

MINUTES OF THE VETERANS AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lee Tafanelli at 12:00 Noon on February 1, 2006, in Room 234-N of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Amy Deckard, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Gina Bowes, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

George Webb, Executive Director  
Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs

Others attending:

See attached list.

- Attachment 1 Briefing on the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs
- Attachment 2 Comparison of State Benefits

Chairman Tafanelli recognized Mr. George Webb from the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs (KCVA) who provided a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment 1) of KCVA's mission, administrative structure, program benefits and services, with an update of program issues and concerns. Mr. Webb also spoke on comparison of Kansas veterans' benefits with those of other states. (Attachment 2) There was discussion between committee members and Mr. Webb during the presentation.

Chairman Tafanelli indicated the Committee may reschedule another time for KCVA to appear before the Committee to provide further insight on the Joint Employment Agreement (JEA).

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m. The next meeting will be "on call of the Chair".

THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

GUEST LIST

February 1, 2006

NAME

AGENCY/COMPANY

KEN Stodgell

State VFW

Darrell Becken

" "

Jeff Lawson

" "

DARRELL Becken

" "

Charles M Yunker

Ks American Legion

Ralph Snyder

Ks. American Legion

Wayne Dale

KC VA

John Peete

KCVA

Jim Ludwig

KCVA

Tom Bruno

Bruno + Associates



**BRIEFING ON THE KANSAS  
COMMISSION ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
TO  
THE HOUSE VETERANS COMMITTEE**

SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS  
AFFAIRS

DATE 2-1-2006

ATTACHMENT /



## PURPOSE

To provide information on KCVA mission and structure as well as benefits and services for Kansas' veterans ... and their eligible dependents.



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## AGENDA

- KCVA mission and structure
  - Kansas veterans demographics
  - Veteran Services Program
  - State Approving Agency
  - State Veterans' Cemetery Program
  - Soldiers' Home and Veterans' Home Overview
  - Persian Gulf War Veterans Health Initiative
- Kansas benefits to veterans
- Joint Employment Agreement review



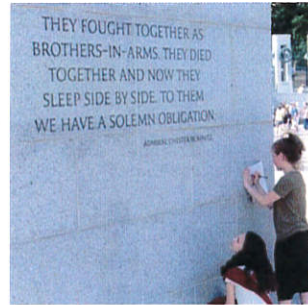
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## BLUF

Kansas has good programs available for veterans, but the Agency has struggled for funding for homes and service reps. Compared to other states, benefits to Kansas veterans are average to below-average. The Agency is gaining ground on the Fort Riley State Veteran's Cemetery.



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## WHO DO WE WORK FOR?



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## KCVA MAJOR TASKS

- Provide assistance and advice to veterans
- Serve as state approving agency
- Provide veterans' cemeteries
- Provide domiciliary and long term care to veterans



**Implied task: Be an effective and active partner with veteran service organizations throughout the state**

- *Caveat: not federal; not KS Department of Commerce*
- *Assists Governor's staff with constituent information, proclamations, and ceremonies on Memorial Day and Veterans Day*

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## HISTORY



- 1937: Service agency originally created as a Division of Social Welfare
- 1945: Approval Agency established to implement the G.I. Bill
- 1953: Commission established by K.S.A. 73-1201 through 1220
- 1976: Executive Order Number 14 attached the Kansas Commission to the Department of Human Resources
- 1986: Established as an independent agency and renamed as the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs



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# COMMISSION

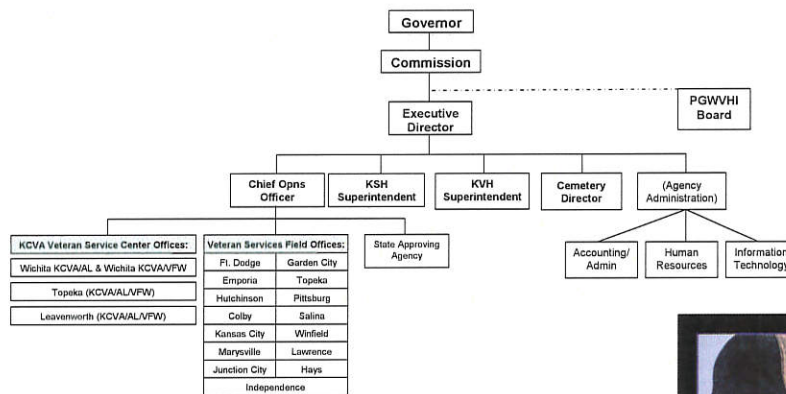


- 5 MEMBERS (ALL VETS)
  - Appointed by the Governor
  - Staggered 4-year terms
- CURRENTLY SERVING:
  - Jim Buterbaugh – Winfield
  - Jack Walker (Vice Chair)– Leavenworth
  - Jack Fowler (Chairman) – Topeka
  - Mike Neer – Overland Park
  - Ed Wiegers – Marysville

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# KCVA ORGANIZATION



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## KANSAS VETERANS\*

• Gulf War	35,000
• Vietnam	78,000
• Korean Conflict	29,000
• World War II	45,000
• World War I	1
• Peacetime	70,000



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• Kansas veterans 257,001

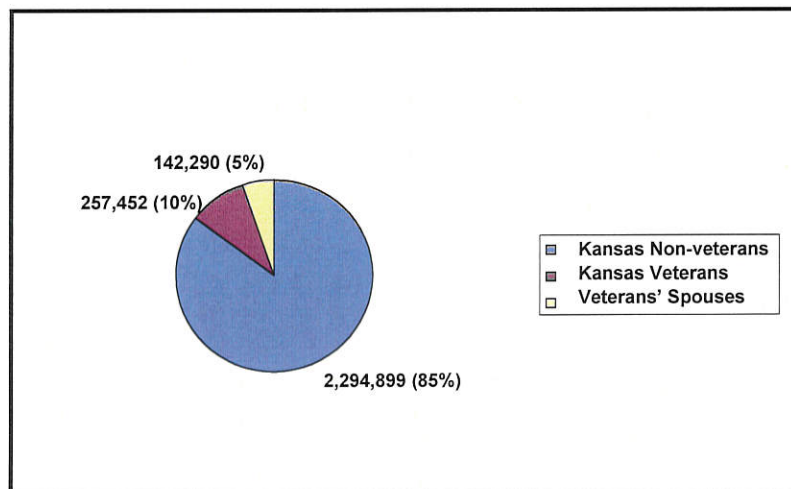
\*Per 2000 census.

