



**VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION  
OF  
WINNEBAGO COUNTY**

VACWC Commission Meeting Minutes  
555 N. Court Street, Room 115, Rockford, IL 61103  
January 14, 2026  
5:30 PM CST  
Eric Willard, President

**Meeting Called to Order** at 5:30 PM CST

**Pledge of Allegiance** lead by Ken VanLandegham

**Moment of Silence** lead by President Eric Willard

**Roll Call** Secretary Dana Verfuert

Roll Call Attendance

Ken VanLandegham	American Legion Post #288	Delegate	Present
Raymond Dhom	American Legion Post #288	Alternate	Not in attendance
Gary Holmes	American Legion Post #332	Delegate	Present
Jeff Greer	American Legion Post #332	Alternate	Not in attendance
Dave Davis	American Legion Post #1207	Delegate	Present
George Meissen	American Legion Post #1207	Alternate	Present
Todd Burton	Blackhawk DAV Chapter #29	Delegate	Not in attendance
John Kline	Blackhawk DAV Chapter #29	Alternate	Not in attendance
Robert Lamay	Navy Club Ship #1	Delegate	Present
Stephanie Gilberto	Navy Club Ship #1	Alternate	Not in attendance
Terrell Lewis	Rock Valley AmVets Post #922	Delegate	Not in attendance
Jean Henning	Rock Valley AmVets Post #922	Alternate	Present
Eric Willard	Vietnam Veterans of America #984	Delegate	Present
Jerome Egilske	Vietnam Veterans of America #984	Alternate	Not in attendance
Lana McCants	VFW Post #342	Delegate	Not in attendance
Sean West	VFW Post #342	Alternate	Not in attendance
Ruben Hernandez	VFW Post #2955	Delegate	Present
Bill Graves	VFW Post #2955	Alternate	Not in attendance
Nancy Clark	VFW Post #5149	Delegate	Present
F.S. Tate	VFW Post #5149	Alternate	Present
Gene Schaefer	VFW Post #9759	Delegate	Present
Keith McDonald	Winnebago County Board	Representative	Not in attendance

**Additional Attendees:** Superintendent Tim Hotchkiss, Assistant Superintendent Debi Hoover, VSO Willie Orden, VSO Luz Ortiz-Rivera, VAC Admin Francesca Montanez, VAC Admin Mayra Torel, VAC Secretary Dana Verfuert, Attorney Michael Phillips.

**Quorum Established:** 11 attendees, representing 9 MVSO's

**Motion to allow Zoom attendees to join the meeting electronically:** None

**Motion to Approve Agenda for January 14, 2026:** Henning, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Holmes, no discussion, no amendments, **Voice Vote Yes Unanimous. January 14, 2026 Agenda approved. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**

**Motion to approve December 29, 2025 Commission Meeting Minutes:** Hernandez, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Henning; Davis pointed out that "Posts" under "Quorum Established" should be changed to MVSO's on this document and all future minutes; discussion; no additional amendments, **Voice Vote Yes Unanimous. December 29, 2025 Commission Meeting Minutes. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**

**Public Comments:** Mr. Ted Christo, Homefront 815 Veteran Center, addressed the Commission. Mr. Ray Richmond, Commander of American Legion Post #340, addressed the Commission.

**President's Report: Eric Willard**

President Eric Willard reminded all MVSO's that the VACWC Delegate and Alternate forms are due on March 1, 2026.

**Finance President's Report: Nancy Clark**

- Bylaw Committee – Next Meeting will be January 27, 2026 at 1:00 PM CST, Veterans Memorial Hall, First Floor Conference Room.

**Finance Officer's Report: Eric Willard**

- Fiscal year to date budget review: Eric Willard
- Finance Committee – Next Meeting will be January 27, 2026 at 2:00 PM CST, Veterans Memorial Hall, First Floor Conference Room.

**Services Chairperson's Report: Dave Davis**

- Services Committee – Next Meeting will be February 24, 2026 at 1:00 PM CST, Veterans Memorial Hall, First Floor Conference Room.

**Personnel Chairperson's Report: Rueben Hernandez**

- Personnel Committee – Next Meeting will be February 24, 2026 at 2:00 PM CST, Veterans Memorial Hall, First Floor Conference Room.

**Superintendent's Report: Tim Hotchkiss**

- Superintendent Tim Hotchkiss reported on the state of the Veteran's Assistance Commission.

- VSO Luz Ortiz-Rivera reported on assisting a Veteran in obtaining over \$400,000 in back pay from VA Disability.

**Correspondence: Secretary Dana Verfuert**

- None

**Unfinished Business**

- None.

**New Business: President Eric Willard**

- **6:08PM - Motion to Enter into Executive Session pursuant Section 2(c)(1) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act:** Holmes, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Henning, no discussion, no amendments, **Roll Call Vote Yes Unanimous. Motion approved. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**
- President Eric Willard excused all guests and the VAC Staff from the Executive Session. Attorney Michael Phillips remained in Executive Session along with all members of the Commission.
- EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:08PM – 6:59PM
- Reconvene in Open Session at 6:59PM
- **Motion to Accept the 90 Day Evaluation of Superintendent Tim Hotchkiss:** Clark, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Henning, no discussion, no amendments, **Roll Call Vote Yes Unanimous. Motion approved. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**
- **Motion For a Five-Minute Recess:** Henning, 2<sup>nd</sup> Holmes, no discussion, no amendments, **Voice Vote Yes Unanimous. Motion approved. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**
- 7:12PM Reconvene in Open Session
- **Motion to Accept the Resignation of Superintendent Tim Hotchkiss:** Henning, 2<sup>nd</sup>: LaMay, no discussion, no amendments, **Roll Call Vote Yes Unanimous. Motion approved. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**
- **Motion to Appoint Willie Borden as the Interim Superintendent of the Veteran's Assistance of Winnebago County, IL:** Holmes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Henning. **Roll Call Vote Yes Unanimous. Motion approved. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**

**Announcements: Secretary Dana Verfuert**

- Navy is having a Four Chaplains Day commemoration at Hines Hospital on February 1, 2026 at 1:00PM.

Next VACWC Meeting will be on February 11, 2026 at 5:30 PM CST. 555 N. Court Street, Room 115, Rockford, IL 61103

**Motion to Adjourn:** Clark, 2<sup>nd</sup> Davis, no discussion, no amendments, **Voice Vote Yes Unanimous, Motion approved at 7:25 PM CST. Yes 9, No 0, Abstain 0**

Minutes Approved:

By:



Eric Willard, President  
Veterans Assistance Commission of Winnebago County, IL

Attest:



Dana Verfueth, Secretary  
Veterans Assistance Commission of Winnebago County, IL