



## **Ottawa County Veterans Affairs Committee**

**January FY 2024**

The Ottawa County Veterans Affairs Committee met on Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 9:00 am and was called to order by Nicholas Knebl.

Present for roll call: County Commissioner Kendra Wenzel, Patrick Muir, Robert Linderman, Eric Johnson, Randal Cope, Nicholas Knebl, and Steven Barnes.

Staff: Jason Schenkel, Loren Snippe, and Dan Boter

Public Attendance: Hadley Kelly, and Brad Dorland

1. Committee member introductions.
2. Introduction of Department of Veterans Affairs Director- Jason Schenkel
  - a. Jason Provided a recap of his 1<sup>st</sup> three weeks and the initial work and planning that he has accomplished. Discussed future meetings with other county VA departments and with the Veterans Student Services at GVSU.
3. Public Comment: Brad Dorland explained his role with the Veteran Stand Down and Resource Fair planning committee. The resource fair is planned for August 23<sup>rd</sup>, at the Holland Civic Center.
4. Jason, Loren, and Dan discussed staffing changes and transition. The current contract team will end their service on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.
  - a. Loren reviewed the December monthly report.
  - b. Loren conducted a 2023-year review.
5. Jason conducted an overview of the four pillars of care for veterans and Families.
6. No status update on Burial Allowance.
  - a. Discussion of opening it up to all Vets: would require more county dollars.
  - b. War time era: a 15-year window that OC vets are not eligible.
  - c. Two committee members' support extended to anyone who served. Discussed the possibility of increasing the allowance.
  - d. Cold War era Vets
  - e. Jason recommended tabling the Burial Allowance to the next meeting. Give him time to review state guidelines.
7. Moved to the committee meeting to Monthly cadence.
8. No current OCVAC Funding cases to present.
9. No other Business
10. Adjournment
11. Next Meeting will be on February 26<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 am