Does not include ongoing Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom

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## VETERANS AS A PERCENTAGE OF KANSAS POPULATION



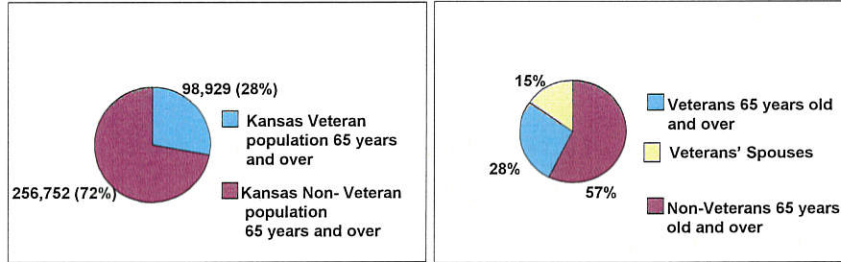
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# KANSAS VETERAN DEMOGRAPHICS

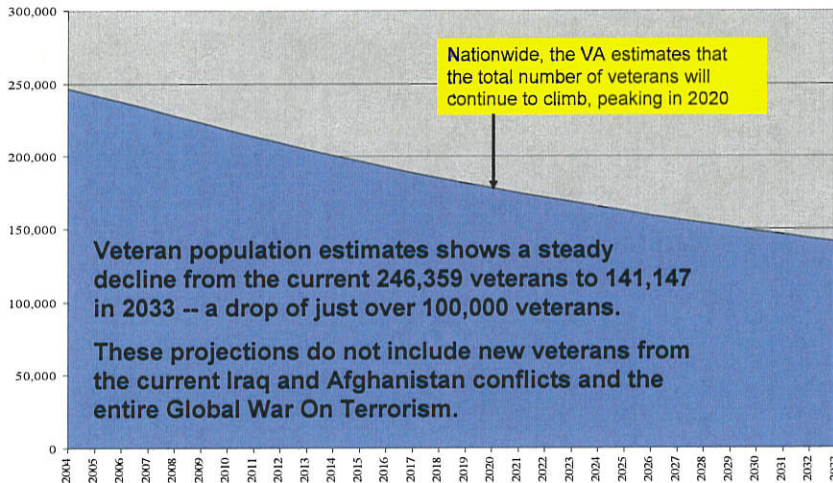
## Kansas Population 65 Years and Over



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## NUMBER OF VETERANS IN KANSAS (PROJECTED)



The current estimate and projection of the veteran population is contained in VetPop2004 Ver 1.0 released by OACT in April 2005.

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## VETERAN SERVICES MISSION

The Veteran Services component of the KCVA is to obtain U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) and state benefits through services and assistance in which the Kansas veteran receives information, advice, direction, medical care, benefits, social support, and superior education and training programs.



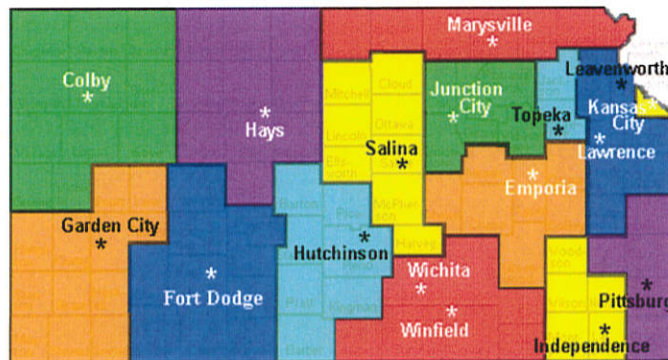
*Wayne Bolig (sp?)*

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## KCVA PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO VETERANS THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF VETERAN SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES:

- 15 Field Offices (with itinerant schedules)
- 3 State Service Centers (at 3 VA medical centers with KCVA and American Legion or VFW reps)



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## **SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES RESPONSIBLE FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE ON:**

- Disability Compensation
- Non-Service Connected Disability Pension
- Death Pension - Burial Benefits
- Health Care Benefits
- CHAMPVA and CHAMPVA for Life
- TRICARE and TRICARE for Life
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Vet Centers
- Education Benefits
- Life Insurance
- Home Loan Guaranties
- State Veterans Nursing Facilities
- State Veterans Cemeteries
- Operation Recognition (High School Diploma Program)
- Requesting DD-214 (Proof of Service)
- Prescription Drug Coverage
- Filing Claims
- Appeals

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## **KCVA'S VETERAN SERVICES OFFICERS AND OFFICE ASSISTANTS**



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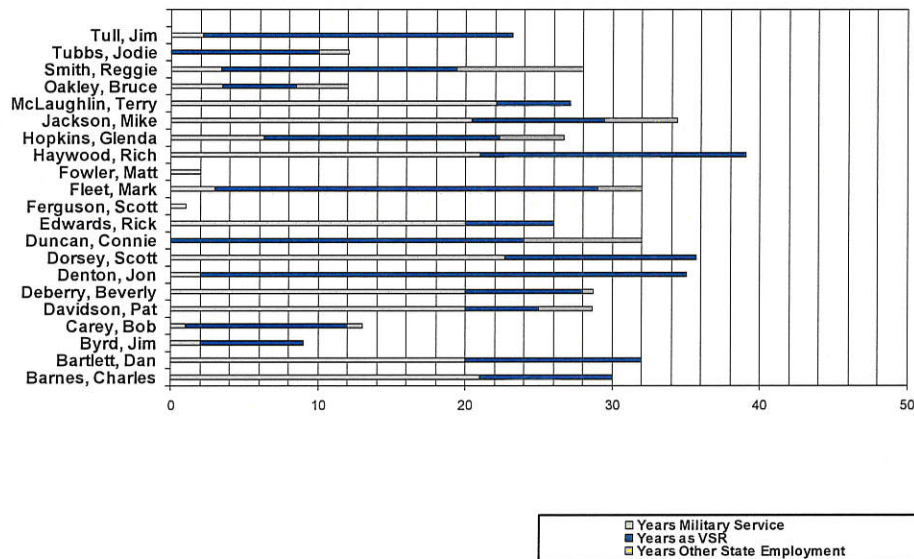
## VETERAN SERVICES PERSONNEL FILL

Veterans Services Authorized FTE	PSE III	PC	VSR II	VSR I	Office/ Admin Assistant	Total
Service Centers	0.5		2.0	10.0	7.75	20.25
Field Offices	0.5			15.0	7.25	22.75
State Approval Agency		1.0				1.0
Total Authorized FTE	1.0	1.0	2.00	25.0	15.0	44.0
Current Vacant Positions			1.0	4.0	3.00	8.00

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## KCVA VETERAN SERVICE REP EXPERIENCE



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## VETERANS BENEFITS TO KANSAS: MONETARY AWARD TOTAL FROM ALL KCVA OFFICES

