



Board Meeting Minutes

11 June 2025

I. **Call to Order:** Dale Ellenburg called the board meeting of the Veterans' Trust Fund of SC (Fund) to order at 1300. (This was an MS Teams and in-person meeting.)

II. **Attendance:**

- A. Present: Dale Ellenburg, Melvin Poole, Jimmy Hawk, Shawn Pinkston, David Finley, Stephen Jones, Nick Messenburg, Dr. Ada Stewart, Dr. Nikki Wooten Secretary McCaffrey
- B. Absent: Nancy Dunn
- C. SCDVA Support Staff: Joseph McLamb, Chief of Staff; Bobby Patterson, CFO; Colleen Clark, Office of General Counsel; Brandon Wilson, Office of Public Information

III. **Minutes:** Minutes from the 12 March 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved.

IV. **Executive Director Update**

A. **Opening Comments:**

- Secretary McCaffrey introduced new board member Lowell Koppert:
 - Confirmed two weeks ago.
 - Out of Aiken County
 - Army Special Forces 199-2007
 - State Department: overseas, high threat
 - Veteran Engagement Council

B. **Board of Trustees Configuration**

- SCDVA will be assisting the Governor's Office in bringing trust Fund into compliant with the law (reviewed "Board of Trustee Configuration" slide?)
- Have looked at Congressionally Chartered Veteran Service Organizations
- 24 rural counties in South Carolina
- Currently have two Veteran Service Organization representatives: Jim Hawk representing the American Legion, Dalen Ellenburg representing MOAA
- Over 50% of the current board are Veterans
- There are no County Veterans Affairs Officers at this time; two are required.
- There are no rural county representatives.

- Multiple representatives from one county are not allowed.
- To bring the board into alignment with the law will also require a reduction in the current number of members on the board.
- Secretary McCaffrey asks that if a board member is no longer able or willing to serve, to let him or TerryLynn know.
- Questions:
 - Shawn Pinkston clarified that he lives in Berkeley County.
 - Dr. Wooten asked if there would be term limits as well. She explained that several members were appointed in 2022, and that some members terms would expire in 2025 if their terms were 3 or 4 years. This would help bring the board into compliance. Secretary McCaffrey said he would look into that.

C. Recommended Changes to By-laws

- Colleen Clark made some revisions to the by-laws in December 2023.
- The following changes were suggested:
 - Changing the Parliamentarian to a staff role
 - Executive Committee would consist of the current chairman, past chairman, and one committee director
 - By-laws Committee would be an SCDVA staff role
 - Permanent Committees would be Finance, Fundraising, and Investment
 - Grant awards are now determined once a year, could increase to twice a year. This would be based on feedback from board members.
 - Current by-laws require a 30-day notification for approval to changes; would two weeks (15 days) would be better to come back with draft language?
- a. Grant awards
 - Board members discussed the timeline for grants: yearly or biannually
 - Mr. Hawk explained that grant awards were done quarterly, then went to twice a year, and finally to annually. This was so the board had more money to award at one time – Funds available for disbursement were limited by law.
- b. Motion:
 - Mr. Mesenburg introduced a motion to have Ms. Clark update the by-laws and draft two versions of the by-laws: one with annual grant awards and one bi-annual. These are to be sent to the board members for review, and to be prepared to discuss at the September meeting. Seconded by Messrs. Poole and Koppert. Motion was passed unanimously.

D. Election Recommendation

- a. Secretary McCaffrey recommended that the Board not proceed with changes to leadership at this time. The Board could have an election in September.
- b. Mr. Ellenburg suggested the Board continue with the Secretary's recommendation to wait until September. Mr. Hawk introduced this as a motion, seconded by Mr. Koppert, and passed unanimously.

E. Executive Session

A. Unfinished Business

Per Mr. Ellenburg, there is no unfinished business on record.

B. New Business

- Mr. Finley provided the following finance report.
 - As of 02/02/2025, monies had not been received by Raymond James. However, the balances from the Treasurer's Update:
 1. Truist Bank Accounts \$252,285.74
 - Truist Investment Services \$1,566,429.29.*
 - 2. The SCDVA Investment Policy was distributed and changes made. Updated version will be sent to TerryLynn and to Ms. Jeannie Gravelle, VP, Financial Adviser with Raymond James Investments.

*As of 02/02/2025 Raymond James Investments are scheduled to receive \$1,566,429.29 (full account in cash).

- Mr. Ellenburg suggested three permanent committees:
 - Finance
 - Fundraising
 - Marketing

- F. Secretary McCaffrey informed the Board that the Trust Fund has its own donation link on its website and donations can be made by credit card.
- Mr. Koppert said it was the first that that pops up on the website
 - Mr. Ellenburg reminded the Board they are responsible for publicizing and advertising the Trust Fund. On 28 May, he attended a Joint Veteran Council in Spartanburg and spoke about the Trust Fund. He shared information about what the Trust Fund does and about its website

G. American Heroes Bingo

- Mr. Hawk said the American Legion has been receiving calls about this and asked SCDVA about it.
- Secretary McCaffrey explained it was introduced this session, passed the House, but was still in the Senate Finance Committee. The legislation would die if not passed this next session.
 - If passed, it would allow South Carolina to have electronic bingo.
 - The legislation provides for some of the profits to be distributed to non-profits, including the Trust Fund.
- Per Mr. Hawk, the American Legion has been receiving calls from promoters, what percentage would a Veteran Service Organization receive? Secretary McCaffrey said he would try to find out.
- If passed, this would create a stream of revenue, but no idea how much.
- Ms. Clark explained, if passed, this would fall under the Department of Revenue.

H. Next meeting and Adjournment:


- The next meeting the Trust Fund will be 10 September 2025 at 1300 at the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs, 1800 Saint Julian Place, Suite 305, Columbia SC 29204.
- Stephen introduced a motion that the September meeting be in person, seconded by Mr. Koppert, and passed unanimously.
- Dr. Steward introduced a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. David, and passed unanimously.
- Meeting adjourned.



TerryLynn Di Chiara, Secretary



Date of Approval



Todd B. McCaffrey, Executive Director
Veterans' Trust Fund of South Carolina



Date of Approval