

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA – CHAPTER 120
MEMBERSHIP MINUTES – THURSDAY, March. 2, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Frank Mello at 7:10 pm at the IAM Union Hall, 357 Main Street, East Hartford, CT, leading with the pledge of allegiance, followed by a moment of silence. Officers present: President Frank Mello, Vice President Jerry Blum Treasurer Roger Anderson, and Secretary Pete Lund. Board of Directors present: Paul Barry, Frank Zizzamia, and Peter Galgano. Bill Chiodo and Pattie Dumin were absent and excused.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Chapter read minutes. Motion made to accept minutes, seconded and passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Roger Anderson provided copies of account balances report as of 2/28/17 and the transaction report for the period thru 2/28/17. He reviewed the income and expense items on the transaction report. President Frank Mello thanked Roger for his report.

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT –John Cutler reported the following:

As of 28 February, we have 56 open claims and 40 appeals, for a total caseload of 96 (this figure does not include brokered claims from other Regional Offices).

In the first five months of FY17, we've won \$241,430 while spending about \$1,600 for our VSO program. This equates to a Return on Investment of 150 to 1, meaning for every dollar we spend on our VSO program, we win \$150 for veterans.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP – Frank Mello reported that the chapter has a total of 259 VVA members, 39 individual members, 4 permanently hospitalized members, and 216 life members. Frank reported that AVVA has 15 members, 5 individual and 10 life members. Frank also reported he has processed a new member and new Life Member. Not on report from National yet.

AGENT ORANGE – No Report

VAVS – No Report

AVVA – No Report

POW/MIA – No Report. Mary Beaulieu had sent (I found) the Email and want to report as follows from the email. Recovery efforts have been very slow due to a funding shortage - operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have been suspended.

There has still been no DPAA Director (Defense POW/MMIA Accounting Agency) chosen to replace Army LTG Mike Linnington who abruptly resigned 8 months ago.

There have been remains of WWII and Korean Veterans returned - the WWII remains were recovered by History Flight, a non-government contractor and the Korean remains were the result of disinterment of remains buried in a US cemetery.

Not to get Political BUT, the Republican Platform did request that we must advance efforts to obtain more accounting and return of remains of our missing Americans.

In March she sent another email and here it is. Recovery efforts have been very slow due to a funding shortage - operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have been suspended.

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A bill has been submitted to the House and Senate stating "we are requesting that the DOD intensify efforts to investigate, recover, identify and account as fully as possible for all missing in action military"

PLEASE ask your members to make a 2 minute phone call to their Reps to ask them to co-sponsor this bill

Senate Res #61 Blumenthal 202-224-2823 Murphy 202-224-4041 or send email thru their websites
House Res #129 Larson 202-225-2265 Courtney 202-225-2076 DeLauro 202-225-3661 Himes 202-225-5541 Esty 202-225-4476 or email thru their website.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS – Tim Siggia reported H.R. 422 has been reintroduced for the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans act by David Valadao (CA-21).

Dr. David Shulkin confirmed as the Department of Veterans Affairs - he will become the first non-veteran to lead the agency. Dr. Shulkin also favors the 40 mile rule elimination of certain veterans who's awaiting care for more than 30 days and over 40 miles to nearest VA Center under the Veterans Choice program.

WOMEN VETERANS – No report

GOOD AND WELFARE – Frank Mello has mentioned of a great article from American Legion Magazine; web site is //www.legion.org/magazine/236274/lifetime-healing. A great article on Father Phil who has served in Vietnam; article a lifetime of healing. I copied part of the article and follows: Salois was one of only seven in his platoon who weren't injured in the battle. He received the Silver Star for his actions on March 1, 1970. What transpired led him to an even higher calling, one that has given him the opportunity to minister to countless souls over the decades since Vietnam.

OLD BUSINESS Paul Barry brought up some discussion of Elections coming up for Nominating Committee and Delegates to National Convention to be held in August. August 8, 2017-August 12, 2017 New Orleans Marriott, 555 Canal St, New Orleans, LA. Paul Barry spoke on possible and expected expenditures. Nominations are to be suggested and accepted to present committee: Tim Siggia, Ken Lewis, and Bill Chiodo. Pete Lund will get particular correspondence to committee. Delegates can plan on \$600.00 support from Chapter and possibly \$125.00 from St. Council which has to be approved at next St. Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS None Frank Mello had mentioned that Chapter showed up to support SP 76 held at legislature. That would remove the funding for a highway study costing as much as \$300,000 and return it back to General Fund. There was some discussion and support of this to possibly resolve problem on spending this money to support Honor Guards at Veterans Funerals. Paul Barry also mentioned that a bill would have to be passed and suggested that a line item for the budget be designated for Military Honors.

Frank also mentioned that the Chapter will participate in Shad Derby May 20th in Windsor; staging at High School at 10:30 and step-off at 11:30.

Pete Lund has mentioned Annual Dance to be held Dec. 9th instead of Dec. 2nd due to scheduling conflict at Union Hall; so Save the Date.

Paul Scappaticci read a letter he had written to support the ongoing efforts "Trump going to take care of all veterans". He feels good that there will be support of efforts to do this to support the veterans that is well long overdue.

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There will be a Welcome Home Veterans Day at Hall of Flags at LOB bldg. March 30 at 1 P.M. There will be a Spring Fling Dance to support Relay for Life Avenging Angels at Temple Beth Tefilah 465 Oak Street East Hartford on April 1, 2017. In addition, at 99 Restaurant in Glastonbury, they will also donate to this cause by giving 15% to the cause on March 29th.

Bob Venti mentioned that Paul Barry and he participated in an Eagle Scout induction at Manchester VFW to support a possible scholarship for the scout.

Leigh Loverling has mentioned of a great website for all Vietnam Clothing at Aotp.com; Company called Army of the Past. Roger Anderson spoke on Post Exchange purchases will be available to all veterans possibly Nov. 11th

COMMUNITY SERVICES Pete Lund had read the Thank you note to the Chapter from CT. Dept. of Veterans Affairs Tammy Marzik for participation and support to Ct. Stand-Down last Sept.

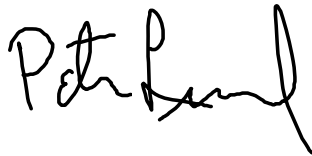
NEWSLETTER – John Cutler reported Cutoff for April newsletter articles is 17 March.

PRODUCT SALES – Ted has mentioned of Chapter jackets won't be available, if you want one, get you order to Ted before this goes away.

ADJOURNMENT- Motion made to adjourn at 7:35. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The next Chapter Board meeting will be March 30, 2017. The next membership meeting will be held April 6, 2017. The next State Council meeting will be held March 19th, 2017.

Respectively submitted by



Pete Lund
Secretary Chapter 120