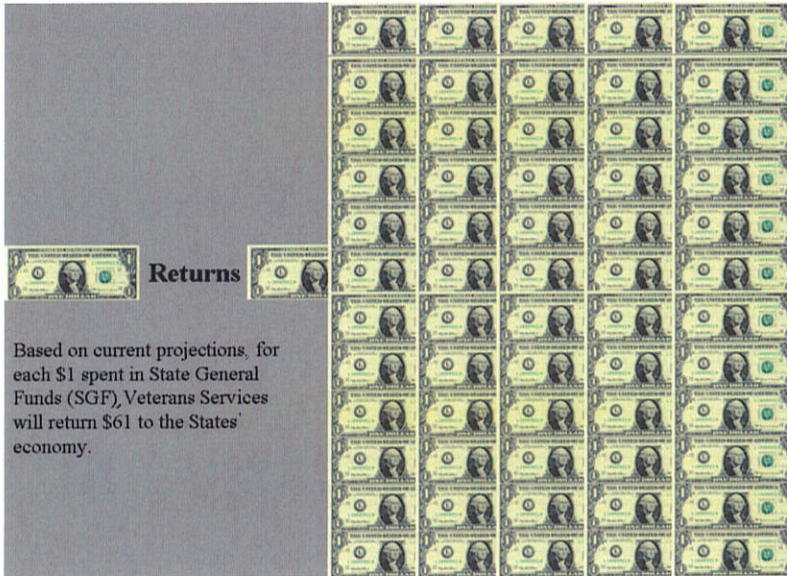
	Appropriations*	KCVA Award Total	Direct Return to KS on \$1 Spent	Fed Pmt Multiplier of 2.97x
FY2001	\$ 1,790,000	\$ 81,602,368	\$ 46	\$ 135
FY2002	\$ 1,741,000	\$ 101,550,493	\$ 58	\$ 173
FY2003	\$ 1,709,000	\$ 120,009,865	\$ 70	\$ 209
FY2004	\$ 1,678,000	\$ 119,551,188	\$ 71	\$ 212
<b>FY2005</b>	<b>\$ 1,554,000</b>	<b>\$ 103,133,543</b>	<b>\$ 66</b>	<b>\$ 197</b>
Average			\$ 62	\$ 185

\* Includes Veteran Services SGF and Agency overhead

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## VETERANS BENEFITS TO KANSAS:

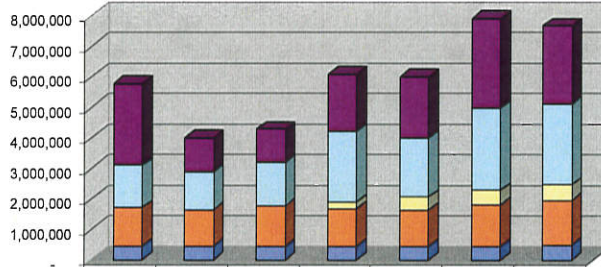


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# AGENCY BUDGET HISTORY

Multi Year Comparative for State General Funds



	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006 Gov. Est.	FY2007 Gov Rec
■ Veterans Home	2,712,558	1,106,481	1,106,693	1,874,599	1,990,374	2,938,501	2,550,859
□ Soldiers Home	1,372,101	1,238,020	1,412,781	2,321,914	1,955,750	2,688,481	2,663,203
□ Cemetery Program	-	-	-	227,281	417,832	451,281	522,073
■ Veterans Services	1,285,286	1,228,553	1,345,457	1,252,680	1,208,517	1,388,221	1,466,232
■ Administrative Services	425,000	425,000	425,000	425,000	434,389	444,700	472,449

ADMIN SEPARATED OUT IN 2005; \$425K IS INTERPOLATION

REFLECTS INITIAL BUDGET W/O SUPPLEMENTS; FY 06 HAS EXTRA PAY PERIOD

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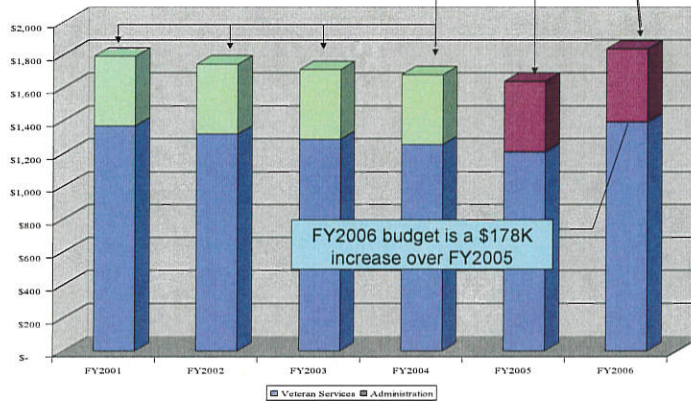


# VETERAN SERVICES BUDGET HISTORY

Administrative figures are estimated for FY2001 – 2004 at \$425K

Administrative figures for FY2005 - \$427K  
FY2006 - \$445K

Veteran Services SGF Appropriation (x \$1000)

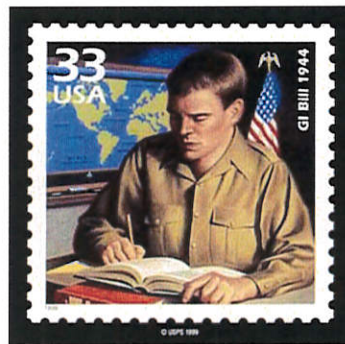


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## STATE APPROVING AGENCY

- KCVA is “SAA” for the Federal Department of Veterans’ Affairs
- Inspects, approves, and supervises courses, programs, and tests for educational and training institutions pursued by veterans and other eligible persons
- Over 160 schools and training facilities in Kansas evaluated annually
- Receives 100% federal reimbursement for costs (up to ceiling amount)
- College grad VSRs can assist ... and be reimbursed, too

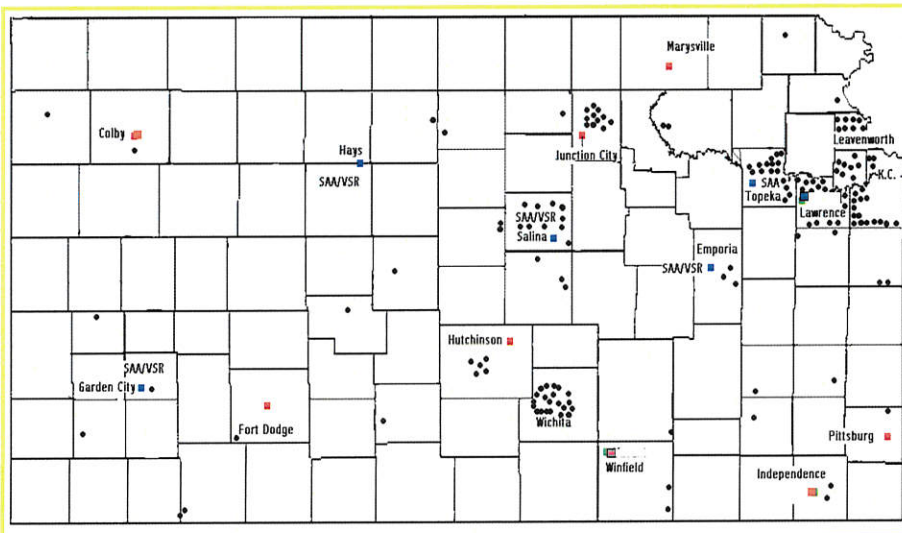


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## VSR LOCATIONS AND SAA TRAINING PROGRAMS

■ Active VSR    ■ Vacant Office    ■ Active SAA/VSR



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## THE STATE VETERANS' CEMETERY PROGRAM



- Authorized by Kansas SB 19 in 1999
- Construction fully funded by federal government
- State maintains sites in perpetuity

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## KANSAS STATE VETERANS CEMETERY PROGRAM

- SFY 2004 estimates for cost of operation holding true (w/ adjustments for COLA and fuel /water increases)
- These cemeteries are memorials to honor veterans, not just places to be buried.
- The Fort Riley State Veterans' Cemetery was first ... but now is last.
- VA Deputy Secretary Mansfield:
  - 1800 vets die every day; of 16M WW II vets, 3.9M are still alive.
  - “SVCs are more important than ever.”
  - “A national shrine that shows that we honor the service of those enshrined there.”



