

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA – CHAPTER 120
MEMBERSHIP MINUTES – Thursday March 1, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Frank Mello at 7:05 pm at the IAM Union Hall, 357 Main Street, East Hartford 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 were Paul Barry, Peter Galgano, Bill Chiodo and Frank Zizzamia. Board of Director Phil Morneault was absent and excused.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Chapter read minutes. Motion was made to accept, Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Roger Anderson provided copies of account balances report as of 2/28/18 and the transaction report for this period. 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:

As of 28 February, we have 35 open claims and 42 appeals, for a total caseload of 77. Of the 42 appeals, 19 are at the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) and of those 19 at the Board, 10 are waiting for hearings. As I mentioned last month, we are not accepting new clients. We're working the existing claims and appeals over the next year to close them out before we end operations in June 2019. President Trump has nominated Paul Lawrence as Undersecretary for Veterans Benefits Administration. Lawrence is currently Vice President of Kaiser Associates, an international consulting firm. Let's see how long he lasts....

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP – Frank Mello reported that the chapter has a total of 259 VVA members, 32 individual members, 4 permanently hospitalized members, and 223 life members. Frank reported that AVVA has 20 members.

AGENT ORANGE – No Report

VAVS – No Report

AVVA – No Report

POW/MIA – Pete Lund read a report sent by Mary Beaulieu Feb. 27th as follows. Nothing new to report - continued cooperation with Vietnam on recovery missions

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS – Tim Siggia reported David Shulkin gets assurances from White House he will stay after damaging report; his chief of staff's email was hacked pointing to a group of aides targeting undermining him. He has paid the govt back and expressed remorse. Trump nominates former Army Captain as new top benefits official for VA. Trump seeks \$12B increase in FY2019 VA budget. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee passed the "Caring for Our Veterans Act that will reform the VA health care system by providing veterans easier access to private care doctors. Tim also had

discussion of new dental and vision program coming in 2019. He also discussed an online tool for discharge upgrade process to improve the veteran's guidance who believe in and unfair discharge.

GOOD AND WELFARE – Bill Chiodo mentioned he had taken coats to be distributed in Windsor. Frank Mello mentioned of a letter from Town of South Windsor Patriotic Commission holding an event called “Evening in the Park” held in Nevers Road Park May 19, 2018 from 5PM to dusk. Chapter will be participating at Shad Derby Parade to be held at Windsor same day; step-off at 11:00 AM. Chapter 120 also donated \$200 for fence banner for South Windsor Legion Ball-field Program. Chapter has done this for years. Frank Mello also mentioned of a Veterans Resource Fair to be held March 7 at 3Rivers Community College; inclement date scheduled for March 22 same Time 10 AM to 2 PM. He also mentioned of Spring Fling 2018 to Benefit Relay for Life- Team Avenging Angel to be held at Machinist Union Hall April 21, 2018.

OLD BUSINESS – Trump declares VVA War Recognition Day to be March 29th There will be a celebration at LOB State Capital March 29th held by Dept of Veterans Affairs.

NEW BUSINESS – Paul Barry spoke on the budget cuts slated and talked of a meeting at Conn. Capital scheduled for Appropriations Committee scheduled March 6, 2018 to be held at LOB. The \$2,000,000 is needed to be put back in budget to prevent Rocky Hill Hospital to remain a Critical Care Unit instead of a Nursing Home. Summary, this would close a wing at hospital and state would lose more than projected dollars because of less dollars provided by feds for the veteran's care. Kathy Lechause, Peter Galgano and Joanne Blum provided extra information as part of this bill. Veterans are urged to attend or go on-line to contact their respective congress and contact to let them know this does not sit well for community at Rocky Hill. Elections coming up for next meeting; all positions open with exception of Delegates to Nat'l Convention. Please submit your name to Nominating Committee; Tim Siggia, Bill Chiodo or Ken Lewis. Rules posted in Newsletter.

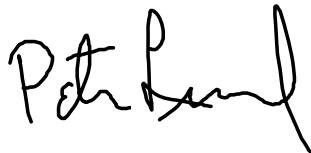
COMMUNITY SERVICES Discussed as part of Good and Welfare.

NEWSLETTER – John Cutler reported Cutoff for April newsletter articles is 23 March. Email any articles and/or photos to the new address at ctchapter120@aol.com

PRODUCT SALES – No report.

ADJOURNMENT- Motion made to adjourn at 8:30. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The next Chapter Board meeting will be March 29, 2018. The next Chapter membership meeting will be held April 5, 2018. The next State Council meeting will be held March.18, 2018.

Respectively submitted by



Pete Lund
Secretary Chapter 120