

Oscoda County Veterans Affairs Committee By-Laws



By-Laws changes voted and approved on 11 May 2018, see Addendum. The Oscoda County Board of Commissioners approved the By-Laws on June 12, 2018.

ARTICLE I - IDENTIFICATION

The name of this organization shall be the Oscoda County Veterans Affairs Board, hereafter, maybe referred to the "Board". This board is a public, non-profit entity

ARTICLE II - AUTHORITY TO OPERATE

The Board is established by MCL Public Act 192 of 1953, MCL 35.621 and Section 1. The full text of Public Act 192 below. **Included is the amended section, effective date of April 4, 2017.**

35.621 County department of veterans' affairs; creation; administration; committee; appointment, qualifications, and terms of members; vacancies.

Sec. 1.

- (1) The county board of commissioners may create a county department of veterans' affairs. The county department of veterans' affairs shall be under the administration of a committee of 3 to 7 veterans, appointed by the county board of commissioners. Members appointed to the committee shall be residents of the county who have served honorably on active duty in the United States Armed Forces.
- (2) Committee members appointed under subsection (1) shall include the following:
 - (a) At least 1 member representing a congressionally chartered veterans' organization within the county, to be appointed upon the recommendation of the posts of each chartered veterans' organization within the county.
 - (b) At least 1 independent member who may or may not be a member of a congressionally chartered veterans' organization within the county.
- (3) Each committee member appointed under this section shall have demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in public service, business, or finance.
- (4) If an opening on a committee of veterans occurs, the county board of commissioners shall provide notice of that opening to 1 or more newspapers within the county and to veteran service organizations within the county.
- (5) Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, a member of the county board of commissioners of a county is eligible for appointment under this section.
- (6) Committee members appointed by the county board of commissioners under this section shall be appointed for a term of 4 years each. However, the terms for committee members first appointed shall be staggered so that not more than 2 vacancies are scheduled to occur in a single year. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments for the unexpired terms.

History: 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953;—Am. 1958, Act 156, Eff. Sept. 13, 1958;—Am. 1968, Act 204, Imd. Eff. June 24, 1968;—Am. 1973, Act 153, Imd. Eff. Dec. 6, 1973;—Am. 1996, Act 108, Imd. Eff. Mar. 5, 1996;—Am. 2004, Act 11, Imd. Eff. Feb. 26, 2004
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;—Am. 2012, Act 235, Imd. Eff. June 29, 2012;—Am. 2016, Act 420, Eff. Apr. 4, 2017.

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35.622 Soldiers' relief commission; abolition, transfer of powers and duties to county department of veterans' affairs.

Sec. 2.

In any county in which the board of supervisors adopts the provisions of this act, section 2 of the act creating the soldiers' relief commission created under the provisions of Act No. 214 of the Public Acts of 1899, as amended, being section 35.22 of the Compiled Laws of 1948, is hereby declared to be inoperative and the powers and duties of commission are hereby transferred to the county department of veterans' affairs created under the provisions of this act, and wherever soldiers' relief commission is used in Act No. 214 of the Public Acts of 1899, as amended, and Act No. 235 of the Public Acts of 1911, as amended, being sections 35.801 to 35.804 of the Compiled Laws of 1948, it shall mean the county department of veterans' affairs herein created.

History: 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953;—Am. 1958, Act 156, Eff. Sept. 13, 1958.

35.623 Administrative committee of county department; selection of officers, expenses; veterans' service officer, appointment; offices.

Sec. 3.

The committee shall select a chairman and a secretary. The committee is authorized to incur such expense as shall be necessary in carrying out the provisions of this act within the budget set up by the board of supervisors. The members of the committee shall be entitled to receive the same per diem and mileage in attending meetings as members of the board of supervisors. The committee shall appoint a veterans' service officer and such other employees as shall be necessary from time to time to carry out the provisions of this act. In the selection of the veterans' service officer hereby authorized, the committee shall consult with and request the assistance of any association or council of organized veterans in such county, and any recommendation from such association or council of veterans as to the personnel to be appointed by said committee under the provisions of this act, while not binding on said committee, shall be given the greatest consideration. The board of supervisors shall furnish, equip and maintain reasonably adequate office facilities for the county department of veterans' affairs.

