BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Brown County

305 E. WALNUT STREET
P. O. BOX 23600
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN 54305-3600
PHONE (920) 448-4015 FAX (920) 448-6221

VETERANS SUBCOMMITTEE
Jack Krueger, Chair
Sherry Steenbock, Vice Chair
Donald Bettine, James Haskins, John Maino, Troy Ness, Duane Pierce, Kristen Verhaagh, John Walschinski.

**Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1191

VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE
Tuesday, March 9, 2010
****5:15 p.m.****
Room 201, Northern Building
305 E. Walnut Street

1. Call Meeting to Order.
2. Invocation by Jim Haskins.
3. Approve/Modify Agenda.
4. Approve/Modify Minutes of February 9, 2010.
5. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus (if available).
6. Report from Chair Jack Krueger
7. Report from Committee Members Present (Steenbock, Bettine, Haskins, Maino, Ness, Pierce, Verhaagh, & Walschinski).
8. Such other Matters as Authorized by Law.
9. Adjourn.

Jack Krueger, Chair

Notice is hereby given that action by Committee may be taken on any of the items which are described or listed in this agenda. Please take notice that it is possible additional members of the Board of Supervisors may attend this meeting, resulting in a majority or quorum of the Board of Supervisors. This may constitute a meeting of the Board of Supervisors for purposes of discussion and information gathering relative to this agenda.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats. a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, February 9, 2010, at 5:15 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT:	Jack Krueger—Chair, Jim Haskins, Duane "Snake" Pierce, Kristen Verhaagh, John Walschinski.
EXCUSED:	Don Bettine, John Maino, Troy Ness, Sherry Steenbock.
ALSO PRESENT:	Jerry Polus.

1. **Call Meeting to Order**:
The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jack Krueger at 5:17 p.m.

2. **Invocation by Jim Haskins**

3. **Approve/Modify Agenda:**

A motion was made by Kristen Verhaagh and seconded by John Walschinski to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. **Approve/Modify Minutes of January 12, 2010:**

A motion was made by Duane Pierce and seconded by Jim Haskins to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **Report from CVSO Jerry Polus (if available):**
Mr. Polus, Veterans Service Officer, reported that there is not a receptionist in the Veterans Office any longer due to budget cuts and bumping rights of union employees who have been laid off. Because of the current hiring freeze, he said Brown County has a process to go through to justify re-filling a position; he added that he is hoping to fill this position shortly, at least on a temporary basis.

Mr. Polus stated that the 127th came back from Iraq and are being seen daily. He reported that the workload in the Veterans Office is huge, and there is one employee who is pregnant and will be out from mid-April to mid-June. He explained that calls are not being returned as quickly; people are not being seen as quickly; and applications and claims are not being processed as quickly. He said there is about a 3-4 week backlog of claims because of the volume.

Upon further questions, Mr. Polus explained that approximately 2 ½ weeks ago, he spoke with County Executive Tom Hinz to request filling the receptionist position; and Mr. Polus was asked to provide additional data. He said he presented the information about 1 week ago and was told that the position would be held open for 30 to 60 days to study the request. He added that he met with Executive Hinz and Human Resources (HR) yesterday and proposed the following: (1) a limited term employee be hired for 120 days; (2) a study be performed by HR during that time to determine whether the position should be continued as is or modified; (3) a recommendation be made to the Executive Committee and County Board by April or May; and (4) a Kaizen study be conducted in July to assist with process improvement. He stated that he was told that he could fill the position with a

temporary employee for the next 90 days and that the Kaizen event should be done before the decision is made concerning the position. He added that although this creates a temporary hardship, he hopes that this will ultimately be a benefit to the Veterans Office.

Chair Krueger clarified for those present that the County Board sets the Table of Organization. Chair Krueger said the study may show that more employees are needed in the Veterans Office; and he stated that he told Executive Hinz that he wants to be involved in this process.

Kristen Verhaagh questioned when the last time was that the office was reviewed to see what the needs were, to which Mr. Polus replied that that has never been done. Mr. Polus explained that the LEAN program is designed to do this; however, he is not convinced that there will be any significant cost savings identified, particularly in view of the bureaucracy when dealing with the State and Federal VA. He said he could be wrong and his department is open to the possibility.

