

MINUTES  
WISCONSIN BOARD OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Special Meeting by Teleconference of April 25, 2011  
Madison, Wisconsin

**Board Members Present**

Dan Naylor, Chair  
Pete Moran, Vice Chair  
Marv Freedman, Secretary  
Rod Moen  
Dave Boetcher

**Board Members Absent**

None

**Others Attending (not all-inclusive)**

Gil Halsted, WI Public Radio  
Tim Stumm, WI Health News  
Grant Cummings, LFB  
Karina Silver, DOA  
Roger Fetterly, MOAA  
Rick deMoya, AGIF  
Roger Boeker  
Dave Benson

**WDVA Present**

Donna Williams, Acting Secretary  
Micabil Diaz, Assistant Chief Legal Counsel  
Max Dulberger, Executive Assistant  
Colleen Holtan, OBBP Director  
Brian Marshall, Division Administrator  
James Bond, Division Administrator  
Reid Aaron, WVH Commandant–Union Grove  
Jackie Moore, WVH Acting Commandant–King  
Mary Tenant, WDVA  
Julie Van Metre, Executive Staff Assistant

1. **Roll Call and Introductions**

The meeting of the Board of Veterans Affairs was called to order at 1:35 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by a moment of silence. A quorum was present. Acting Secretary Williams introduced a new staff member, Reid Aaron, Commandant of the Wisconsin Veterans Home–Union Grove.

2. **Certification of Notice of Meeting**

It was certified proper notification of the meeting occurred.

3. **Board Discussion and Action on the Governor’s WDVA 2011-2013 State Biennial Budget Recommendations Relating to:**

a. Nursing Home Bed Assessment (“Bed Tax”) for the Wisconsin Veterans Homes.

**MOTION #1:** It was moved by Mr. Freedman and seconded by Mr. Moran that the Wisconsin Veterans Homes are already reimbursed at the Medicare upper limit so payment of the nursing home bed assessment (bed tax) will generate no additional, offsetting Medicaid revenues and payment for the nursing home bed assessment will increase the projected cost of providing care for private pay members of the Homes by approximately \$2,200 annually. Therefore, the Board strongly urges the Governor and the Legislature to continue the exemption from payment of the nursing home bed assessment for the Wisconsin Veterans Homes at King and Union Grove for the 2011-2013 biennium and for the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls projected to open in November 2012 for the 2011-2013 biennium. Mr. Moen

offered a friendly amendment that “per member” be added after \$2,200 annually. The amendment was accepted by Mr. Freedman and Mr. Moran. The motion, as amended, was carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

- b. The Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls.  
The Board passed a motion at its April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting relating to the Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls, requiring a cost-benefit analysis as a condition of deciding privatization.
- c. The Wisconsin GI Bill.  
Dave Boetcher said the proposal would allow the UW-Madison to automatically end the GI Bill Program as of 2013. The new Board being considered in the Budget could also draft a resolution at any time to end the GI Bill Program before 2013. Mr. Boetcher said the SAA functions are proposed to be transferred from WDVA to Regulation and Licensing; and asked if that happened, would that allow another Department to decide which individual colleges would or would not accept the GI Bill? Mr. Diaz said the SAA is a federal contract. The proposal is to transfer the functionality over to another agency; it does not change the internal mechanism by which the staff performs their duties. In order for staff to certify colleges, they need to follow certain rules provided by the USDVA. Roger Boeker added the SAA has no standing on state issues; they are only a contractor of the USDVA.

**MOTION #2:** It was moved by Mr. Boetcher and seconded by Mr. Moran that the Board of Veterans Affairs supports the increase in rights of the GI Bill in the budget but opposes the ability of colleges to selectively opt out of the program. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

- d. Program Re-estimates and Budget Reductions of Existing Department Programs.  
**MOTION #3:** It was moved by Mr. Boetcher and seconded by Mr. Moran to oppose the Governor’s proposal to transfer Gifts and Bequests Funds from the Veterans Homes to the Veterans Trust Fund. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.
- e. Funding of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.  
**MOTION #4:** It was moved by Mr. Freedman and seconded by Mr. Moran that the Board of Veterans Affairs remains strongly committed to having all Wisconsin Veterans Museum funding removed as a Veterans Trust Fund obligation since the Museum is not a veterans benefit but a state treasure, always intended to be the State of Wisconsin’s way of honoring the service and sacrifice of our veterans. Having veterans, through the Veterans Trust Fund pay the cost of the Museum’s operating costs has always been totally inconsistent with the Museum’s objective of honoring Wisconsin’s veterans’ service and sacrifice and while full GPR funding of the Museum may not be practical at this time in view of the state’s current fiscal challenges, the Board urges the Governor and Legislature to continue the phase-in of full GPR funding in an amount at least equal to the GPR funding levels of the last three biennia. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

- f. Funding of Wisconsin Veterans Cemeteries.  
There was no discussion on this item.

4. Public Comment  
None.

5. Adjournment

**MOTION #5:** It was moved by Mr. Moran, seconded by Mr. Moen and carried on a voice vote to adjourn the teleconference; the time was 2:00 p.m.

Dan Naylor  
Chair