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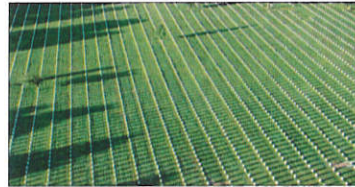




## 1966 FEDERAL CEMETERY STUDY

•“If the rate of burial in national cemeteries should continue as in Fiscal Years 1963-65, all developed grave sites will be filled by 1974 and the now undeveloped acreage would be exhausted before the year 2000.”

•“Although the eligibility for burial in federally operated cemeteries now legally extends to approximately 26 million living ex-servicemen, the de facto eligibility is limited by the restricted availability of space as well as inconsistency in the location of the cemeteries and the veteran population.”



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## KANSAS CEMETERY HISTORY

- FORT DODGE: Built in 1890
- 1999: GOV GRAVES APPROVES NEW PROGRAM
  - Improve Ft. Dodge
  - Add 3 new state veterans cemeteries
  - Fully funded by USDVA grant
- FORT DODGE SVC: Completed Nov 02
- WAKEENEY SVC: Completed Sep 04
- WINFIELD SVC: Completed Oct 04
- FT. RILEY SVC: To open 2007



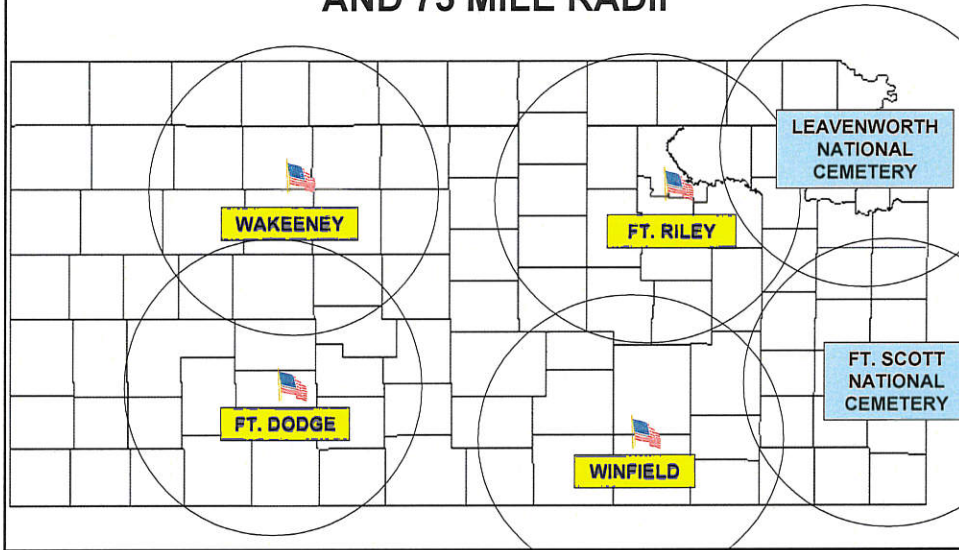
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# KANSAS STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES



## AND 75 MILE RADII



## FOUR LOCATIONS:

### •Fort Dodge:

- Opened December 2002
- 3,752 spaces

### •WaKeeney:

- Construction began June 2003
- Opened September, 2004
- 2,136 spaces

### •Winfield:

- Construction began November 2003
- Opened October, 2004
- 11,166 spaces

### •Fort Riley:

- Currently pending land transfer
- Up to 16,000 spaces

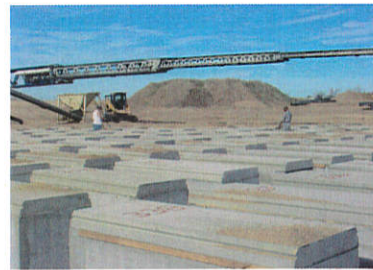


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## CONSTRUCTION COST

- Fort Dodge Cemetery  
\$3,595,000
- WaKeeney Cemetery  
\$3,329,255
- Winfield Cemetery  
\$5,864,000
- Fort Riley Cemetery  
\$7,200,000(est.)



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## KANSAS VETERANS' CEMETERY AT FORT DODGE



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## KANSAS VETERANS' CEMETERY AT WAKEENEY



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## KANSAS VETERANS' CEMETERY AT WINFIELD



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## ELIGIBILITY

- Criteria for burial in state veterans' cemeteries are the same as those for burial in national cemeteries.
- Veterans are eligible for interment if they meet the requirements for military service.
- In most cases, spouse and dependent children of eligible veterans may be interred at a state veteran cemetery.
- Any veteran convicted of a federal capital crime\* or state capital crime is not eligible for burial in the Kansas State Veteran Cemeteries.
- No residency requirement

\* Congress passed law to remove Rader's (BTK) eligibility

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## BENEFITS

- Burial space
- Grave liner
- Opening and closing of grave
- Perpetual care
- Placement of cremation remains in columbarium wall or in-ground
- Scattering garden
- Up-right granite headstone
- Burial at no cost (but request VA \$300 plot allowance for vet)



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# FT. RILEY CEMETERY SITE



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# SITE DEVELOPMENT: POTENTIAL PLAN FOR FORT RILEY STATE VETERANS CEMETERY





## CEMETERY PROGRAM PROJECTIONS FOR FY 2004 AND FY 2007

Cemetery Program Projections from FY 2004

Cemetery Program	Projected Budget FY 2004	Projected Budget FY 2005	Projected Budget FY 2006	Projected Budget FY 2007
Total FTE	6	13	13	18
FTE Filled	5.5	11.5	11.5	16.5
Salaries and related benefits	\$ 169,561.00	\$ 380,907.75	\$ 431,316.00	\$ 552,341.00
Contractual Services	\$ 6,280.00	\$ 13,405.00	\$ 15,280.00	\$ 20,280.00
Commodities	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 37,291.65	\$ 42,500.00	\$ 54,500.00
Capital Outlay	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 193,341.00</b>	<b>\$ 431,604.40</b>	<b>\$ 489,098.00</b>	<b>\$ 627,121.00</b>

← **Projected operation** In FY 2004 dollars →  
 WaKeeney Cemetery: 10 months of operation in FY 2005  
 Winfield Cemetery: 8 months of operation in FY 2005

Cemetery Program Actual & Projections from FY 2006

Cemetery Program	Actual Budget FY 2004	Actual Budget FY 2005	Projected Budget FY 2006	Projected Budget FY 2007	Projected Budget FY 2008
Total FTE	6	13	13	18	18
FTE Filled	6	11.5	11.5	16.5	16.5
Salaries and related benefits	\$ 168,367.67	\$ 343,137.84	\$ 421,356.00	\$ 476,567.00	\$ 541,274.00
Contractual Services	\$ 7,541.65	\$ 30,876.26	\$ 49,559.00	\$ 55,763.00	\$ 72,373.00
Commodities	\$ 13,272.27	\$ 43,285.92	\$ 32,081.00	\$ 36,275.00	\$ 42,050.00
Capital Outlay				\$ 13,500.00	\$ 0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 189,181.59</b>	<b>\$ 417,302.04</b>	<b>\$ 502,996.00</b>	<b>\$ 582,105.00</b>	<b>\$ 655,697.00</b>

