

IN THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF WOOD COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
#1 COURT SQUARE, SUITE 203
PARKERSBURG WV 26101

IN RE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2013

PRESENT: WAYNE DUNN, PRESIDENT
STEPHEN GAINER, COMMISSIONER
DAVID BLAIR COUCH, COMMISSIONER

At 9:00 A.M., the County Commission of Wood County met in regular session. They signed purchase orders, invoices, orders and other correspondence during today's meeting.

The County Commission approved an Erroneous Assessment Application for Personal Property for Randy L. Curfman. (Copy attached.)

AGENDA AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

At 9:00 A.M., the County Commission met with Ron Salter and Gary Farris representing the Veterans Museum. The gentlemen requested a donation. They stated that Attorney David Huffman has agreed to match a \$5,000.00 donation with the County and City. The Commission requested the funding request be added to the next agenda and also requested they advise the Commission if the City agrees to donate.

At 9:12 A.M., Delegate Dan Poling presented Governor's Community Participation Grant awards to the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army.

At 9:26 A.M., Wood County Compliance Officer, John Reed, met with the Commission to present two abandoned and dilapidated properties at 971 Staunton Turnpike and 114 Elmwood Heights. Mark Rhodes from the County Clerk's Office was in attendance and explained that the property on Staunton Turnpike is about to go delinquent on taxes and may be sold at the upcoming tax sale lien free. He stated one option would be for the Commission to pay the overdue taxes before it goes for sale which would allow the Commission to protect their investment if they choose to take the structure down. Mr. Reed stated that he would like to post a condemnation notice on the structure. Since he has the authority to post the notice, the Commission took no action.

Regarding the property on Elmwood Heights, there appears to be a foundation problem. Mr. Reed stated he contacted the owner, Mr. Ron Newman, and he stated nobody was living in the home. He has since found out that there is a lady renting the home. It was agreed that Mr. Reed would send the owner a letter asking that he schedule an appearance before the Commission to discuss the disposition of the property.

At 10:02 A.M., Kim Coram with the Hiking, Biking and Trail Coalition met with the Commission to request the County hire her for \$2,500.00 to coordinate County-wide trails and for an additional \$300.00 she will update the County trail site. For another \$300.00 she will coordinate a program to inform people on the progress of the trails. The Commission asked that the funding consideration be moved to next Monday's agenda.

At 10:15 A.M. a discussion was held regarding the board of Review and Equalization hearing procedures that are upcoming.

At 10:45 A.M., a discussion was held regarding a requisition submitted by the Sheriff for a pickup truck. The President agreed to call the Sheriff and ask that he appear before the Commission to explain the purchase.

At 10:50 A.M., Commissioner Couch discussed various agendas throughout the State by other County Commissions.


ORDERS APPROVED AND ATTACHED TO THESE MINUTES

M/2243

Having no further scheduled appointments or business to attend to, the County Commission, upon a motion made by Stephen Gainer, seconded by David Blair Couch and passed, adjourned at 11:38 P.M.

APPROVED:

THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF WOOD COUNTY


Wayne Dunn, President


Stephen Gainer, Commissioner


David Blair Couch, Commissioner

To listen to this meeting, please refer to DVD labeled January 28, 2013.



Wood County Commission

01/28/2013
 1 Court Square, Suite 203
 Parkersburg, WV 26101

9:00 AM	DISCUSS ABANDONED & DILAPIDATED PROPERTIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 971 STAUNTON TURNPIKE - 114 ELMWOOD HEIGHTS 	JOHN REED, COMPLIANCE OFFICER
	PRESENTATION OF GRANT CERTIFICATES TO AMERICAN RED CROSS & SALVATION ARMY	DELEGATES ELLEM, POLING & AZINGER
	CONSIDER REQUEST FOR FUNDING	GARY FARRIS, VETERAN'S MUSEUM
	DISCUSS PERSONNEL	JASON WHARTON, PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
10:00 A.M.	DISCUSS HIKING, BIKING & TRAIL COALITION	KIM CORAM
	APPROVE AND SIGN MINUTES, ORDERS, PURCHASE ORDERS, INVOICES, NEW ROAD NAMES, ERRONEOUS ASSESSMENT APPLICATIONS AND ANY OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES	MARTY SEUFER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Wood County Commission

Erroneous Assessment Application

aw
 gw
 1/28/13
 70/221

Tax Type: **Supplemental**
 Tax Ticket: **80000456**
 Tax Year: **2012**

Upon the application of **CURFMAN RANDY L** whose address is **624 DUTCH CENTRAL RD ROCKPORT, WV 26169-8294** aggrieved by an erroneous assessment in **STEELE** District (07), in the County of Wood, for the **2012** tax year.

