



# AGENDA

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF MACON COUNTY, INC.

26 APRIL 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG
3. PRAYER – CHAPLAIN
4. ROLL CALL OF DELEGATES
5. RECOGNIZE NEW COMMISSION MEMBERS OR GUESTS:
  - A) BLAIN SMITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MACON COUNTY COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA)
6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR 26 JANUARY 2023 MEETING
7. SUPERINTENDENTS/TREASURERS REPORTS
8. POST DELEGATES REPORTS & ACTIVITIES
9. HONOR GUARD REPORT
10. OLD BUSINESS:
11. NEW BUSINESS:
  - A) ELECTION OF OFFICERS
  - ~~B) ELECTION OF SUPERINTENDENT~~
  - ~~C) ADVANCE ON FOLLOWING YEAR VACATION TIME FOR EMPLOYEES~~



# AGENDA

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF MACON COUNTY, INC.

*26 APRIL 2023*

## 12. GOOD OF ORGANIZATION /ANNOUNCEMENTS

A) PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION-TERMINOLOGY IN LAW BEING USED TO DISQUALIFY VETERANS FROM EXEMPTION IN ONE COUNTY SO FAR.

## 13. PRAYER – CHAPLAIN

## 14. CLOSED SESSION: IF NEEDED

## 15. ADJOURNMENT

# CASA Pre-Service Training

MAY 4TH - JUNE 8TH!



**Become a CASA Advocate.**

**Complete an online application at  
[maconcountycasa.org/volunteer](http://maconcountycasa.org/volunteer)  
or call 217-428-8424 for more information.**

*\*Just 6 classes: May 4, 11, 18, 25, June 1, 8*



MEETING MINUTES – 01/25/2023  
VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF MACON COUNTY, INC.

1. CALLED TO ORDER – AT 17:30 ON 25JAN2023
2. PLEDGE TO FLAG LED BY GREG COLLINS
3. ROLL CALL – QUORUM PRESENT 7 POST

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

PRESIDENT BILL HANES  
VICE PRESIDENT RICHARD CAIRNS  
SERGEANT-AT-ARM IVERY CHAMBLISS  
CHAPLAIN BOB RUTHERFORD  
SUPERINTENDENT GREG COLLINS

POST IN ATTENDANCE

AL #72 JIM GOULD  
AL #105 WILLIAM HANES  
AL #660 JAMES KEITH  
AL #1972 CHARLES LOURY  
VFW# 99 RICHARD CAIRNS  
VFW #730 IVERY CHAMBLISS  
MCL #799 BOB KIMMONS

4. RECOGNIZE NEW COMMISSION MEMBERS OR GUESTS

BRUCE BALTIMORE HOUSING “ONE LEVEL”  
JOHN RUSSEL HOUSING “ONE LEVEL”

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 26 OCTOBER 2022

MOTION CHARLES LOURY 2<sup>ND</sup> BOB RUTHERFORD ALL PRESENT  
APPROVED

6. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT / TREASURER REPORT

A) REPORT ATTACHED

8. POST DELEGATES REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

A) AMERICAN LEGION POST 660 WORK TO RENAME POST OFFICE AFTER JEREMY RIDLEN WHO WAS KIA IN IRAQ POST OFFICE DEDICATION COMPLETED. MANY FAMILY, FRIENDS, CONGRESSMAN RODNEY DAVIS AS WELL AS SEVERAL VETERANS WERE IN ATTENDANCE.

9. HONOR GUARD REPORT

133 FUNERALS 2022 AND OVER 3641 SINCE CONCEPTION IN 1995

67 ARMY	WWII	16
33 NAVY	KOREA	43
7 MARINES	VIETNAM	57
19 AIRFORCE	COLD WAR	16
1 ARMY AIR CORE	DESERT STORM	1
1 MERCHANT MARINE		
2 COAST GUARD		
3 ARMY NATIONAL GUARD		

CONDUCTED 2 IN ONE DAY 29 TIMES AND 3 IN ONE DAY ONCE.  
FIRED 2793 ROUNDS ON FUNERALS, PATRIOTIC SERVICES ON  
MEMORIAL DAY AND OTHER PATRIOTIC EVENTS.