← **Actual operation** In FY 2006 dollars →  
 WaKeeney Cemetery: 10 months of operation in FY 2005  
 Winfield Cemetery: 7 months of operation in FY 2005  
 Fort Riley Cemetery 4 months of operation in FY 2007

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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME



## FORT DODGE

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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME

### CENSUS INFORMATION COUNTIES SERVED IN FY 05

Clark	Kiowa
Comanche	Lincoln
Doniphan	Morton
Edwards	Pawnee
Ellis	Rawlins
Ellsworth	Reno
Finney	Saline
Ford	Sedgwick
Franklin	Seward
Gray	Shawnee
Harvey	Wyandotte
Kingman	

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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME HISTORY AND FUNDING

- OLD CAVALRY POST
  - Converted to Soldiers' Home in 1889
  - Home comprises 130 buildings/796 acres
- THREE INCOME STREAMS
  - SGF (34%)
  - Federal per diem (32%)
  - Fee funds (34%)
- CONSIDERING SPECIAL CARE UNIT (ALZHEIMERS)



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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME FACILITIES

- Gas Distribution
- Water Tower
- Boiler System
- Post Office
- Sutler's Store/Canteen
- Chapel
- Water Distribution
- Sewer Lift Station
- Clothing Store
- Gift Shop
- Tourist Attraction



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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME ACUITY LEVEL

- HALSEY HALL (LONG TERM CARE):
  - Total care = 32 residents
  - Moderate care = 20 residents
  - Light care = 8 residents
  - Behaviors = 32 residents
  - Special needs = 4 residents
  - Gastro Tube feeder = 1 resident
- DOMICILIARY CARE:
  - Moderate Care = 17 residents
  - Light Care = 23 residents
  - Behaviors = 19 residents

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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME



	<u>Filled</u>	<u>Max Occupancy</u>
<b>Nursing Bed</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Domiciliary</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Cottages</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>275</b>

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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME STATUTORY AUTHORITY

- Basic requirements and Commission authority are contained in K.S.A. 76-1908 **Persons eligible for admission; application; discharges, hearing; priorities for admission.** (a) The following, subject to the rules and regulations that may be adopted by the Kansas commission on veterans affairs for the management and government of the Kansas soldiers' home shall be eligible to admission to the Kansas soldiers' home:
- (1) Any person who served in the active military service of the United States during any period of war, or who served in the active military service of the United States during peacetime and is entitled to veterans administration hospitalization or domiciliary care under title 38, United States code and veterans administration rules and regulations, and who has been discharged or relieved there from under conditions other than dishonorable, **who may be disabled by disease, wounds, old age or otherwise disabled, and who, by reason of such disability, is incapacitated from earning a living.** (f) The Kansas commission on veterans affairs shall have authority by resolution to discharge any member from the soldiers' home on a showing that the member has gained admittance into the soldiers' home by misrepresentation of the member's financial or physical condition, or a showing that the financial or physical condition of such member has been so altered since admittance so that the further maintenance of the member in the soldiers' home is not justified. (g) **The rules and regulations for admission of members to the Kansas soldiers' home: (1) Shall require that a veteran who has no adequate means of support, and such members of the family as are dependent upon such person for support, shall be given priority over other applicants for admission;** The Last amendment to this statute occurred July 1, 1989.

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## WHAT THE VA PAYS

- Up to 50% of the daily cost of care for a maximum rate of \$63.40 for long term care and \$29.31 for domiciliary care.
- VA Per Diem is based on 1/3 of the national average cost of care of all State Veterans Homes.
- Monthly Per Diem Based on Resident Days of Care for veterans. Furloughs greater than 96 hours not paid from start of furlough.

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## KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME FY 2007 BUDGET ENHANCEMENT REQUESTS

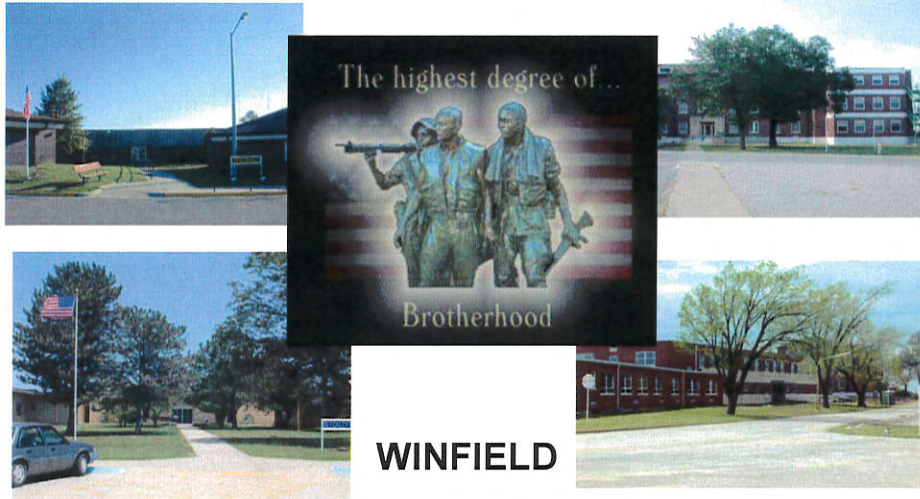
\$106,968 - ARPN & RN  
\$107,240 - Information Technology  
\$ 74,000 - Pharmacist & Direct Care  
\$ 81,076 - Natural Gas  
\$ 32,800 - Mini-Vans  
\$402,084 – TOTAL REQUESTS

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## KANSAS VETERANS' HOME



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## KANSAS VETERANS' HOME HISTORY AND FUNDING

- **BEGUN IN 1997**
  - From old Winfield State Hospital
  - Substantial federal funding for construction/renovation
  - Adjacent to Winfield Correctional Facility
- **THREE INCOME STREAMS:**
  - SGF (25%)
  - Federal per diem (37%)
  - Fee funds (38%)
- **HAS A SPECIAL CARE UNIT (DEMENTIA/ALZHEIMERS')**
- **CURRENTLY HAS FUNDING SHORTFALL**

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## KANSAS VETERANS' HOME HISTORY

- The Kansas Veterans' Home at Winfield was established by KSA 76-1951 et seq.
- Situated on part of the former grounds of WSH&TC
  - 154.5 acres
  - 15 buildings
  - 255,000 Square Feet
- Initial Federal Grant \$17,171,428
  - VA Portion \$10,641,428
  - State Portion \$ 5,280,000
  - Cowley County Portion \$ 1,250,000In support of 120 Domiciliary Beds & 227 Nursing Care Beds  
Residential services for 347 veterans & eligible dependents
- 2004 Federal Grant \$3,940,579
  - VA Portion \$2,561,376
  - State Portion \$1,379,203Principle Projects:
  - re-roofing
  - two tornado shelters
  - new windows
  - tuck point and sealing of two residential buildings
  - two loading docks
  - connecting walkway

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## KANSAS VETERANS' HOME SERVICES AT KVH

- Domiciliary – Assisted Living
  - Shelter, food, and necessary medical care on an ambulatory self-care basis.
  - Disability, disease, or defect that incapacitates the veteran from earning a living.
  - Does not need hospitalization or LTC services.
- Long-Term Care
  - Incapable of earning a living.
  - Skilled or intermediate nursing care but not hospitalization.
  - Administration of medications, treatments.
- Special Care for Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia
  - Must have diagnosis for Alzheimer's/dementia
  - Receives LTC services, but CNA's and nurses receive specialized training.
  - Specialized activities for behaviors.