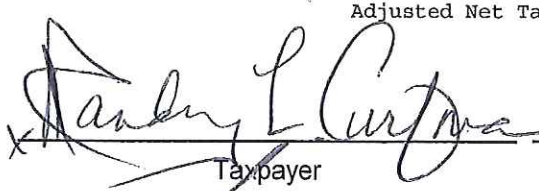
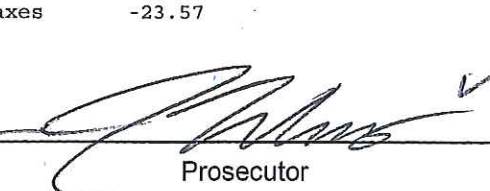
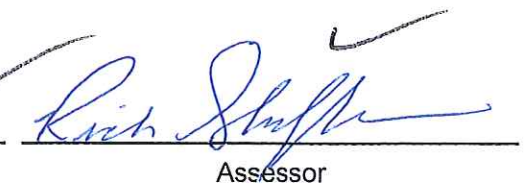



The County Commission therefore, orders that the said applicant be and hereby exonerated from the said erroneous assessment and from the payment of the taxes so assessed in and for the **2012** tax year.

If the taxes have been paid the Sheriff shall refund the same to them; or if more than a year from the time the property books were delivered to the Sheriff for the the affected tax year, the Sheriff shall allow a credit on future taxes payable.

DUE TO A TAXPAYER CLERICAL ERROR THE 1991 FORD F250 WAS REPORTED WHEN IN FACT A 1989 FORD F250 SHOULD HAVE BEEN. SEE ATTACHED.

All of which is ordered to be certified to the Auditor of the State of West virginia and the Sheriff of WOOD County

Date	Transaction Type	Class	Amount	Tax Rate	Tax Class	Net Value
07/30/2012	BILLING	3	56.84	2.191600	3	2,589
07/30/2012	REGULAR PAYMENT	3	-56.84	2.191600	3	-984
07/30/2012	REGULAR PAYMENT	3	1.42	Adjusted Net Value		1,605
07/30/2012	REGULAR PAYMENT	3	-3.42			
01/10/2013	PENDING EXONERATION	3	-21.57			
			Adjusted Net Taxes			-23.57

 Taxpayer
 Prosecutor
 Assessor
 Commissioner
 County Commission President
 Commissioner

At a regular session of the County Commission of Wood County, West Virginia, held at the Courthouse of said County, The County Commission did approve this exoneration on January 28, 2013.

RECEIVED

JAN 28 '13

RECEIVED

JAN 28 '13

County Administrator

By: Tessa Miller

Application Printed On

Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:23 pm



Veterans Affairs & Social Security

**David
Huffman**

LAW SERVICES

521 Market St., Suite 301
Parkersburg, WV 26101

304-428-6572
800-238-4237
Fax 304-428-0114

November 14, 2012

Wood County Commission
#1 Court Square, Suite 205
Parkersburg, WV 26101

Dear Wood County Commission:

Per my conversation with Mr. Couch during the Veterans Day event at the City Park on Monday 11/12/12, I proposed to donate \$5000.00 to match with the Wood County Commission to the Veterans Museum of Mid-Ohio Valley toward building funds or other needs. I spoke to Mayor Newell of Parkersburg about matching the funds as well. Please let me know if I need to do anything else in regards to this proposal. You can reach me at my law office at (304) 428-6572 extension 310. My cell phone number is (304) 210-8439.

I really appreciate all the help the Commission has given in the past and in anticipation of help in the future for the Veterans Museum. As a Veteran myself, after the battles are over; all we have left are our memories. I've been trying to do my part in behalf of the Veteran community.