10. OLD BUSINESS

A) OFFICE WILL BE TEMPORARILY RELOCATED INSIDE COUNTY BLDG.  
DATE CURRENTLY UNKNOWN

B) STAFFING UPDATES

C) SPECIAL TRIPS WITH VAN INCREASING

D) PROPERTY TAX BENEFITS EXTENDED TO SPOUSES PREVIOUSLY  
INELIGIBLE, AND 100 PERCENT PERMANENT AND TOTAL VETERANS  
WILL NOT NEED TO REAPPLY

F) HOUSE BILL 5184 EFFECTIVE JAN 1, 2023

G) HOUSE BILL 2369 TRAILER BILL STILL HAS NOT BEEN SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

H) CONTRACT FOR MARKETING

11. NEW BUSINESS

A) ELECTION OF OFFICERS SCHEDULED FOR 4-26-2023

12. PRAYER – CHAPLAIN

13. ADJOURNMENT

– MOTION JAMES KEITH 2<sup>ND</sup> CHARLES LOURY 18:46 1/25/2023

NEXT MEETING --- WEDNESDAY, 04/26/2023 RM 514 5:30 P.M.



# SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

## *JANUARY 25, 2023*

PAIGE FOSTER STARTED WITH US ON NOVEMBER 21, 2022

SHE HAS COMPLETED TWO DAYS OF IACVAC TRAINING. SHE WILL BE ATTENDING VSO TRAINING IN JUNE. PAIGE IS NOT A VETERAN BUT HER FATHER IS A MARINE AND SHE IS STILL VERY ACTIVE IN THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE. SHE IS STARTING TO PICK-UP ON THE MILITARY CODE TALK AND 3 LETTER ABBREVIATIONS. WE ARE HAPPY TO HAVE HER ABOARD. SHE BRINGS WITH HER A LOT OF POTENTIAL AND A GREAT ATTITUDE. PLEASE STOP IN AND ASK HER SOME VERY CONFUSING QUESTIONS SO WE CAN LAUGH AS SHE LEARNS.

BY-LAWS-I WILL SEND THE ENTIRE COMMISSION THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE NEW BY-LAWS. AT THE FOLLOWING MEETING WE WILL HAVE A DISCUSSION AND POTENTIALLY VOTE ON THE CHANGES. WE WILL HAVE A FULL BOARD DISCUSSION ON THEM AT THE FOLLOWING MEETING BEING THE TRAILER IS SIGNED INTO LAW.

HOUSE BILL 5184 AND COPIES OF THE TRAILER BILL - MARKED IN RED ARE CHANGES TO HB 5184. WHAT WE ARE LEFT WITH IS THIS IT STILL LEAVES THE COMMISSION WITH THE POWER TO REQUEST OUR LEVEE AS WE SEE FIT. IT WILL REQUIRE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO BE RE-ELECTED EVERY 4 YEARS AND REQUIRES THE COMMISSION TO DO A YEARLY PERFORMANCE REPORT ON THE SUPERINTENDENT. ALSO, IT WILL ALLOW FOR THE COUNTY BOARD TO APPOINT A VETERAN ONTO OUR COMMISSION IF THEY CHOOSE BUT DOES NOT GIVE THEM VOTING RIGHTS. THE VETERAN WOULD BE REQUIRED TO REPORT BACK TO THE COUNTY CHAIRMEN. (THIS MUST BE A VETERAN) I WOULD GUESS WHEN I TALK TO THE CHAIRMEN HE WILL SAY CONTINUE COMING TO COUNTY BOARD MEETINGS AND GIVE

