

DEPARTMENT VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMITTEE MEETING

February 21, 2009

The VA & R meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Joe Callahan at the Causeway Bay Hotel, Lansing, MI.
Roll call:

MEMBERS: Joe Callahan, Richard Morrison, Anthony Licari, Donald Chemielewski, Arthur Thomason, Wade Comish

GUESTS: 15 guests present

Minutes:

It was moved by Thomason supported by Morrison that the minutes of September 26, 2008 be approved. Motion carried.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

VHVS Report by Henry Altman: The need for volunteers at all the hospitals if you have a little time your help is needed. Also, reported, no food can be brought in for functions at facilities.

Department VSO report by Ray Moore Asst. Director: The 10% increasing for group 8, also discussed annual Funding for our Department VSO. The case load has increased & Awards coming back to veterans has increased. There also was discussion about glasses for non service connected disability.

Seabock in Harrison has told that approximately 75 million has been brought back to the state by the Department VSOs. The caseloads have increased and the job they're doing is just outstanding.

Chairman reported on the VA budget and the need for mandatory funding. We have a good chance of getting forward funding for VA medical care this year. Resolutions -- bills have been introduced both in the Senate and in the House for forward funding, which will be one year forward funding for the VA, which is a great improvement over what we have. But, of course, we would like to have mandatory funding. But we'll take every step we can get and we will be talking to the legislature next week. And it's very important to the National Commander, also.

Medicare - eligible veterans should have the same opportunity to use their Medicare coverage in the health plan of their choice i.e. VA. As of now, of course you know, the Medicare does not reimburse the VA. So it's something we've got to push for and hope we can get.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before this committee, meeting was adjourned 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Joe Callahan