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## KANSAS VETERANS' HOME

	<u>Filled</u>	<u>Max Occupancy</u>
Nursing Bed	110	227
Assisted Living/ Dom	37	120
<b>Total:</b>		<b>147</b>
		<b>347</b>



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## KANSAS VETERANS' HOME FY2007 BUDGET PROPOSAL & ENHANCEMENT REQUEST

•\$684,134 (staffing shortages)

- First priority: Nursing Services (15 vacancies)
- Second Priority: Physical Plant (7 vacancies)
- Third Priority: Residential Services (1 vacancy)
- Fourth Priority: Administration (1 vacancy)



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## VA COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS

- CBOCs are clinics placed to support veterans who are not close to the VA medical centers in Leavenworth, Topeka, and Wichita

- The US Department of Veterans Affairs operates the Liberal, Hays, Salina, Kansas City, Dodge City, and Parsons CBOCs

- Ft. Dodge CBOC located at Soldiers' Home; KCVA service reps work in Salina and Hays CBOCs



*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## KANSAS PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS HEALTH INITIATIVE

- Research & service program authorized in 1997 (KSA 73-1223 et seq.)
- Mission:
  - Investigate health problems
  - Serve as information resource
- Serves Gulf War veterans
- Major survey of KS vets 1999-2001



*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## KANSAS PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS HEALTH INITIATIVE

### BOARD MEMBERS

- THREE VETERANS
  - Am Legion, VFW, DAV
- MEDICAL SPECIALISTS
  - Epidemiology
  - Toxicology
  - Genetics
  - Family Dynamics
- TWO LEGISLATORS
  - Senator Goodwin
  - Representative Morrison



*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## KANSAS PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS HEALTH INITIATIVE

- Board meets regularly (every two months)
- Ongoing work includes:
  - Assessing medical needs of current vets in SWA
  - Addressing PTSD
  - Encouraging further Kansas research (KSU and KU)
  - Participating in state's reintegration task force
  - Considering recommendation of a second survey



*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## KANSAS BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO VETERANS

- **VETERANS CEMETERIES:** 3 (one pending)
- **NURSING HOMES:** 2; none pending; need in NE Kansas
- **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE:**
  - Tuition waivers to dependents of SM killed in military service (retroactive to Sep 11, 2001; SM must have been Kansas resident)
  - Credit for tuition paid to KS regents school if activated
  - Tuition waivers to SM who were POWs after 1 Jan, 1960 (KS resident upon entry)
  - In-state rates for active duty SM and families; continued in-state tuition status to military dependents when SM PCSs from state (new)
- **LOAN PROGRAM:** None
- **WAR BONUS:** WW I only; only one surviving vet
- **BURIAL ALLOWANCE:** None
- **OPERATION RECOGNITION:** Yes (diplomas for WW II and Korean Conflict non-HS grads)

Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs



## KANSAS BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO VETERANS: TAXES & FEES

- **VEHICLE TAX:** No tax reduction in KS (plates available)
- **PROPERTY TAX:** No tax reduction in KS
- **STATE INCOME TAX:** Military retirement not taxed by state; exemption for bonuses for military recruitment & student loan repayments
- **OCCUPATIONAL TAX:** No tax reduction in KS
- **DRIVERS LICENSES:** No fee reduction in KS
- **HUNTING & FISHING LICENSE FEES:** No fee reduction in KS to vets; KSNG gets free (bill pending)
- **STATE PARK FEES:** No fee reduction to vets; free entry to KSNG (bill pending)
- **LICENSE PLATES:** Seven plates; CMOH free

Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs



## KANSAS BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO VETERANS: LICENSE PLATES



\$33.50



No charge



\$ .50  
100% disabled+



\$ .50



\$33.50



\$33.50



\$33.50



Decals  
\$2 each

Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs



## KANSAS BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO VETERANS

- **PERSIAN GULF WAR ASSISTANCE:** State survey in 1999; PGWVHI board meets to review past and current issues; no ongoing survey
- **MEMORIAL / GRANTS:** None (SB 110 in 2005 authorized program but w/o funds)
- **PENSION / ANNUITY:** None
- **ADAPTED HOUSING:** None
- **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:** None for KS vets; Governor launched program for assistance to families of deployed Guard & Reserve troops
- **BIRTH / MARRIAGE / DEATH CERTIFICATES:** Free if for vet benefits and requested thru KCVA
- **HOMELESS PROGRAM:** None just for vets except what is provided by the VA

Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs



## KANSAS BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO VETERANS

- **VETERAN PREFERENCE:** Guaranteed interview for state jobs; vet preference for city/county jobs; under review by Attorney General
- **WOMEN VETERANS NETWORK:** None; KCVA has POC
- **AGENT ORANGE PROGRAM:** None; info available from KCVA
- **TRANSPORTATION TO VA MED CENTERS:** Nothing for veterans (homes provide transport for residents)
- **REDUCED BUS FARE:** None
- **ESTATE MANAGEMENT:** None
- **WELCOME HOME PROGRAM:** None; ongoing work with TAG, VA, KCVA to develop reintegration program for RC
- **I OWE YOU PROGRAM:** None (VA provides demob info)
- **CLAIMS PROCESSING:** Yes – through KCVA VSRs

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*



## BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO VETERANS TO CONSIDER (WHAT WE HEAR ABOUT MOST)

- Casino/slot machine money for veterans services or VSOs
- Additional Veterans' Home in NE Kansas
- Free hunting/fishing licenses to veterans
- Reduced property taxes for veterans
- Waiver of vehicle property taxes for veterans (esp disabled veterans)
- Campaign recognition program (MO: \$3M program)
- Dementia/Special Care Unit at KSH
- Grant funds for non-KCVA service reps in VSOs
- State-funded memorials
- Fill VSR vacancies; pay scale increase for VSRs
- Reduction of fees at homes
- Not counting service-connected comp in income for state homes/Medicaid

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*



## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

**“The primary criterion to any organizational decision must be the best interests of the veterans in the State of Kansas. However, other decision criteria should ensure that operations remain within the proper boundaries of legality, ethics, and fairness.”**

