

**MINUTES OF THE
BI-STATE REGIONAL COMMISSION**

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 3:30 p.m.
Rock Island County Office Building
1504 Third Avenue, Third Floor County Board Room
Rock Island, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Bark – Chair; David Adams; Mike Bartels; Maria Bribiesco; Richard “Quijas” Brunk; Danny Chick; Reggie Freeman; Robert Gallagher; Ralph Heninger; Jerry Lack; Michael Limberg; Mike Matson; John Maxwell; Drue Mielke; Jeff Sorensen; William Stoermer; Rich Volkert

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kippy Breeden; Kimberly Callaway-Thompson; Michael Davis; Jean Dickson; Rick Dunn; Ashley Harris; Marshall Jones; Marcy Mendenhall; Dan McNeil; Gary Moore; Randy Moore; Jazmin Newton; Dylan Parker; Sangeetha Rayapati; Eileen Roethler; Rick Schloemer

OTHERS PRESENT: Brad Bigford, Rock Island County Veterans Assistance; Marty Larson, Bettendorf citizen

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Ahern, Denise Bulat, Sarah Grabowski, Gena McCullough

Chair Bark called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

1. Approval of the October 22, 2025 Minutes. Mr. Maxwell motioned to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2025 meeting as presented. Mr. Stoermer seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
2. Treasurer’s Report. Mayor Volkert presented the Treasurer’s Report for the month ending October 31, 2025, noting an ending total bank book balance of \$821,285.63. Mayor Volkert moved the report be accepted as written and mailed. Mr. Maxwell seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
3. Finance and Personnel Committee.
 - a. Bills. Mayor Limberg presented the bills totaling \$18,527.91, as listed on the following bills listing:

Bills List

Grants Management Systems, Inc., Annual Billing for 2025-2026	\$ 6,645.75
Rock Island County Treasurer	5,497.68
12/2025 Rent	4,841.75
12/2025 Internet Access	88.00
10/2025 Postage	436.41
10/2025 Paper	116.52
10/2025 Print Job	15.00
Blackhawk Bank & Trust VISA credit card expenses related to:	6,384.48
2 staff attending 2025 ILGISA Annual Conference	
3 staff attending NADO 2025 Annual Training Conference	

2 staff attending IPTA Fall Conference 2025
1 staff attending Illinois Traffic Engineering and Safety Conference
1 staff attending Upper Mississippi River Conference
1 staff attending Iowa Bike and Trail Summit
Managers and Administrators Meeting (costs to be reimbursed by participants)
Envato subscription, Joomla tools subscription, Adobe subscription

Addendum

There were no additional bills.

Mayor Limberg moved approval of the bills totaling \$18,527.91 as presented above. Mr. Stoermer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- b. Report on Progress on Commission's FY 2025-26 Program Budget as of October 31, 2025.
Mayor Limberg explained that on Program Budget Status Report, the Commission is 33.3% through the fiscal year with 27.9% expended and within budget.
- c. Contracts/Grants for Consideration. There were no contracts or grants for consideration.
4. Rock Island County Veterans Assistance. Mr. Bigford provided an overview of veterans benefits. He stated that the Veterans Assistance Commission of Rock Island is one of the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers accredited commissions. The Association is comprised of 36 states and two Native American Tribes with 1,863 members. Their purpose is the preparation, submission and representation of claims with Department of Veteran Affairs. They advocate on behalf of veterans and eligible family members and assist Veterans who are financially challenged for all branches of the Armed Forces including the Reserve and National Guard Veterans. The services they provide include disability claims and appeals, burial benefits, survivors and non-service connected pensions, dependent indemnity compensation, VA health care enrollment to include eligible spouses, and other VA benefit resources.

Those who can apply for VA benefits are:

- Active Duty Veterans who provided full-time duty with the Armed Forces, other than for training as an enlisted member, warrant officer, commissioned officer, service cadet or midshipman in the military academies, attendance at the prep schools for the academy, and authorized travel periods.
- Active Duty Veterans who provided full-time duty in the Armed Forces performed by a member of any Reserve Component or National Guard for training purposes, or attendance in a preparatory school of a member entering directly from the National Guard with a binding requirement of service upon disenrollment or authorized travel time.
- Inactive Duty Veterans who trained other than full-time duty for training purposes, not including study or educational training sessions for Reserves and Reserve Officers to include National Guard, or authorized travel to and from inactive duty training.

Claims for health benefits must have a connection to the service the Veteran provided called a Service Connection. This includes any injury or disease that is caused by or aggravated by active military service, or treatment of service-connected disabilities, or a diagnosis of an injury, illness, or disease during service when there is no evidence or findings a disability was a pre-existing condition. The types of Service Connections are:

- Direct service-connection: incurred or began in service
- Aggravated service-connection: the injury/disease existed prior to military service, but is now worse because of participation in service beyond natural progression
- Presumptive service-connection: diseases that are known to be caused by specific exposures while on active military service or injuries and diseases that manifest to the 10% level within a specific time frame
- Secondary service-connection: a disease or injury that is directly attributed to a condition for which the veteran is service-connected

He noted the average number of days to complete the VA Claims Process in September 2025 was 88.2 days. The most important item for Veterans to know to make a claim is not to wait to start inquiring about whether they qualify for benefits, to know that there are more benefits than just disability, to register their DD 214 with their county records department, and not to assume that there are no benefits for which they will qualify. He stated a Veteran should request a benefits review appointment with a Veteran Service Officer, and the longer a Veteran waits after departing service to make a claim, the more difficult it will be to connect any disabilities to their service.

5. Questions or Comments by Commissioners. There were no questions or comments.
6. Other Business. Ms. Bulat noted an error on the first agenda packet, and mentioned that there is a meeting December, 17, 2025.
7. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



John Maxwell
Secretary