

Keweenaw County Veterans Affairs

Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2021

March 12, 2021, Keweenaw County Veterans Affairs Office 10am

Roll Call: Present Barry Koljonen, Chair

- Ned Huwatschek, member
- Wes Aho, member
- Bill Hannon, member
- Del Rajala, member/county rep
- Derek Parkinen Veterans Service Officer, Keweenaw County

Call to order: Meeting was called to order at 10am by Chairman Koljonen. The pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed in recognition of past Comrades and Veterans.

A motion to approve the agenda for today's meeting was made by Wes Aho, 2nd by Ned Huwatschek with all members in favor, Motion carried.

A motion to approve the meeting minutes for the meeting on January 8th, 2021, agenda was made by Del Rajala, 2nd by Ned Huwatschek with all members in favor, Motion carried.

Guests: None

Public comment: None

Old Business: The board discussed with VSO, Derek Parkinen to make sure that the Keweenaw County Veterans web page has all the Houghton County reference material removed. VSO, Derek Parkinen advised that he has taken care of this with Ann Gasperich at the Keweenaw County Courthouse and yes, all references of Houghton County taking care of the Keweenaw County veterans has been removed and all relevant material now reflects the Keweenaw County Veterans Affairs Office.

New Business: The board discussed the two millage accounts that Keweenaw County maintains for the Veterans Service funding. The first millage account is restricted and only used for pre-approved expenditures. The second fund is a general fund that can be used for maintaining the Veterans Affairs Office in Allouez.

Currently Keweenaw County contributes \$300 towards the van program. If there is a significant increase in the amount of Keweenaw County veterans that will be using this service, the board will discuss increasing this amount to \$500. A motion was made to approve funding up to \$500 for spending the VSO Derek Parkinen deems required for maintain the overall office operations at the Keweenaw County Veterans Affairs office. Ned Huwatschek motioned first, and Wes Aho seconded this motion. A roll call vote was taken to allow the amount up to \$500 to be pre-approved with

proper receipts being presented and signed by Chairman Koljonen and forward to Julie Carlson at the Keweenaw County Courthouse:

Koljonen Yes

Huwatschek Yes

Hannon Yes

Rajala Yes

Parkinen Yes

The board discussed placing a monthly advertisement in the Mining Gazette under the classified section of the ABC's of Service. The monthly fee of \$99.00 will be deducted from the pre-approved grant funding balance of \$1800. Bill Hannon approved this first and it was seconded by New Huwatschek. VSO Derek Parkinen will contact the Mining Gazette and place a proof with them for review and submit this advertisement regarding our services, and phone number. The advertisement will continue to run until the end of the grant year.

The board discussed attaching the few Keweenaw County women veterans onto the Houghton County VSO's program for women this month. VSO Derek Parkinen will contact the Houghton County office and see if they have sponsored any type of program and request to have their information shared to include the Keweenaw County women veterans on file.

The board discussed approving a wheelchair ramp for our terminally ill Keweenaw County veteran in need. VSO Derek Parkinen is already working with the Hancock CBOC to use the HISA grant funding up to \$2,000 to widen his two front doors up to 36" for his upcoming wheelchair to fit through. The additional funding up to \$1,500 would be required to build a wheelchair ramp for this veteran. This was approved first by Ned Huwatschek and seconded by Wes Aho. A roll call vote was taken to approve this funding:

Koljonen Yes

Huwatschek Yes

Hannon Yes

Rajala Yes

Parkinen Yes

The board discussed placing a calendar on the Keweenaw County Veteran's webpage to include the upcoming meeting dates for the remainder of 2021. VSO Derek Parkinen will contact Ann Gasperich at the Keweenaw County courthouse to have the upcoming meeting dates included.

The board discussed making sure that due to Governor Whitmer's current COVID-19 in office restrictions for VSO Derek Parkinen to obtain the same forms that the Keweenaw County courthouse uses for their visitors. VSO Derek Parkinen will contact Julie Carlson to have the same form present for in house appointments at the Veterans Affairs office to be filled out and stored on file.

A motion to adjourn was made by Bill Hannon at 1125am and seconded by Wes Aho with all members in favor, motion carried. All board members made aware of the next board meeting at 1000am on May 14th at 1000am Keweenaw County Veterans Affairs Office.