Thank you,
Yours truly,

David L. Huffman, Esquire

AP: Nation/World AP: US AP: World AP: Business AP: Markets AP: Tech AP: Entertainment AP: Sports

FINAL COPY
OK TO SET TYPE
11-25-12
AE DATE

AP COVERAGE

Nov 24, 10:12 AM EST

Veteran turned advocate seeks claims change

By LAWRENCE MESSINA
Associated Press

PARKERSBURG, W.Va. (AP) -- David Huffman has helped thousands of military veterans seeking disability benefits navigate the complex, often slow and at times frustrating claims process. The Wood County lawyer can relate: he was a 19-year-old Marine in Vietnam when a booby trap blinded him.



As if getting through college and law school without sight weren't challenges enough, Huffman has begun a new quest: convincing the U.S. government to change the way it allows lawyers to handle veteran disability claims.

Huffman is targeting the policy for claims, revised in 2007, that says a veteran can hire a lawyer for a fee only after a claim has been rejected. He supports what he hopes becomes a national movement, Veterans for Full Representation, which is seeking nonprofit status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and recently launched a website. Ultimately, he hopes officials will allow fee-charging lawyers earlier in the process.

19

"I want the (Disabled American Veterans), the VFW or any of them to say, 'Why the heck would you want to pay an attorney 20 percent of your back check, when we can do it for free?' Maybe that will help them do better, to give the veteran a choice," Huffman said. "Veterans, in the long run, are better off having free choice and full representative from either an attorney or a claims representative."

Huffman has long been involved in veterans' affairs. He caught the attention of President Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s, after earning his degrees with the help of audio books, and agreed to join the new Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program. A Delaware native, Huffman was also active in such groups as Vietnam Veterans of America.

He moved to West Virginia after meeting his wife, Cheryl, in 2000 and began aiding veterans on a case-by-case, word-of-mouth basis.

Huffman now has nearly 2,000 veteran clients and estimates that he's helped several times as many in the last dozen years.

"Until 2006 or 2007, you couldn't hardly find me in the phone book," Huffman said. "They just referred each other to me, and after so many years, it just got to where in order to get the work done I had to hire people."

Groups like the Disabled American Veterans provide service officers to help veterans file benefit claims for free. While praising these organizations, Huffman questions whether they have enough staff for the avalanche of claims both from recently returned and aging veterans.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates there are more than 22 million veterans nationally. Of the 1.6 million from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, 45 percent are now seeking compensation for injuries they say

are service-related, The Associated Press recently found. That compares with 21 percent who filed such claims after the Gulf War in the early 1990s, top government officials told the AP.

Huffman also argues that these groups don't have the funding to obtain a veteran's medical records, or to arrange for an opinion from a physician or specialist. But his chief concern is the expertise of these service officers, given this complicated and evolving area of the law. He cited anecdotes from veterans and his own experience of service officers receiving just a few hours' training in a year's time, or who appeared to pre-judge a veteran for a claim involving noncombat injuries, or who see themselves more like a chaplain than a claims advocate.

"I can't say this in general, because the (veterans) I don't hear from are the ones who are happy," Huffman said. "I love the veterans' organizations, and there are claims representatives who do a good job and a lot of them get more training than they used to. But the fact that veterans do not have an alternative but them has hurt the veterans more than it helped them. I hate to say that."

Joe Violante of the Disabled American Veterans said its 250 or so national service officers must complete a 16-month process before assisting with claims, and then receive training and are tested throughout their careers. They are all also wartime-disabled veterans, said Violante, who estimated that the DAV represents more veterans than the other service groups combined.

"They know it firsthand," said Violante, a Vietnam veteran. "They've been involved on a personal level, in addition to being trained to help others get through the process."

States also help veterans. West Virginia's Department of Veterans' Assistance, recently elevated to Cabinet-level, has 16 field offices with trained service officers that provide free assistance, spokeswoman Heather Miles said.

"For this reason, the (department) is confident that West Virginia's veterans and their dependents have access to quality claims assistance under the current system," Miles said.

Veterans often have more than one condition they attribute to their military service. Those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan on average are claiming eight to nine ailments. For those who have come back since mid-2011, the average is 11 to 14. Failing to identify all of a veteran's service-related claims at the onset can mean a delay in resolving their case or insufficient benefits, Huffman said. He offered the example of a veteran with a service-related back injury who has begun suffering depression as a result, but his pending benefit request fails to make that connection.

This reality makes the policy limiting lawyer involvement unfair and counter-productive, Huffman argues.