History: 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953.

35.624 County department; powers and duties.

Sec. 4.

The county department of veterans' affairs shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as shall be necessary in carrying out the provisions of this act and any and all other benefits to which veterans may be entitled as prescribed by the county department of veterans' affairs.

History: 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953.

ARTICLE III - MISSION STATEMENT

To assist veterans and their dependents by obtaining any and all county, state and federal benefits to which they are entitled.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this organization shall be open to all Honorably Discharged veterans per MCL Public Act 192 of 1953, Section 35.621.

The board shall at the beginning of each New Year select a chairman, co-chair and a secretary (*this is optional and not coded into Michigan Law*). Unless circumstances warrant, a Treasurer is not needed for the Veterans' Affairs Office.

1. Chair shall:
 - a. Preside at all meetings
 - b. Enforce Roberts Rules if meetings get unruly
2. Co-Chair:

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- a. Acts in absence of the Chair in all capacities as listed above duties
- b. Assist in conducting the business of the Board
3. Secretary:
 - a. Shall record the minutes of the meeting

The board is authorized to incur such expense(s) as shall be necessary in carrying out the provisions of this act within the budget set up and approved by the taxpayers of Oscoda County. The members of the Board shall be entitled to receive per diem by attending meetings.

1. Minimum qualifications for Board Membership
 - a. Served honorably on active/reserve in the United States Armed Forces
 - b. Be appointed upon recommendation of the county posts for each service organization (American Legion, VFW, Purple Heart etc.)
 - c. Have demonstrated knowledge, skills and experience in public service, business or finance
2. Are appointed by the Oscoda County Board of Commissioners

ARTICLE V - COMPOSITION

Members appointed by the board of commissioners shall serve for a term of 4 years each. However, the terms for members first appointed shall be staggered so that not more than 2 vacancies are scheduled to occur in a single year. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments for the unexpired terms. The current makeup of the Board consists of five members appointed by the County Board of Commissioners). Up to seven members can serve on the board.

1. Responsibilities
 - a. Attend regularly scheduled and special meetings.
 - i. Excusals from two consecutive meetings (only) for vacation purposes shall be allowed.
 - ii. Excusals for more than two consecutive meetings shall be allowed for medical reasons.
 - b. Each Board member has one vote – quorum
 - c. Additional roles and responsibilities can be found under Article X of this document
 - d. Sign documents requiring signatures on behalf of the veterans' board

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

Meetings will be conducted in an informal manner. If the meeting becomes unmanageable then Parliamentary Authority will fall under Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Meetings will be held on the first Friday of a full week of the following month except for the months of where holidays may fall on the first weekend.

It is permissible to use the following weekend to schedule veteran board meetings (example: if 1st Friday falls on Labor Day weekend). The board is duly authorized to consider alternate dates for this time frame (or any time frame).

In addition, the board should carefully consider the full year schedule for each month schedule to:

- Ensure it doesn't conflict with a holiday or event.

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- Required training by the Director that may fall on that period.

Changes to the regularly scheduled month should be voted on by the body of the Board and should require a quorum to affirm such changes. A meeting change notice should be posted by the Director to all public places where such postings are seen.

Board Members are expected to attend Regular and Special Meetings. Any Board Member not able to attend a meeting should contact the Oscoda County Veteran Affairs Office.

SPECIAL MEETINGS: May be called by the chair or by a quorum of members when it is deemed necessary for the best interest of the office (in accordance with Michigan Open Meetings Act). OCVA (Director) will notify each Board Member via E-Mail of record, and or Phone with a 3-day notice and complete info re: Special meeting agenda.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS: For Veterans' Relief: Director will request that a committee of no more than two board members be selected to review any veteran relief applications.

