



COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mandy Coates – Director

Bill Blanchard – Chairperson, Larry Hingtgen - Secretary

Jacob Korbakes, Tera Denial, Nathan Rose

Formal Meeting Minutes

Health and Human Services Building

855 South Dubuque Street, Iowa City, IA 52240

Conference Room 203 B

August 18, 2026

Meeting called to order at 17:00 by Blanchard

Present: Bill Blanchard, Jake Korbakes, Tera Denial, Nathan Rose, and Mandy Coates

Guests: Nathan Peters, Johnson County Attorney's Office

Unless noted, all actions were taken unanimously

1. Call to order
2. Commission went around the room and introduced themselves
3. Motion by Korbakes, second by Denial to approve the July minutes
4. Motion by Denial, second by Korbakes to approve the July vouchers
5. FY27 budget is utilized at 8.26%. Federal revenue for Johnson County from VA Compensation and Pension payments for the month of June was \$3,604,315.00. Coates attended SAH/SHA Grants training from the VBA. Coates provided outreach at the Iowa City Networking Event, Iowa City American Legion with VA Secretary Dr. Paul Laurance, Coates presented at the Yellow Ribbon Event in Cedar Rapids, Coates presented to the Iowa City Veterans Hospital Visually Impaired Support Group. Coates presented the commission with the federal claim forms submitted for the month and phone call data. Coates informed Commission of Memorial landscaping upgrades and panel switch on kiosk. Coates informed Commission regarding a potential appeal issue from a Veteran for Temporary Emergency Assistance and reported a Veteran who was upset that I didn't know the answer to her question on the spot on the phone.
6. The Johnson County Commission of Veterans Affairs Fund Compliance Report was provided to the Commission and sections were explained
7. Motion by Rose, second by Korbakes to follow and adopt Resolution No. 07-09-26-01 set by the Board of Supervisors designating official public notice posting locations for meetings of the Board of Supervisors and other county governmental bodies.
8. Coates informed Commission of complaints from disabled Veterans and dependents regarding no signage at the Administration building that would direct them to the Veterans Affairs Office. The buildings are not very well marked on the outside and many people end up in the wrong building. Coates attempted to provide several solutions for signage areas that would direct people within a reasonable point of entry. Many of these suggestions were not feasible to the Special Projects Manager. One last request was made to place a sign in the vestibule of the Administration building with all the departments listed at the Health and Human Service Building and inform them where it is located. I have not received word of when these will be placed.

9. Iowa Code § 35B.17 Maintenance of Graves was repealed by 2024 Acts, Chapter 1047, § 11. This budget line was not placed on the Veterans Affairs Budget in the past and as of FY27 it was changed to our budget. Due to the state mandate no longer existing and the authority now falling under the Veterans Affairs budget a policy was created and reviewed by the Commission. The Commission has adopted the policy for payment of Care of Graves which will be provided to the Board of Supervisors. Motion to adopt and enact the policy was made by Rose, second by Korbakes.
10. Motion by Korbakes, second by Denial to enact and adopt the application and policy regarding issuance of county funded grave markers
11. Bill Blanchard has been reelected as Chairperson and Larry Hingtgen has been reappointed as Secretary. Motion by Korbakes, second by Denial.
12. Veterans Guardian legal issues were presented along with conversation regarding other unaccredited entities charging unjust and sometimes illegal amounts of money to Veterans and dependents for services that are provided for free from accredited Veteran Service Officers.
13. Korbakes informed the Commission of Veterans being referred by VSOs to the VA Hospital requesting a specific diagnosis to obtain benefits.
14. Next meeting will be held on September 15, 2026 at 17:00

Blanchard adjourned the meeting at 17:40

Recorded by Mandy Coates

These minutes will be presented to the Secretary for approval during our September 2026 meeting.

9/15/2026

Date:

Signature on File

Secretary or Alternate