



Minutes - August 18, 2026

Call to Order: Chair Peer called the hybrid Veterans Service Committee meeting to order at 5PM in Veteran's Service Building.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Peer, Fugelseth, Wallis, and Schneider.

Committee Members Absent: Supervisor Sutter.

Staff Members Present: Paul Crawford, Veteran Services Officer; Laura Jones, Administrative Professional III.

Others Present: Ethan Bahmann.

Approve Agenda: Supervisor Schnider moved approval of the agenda as presented, second by Supervisor Wallis. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: None.

Review, Discussion and Possible Action:

Veterans Service Office Update:

Budget: The board reviewed the Veteran Service Office budget, which remains largely status quo with most expenses locked at previous levels, including rent and mandatory costs. Paul highlighted that the office's operational costs align with their \$18,800 state grant, and noted increases in travel and software costs due to inflation. The discussion included data on the office's growing impact, including a significant increase in new veterans served, and phone calls handled in 2026 compared to previous years, emphasizing the economic benefit to the county as direct payments to veterans and survivors.

The team discussed preparing data for a budget appeal, with Supervisor Fugelseth suggesting counting multiples of the same families to demonstrate acuity level and show percent changes from 2021 to 2024. Paul clarified that the county office receives no direct reimbursement from the VA for services, as they are fully funded by the county, and explained that tracking how veterans spend benefits would violate privacy rights. The discussion highlighted concerns about potential budget cuts, as a 10% reduction would significantly impact their \$18,800 operating budget, with Paul noting that most expenses are covered by state grant money from the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

The meeting focused on budget discussions and conference attendance requirements for the

veteran services department. Paul explained that while the department must attend mandatory conferences for continuing education and accreditation, optional conferences would need to be funded through separate initiative requests rather than the operating budget.

You May Not Know:

Benefits for Veterans:

Rock County 4-H Fair Update: The team discussed concerns about the effectiveness of their fair participation, which costs \$800 annually, as attendance was lower this year due to weather and other factors, leading them to consider alternative outreach methods.

Upcoming Events:

Pistons & Props Airshow: The committee confirmed their participation in the upcoming Pistons and Props air show event, which will be free for veteran service organizations.

Committee Requests: None.

Next meeting date and time: September 15, 2026 at 5:00 PM.

Adjournment: Supervisor Schneider moved to adjournment at 5:55PM, second by Supervisor Wallis. ADOPTED.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Jones Administrative Professional III

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