacetime for two or more years or the full period of their initial obligation. OR;
- A person who served on active duty for at least ninety days, one day of which must have been during a wartime period. AND:
- A person who served and was discharged from the armed forces under honorable conditions.
- Spouses of Veterans and parents of Veterans who were killed (died or died of wounds”) while on active duty are also eligible to apply.
- Veterans living in one of the State Veterans Homes may be eligible for federal benefits which can help supplement their cost of care. The cost of staying at a State Veterans Home is often significantly below what is charged by for-profit facilities. Financial assistance is available during the application process to determine the best options for financing the Veterans living arrangements and cost of care.
- Federal Veterans entitlements help to make the cost of care affordable for many Veterans. Most Veterans will find economic, as well as quality of life reasons, to live at a State Veteran Home. Veterans who live at one of the State Veteran Homes also benefits from many events and activities supported or supplied by Veteran organizations, corporate sponsors, and individual volunteers.
- The following information outlines the ways members of the Wisconsin Veteran Homes may pay for their cost of care.

**Chippewa Falls Veterans Home**
- Private Pay – Members who are able to pay for the total cost of their care are billed monthly. Each member has the right to manage his or her own personal funds.
- Medicare (T-18) / Medicaid (T-19) – Members who are unable to pay the cost of their care may be eligible for Medicare or Medicaid. Please note that Medicare and Medicaid only cover Nursing Home costs but, not Assisted Living costs.

**King Veterans Home**
- Private Pay – Members who are able to pay for the total cost of their care are billed monthly. Each member has the right to manage his or her own personal funds.
• Medicare (T-18) / Medicaid (T-19) – Members who are unable to pay the cost of their care may be eligible for Medicare or Medicaid. Please note that Medicare and Medicaid only cover Nursing Home costs but, not Assisted Living costs.

• Union Grove Veteran Home
  • Private Pay – Members who are able to pay for the total cost of their care are billed monthly. Each member has the right to manage his or her own personal funds.
  • Medicare (T-18) / Medicaid (T-19) – Members who are unable to pay the cost of their care may be eligible for Medicare or Medicaid. Please note that Medicare and Medicaid only cover Nursing Home costs but, not Assisted Living costs.

To accommodate the Veterans residing in NW Wisconsin it is imperative that we act now and create a Veterans Village which will be emulated not only here in Wisconsin but, all across the country.

4. Tiny Houses – Housing for Veterans

The Veterans Village of Douglas County will offer transitional housing options to eligible Veterans who are: 1) homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, 2) are transitioning from an eligible Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) or a Mental Health treatment facility such as the treatment programs at the VA facilities in St. Cloud or Minneapolis VAMC. These Tiny Houses will be available for both single and/or family occupancy to assist in the transition of affected Veterans and their families. The goal is to provide a smooth transition into permanent housing in the community. Rent will be affordable and based on both income and ability to pay.

Two types of Housing:

1. Bridge Housing provides Veterans with short- term transitional housing for those who have been offered and accepted a permanent housing intervention (e.g., SSVF, HUD-VASH). Bridge Housing provides Veterans experiencing Mental Health (MH) issues a short-term housing option while they work through short-term MH setbacks and challenges during the transition to community living.

2. Transitional Housing provides Veterans temporary housing that helps them to become independent in the mainstream community. The Veterans Village will provide mental health services, including case management, to those veterans interested in additional support.
5. **Mental Health Inpatient/Outpatient Facility**

The construction of a Mental Health Inpatient/Outpatient facility will greatly aid in the continued well-being of numerous veterans within our region. It will provide additional support to the Twin Ports Outpatient Clinic (TPOC) located in Superior and the VA Vet Center located in Duluth MN. The facility will be dedicated to treating individuals seeking quality mental health care outside of a traditional hospital setting. This specialized care facility will provide the Veteran a stable environment before they await entry into a mental health outpatient treatment program at the Vet Center or TPOC. Currently, the closest VA facilities that provide in-patient mental health treatment are: 1) the St. Cloud VAMC (currently operating at 95% capacity) or; 2) the Minneapolis VAMC. Both of these facilities are around 150 miles away from the Twin Ports region.

According to the VA, it is estimated that 30% of Vietnam Veterans have struggled or currently struggle with PTSD. Of Veterans who served from the Gulf War period to the present it is estimated that 10% - 20% suffer from PTSD. (The rates of substance abuse, depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders are not included). By contrast, 18% of US general population has a mental health diagnosis.

6. **Veterans Community Center**

Finally, the Veterans Community Center will provide a place local Veteran organizations can call home with meeting rooms and a community hall for major events. This is a place where Veterans will gather, will share their experiences and enjoy planned events. This would be a suitable place for both the younger and older Veterans with a focal point of camaraderie.