

PATRICK F. GILL
WOODBURY COUNTY
AUDITOR & RECORDER &
COMM. OF ELECTIONS

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

2016 APR 27 AM 10 53

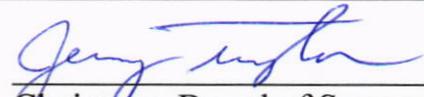
WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA

76
04/26/16

DATE: April 26, 2016

AUTHORIZATION TO INITIATE HIRING PROCESS

DEPARTMENT	POSITION	ENTRY LEVEL	APPROVED	DISAPPROVED
Veteran Affairs	Service Officer	Wage Plan comparability with AFSCME Courthouse Contract (Pay Grade 5): \$18.48/hour	X	
	*Please See Attached Memo of Explanation			



Chairman, Board of Supervisors



Woodbury County Commission of Veteran Affairs

1211 Triview Avenue
Sioux City, Iowa 51103
Phone: 712-279-6605 or 6606
Fax: 712-224-4093



Leon Koster
Chairman

Vicki DeWitt
Secretary

William Burkhart
Member

Katherine Moreno
Member

Lincoln Ryan
Member

Woodbury County
Board of Supervisors
620 Douglas Street
Sioux City, IA 51101

February 16, 2016

Re: New CVSO

Dear Supervisors:

We, the Woodbury County Commission of Veteran Affairs, were very pleased to have the Supervisors approve a desperately needed County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO). We believe this position will work toward our quest to provide the best service possible to Woodbury County Veterans. This position was requested due to ever increasing foot traffic, changes in office requirements and changes in available benefits. The CVSO will help the current staff to improve effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the potential to reach more Veterans and to improve their lives by obtaining Veterans benefits.

The need for a third CVSO was considered in the planning of our office, but became more apparent upon doing business in the TriView location. Word of mouth, easier access and better visibility, has enabled many more Woodbury County Veterans to inquire and to utilize our services. The TriView location is a wonderful asset to our Veterans. However, our current square footage is insufficient to continue to serve our clients, or to house another staff member. We understand there have been multiple discussions regarding 1211 Triview. We also understand that we may be required to pay rent in order to access the space needed. We request that any future discussions regarding the building would include Director Dempster. We trust her to keep us informed and involved in this process.

To ensure fulfillment of Iowa Code and to properly serve Veterans, we are expected to provide outreach and obtain continuing education, requiring staff to leave the office. With an additional Service Officer, we will provide more availability to the public, as well as direct contact with potential pensioners. We receive 35-50 new contacts per month from the Iowa Department of Veteran affairs (IDVA). These potential clients currently receive only a mailer requesting personal and financial information; response is extremely limited. One new pensioner in receipt of maximum benefit would bring over \$2000 per month into our county. The ability to serve an even larger clientele would add to the receipt of benefits by our Veterans, as a result of our efforts. [FY14 \$34,331,000/FY10 \$22,312,000 (Numbers include all VA benefits provided to Woodbury County residents)].

Our staff has worked diligently to handle an incredibly increased Federal caseload (from less than 700 clients in 2005, to 3177 current clients). The office also assists about 1000 clients with issues that do not involve entry into the Federal database (assistance, discharges, driver's license and plates, Iowa benefits, Veterans Home and others). While located in the Courthouse, we averaged 100 visitors per month. In 2010, the monthly average rose to an average of 184 visitors per month. Our current foot traffic averages 222 visitors per month, about 21% more than our first year at the new location, which was a 210% increase over the Courthouse location. The resignation of the last Service Officer was partially caused by a totally overwhelming workload. More and more Veterans are filing for pension and compensation. The need for more staff has existed for years, but is currently a necessity. The new CVSO will share the workload, ensuring Veterans are served accurately and timely, while allowing Director Dempster to fulfill her increased responsibilities, including maintaining and developing working relationships with community partners.

To allow expanded service and staff, we require the addition of an equipped private office and increased storage. We also require a place to hold Commission meetings (currently held in the shared Conference room) and a break area for staff (also currently in the shared Conference room, if available). There would also be a need for expenses for education/training, database license, etc. Again, the Commission is very grateful for the opportunity to expand our staff and improve our services. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working through any and all requirements allowing us to expand our space. We are excited for the opportunity to obtain more benefits to improve the lives of our Veterans, which will improve our local economy. Please provide us with direction and action.

Sincerely,

Leon Koster
Chairman

Vicki DeWitt
Secretary

Bill Burkhart
Member

Katherine Moreno
Member

Lincoln Ryan
Member

*Foot traffic is over 200% more than in the Courthouse and continues to grow.

Changes in office requirements include serving more newly discharged Veterans, war-era Veterans retiring and entering nursing facilities, additional training, Veterans Court and more.

Changes in benefits include more complicated claims and appeals, presumptive conditions and constantly changing policies.