

Meeting Minutes
Jackson County Veterans Affairs Commissioner Meeting

4:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Community Room, Jackson County Courthouse

201 W Platt Street, Maquoketa, Iowa

Commissioners Present: Secretary Stephen Norpel, Laura Eggers, Greg Stalker

Commissioners Absent: Chair John Pitlo, Dorothy Wisted

Staff Member Present: Administrator Ruth Eltrich

Guests: None

The Zoom meeting was launched. The recording was paused. The recording was started. Secretary Norpel called the meeting to order.

Roll call was taken, commissioners present at roll call were Secretary Stephen Norpel, Laura Eggers, and Greg Stalker

Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from December 10, 2025:

Motion by Greg Stalker

Second by Laura Eggers

All yea: Norpel, Stalker, Eggers

Discussion of December 2025 Budget Report:

Administrator Eltrich provided the update for the December 2025 budget. 50.41% of the year is gone. 40.13% of the budget is gone. Discussion followed regarding expenses and what items were purchased.

Eltrich discussed the December Activity Log. The status of 33 claims was checked. We did 5 Intent to Files, 4 Statements in Support of Claims, 9 new disability claims, 3 Higher Level Reviews, 1 Survivors Pension, 13 decisions were made, 1 health care application, 1 SF 180, 1 C-File request, 71 total forms filed.

The total number of interactions for December was 159. The number of interactions in November was 169. The phone calls were down, but the in-person interactions stayed the same. It was brought up that the cell phone interactions should be tracked.

November County Award Report:

370 veterans received \$747,572 in November. 8 Veterans receiving a pension for a total of \$10,767, 4 survivors pensions totaling \$1,985, 40 eligible family members receiving DIC totaling \$67,683. The total is 422 veterans and or their eligible dependents receiving \$828,007 in November. There were 85 open claims in December, our office filed 60% of the claims open in Jackson County in

December. There were claims that were automatically filed by the VA, such as Drill Pay Adjustments.

Discussion and Possible Action on elections for Chairperson and Secretary Position:

Eltrich discussed that she had a meeting with the Jackson County Attorney about elections for these positions. He stated that according to Iowa State Code that governs the Veterans Affairs Commissions, elections are not necessary. However, it is best practice to hold elections for a chairperson and a secretary. The County Attorney also recommended creating bylaws for the Commission. The bylaws would be what the Commission would agree to abide by. Eltrich discussed that there are other County Commission Boards who have bylaws. Elections will be held once the bylaws are created, or if it is decided that bylaws are not warranted.

Discussion regarding recommendation to create bylaws:

Eltrich will see what if the surrounding counties have bylaws for their VA Commissions. The County Attorney will also investigate the bylaws as well. By using those existing bylaws as a template, the County Attorney will create bylaws for the Jackson County Veterans Affairs Commission. Eltrich will reach out to the Attorney and see how the process of drafting the bylaws is going and what counties they are looking at.

Office updates:

An update on budget work session with Board of Supervisors was given. This work session included explaining the budget changes for the Assistant Administrators hourly increase and requesting that if the increase is approved that the Assistant Administrator position be increased from 30 hours per week to 35 hours per week.

There are a few outreach events that the office will be participating in. Sabula VFW would be interested in having a monthly or bi-monthly outreach, like the monthly outreach in Bellevue. Eltrich will continue to communicate with the Sabula VFW Commander to set this outreach event up. Eltrich will also investigate contacting the Miles Legion as an alternative to Sabula. The Senior Center in Bellevue reached out to Eltrich to see if our office would be interested in doing an outreach event outside of the monthly claim filing at the Legion. Having food at this outreach event would also be a possibility to go along with a program.

We will be hosting the Veterans Appreciation night at the Drive in Movie Theatre in May. There are already organizations calling to reserve spots for tables.

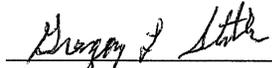
The remaining funds of the allocation money were discussed, including the items that will be purchased with that money. These items include T-shirts, hats, chip clips, flashlights, etc.

Administrator Eltrich shared the December Newspaper Article. It was about general FAQ about the Veterans Affairs Office

Motion to adjourn:

Motion by Laura Eggers
Second by Greg Stalker
All yeas: Norpel, Eggers, Stalker

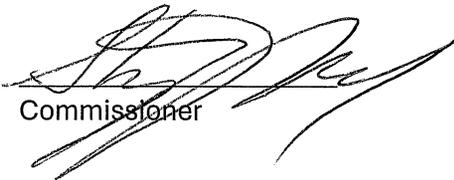
The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.



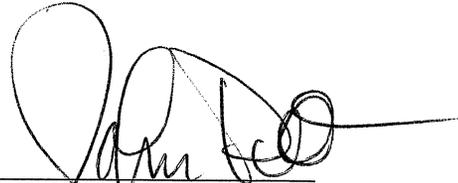
Commissioner



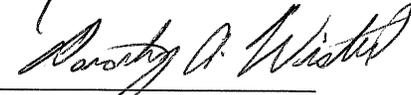
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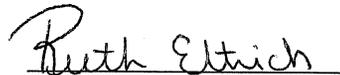
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Commissioner



Commissioner



Administrator

Submitted to Auditor 02/12/2026