Commissioner Thomas O’Neal called the Clark County Veterans Service Commission (VSC) meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on 21 September 2023. Commissioners present: Thomas O’Neal, William E. McGee, James G. “Grant” Wells, and James R. Ryan. Executive Director Cathy Wood, Acting Director Crystal Baker, and Assistant Director David Mitchell were also present.

The *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited.

Reading and Approval of Minutes: James R. Ryan moved to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of 14 September 2023 and approve them as written. The motion was seconded by James G. “Grant” Wells and carried by a unanimous vote.

**Acting Director Updates:** The annual Christmas party was discussed.William E. McGee moved to authorize the Annual Christmas party at Courtyard by Marriott at a cost not to exceed $1,000.00. The motion was seconded by James R. Ryan and carried by a unanimous vote.

The 2024 Budget was conversed about. Ms. Baker advised the board that she emailed the 2024 budget request to all three County Commissioners and Jennifer Hutchinson on 15 May 2023 however she never received a request. She emailed them again following up and received a response on 19 September 2023 stating the 2024 budget request was received. Ms. Baker expressed her concern about not getting the official letter stating they received the request and when the formal budget process would begin. Thomas O’Neal stated the Count y Commissioners just began talking about the budget at the last meeting. Thomas O’Neal suggested Ms. Baker get the letter together requesting the hearing and have it ready for the next board meeting.

Cost of living adjustments were debated. James R. Ryan suggested we follow Social Security Administration and or Veteran Affairs. Thomas O’Neal recommended when preparing the budget to do a 3.5% increase on the staff salaries.

Thomas O’Neal stated he attended the County Commission meeting the day prior where someone mentioned starting an Emergency Mental Health facility. He suggested they contact Crystal Baker at the Veterans office. Ms. Baker stated she would let Thomas O’Neal when she is contacted.

Cathy Wood’s retirement was discussed. The office will close Friday September 29th at 11:00a.m. to have lunch at Texas Roadhouse and will remain closed for remainder of the day.

**Assistant Director Updates:** Mr. Mitchell discussed and read a letter that was created for a veteran who has been demanding and borderline aggressive with the staff. All board members agreed it was unacceptable and signed the letter.

Correspondence was discussed. Mr. Mitchell read aloud a letter the office received from the Soup Kitchen thanking the office for the donation of $145.00

James G. “Grant” Wells moved to acknowledge payment of the following invoices:

**Contract Services ~** Spectrum $167.97 for internet services.

**Other Expenses ~** Mansfield Oil Company $1137.55 for vehicle fuel, MacRay $78.00 for additional Silent Watch shirts, Springfield News-Sun $170.97 for newspaper renewal, Flower Craft $360.00 for Silent Watch flowers, Huntington Bank $1079.08 for National Association fees and Cruise-In event items.

**Travel ~** Crystal Baker, Darwin Hicks, and Roger Ward $255.26 each for mileage and per diem reimbursement for Fall Conference.

The motion was seconded by James R. Ryan and carried by a unanimous vote.

**Public Comments:** None.

James G. “Grant” Wells moved to enter executive session for the purpose of reviewing financial assistance. William E. McGee seconded the motion. James R. Ryan called the roll: William E. McGee, yes; James G. “Grant” Wells, yes; James R. Ryan, yes; Tom O’Neal, yes; motion carried. The board entered Executive Session at 8:50 a.m. The board reviewed financial assistance applications. The board returned to open session at 9:00 a.m.

James G. “Grant” Wells moved to approve financial assistance for the following applicants: James R. Ryan seconded the motion.

**Edward Cooper,** 1016 Heard Street, Springfield, OH 45506, laborer, was approved for a $300.00 Kroger card for food, $91.00 to CJ’S Refuse for trash and $30.00 cash grant to the veteran for phone. Vote: Yes, 4 No, 0.

There being no further business to come before the board, William E. McGee moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by James R. Ryan and carried by a unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Thomas O’Neal, President

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ James R. Ryan