*Executive Director to Chairman, KCVA in letter April 15, 2005*

Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs



## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

- KCVA has 22.25 FTE in 15 authorized field offices and 19.75 FTE in service centers (where JEA exists)
- KCVA has had a MOA with the American Legion (AL) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) since 1998; some partnership has existed for 60 years.
- In 1997, USDOL concluded the agreement is a JEA under Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- JEA is to provide KCVA-funded service reps to AL and VFW in 3 VA hospitals in KS: Leavenworth, Topeka, & Wichita (Wichita is also the VA's Regional Office in KS for adjudication)
- 12 JEA VSR positions (8-9 filled) and 7.75 JEA OA positions (6 filled)
- Salaries/benefits approx \$450K in SGF annually in service centers (over \$700K annually if all FTE filled)

Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs



## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT STATUS

- 1997-1998: Significant discussion on JEA; Commission at one point voted to develop plan to sever JEA; finally kept it anticipating favorable USDOL resolution; USDOL never responded; AG unable to finish assessment; no written assessment then from Ethics Commission.
- Current Exec Director tried to find remedies for a year w/o success.
- March 2005: Exec Director sends 10-page letter to commissioners explaining situation, outlining 5 pros/ 13 cons, suggesting solutions, seeking further guidance.
- April 2005: Chairman sends copy of ED letter and other documents to all VSOs, AG, EC seeking written input w/in 30 days.
- April-May 2005: Three smaller VSOs respond; express concern about present arrangement.
- June 2005: AL, VFW, DAV respond: Form a committee to study issue.

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT STATUS (cont)

- 17 June 2005: Commission votes to form committee to study issue and make recommendations
  - One member each from KCVA (ED), AL, VFW, DAV
  - Chaired by Commissioner Wiegiers
  - Recommendation NLT 31 Dec 2005
- 29 Sep 05: Governmental Ethics Commission renders decision:
  - VSRs/OAs may not receive stipends, bonuses, or other gifts from VSOs for work done on state time (K.S.A. 46-235)
  - VSOs may have separate contracts for non-state work done off of state time
  - VSOs may, in certain cases, cover travel for VSRs
- Committee met eight times; no agreement
- Jan 06: Commission received written and oral reports by committee members

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BENEFITS (5)

1. Accreditation. VA requires accreditation for certain functions. Being credentialed by AL or VFW eases the process.
2. Training. JEA VSRs receive periodic national training; this is excellent information.
3. Strong voice. Two largest VSOs (AL and VFW) have experience, influence, and a large constituency.
4. History. Long term partnership of 60 years, in some fashion; AL claims responsibility for getting approval of Kansas Veterans Commission in 1953.
5. Budget saver. KCVA saves training dollars on selected VSRs and some office supplies.

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT PROBLEMS (13)

1. Compensatory time. Per FLSA, KCVA personnel limited to 40-hour week unless paid overtime; KS AG opinion states that per FLSA, JEA dictates that duties of one party (VSO) cannot be separated from the other party (KCVA).
2. Training imbalance. Significant difference between JEA employees and other KCVA reps (and even other VSOs).
3. Fairness to other VSRs. JEA VSRs receive VSO stipend of \$200-\$500 monthly from AL or VFW; other KCVA VSRs in field offices receive no stipend; all VSRs limited to a 40-hour week.
4. Ethics. Dual compensation for same duties likely in violation of K.S.A. 46-235. (KS Ethics Commission decision rendered Sep 05 in a 7-0 vote).
5. Fairness to other VSOs. Seven VSOs providing claims assistance in KS; only the AL and VFW get state support in funding.

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT PROBLEMS (cont)

6. Claim feeding. If VSOs "compete" for claims as a membership tool, having "feeder" reps in Topeka and Leavenworth help get Powers of Attorney for AL and VFW before claims go to Wichita.
7. Other states do it differently. Still assessing (thru 43 states & PR). Only one other state has similar JEA; most express surprise.
8. Accountability. Despite JEA, any misrepresentation on a claim can result in lawsuit. Most likely, State of Kansas is accountable. One episode last CY was problematic. VSO role uncertain.
9. Governor's guidance on consolidation. Separate offices exist for KCVA-AL and KCVA-VFW in each of the 3 VA hospitals; for 3 years, Gov's budget guidance has been to consolidate into one office in each hospital to gain efficiency; guidance had been largely ignored; ongoing discussion by KCVA seeks to address that guidance objectively.

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT PROBLEMS (cont)

10. Claims and Powers of Attorney. Once POA is established by the vet, access to status or changes in info can only come from a VSR accredited by that VSO. Therefore, KCVA VSRs cannot assist all KS vets once process is started.
11. Conflict of interest. Concern by some VSOs that developing claims which foster AL or VFW membership on state time is a conflict.
12. Default on quality control. The only KCVA employees in Wichita RO are JEA'd with AL or VFW. Therefore, all claims go straight to AL, VFW, or other VSOs, and KCVA has defaulted on QC process. Some JEA reps look at KCVA field reps with derision; creates organizational cancer.
13. The issue that counts. Despite good local support for homes and cemeteries, this is the only issue w/ state-level AL and VFW dialogue w/ KCVA; other KCVA missions (like cemeteries) have been attacked or dismissed.

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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## CLAIMS PENDING AT VARO WICHITA KS BY POWER OF ATTORNEY SNAPSHOT 08/03/2005

Name	Cases Assigned	Percent of Claims Pending
Misc or No POA	1895	29.23%
Disabled American Veterans	1690	26.06%
American Legion*	1288	19.86%
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)*	1192	18.38%
AMVETS	201	3.10%
Private Attorney	95	1.47%
Paralyzed Veterans	85	1.31%
Vietnam Veterans	36	0.56%
Blinded Veterans	2	0.03%
Total Claims Pending	6484	100.0%

\* VSRs funded by KCVA \*\* MOPH not shown; new office

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*



## JOINT EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT CONCERNS

- Advertised as KCVA attempt to cut service to veterans
- Insistence that nothing is wrong with current procedures
- Long range vs. short term corrections
- ED problem
- Joint resolution
- Out of state for information
- Accreditations
- Operating costs unknown
- Per AG and VA: state organizations can perform all assistance functions

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*





## BUDGET HISTORY SUMMARY

**JAN 2004:** KVH and KSH in serious financial trouble; 2-3 months before going into red.

**FEB 2004:** DoB, KVH, KSH, & ED agree on homes requirements; GBA submitted for \$530K SGF for remainder of SFY 04 and \$389K SGF for SFY 05. Agency continues monthly reviews with DoB.

**JUL 04:** Agency separates Agency Administration from Veteran Services and Cemeteries; gets greater fiscal clarity.

**JUL-SEP 2004:** Agency recognizes inability to meet V/S payroll for SFY 05; KSH identifies new shortcomings in salaries & wages; KVH elects to hold fast w/ Feb 04 estimates; SVCP agrees to reduce FTE and reduces needs by \$20K; Agency requests \$7,385 for PGWVHI; Agency requests supplements & enhancements.

**FEB 05:** KVH requests funds for addl costs of pharmaceuticals, food service, & COLA.

**APR 05:** Agency receives SFY 05 supplements: \$81K for V/S; \$205K for KSH; \$7,385 for PGWVHI (SFY 05 only). SVCP reduced by \$20K. Agency receives SFY 06 enhancements: \$207K for V/S; \$201K for KVH; \$628K for KSH; no SFY 06 funds for PGWVHI.