REPORTS AND WE SHOULD BE GOOD. I HAVE NOT SPOKEN WITH THE COUNTY BOARD CHAIR ABOUT THIS YET. LASTLY, I WILL HAVE TO INCLUDE YEARLY REPORTS TO THE COUNTY BOARD CHAIR. I ALREADY ATTEND MONTHLY COUNTY BOARD MEETINGS SO THIS SHOULD NOT BE AN ISSUE. THE BILL DID GIVE US THE POWER TO SET OUR LEVEE. IT GAVE A FEW COUNTIES VAC'S HEALTHCARE AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

# VETERAN'S ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF MACON COUNTY, INC.

MACON COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING

141 SOUTH MAIN ST., ROOM 210

DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62523-1293

PHONE (217) 424-1376

FAX (217) 718-4760

WILLIAM HANES

CHAIRMAN OF COMMISSION

RICHARD CAIRNS

VICE CHAIRMAN

GREG COLLINS

SUPT. OF COMMISSION, V.S.O.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

OREN L. DAVIS POST NO. 99 - 1<sup>ST</sup> MON.

WILSON TAYLOR POST NO. 730 - 3<sup>RD</sup> TUES.

SMITH MARTIN POST NO. 5224 - 4<sup>TH</sup> TUES.

CHARLES E. LEACH POST NO. 3287 - 1<sup>ST</sup> THURS.

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

DECATUR DETACHMENT 799 - 1<sup>ST</sup> MON

MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

CHAPTER 159 - 3<sup>RD</sup> MON.

AMERICAN LEGION

CASTLE-WILLIAMS POST NO. 105 - 2<sup>ND</sup> MON.

LANCASTER-DUNN POST NO. 72 - 3<sup>RD</sup> MON.

WEILEPP-CRAMER POST NO. 660 - 1<sup>ST</sup> THURS.

ROBERTS-STARKS POST NO. 1972 - 3<sup>RD</sup> WED.

FORSYTH POST NO. 2008 - 1<sup>ST</sup> SAT.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DECATUR MACON COUNTY CHAPTER NO. 17 - 3<sup>RD</sup>

WED.

DECEMBER 26, 2022

STATE OF ILLINOIS

THE HONORABLE JB PRITZKER

207 STATE HOUSE

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706-0001

DEAR GOVERNOR PRITZKER,

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I PRESENT YOU WITH THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF MACON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 330, PART 45, SECTION 8 OF THE ILLINOIS COMPILED STATUTES.

WE PROVIDE SERVICES IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

- 1.) BENEFIT APPLICATION FILING AND CLAIMS MANAGEMENT WITH ADVOCACY
- 2.) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
- 3.) TRAVEL - DAV SHUTTLE & CHARITY OWNED TRANSIT VAN WITH 8 VOLUNTEERS

WE ARE EXCITED TO REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 OUR SERVICES HAVE IMPACTED 3,922 MACON COUNTY VETERANS AND 1,220 VETERANS IN SURROUNDING AREAS.

WE HAVE PROCESSED 270 VA COMPENSATION & PENSION CLAIMS WITH 198 ADJUDICATED, 67 OPEN AND 15 ARE READY FOR DECISION.

RESULTS:

\$715,852.58 IN RETROACTIVE BACKPAY

\$227,792.72 IN CONTINUED MONTHLY BENEFITS TO MACON COUNTY VETERANS.

\$943,645.30 TOTAL MONETARY VALUE BROUGHT INTO MACON COUNTY.





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WED.

OUR VANS COMBINED TO MAKE 212 TRIPS AND CARRIED 416 RIDERS TO VA ILLIANA HOSPITAL IN DANVILLE ALONG WITH OTHER VARIOUS LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT ILLINOIS AND MISSOURI TRAVELING OVER 41,000 MILES.

MACON COUNTY VAC HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING:

- 32 GOVERNMENT MARKER APPLICATIONS
- 271 PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS PTAX FORMS COMPLETED
- 37 CHAMP VA ENROLLMENTS
- 27 BURIAL BENEFITS
- 134 VETERANS ENROLLED INTO VA HEALTHCARE.

