

## **Establishment of Veterans' Service Office**

**GOAL:** Analyze the benefits of the establishment of a Veterans' Service Office and acknowledge the service of our veterans to our country.

**OBJECTIVE:** To enhance the service of benefits to our area veterans by the establishment of a Veterans' Service Office (department).

**FACTS:**

1. Roane County has historically allocated an annual budget of \$4,000 which is allocated at \$1,000 to each of our four (4) County Service Officers (CSO) who service regions within the county.
2. The State Department of Veterans' Affairs Assistance Commissioner Don Smith approached the county about a year ago and requested that Roane County enhance services to county veterans by the establishment of a permanent part-time Veterans' Service Office. Mr. Smith also requested the same enhancement of other counties who have been in the process of improving services to their veterans.
3. Roane County has recently made available on the third floor of the Roane County Courthouse space for a Veterans' Service Office (Resolution# 10-13-07).
4. Roane County service from our four (4) assigned veterans has been greatly appreciated.
5. One CSO position has been vacated due to the passing of the veteran; one CSO position has been vacant; one CSO position has rendered limited service; and one CSO has indicated that he would be glad to resign in order for a more efficient organization to be established.
6. Roane County as of 2009 had a veteran population of 4,972 and received over \$6 million of monetary awards in 2011.
7. TCA§58-3-109 authorizes the establishment of service offices for the purpose of advising veterans. The service offices shall be staffed by accredited CSO's.
8. Accredited CSO's are paid employees of the county who work at least 1,000 hours annually and successfully complete a course of training and examination which has been approved by a regional counsel.
9. Work of a County Service Officer is often split between work in the office and work at a veteran's home or location of residence.

**ASSUMPTIONS:** Roane County wishes to provide a Veterans' Service Office in order to facilitate the benefit process for our county's veterans.

**ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:** Due to the number of Roane County veterans, to assist in his/her obtainment of veteran's benefits, and to further acknowledge his/her service to our country, the County Executive's Office recommends that Roane County establish a permanent part-time employee who shall service local veterans. The employee shall be granted office space in the Roane County Courthouse and become an employee of the Roane County Government. An annual budget shall be adopted to support the office. It is anticipated that the annual budget would be approximately \$30,000 with a part-time position of 1,000 hours at an hourly rate of \$12 to \$15 per hour, a computer, printer/copier, telephone, travel budget and potential access to a county vehicle.