**JUN 05:** All components of Agency finish SFY 05 on budget except KVH (borrows \$209K from KSH).

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*



## KCVA PRIORITY LIST Enhancement Packages -- FY 2007

1. The Kansas Veterans' Home (1): Salaries and wages increases. \$684,134. (Rec \$400K in budget year)
2. Kansas Soldiers' Home (1): Utilities. \$81,086 due to higher costs of natural gas.
3. The Kansas State Veterans' Cemetery Program (1): Fort Riley Cemetery. \$72,792 for the opening of the Fort Riley Cemetery in March, 2007. (Rec approval)
4. The Veteran Services Program (1): Veteran Service Representative training. \$11,500. (Rec approval)
5. The Veteran Services Program (2): Additional Veteran Service Representatives. \$71,310 to hire two additional VSRs for assignment in the Service Centers. (Rec approval)
6. Kansas Soldiers' Home (2): IT equipment, travel, and printers. \$107,240.
7. Kansas Soldiers' Home (3): Primary direct care. \$156,968.
8. The Veteran Services Program (3): IT equipment. \$21,250.
9. The Kansas State Veterans' Cemetery Program (2): Winfield and WaKeeney operations. \$31,628 to cover identified higher costs in sustaining operations.
10. Agency: Persian Gulf War Veterans Health Initiative Board. \$4,000 for meetings and other activities of this board in FY 2007. (Rec approval)
11. Kansas Soldiers' Home (4): Pharmacist. \$24,000 to offset the increase in its contract.
12. The Agency Administration: Medicaid consultant. \$30,000. (Rec approval)
13. Agency wide: Increased processing fees for DISC-ENTERPRISE APPLICATION. \$31,580 for the rise in FY 2006, and FY 2007 will likely see the same fee amounts.
14. The Veteran Services Program (4): File cabinets. \$19,500.
15. Kansas Soldiers' Home (5): Two Minivans. \$32,800. (Rec approval)
16. Agency wide: Increased costs of fuel and other travel. \$7,305 for Agency Administration, Veteran Services, and the Cemetery Program.
17. The Veteran Services Program (5): IT equipment. \$10,000 for a new veterans' claim tracking and document management software system.
18. The Veteran Services Program (6): Mobile vans. \$80,000.

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*



## BUDGET NUMBERS IN ONGOING REVIEWS

- TO FILL ALL VACANT FTE IN SERVICE CENTERS: +\$295,398 (annual)
- TO FILL ALL VACANT FTE IN FIELD OFFICES: +\$57,992 (annual)
- TO ADD KCVA STAFF IN VARO IF ALL VSRS ARE ASSIGNED TO LEGION OR VFW: +\$127,211 (annual)
- TO MEET OTHER VSO COMPENSATION LIKE AL & VFW: +\$288,000 TO \$388,000 DEPENDING ON STAFFING (annual)
- TO PROPERLY ALIGN/PAY STATE VSRS @ CURRENT STAFFING: +\$120,308 TO \$153,000, DEPENDING ON INCREASE % (annual)
- TO HIRE PART TIME ASST TO MANAGE FLSA ACCOUNTING WITH AL & VFW: +\$16,675 (annual)

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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**“ We must honor them by never—not for a single moment— taking for granted the freedoms and blessings that their sacrifices helped protect.”**



**Governor Kathleen Sebelius  
November 11, 2003**

*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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*Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs*

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States	COMPARISON OF STATE BENEFITS																																
	Veterans' Cemeteries	Nursing Homes	Education Assistance	Loan Program	War Bonus	Burial Allowance	Operation Recognition	Vehicle	Property	Taxes-Reduced		Plates	Licenses- Reduced fees				Persian Gulf war	Memorial/ Grants	Pension/ Annuity	Adapted Housing	Assistance Emergency	B/M/D Certificates	Homeless Program	Veteran Preference	Women/Vet Network	Agent Orange	Transport VA Med	Reduced Bus fare	Estate Management	Wet/Home Program	I Owe You Program	Veteran Bene	
Alabama																																	
Alaska		3	X					X	X			X																					
Arizona	1	1	X					X	X			X			X	X	X																
Arkansas	1	1	X					X	X	X		X			X	X	X																
California	3	1	X	X				X	X			X			X	X	X																
Colorado	7	2	X					X	X			X			X	X	X																
Connecticut	1	3	X					X	X	X		X			X	X																	
Delaware	1	2	X					X	X	X		X			X	X																	
Florida	1	6	X					X	X	X	No Tax	X			X	X																	
Georgia	1	2						X	X	X	X	X			X	X																	
Hawaii	8							X	X			X		X	X	X	X																
Idaho	1	3	X					X	X			X			X	X																	
Illinois		4	X		X	X		X	X			X			X	X																	
Indiana	1	3	X					X	X			X			X	X	X																
Iowa	1	1	X					X	X			X			X	X																	
Kansas	3	2	X					X	X			X			X	X																	
Kentucky	3	3	X		X			X	X		X				X	X																	
Louisiana		2	X					X	X			X			X	X																	
Maine	3	5	X	X				X	X			X			X	X	X																
Maryland	5	1	X					X	X			X			X	X	X																
Massachusetts	2	2	X		X	X		X	X		X				X	X																	
Michigan	2	2	X		X	X		X	X			X			X	X																	
Minnesota	1	5	X		X	X		X	X			X			X	X																	
Mississippi		4	X	X				X	X			X			X	X																	
Missouri	5	7	X					X	X	X		X			X	X																	
Montana	2	2	X		X	X		X	X			X			X	X																	
Nebraska	1	4	X					X	X			X			X	X																	
Nevada	2	1	X					X	X		No Tax	X			X	X																	
New Hampshire	1	1	X		X			X	X	X		X			X	X																	
New Jersey	2	3	X	X	X			X	X	X		X			X	X	X																
New Mexico		1	X					X	X	X		X			X	X	X																
New York		4	X		X	X		X	X	X	X				X	X																	
North Carolina	3	1	X					X	X			X			X	X	X																
North Dakota	1	1		X	X			X	X			X			X	X																	
Ohio	1	2	X		X			X	X			X			X	X																	
Oklahoma	1	6						X	X			X			X	X																	
Oregon		1	X	X				X	X			X			X	X																	
Pennsylvania	1	6	X					X	X			X		X	X	X																	
Rhode Island	1	1	X		X			X	X			X			X	X																	
South Carolina		2	X					X	X			X			X	X																	
South Dakota	1	1	X	X	X			X	X			X			X	X	X																
Tennessee	3	2	X					X	X			X			X	X	X																
Texas	1	4	X	X				X	X		No Tax	X		X	X	X	X																
Utah	1	1	X					X	X			X		X	X	X																	
Vermont	2	2	X		X			X	X			X			X	X																	
Virginia	2	1	X					X	X			X			X	X																	
Washington	2	3	X	?	X			X	X			X			X	X																	
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Wisconsin	2	3	X	X	X			X	X	X		X		X	X	X																	
Wyoming	1	1	X					X	X			X			X	X																	

SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS  
 DATE 2-1-2006  
 ATTACHMENT 2

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