

CLAYTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS MEETING

600 Gunder Road NE, Elkader, Iowa 52043

November 6, 2023 at 7:30 a.m.

Veterans Commission Meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. on November 6, 2023 at the Clayton County Office Building Meeting Room.

I.) Roll Call: Commissioners Clark, Eilers, Torkelson and Jordan, Director present.

II.) Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Eilers to approve the minutes from October 9, 2023. Motion was seconded by Clark; Motion carried.

III.) Public Comments: No public comments noted.

IV.) Budget Review. Jordan distributed the current Fiscal Budget for 2023-2024. Veterans Affairs office spent \$5759.86 during the month with 81.21% remaining. Eilers made the motion to approve the budget, Clark seconded the motion; motion carried.

V.) Old Business:

a). Discussion was held regarding the cellphone purchase and service plan for the Veteran Commission Van Coordinator. Jordan will continue to follow-up with purchase of new cellphone and plan change with cost shared by Delaware County.

b). Director Jordan reported on the cemetery flag holders. He discussed this issue with other counties attending the Fall Training School. Jordan noted that the Martin Flag Company located in West De Moines is used by some counties. Currently, our county uses Syntax for purchase of flag holders. More information will be shared in addressing the strategy of purchasing flag holders going forward. Jordan will also continue his research on fund raising and installation of flag holders.

c). The internship position was discussed. Intern position would be considered a part-time county employee. Jordan will continue his talks with the Board of Supervisors and Clayton County Auditor's Office regarding this position. Jordan has established a list of duties for this position.

VI.) New Business

a). November 6-12 is designated as "Green Light" week. The green lights will be displayed on the Clayton County Office Buildings to bring awareness to community members to help provide assistance to veterans.

b). The October Statistical Report was distributed. 57 total number of calls received this month re: Veteran related concerns. 22 total office visits from Veterans, 2 home visits, and 1 veteran outreach event.

c). Discussion was held regarding the Fall Training School for the Commissioners and for the Veterans Service Officer.

d). Commissioner Clark questioned Agent Orange presumptive diseases. He was encouraged to tell his constituents to contact Chris Jordan with questions.

e). All Veterans Day Celebration fliers were distributed. It was noted that it is the 10 Year Anniversary Rededication to the American Legion Clay-Gar Post 723 in Garnavillo, IA. Veterans Assemble at the Community Center at 10:00 a.m. Public Assembles at the Veterans Memorial in the City Park at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 11, 2023.

f). Jordan distributed a report that he prepared for the Board of Supervisors indicating the purpose, goal, and strategy of the Clayton County Veterans Affairs office. The report included the demographics, team members, VA Count for the FY22 and FY23 years. The report also provided the Live VA Awards for Clayton County for the FY22 and FY23 years.

VII. Review and approval of Claims.

VIII. Confirmation of Next Meeting. Next meeting will be on December 11 at 7:30 a.m.

IX. Adjourn. Eilers made the motion to adjourn, Clark seconded the motion; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Geralyn Torkelson

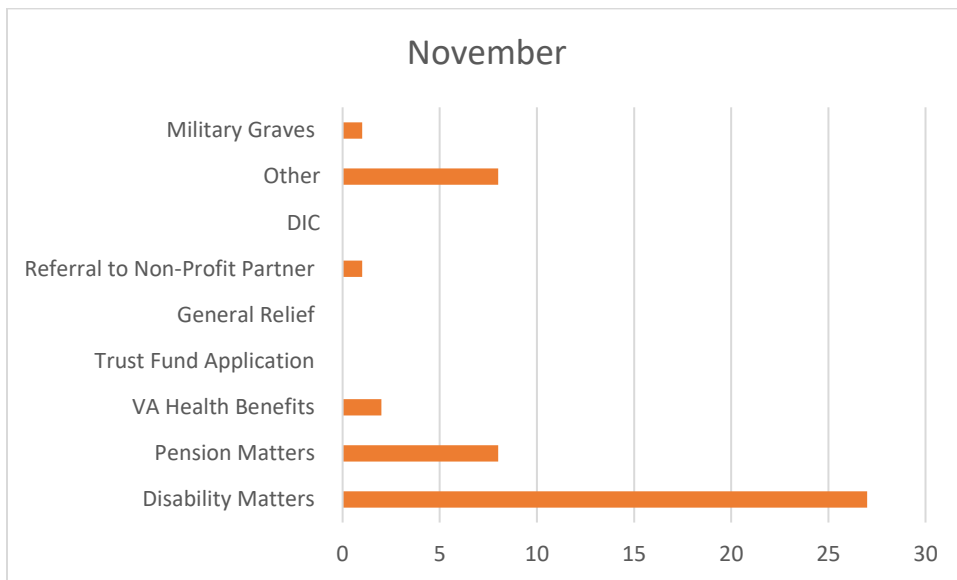
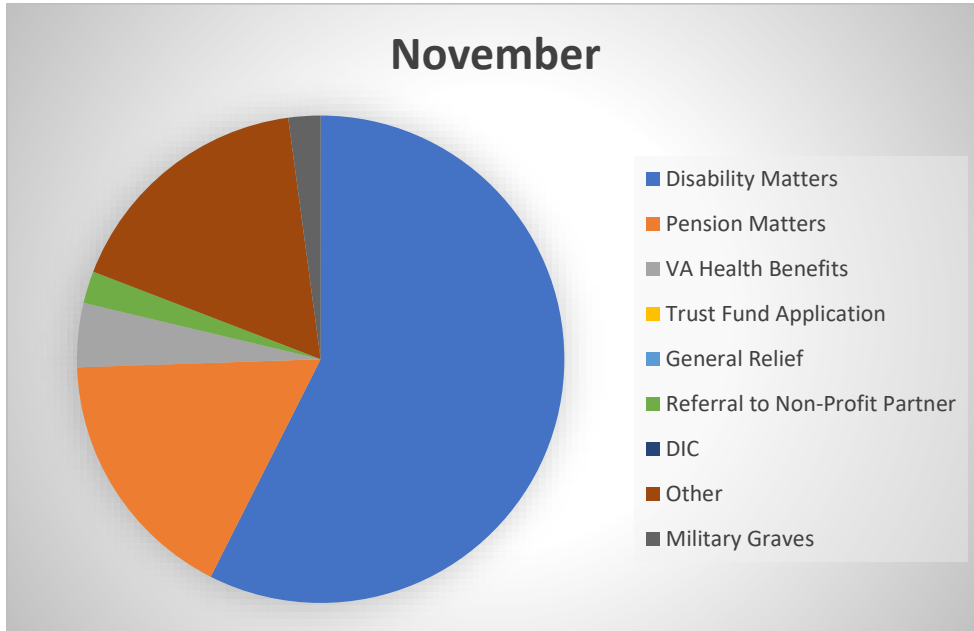
November Report

