

Sunset Advisory Commission
Board and Commission Review of the Vermont Veterans Fund

The Commission reviews every State board and commission and takes testimony regarding whether each board or commission should continue to operate or be eliminated and whether the powers and duties of any board or commission should be revised. Each board and commission has the burden of justifying its continued operation.

The Commission also reviews whether members of a board or commission should be entitled to a per diem and, if so, the amount of that per diem.

In testifying before the Commission, you should be able to provide the following information:

The VVF Board is charged with the distribution of donations made to the Vermont Veterans Funds through the grant award process. Donations are received by individuals through the Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA) and via individual tax return donations. The OVA issues the RFPs soliciting grant request applications. The OVA in conjunction with the Military Department's Finance Manager conduct the necessary pre-award reviews as outlined in the Department's grant plan. The board receives the grant request packages along with a award worksheet. The board discusses the merit of each grant request and make a determination whether to approval (whole or partial funding) or to decline. Once the board has made all its recommendation, the award worksheet is completed and provided back to OVA for administrative processing and disbursement of awards.

1. In general, how often does the board and commission meet? Provide specific information on how often the board or commission has met in the past two fiscal years. Provide information on where agendas and minutes of meetings can be found. [This selection board meets annually to select grantees based on proposals submitted. Agendas and minutes are not kept. However, award worksheet is completed and returned back to OVA.](#)
2. Provide the names of members of the board or commission, their term length and expiration, their appointing authority, and the amount of any per diem they receive.
 - [The Adjutant and Inspector General or designee – Deputy Adjutant General](#)
 - [The Vermont Veterans' Home Administrator or designee – Gary DeGasta](#)
 - [The Commissioner of Labor or designee – Larry Forsythe](#)
 - [The Secretary of Human Services or designee – Will Eberle](#)
 - [The Director of the White River Junction VA medical center or designee - Vacant](#)
 - [The Director of the White River Junction VA benefits office or designee Jeff Neily](#)
 - [Three members of the Governor's Veterans' Council to be appointed by that Council](#)
 - [Andy Megrath, Brenda Cruickshank, & Richard Farmer](#)

3. Provide an overview of the board or commission's purpose. [The purpose of this committee is to evaluate and select proposals to provide grant funding for veterans related support programs.](#)
4. Is that purpose still needed? What would happen if the board or commission no longer fulfilled that purpose? [The purpose is still needed. If the committee did not fulfill that purpose, the grant program would end.](#)
5. How well is the board or commission performing in executing that purpose? What evidence can you provide to substantiate that performance? [The board performs well. Over the past five years it has evaluated 64 proposals and selected 54 organizations to receive \\$342,904 in grant funds.](#)
6. If the purpose is still needed, can State government be more effective and efficient if the purpose was executed in a different manner? [The burden is light for the committee; it is an annual event that takes a total of approximately four hours. Two hours to review proposals and then two hours to deliberate on award selections.](#)
7. If the purpose is still needed, do any of your board or commission's functions overlap or duplicate those of another State board or commission or federal or State agency? [No.](#) If so, is your board or commission still the best entity to fulfill the purpose?
8. Does the board or commission's enabling law continue to correctly reflect the purpose and activities of the board or commission? [Yes](#)
9. Provide a list of the board and commission's last fiscal year expenditures including staffing costs. How are these funded? [There are no associated overhead costs for the committee.](#)
10. Is the board or commission required by law to prepare any reports or studies for the Legislature, the Governor, or any State agency or officer? [No.](#) If so, have those reports or studies been produced? Does the board or commission have ongoing reporting obligations?
11. How would you measure the performance of the board or commission? [The past five years have shown an efficient and very productive process for solicitation of proposals and the review and selection of grant applications submitted.](#)