WE HAVE DISTRIBUTED \$11,618.56 IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. WE HAVE GIVEN \$6,100 OUT IN HYGIENE AND FOOD VOUCHERS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR COUNTY'S VETERANS. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR CONCERNS.

SEMPER FI,



GREG COLLINS

SUPERINTENDENT





# VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

To go to bills please click on Links

Click Here  
To  
Take Action

**The Department of Illinois VFW would like all Illinois supporters of Veterans to complete Witness slips before Thursday April 27 for 5 items. A witness slip takes 30 seconds to complete and lets Illinois state Senators and Representatives know what we support and what we oppose. The 5 items are:**

**SR0066** Atomic Veterans Day" to honor veterans exposed to atomic bomb testing; (we support this)

**For a complete explanation of the bill, click here** <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=112&GA=103&DocTypeld=SR&DocNum=66&GAID=17&LegID=146425&SpecSess=&Session=>

**HB0925** Military Service-Tech" outlines how a Veteran Service Organization can become State Chartered and the benefit that comes from that; (we support this).

**For a complete explanation of the bill, click here** <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=112&GA=103&DocTypeld=HB&DocNum=0925&GAID=17&LegID=142800&SpecSess=&Session=>

**HB2500** HB2500 "Animal Adoption – Fee Waiver" specifies how and from where the adoption fee for a dog or cat can be waived for a veteran; (we support this)

**For a complete explanation of the the bill, click here** <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=112&GA=103&DocTypeld=HB&DocNum=2500&GAID=17&LegID=147586&SpecSess=&Session=>

**HB2856** "Vital Records—Veteran Death" proposes that a veteran's death certificate may include branch, period of service and whether a service-related injury contributed to cause of death; (we support this)

<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=112&GA=103&DocTypeld=HB&DocNum=2856&GAID=17&LegID=147987&SpecSess=&Session=>  
**For a complete explanation of the the bill, click here**

**HB3295** "DFPR – Military Fee Waiver" proposal to amend Professional Regulation Law provisions on expedited licensure to waive certain fees for service members or spouses; (we support this)

**For a complete explanation of the the bill, click here** <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=112&GA=103&DocTypeld=HB&DocNum=3295&GAID=17&LegID=148452&SpecSess=&Session=>

## **Witness Slip Tips:**

- **Section II. Representation – enter "Self"**
- **Section III. Position – click "Proponent"**
- **Section IV. Testimony – click "Record of Appearance Only"**
- **When finished, click-on "Create(Slip)" on the bottom right**

**You will then receive an email confirmation that you submitted a witness slip**

**Please share this call to action; the more supporters completing witness slips the better.**

## **NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.®**

[www.vfwil.org](http://www.vfwil.org)



# SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF MACON COUNTY, INC.

26 APRIL 2023

STALEY CREDIT UNION ACCOUNT-

CHECKING \$60,153.38 SAVINGS \$25.00

TREASURERS CD - \$506,202.20 +\$6,202.20

DAV VAN: 49 TRIPS CARRIED 101 PASSENGERS TRIPS TRAVELED 8820 MILES

VAC VAN: 44 TRIPS 28 LOCAL

NEW DRIVERS - JIM DICK & TOMMY SCROGGINS

## 2023 CLAIMS REPRESENTATION - NACVSO PACT ACT

- ✓ 221 CLAIMS OPENED/SETTLED.
- ✓ \$441,808.90 IN BACKPAY FY 2023
- ✓ \$814,795.08 IN NEW YEARLY BENEFITS FY 2023
- ✓ \$1,256,603.08 TOTAL BROUGHT INTO MACON COUNTY FY 2023