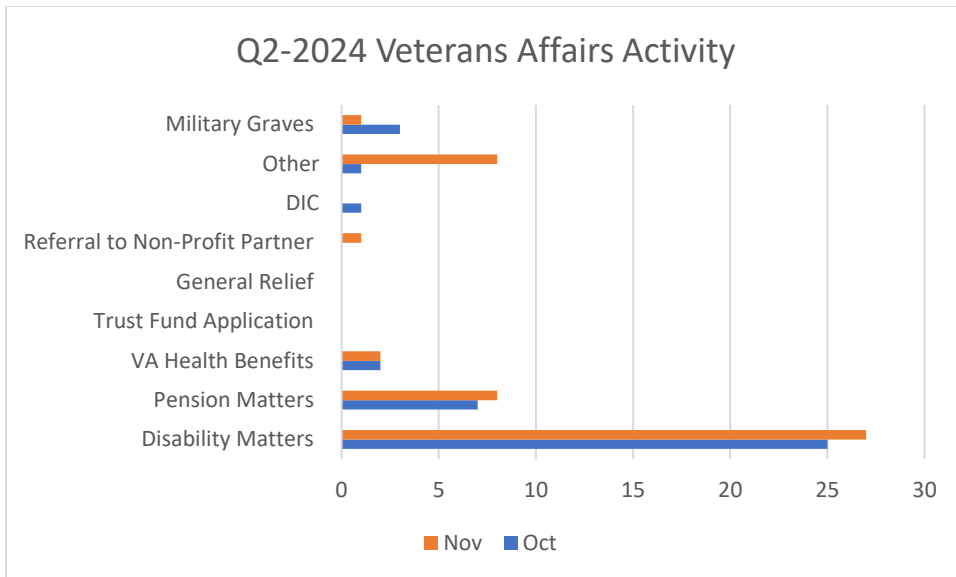
55 total number of calls received this month re: Veteran related concerns.

21 total office visits from Veterans.

2 home visits

1 Outreach events





VA & State Updates:

VA Expands List of Conditions to Include Parkinson's disease under Camp Lejeune Family Member Program.

The VA announced that family members of veterans who were exposed to contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune from August 1, 1953, to December 31, 1987, are now eligible to apply for reimbursement of health care costs for treatment associated with Parkinson's disease. Note that this health care reimbursement extended to family members diagnosed and treated for esophageal cancer, lung cancer, breast cancer, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, leukemia, multiple myeloma, renal toxicity, miscarriage, hepatic steatosis, female infertility, myelodysplastic syndromes, scleroderma, neurobehavioral effects, and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Additionally, Veteran who served at Camp Lejeune are eligible for no-cost Parkinson's health care. Applications may be submitted online or on paper (VA Form 10-10068). For family members, the VA will need evidence to the applicants are Veteran's dependent and were a resident at Camp Lejeune for at least a 30-day period. Proof of residents may include military orders, base housing records, utilities bills, pay stubs, tax forms or similar documents.

VA Health Care of Extended to all WWII Veterans

All WWII Veterans are now eligible for no-cos VA inpatient and outpatient health care regardless of this financial status or length of service. WWII Veterans will not have to pay co-pays (inpatient/outpatient), enrollment fees or monthly premiums. Veterans may keep their private provider, Medicare and most other insurance to meet their health needs. Note that Veterans may have to pay modest amounts of medications, urgent care or long-term care services. Veterans would have to enroll, as the VA cannot automatically enroll Veterans. Therefore, the VA will be contacting Veterans by phone and mail to encourage them to apply.

Suicide Rates for Veterans Increased in 2021

Suicide rates among Veterans rose by 1.8% in 2021, a slight increase from 2020. It's estimated that 17.5 Veterans died every day by suicide in 2021 (that is approximately 71,000 Veterans deaths from 2011-2021). Officials believe that increase can be attributed to pandemic stress, higher levels in gun ownership (most suicide deaths involved a firearm) and VA's struggle to gain headway with outreach and emergency response efforts (note some confusions with launch of 988 program). VA research indicates that Veterans are twice as likely as their civilian peers to die by suicide.