

Veterans Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Clinton County Board Room
September 19, 2024 – 6:00 PM

Greg Riechman, Chairman

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman, Greg Riechman.

2. OPENING PRAYER & PLEDGE

Greg Riechman shared a prayer and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Committee Members Present: Holly Clark, Mike Hilmes

4. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Ten guests were recognized via the sign-in sheet.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mike Hilmes to approve the 08-15-24 minutes and seconded by Holly Clark. Motion carried.

6. OLD BUSINESS

None

7. NEW BUSINESS

Jim Beasley Veterans Tribute Committee Update

Greg Riechman mentioned that the next Committee Meeting will be held at Kaskaskia College on Monday, September 23rd, at 9:30 AM.

Additionally, the Annual Enduring Freedom Event will be held on Wednesday, November 6th (@Kaskaskia College with the following schedule):

Breakfast (KC Student Center)	7:30 AM – 9:30 AM
Celebration (Jane Knight Auditorium)	9:45 AM
Trauma Comes Home: The Battle for the Warrior Family*	11 AM – 12:30 PM & 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

*Craig Roper will be promoting the aforementioned presentation, by working with the College's Marketing Department to develop press releases, social media announcements, etc. and a Training Activity is scheduled for Thursday, November 7th (at KC from 9 AM to 3 PM).

Greg Riechman reminded the group that we need your help at future events to focus our efforts on educating the children of the counties in the college's district.

Greg Riechman reminded everyone that Jim Beasley previously suggested that we have a Clinton County fundraiser in Centralia, and asked the group to bring future ideas to our next meeting.

Veteran 2 Veteran of Bond County (V2VBC)

Holly Clark shared that their next meeting will be held at the Greenville First United Methodist Church @6:30 PM on Tuesday, September 24th.

7. NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

VVA Chapter 269 Update

Several VVA Chapter 269 members thanked Mike Hilmes for his efforts to organize the replacement of the lighting for the Flag Pole at the War Memorial.

Discussion was held regarding the potential to proactively raise additional funds for the War Memorial Fund, by possibly reaching out to various local veteran-related organizations.

It was shared that two more wheelchair ramps have gone up in the last several weeks.

Miscellaneous

Mike Hilmes shared that the Breese Legion will be hosting a breakfast event on Sunday, October 6th (8 AM to Noon).

Whispering Pines of Clinton County

Greg Riechman reported large attendance at the following recent events: 1) Annual "Together We Can Make A Difference" Fundraiser at Hondo's in Bartelso held on Saturday, August 17th and the 2) Veterans Appreciation Day on Saturday, September 7th, with 135+ in attendance.

Additionally, the following upcoming events are planned:

- Final Open House of 2024 (Sunday, September 29th – Noon to 3 PM)
- Annual Hunters' Prayer Service & Memorial Brick Dedication (Sunday, October 13th – Noon)

Honor Flight Update

Greg Riechman shared that there was a very large turnout on Monday, August 26th, as four veterans headed to Springfield for their Honor Flight on Tuesday, August 27th. Two other veterans who are scheduled to participate in an Honor Flight from Marion in September were also recognized.

Greg Riechman will continue to work with Carl Huels and Kathy Rakers Kampwerth to plan for the next send-off on Monday, October 14th, in preparation for the Honor Flight on Tuesday, October 15th.

Wreaths Across America Event (Saturday, December 14, 2024)

Stan Todd and Charlie Todd (little brother Cale was in attendance too) provided an update on their extremely successful "Lemonade and Bake Sale" event, which was held on Saturday, August 10th. They are in good shape for the upcoming event in December.

Cheryl Brinkmann and Whitney Reynolds (by phone) reported on the efforts to plan the "K&J Chevrolet & The City of Carlyle's Family Fall Fun Fest, with proceeds to be used for wreaths for the WAA Event. It will be held on Saturday, October 5th (10 AM – 2 PM) at the dealership in Carlyle.

Veterans Assistance Commission

Holly Clark shared that veterans from Bond & Fayette Counties have asked her to pursue starting a Veteran's Assistance Commission (VAC) in those counties. She asked the veterans in attendance if they thought that a VAC is needed in Clinton County and the consensus was a resounding yes, so she will start the same process here by meeting with the Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) (VFW, American Legion, Am Vets etc.) in Clinton County. She will ask them about their experiences with veterans in need, what they think the issues are, and if they feel a VAC is needed. If the VSOs are in favor of starting a VAC, she will then work with the County for funding.

8. MEETING CADENCE

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, October 17th @6 PM in the Board Room.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Holly Clark, seconded by Mike Hilmes. Motion carried.