"So, you either throw the veteran under the bus by handling just what's on appeal - that's a lot easier - or you represent him correctly, on everything," Huffman said. "I did not want to throw the veteran under the bus."

The Disabled American Veterans has opposed fee-charging lawyers, Violante said.

"We don't believe that veterans should have to pay for their earned benefits," said Violante, who is also a lawyer. "We've seen a lot of egregious cases where veterans have paid an awful lot of money (to attorneys) regardless of the level of representation."

While the DAV now accepts the policy change, its members have adopted a resolution asking Congress to cap attorneys' fees, Violante said.

"Attorneys are in the process, for better or worse," he said. "I think that we would oppose bringing them in on the initial claims process."

Huffman likens his situation to that of David versus Goliath, but believes the cause is worthy.

"I'm 65, I can retire. I don't have to do this. I get veterans benefits myself," he said. "But I like to do this, and I want to see that the veterans are taken care of. I can't imagine how many Second World War veterans died without even knowing what their benefits were."

Online:

Veterans For Full Representation: <http://vets4fullrepresentation.com>

Disabled American Veterans: <http://www.dav.org>

W.Va. Dept. of Veterans' Assistance: <http://www.veterans.wv.gov>

Follow Lawrence Messina at <http://twitter.com/lmessina>

© 2012 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed. Learn more about our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Use](#).

Wood County Commission Meeting
Held January 28, 2013

Please Print

1.	Dan Poling
2.	Lt. Michelle Henry
3.	Sharon Kesselring - American Red Cross
4.	GARY FARZIS VETERANS MUSEUM
5.	Ron Salter VETERANS MUSEUM
6.	Rick Saff
7.	Kim Coram
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	

JANUARY 28, 2013

1/28/13
70/221

IN THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF WOOD COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

IN RE: THE COUNTY COMMISSION DID HEREBY AUTHORIZE DAVID BLAIR COUCH TO SIGN THE REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT IN REGARD TO THE VICTIMS OF CRIME ADVOCATE GRANT NUMBER 12-VA-008. SAID REQUEST IS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,407.50.

ORDER

On this date, the County Commission of Wood County, upon a motion made by Stephen Gainer, seconded by David Blair Couch and made unanimous by Wayne Dunn, did hereby AUTHORIZE David Blair Couch, on behalf of the County Commission, to sign the Request for Reimbursement in regard to the Victims of Crime Advocate Grant Number 10-VA-040. The Request for Reimbursement is in the amount of two thousand four hundred seven dollars and fifty cents (\$2,407.50) for the month of December, 2012. Along with the Request for Reimbursement Form; a Financial Recap Page; Project Financial Report; Daily Time Sheets for the Victims Advocate, Tiffany Kiger; Time Sheets for the Assistant Victim Advocate, Monthly Progress Reports and the Monthly Statistical Report have been submitted.

A copy of the Request for Reimbursement is attached to this Order and should be made a part thereof.

Documentation pertaining to the Victims of Crime Advocate Grant is on file in the Office of the County Administrator.

APPROVED:

THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF WOOD COUNTY



Wayne Dunn, President



Stephen Gainer, Commissioner



David Blair Couch, Commissioner

M/2243

1/28/13
70/221

WEST VIRGINIA Division of Criminal Justice Services	Request for Reimbursement
---	----------------------------------

RECEIVED (For DCJS Use Only)	Subgrantee: Wood County Commission
	Address: One Court Square, Suite 203 Parkersburg, WV 26101
	Project #: 12-VA-008
	FEIN#: 556 000 417
	Funds are hereby requested to cover expenditures FROM: 12/1/12 TO: 12/31/12

PROJECT CASH EXPENDITURES

CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Personnel/Contractual	\$2,407.50
Travel/Training	
Space	
Other	
TOTAL	\$2,407.50

CERTIFICATION:

I certify that this report presents actual receipts and expenditures of funds for the period covered and for the total grant budget to date, made in accordance with the approved budget for this grant.

All documentation is available at our office.

BY: Wayne Dunn, President, Wood County Commission
TYPED NAME & TITLE

 1/24/13
SIGNATURE DATE

(Authorized Official or Grant Financial Officer ONLY)

DCJS USE ONLY

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL:

This request is approved in the amount of \$ _____
Initials _____ Date _____

Pursuant to the authority vested in me, I certify that this request is correct and proper for payment.

_____ Date _____ Program Accountant