

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA – CHAPTER 120**  
**MEMBERSHIP MINUTES – THURSDAY, May 4, 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: Bill Chiodo, Frank Zizzamia, and Peter Galgano, Paul Barry, and Pattie Dumin.

**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 4/30/17 and the transaction report for the period thru 4/30/17. 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 30 April, we have 49 open claims and 42 appeals, for a total caseload of 91. Of the 42 appeals, 18 are waiting Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) decisions.

The Louisville Regional Office – the Regional Office that specifically handles Camp Lejeune claims – is finally working on Camp Lejeune contaminated water presumptive claims. Three (3) of our Camp Lejeune claims are being worked – one waiting an exam, one ready to be rated and one rated.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**MEMBERSHIP** – Frank Mello reported that the chapter has a total of 261 VVA members, 39 individual members, 4 permanently hospitalized members, and 216 life members. +2 from last month. He also mentioned possible discrepancy from National; hopes to get it taken care of by next meeting. Frank reported that AVVA has 15 members, 5 individual and 10 life members.

**AGENT ORANGE** – No Report

**VAVS** – No Report

**AVVA** – Joanne Blum mentioned to she is to represent Chapter at Nat'l Convention to be held in August.

**POW/MIA** – Mary Beaulieu spoke of ongoing operations in Laos and Cambodia and Vietnam but mentioned of obstacles like lack of scientists. Also mentioned of a 2013 sighting and also discussed Hartford POW Ed Bishop's family contacted with govt asking for dental records with family provided (not originals) and also requested letters from Ed which family provided. May be some hope on return of Ed Bishop. Mary also spoke on since as rules from National, she hasn't been allowed as Chair of this committee but she would be glad to help another person to be chair which has not happened yet.

**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS** – Tim Siggia reported that Veteran's Accountability Act has been signed by Present Trump. Tim also mentioned that there was a one week extension to prevent a one week shutdown. He also mentioned of a proposal to change the GI Bill that would require servicemen to

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pay \$100 monthly for 2 years. Tim also mentioned that the House Subcommittee is reviewing the Agent Orange Blue Water Navy Bill.

Paul Barry also spoke on the State's Budget has frozen any positions unless that have been accepted and signed by April 28<sup>th</sup> , putting positions dealing with veterans in jeopardy. Positions will be abolished with no transition to fill position.

**WOMEN VETERANS** – No report

**GOOD AND WELFARE** – No report

**OLD BUSINESS** Chapter participated in Earth Day at Pratt's Hangar with many donations to be given for needy veterans. Chapter provided 18 holes of golf for winner of raffle held. Household Goods from National to pick up excess product after books and cd's given to Hartford Vet Center.

**NEW BUSINESS** Bill Chiodo brought up motion to increase Chapters obligation for each delegate be raised \$200.00 from \$600.00 to \$800 due to high costs for convention. Motion approved and passed unanimously.

National Convention was discussed with Bob Burgess excusing himself as delegate. Discussion was held with members to find another replacement. Phil Morneault gave his name as a possibility; mentioned he would let me know tomorrow. Chapter took a motion to accept him as a delegate; motion seconded and passed unanimously.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES** No report

**NEWSLETTER** – John Cutler reported Cutoff for June newsletter articles is 19 May.

**PRODUCT SALES** – No report

**ADJOURNMENT-** Motion made to adjourn at 7:55. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The next Chapter Board meeting will be May 25, 2017. The next membership meeting will be held June 1, 2017. The next State Council meeting will be held June 11, 2017.

Respectively submitted by 

Pete Lund  
Secretary Chapter 120