Mr. Polus reported that $38 million was brought into Brown County through the Veterans Office last year. He said this means that for every dollar spent by his office, there is approximately $100 brought into the county. He stated that processing five pension applications in a week would amount to about $100,000 brought into Brown County. He added that with the reduced staffing, because fewer applications can be processed, the Veterans Office is not able to generate the same amount of money into Brown County; therefore, Brown County is losing money.

Mr. Polus told those present that he spoke at the monthly meeting targeting senior and disabled veterans at the ADRC (Aging Disability Resource Center); the topic was this Subcommittee. He stated that there were between 70 and 80 people there and that his intent was to help those at the meeting understand the time, effort and goals of this Subcommittee. He said he also spoke about a program targeting senior veterans that John Walschinski will introduce tonight. Mr. Polus invited those present to attend the meetings: Next month Beth Ann Smith of the Milwaukee VA will be speaking; and the following month (on April 9 at 10:00 a.m. with free lunch to follow) Rolling Thunder will perform a Table Ceremony and Flag Folding Ceremony.

6. **Report from Chair Jack Krueger:** No report.

7. **Report from Committee Members (Steenbock, Bettine, Haskins, Maino, Pierce, Verhaagh, & Walschinski):**
John Walschinski distributed handouts (copies attached) and asked for input from the Subcommittee members. He said the focus of this is senior vets.

Mr. Walschinski showed the members a mock-up of a suggested page for the "Green Bay Press-Gazette" that he would like to propose as a bi-weekly featured edition. He stated that the purpose would be to offer articles of interest and information to veterans and that he intends to send this suggestion to the president of the "Green Bay Press-Gazette." Chair Krueger suggested emphasizing readership and selling newspapers when Mr. Walschinski makes the presentation. Chair Krueger also suggested having a volunteer organization purchase newspapers for vets. When Mr. Walschinski added that it might be possible to have organizations purchase advertisements, Chair Krueger said John Maino may be able to help in this area. Mr. Polus suggested that local military and veterans organizations contribute information, such as upcoming events, in addition to updates from his office and this

Subcommittee. Duane Pierce said there are other papers in the area that might also be receptive to this. When Mr. Walschinski recommended that this be a bi-weekly publication, Chair Krueger suggested publishing this weekly in the Sunday paper. Chair Krueger also said he would talk with Mr. Maino about obtaining sponsors for this publication. Ms. Verhaagh opined that individuals and groups may also be interested in sponsoring editions. Mr. Pierce added that when he began with Rolling Thunder and was asking for donations, many people opined that they did not support the war but they definitely supported veterans.

Jim Haskins reported that at Stowe's Drug Store in DePere, there is a sign in the window with a heart on it that indicates support of veterans. He read an editorial printed in the "Green Bay Press-Gazette" entitled "Why LZ Lambeau?" by John L. Zilles (copy from website attached). Chair Krueger opined that the government built that stigmatism, and there was never a welcome home for the heroes. Ms. Verhaagh said everyone is entitled to an opinion—that's what we fought for. Duane Pierce added that there has been such a response for this event that there will be four legs from all different parts of the state; and the early numbers are over 12,000.

(Mr. Haskins left at 6:33 p.m.)

Mr. Pierce reported the following events:

- **April 13, 2010**—Col. Tim Lawrie (U.S. Army retired) will be speaking at Heritage Hill on opening night of War, Art and the Vietnam Veteran - War Perspectives.
- **May 5, 2010**—Medal of Honor Winner Sammy Lee Davis will be speaking at Heritage Hill from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.; tickets are $10.00 in advance and can be purchased by calling Heritage Hill at 448-5150.
- **May 20, 2010**—Opening Ceremony for the Moving Wall will be held at noon. This is the first showing of this version of the Moving Wall, which is ½ the size of the original. This will be open 24 hours throughout the weekend.
- **May 21, 2010**—Exhibits open to the public at 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Verhaagh reported that because of the minutes from a prior meeting that were placed on the Brown County website, the training for the Desert Veterans was featured on Channel 2 News.

Mr. Walschinski said he met a gentleman (Ken Stoey) who expressed interest in becoming a member of this Subcommittee.

8. Such other Matters as Authorized by Law: None.

9. Adjourn:

A motion was made by John Walschinski and seconded by Duane Pierce to adjourn at 6:43 p.m. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Alexander
Recording Secretary