## NEW BENEFITS & INFO:

1. VAC COUNTY EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE - \$4624.14 FY 2023
2. HYGIENE & FUEL GIFT CARDS \$2800.24 FY 2023
3. VOLUNTEERS - IF YOU HAVE ANYONE AT YOUR POSTS THAT IS ASKING TO GIVE BACK? WE DO HAVE A VOLUNTEER OPENING FOR 2 TO 3 DAYS A WEEK ANSWERING PHONES.
4. LAW CHANGE- TWO MAIN CHANGES IN LAW - 1 -THE COUNTY BOARD IS ALLOWED TO SIT A VETERAN ON THE COMMISSION AS A REPRESENTATIVE BUT SAID VETERAN WOULD NOT HAVE A VOTE. BEING OUR MEETINGS ARE OPEN IT REALLY DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING FOR US. SECOND, THE SUPERINTENDENT MUST BE RE-ELECTED EVERY FOUR YEARS.
5. NEW OFFICE - IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY STOPPED AND SEEN THE NEW OFFICE MACON COUNTY RENOVATED AND DID AN AMAZING JOB ON THE NEW OFFICE. WE ARE TRULY BLESSED. WE THANK MACON COUNTY FOR THE MUCH-NEEDED CHANGES.

Last year, over 500 children in Macon County were involved in the juvenile court system. These children were removed from their homes because their guardians were unable or unwilling to provide a safe and protective environment for them. These abused, neglected, or abandoned children now face an uncertain future. Many strangers have entered their lives: police, social workers, physicians, foster parents, therapists, and lawyers, among others. If this child is fortunate, a CASA volunteer has also been assigned to the case and will become a part of his or her life.

CASAs are **Court Appointed Special Advocates**. They are volunteers who care about the community's children. CASAs are thoroughly trained to watch over and advocate for foster children. Appointed by the judge, CASAs work solely on behalf of the best interests of the child. They create a consistent relationship with the child, offering stability, friendship, connections to resources as well as helping the child to rebuild a sense of trust in adults. Advocates see the children once or twice a month at visits and report back to the judge as an extra set of eyes and ears on the case. CASA advocates are dedicated to their specific cases until they are closed and the child is placed in a safe, permanent home.



## Become a CASA Volunteer

### Advocate training topics:

- The Juvenile Court Process
- Cultural Competency
- Investigating & Interviewing
- Community Resources for Children & Families

### Qualifications to become a CASA advocate:

- A desire to help children
- Age 21 or older
- Pass a criminal background check
- Provide 3 personal references
- Give up to 10 hours per month of time
- No legal or social work background required



If you are interested in learning more about becoming a CASA volunteer call: 217-428-8424 or go to [www.maconcountycasa.org](http://www.maconcountycasa.org) to complete a volunteer application.

**I am for the child™**

Macon County CASA is a non-profit service agency dedicated to providing a voice in court for abused and neglected children. Volunteers are trained to speak on behalf of the child to give them the best possible chance at a hopeful future.

### CASA by the numbers:

**6 months** = CASA helps to close cases 6 months faster when assigned to a case.

**2 years** = The average child's case is open for just under 2 years in Macon County.

**6 weeks** = CASA volunteers go through a 6 week training in order to be sworn in as a court appointed special advocate.

**160** = Over 160 current Macon County CASA volunteer advocates.





**Macon County CASA  
needs your support**

**Please consider giving a tax  
deductible donation today!**

**Macon County CASA**

141 S. Main Street  
Suite 722

Decatur, IL 62523  
217-428-8424 office  
217-428-8423 fax

[www.maconcountycasa.org](http://www.maconcountycasa.org)

**Macon County  
CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates FOR CHILDREN

**Macon County CASA  
Mission Statement:**

*"To provide court appointed volunteers to  
advocate for the abused, neglected and/  
or dependent children who are involved in  
the Macon County juvenile court system.  
It shall further be the purpose of this  
corporation to educate the community  
regarding its responsibility for children  
who have been abused or neglected and  
found to be dependent."*



The Macon County CASA program is  
funded in part through United Way  
of Decatur and Mid-Illinois.

Macon County CASA is an equal  
opportunity employer.



**CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN