

Jasper County Commission of Veterans Affairs
Shared Benefits Coordinator Joshua Price
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Commissioners: Fred Chabot, Marta Ford, Jerry Nelson, and Ed Spangenburg

8 January 2025

Minutes

On 8 January 2025, at 1500 hours, Commission Chairperson Jerry Nelson called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Jasper County Veterans Affairs Commission to order. The commissioners in attendance were: Fred Chabot, Marta Ford, Jerry Nelson, Kat Thompson, and Ed Spangenburg. Also in attendance: Shared Benefits Coordinator Josh Price, Human Resources Director Dennis Simon, Newton News reporter Chris Braunschweig, and 4 guests.

Approve Minutes:

Kat Thompson made a motion and Marta Ford seconded to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled Commission meeting held on 11 December 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business:

1. Progress on Joshua Price Certification:

Josh completed his background check interview at the Federal Building in Des Moines. It may take anywhere from three days to three weeks to receive his PIV card due to the potential of a delay on the federal side.

2. Pay Raise for Joshua Price:

Dennis Simon commented that Josh is at Pay Range 32, Step 3 now. He recommended that the Commission approve an increase to Step 5, upon Josh's receipt of his PIV card, which will increase his pay rate from \$18.06 to \$19.36 per hour. Also, on Josh's employment anniversary, 12 February 2025, he will be eligible for an increase to Step 6, a pay rate of \$20.05 per hour. Dennis explained that he has explained this pay progression to Ms. Connie McQuiston, Director of General Assistance. Ms. McQuiston concurred. Kat Thompson made a motion and Marta Ford seconded to approve the pay rate increases as proposed in Dennis Simon's remarks. The motion passed unanimously.

Dennis also explained that the County Supervisors are working with him to convert the county from a nine-step pay plan to a five-step pay plan.

3. Office Flow Management:

Josh explained that he plans to shadow the Marion County Veterans Affairs Director for a day. Second, Jennie Olson, Iowa County Veterans Affairs, and Patty Hemann, Johnson County Veterans Affairs, plan to come to his office to give him pointers on veterans benefits processing. It was the consensus of the Commission that these cross training visits should proceed.

New Business:

1. Jasper County Legion Riders Presentation:

The Jasper County Legion Riders presented a check for \$468.50 to the Veterans Affairs Commission to be used as it sees fit for the benefit of Jasper County veterans. This represents 50% of the proceeds of their 50/50 donations at their 2024 meetings.

2. December 2024 Activity Report:

Commissioners reviewed the December, 2024 Activity Report. Ryan Eaton, Jasper County IT Manager, is working on voice mail malfunctions in the county office telephone system. A Veterans Affairs quarterly report is due to the County Supervisors in late January.

3. December 2024 Expenses and Allocation Report:

Commissioners reviewed the December, 2024 Expenses and Allocation Report. The Veterans Affairs FY 2026 budget review before the County Supervisors is scheduled from 9:15 to 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, 15 January 2025. Josh Price, Marta Ford, and Fred Chabot indicated they would attend.

4. Director/Administrator Candidate Selection Process:

The application deadline in the Jasper County Human Resources system is Friday, 10 January 2025. Dennis Simon explained that Kat Thompson will excuse herself from the process in light of her husband being a candidate. In light of recent law changes, Dennis recommended that the Commission appoint a five-member committee to review applications, interview applicants, and recommend a hire to the Commission. He also requested that each of the four remaining commissioners review all the applications and give him their five most recommended applicants not later than Friday, 17 January 2025. These recommendations will be considered by the selection committee. The Commission's approved selection will be recommended to the County Supervisors for their approval and funding. Fred Chabot made a motion and Kat Thompson seconded to appoint Ed Spangenburg, Marta Ford, Brandon Talsma, Dennis Simon, and Sheriff Lt. (and veteran) Mike Gunsaulus to a Director/Administrator Selection Committee to follow the process proposed by Dennis Simon. The motion passed unanimously. Either a veteran or non-veteran may be hired in the position.

Discussion ensued regarding the details of conducting interviews and the questions to be asked of each interviewee. Dennis Simon asked the commissioners to send him any questions they recommend being asked of all interviewees.

Public Input: A veteran guest expressed his concern over misinformation about his veteran status by the U.S. Veterans Administration. Kat Thompson recommended that the individual go to the County Assessor's's office to clarify his status.

Announcements: Fred Chabot asked all commissioners to review the bylaws for consideration of necessary changes at the 12 March 2025 Commission meeting.

Marta Ford made a motion and Kat Thompson seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1550 hours. The motion passed unanimously.

Confirm next meeting: Wednesday, 12 February 2025, 1500 hrs., at the Jasper County Office Building.

/s/ Ferdinand J. Chabot, Secretary