ARTICLE VI I - LOCATION

The meetings will be held at the County Veterans Affairs primary office area where the Director maintains regular office hours and where such meetings are allowed.

ARTICLE VIII - PURPOSE

The primary purpose for the monthly meeting is to receive the Director's report and to complete the monthly meeting agenda.

In addition, monthly minutes of the director's report will be presented to the BOCs by the Dept. of Veterans Affairs Director office

ARTICLE IX - MEETING AGENDA

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|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Call to order | 9. Driver's Trip Report |
| 2. Roll Call | 10. Director's Report |
| 3. Pledge to the Flag | 11. Correspondence |
| 4. Approval of Agenda | 12. Old Business |
| 5. Approval of Minutes | 13. New Business |
| 6. Review Per Diem sheets | 14. Public Comments |
| 7. Liaison's Report | 15. For the Good of the Order |
| 8. Financials | 16. Adjournments |

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

The General Board Policies and By-Laws may be altered, amended, repealed or added by a quorum of Board members when deemed necessary to ensure continuity of the Veterans' Office as necessary. Those changes shall be listed under Article XII, By-Laws changes.

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ARTICLE XI – GENERAL POLICIES

The business of this organization shall be managed by an Oscoda County Veterans Affairs Board.

1. The authority of the Board Members is a collective one, *and according to state law*, no individual member can assume any action, report to the media or other government entity without prior *written* consent from the Board Member. *Neither shall a Board Member or the Chair Person make decisions on behalf of or in conflict with, the Board Members' actions or its officers (Director).*
2. Approval of any budget item(s) requires a quorum of the Board Members. Names of voting members for budget items will be recorded, for record, with those who voted yay or nay or abstain.
3. Oscoda County Veteran Relief Policy, guidelines should closely follow the Oscoda County Department of Veterans Affairs Board Veterans Policy.
4. Dollar amount for veteran's emergencies that can be spent by the Director cannot exceed \$600.00 and only with the approval of one board member.
5. By the quorum of Board Members, members can spend up to \$6000.00
6. Formal Correspondence: With the approval of the quorum of Board members, formal correspondence to outside agencies should be done with a Memorandum of Record and mailed by their representative or hand delivered if correspondence is local (i.e. Director of Veterans Affairs).
7. Memorandum of Record should be mailed to the agency/agencies' as necessary to ensure the smooth operation of the Veterans Office.
8. Receipt of Memorandum of Record (i.e. Correspondence) from formal government or private entity may be acknowledged and reviewed at the next Board meeting.
9. No Board Member may be involved with the Oscoda County Veterans Office, where they may appear to be a profiting from or may have the appearance of conflict of interests. Mileage for veteran's travel does not constitute a conflict of interest.
10. The Director may be removed when sufficient cause exists for such removal. The Board Members may entertain charges against any director.
11. The Board Members and its officers should refrain from any political activism that reflects negatively on the Oscoda County Veterans' Affairs.
12. Members who disagree with the quorum of the Board Members decisions are urged to refrain from voicing dissatisfaction with public comments. Such comments can leave a negative image of the Veterans Board Members and Veterans Service Officer with the public at large (and to the Veterans we serve). Such negative comments can also imply agendas (political or otherwise)

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other than in service to the Veterans of Oscoda County and adversely conflicts with the mission statement under Article III.

ADDENDUM – By-Law Changes

1. Changing the meeting day from last Friday of the month to the first Friday of the full week of the following month (see Article VI). – adopted 25 March 2016
2. Increasing the amount of veterans' assistance from \$2000 to \$4000 (see Article XI, section 5).
– adopted 4 November 2016
3. Adding ARTICLE XII to track changes to By-Laws.
4. Increase director's veteran's assistance from \$500 to \$600.
5. – adopted 11 May 2018