

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA – CHAPTER 120**  
**MEMBERSHIP MINUTES – Thursday April 4, 2019**

**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 Phil Morneault, Treasurer Roger Anderson, and Secretary Pete Lund. Board of Directors present were Paul Barry, Bob Burgess, Bill Chiodo, Peter Galgano, and Frank Zizzamia.

**READING OF THE MINUTES** Chapter members read minutes. Paul Barry made motion to accept, seconded by Bob Burgess; motion passed unanimously.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** Roger Anderson provided copies of account balances report as of 3/31/2019 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.

**Election** Motion made to suspend meeting for election of 6 delegates to Nat'l Leadership. Motion seconded and passed. Results for National Convention Delegates Frank Mello, Phil Morneault, Paul Barry, Bob Burgess, and Gerry Wright. Elected Election Committee is Bill Chiodo, and Leigh Lovering. Motion made from floor for Secretary to cast one vote for all elected; seconded and passed. Motion made by Paul Barry to have 6<sup>th</sup> Delegate for Nat'l Convention be discussed and approved by Chapter Board of Directors.

**SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT** – As of 31 March, we have 5 open claims and 39 appeals. Twenty-one (21) of those appeals are at the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA). The VA Secretary told congress he will NOT recommend appealing the Blue Water Vietnam Veterans' court decision concerning Agent Orange exposure for ships that operated within territorial waters off Vietnam. No word from VA since then. The window to appeal the court's decision closes late April.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**MEMBERSHIP** – Frank reported that the chapter has a total of 252 VVA members; of which is 19 individual members, 4 permanently hospitalized members, and 229 life members. Frank reported that AVVA has 19 members. Pete Lund mentioned possibly paper mails to members who aren't Life Members. Address Labels provided; letters from Chapter be sent out with Renewal Forms to possibly get more member's membership to not lapse.

**AGENT ORANGE** –Gerry Wright discussed Agent Orange Bill and discussed possible edits; Paul Barry mentioned more wording might jeopardize and concurrence from Chapter to leave as is. The Bill has been submitted and possibly to be discussed at Nat'l Convention.

**VAVS** – No Report

**AVVA** – No Report

**POW/MIA** – No Report. **Need POW chairperson.**

**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS** –Tim Siggia mentioned several articles such as **VA Secretary Recommends DOJ Not Appeal AOBWN Case**. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie announced during a Senate Veterans Affairs Committee hearing that the VA is recommending the Department of Justice (DOJ) *not* appeal the U.S. Appeals Court for the Federal Circuit decision in *Procopio v. Wilkie*, decided on January 29, 2019. The deadline for the DOJ decision is April 29, 2019. Tim also discussed such items as Trump planning to tap into leftover funds military pay and pension accounts \$1 Billion to pay for border wall, a

\$750 Billion. Tim also discussed proposed Defense Budget. The proposed budget includes \$750 billion for the Department of Defense for FY2020, which is \$34 billion more than the current year spending level. It provides a 3.1 percent active duty pay increase—the largest increase in a decade and provides additional funding for childcare centers on bases. The budget provides funding for 46 more Navy ships in five years.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) budget request provides for a 9.6 percent increase (\$19.3 billion) above the current budget in overall spending for the agency. The proposed budget includes a 9.5 percent increase in medical care that includes a surge in mental health, women's health and homelessness funding. The budget increases money for modernization of disability claims process and appeals reform.

**GOOD AND WELFARE** – No report

**OLD BUSINESS**- No report

**NEW BUSINESS** –National convention discussed. Due to increased travel expenses discussed at Board meeting, motion made from floor to increase Chapter Monies from \$600.00 to \$800.00 for each delegate. Motion seconded and passed unanimously. Delegates to National Convention (6 if we have 250 members) and Nominating Committee (3). Election will be held April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**- Paul Barry discussed the event at Yard Goat Stadium is delayed until April 11<sup>th</sup>. due to inclement weather at 7 P.M. with a POWMIA table to be set up. A Memorial Day Parade to be held in South Windsor Memorial Day; assemble at 9:15 Industrial Park off Route 5 and step off 10:00 A.M. Vietnam Veterans Day to be held at Capital at 1:00 PM March 29, 2019

Existing Member Peter Mazzadra membership about to expire. Hard times. Motion made for Chapter to foot renewal cost for him. Motion seconded and passed.

Bob Venti mentioned few items; Army Navy Club celebrating 100 years and selling paver bricks as fundraiser and an event at 1<sup>st</sup>. Congregational Church Manchester to remember 4 Chaplains lives lost June 21. Pete Galgano mentioned an event at Fisher House in West Haven May 4<sup>th</sup> for an open house from 11 -2pm.

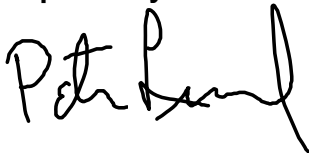
Gerry Wright mentioned to keep calling Congressman for support of HR 599 and SB332..

**NEWSLETTER** – Cutoff for May newsletter articles is 19 April. Email any articles and/or photos to [ctchapter120@aol.com](mailto:ctchapter120@aol.com)

**PRODUCT SALES**- No report

**ADJOURNMENT**- Motion made to adjourn at 8:20. The next Chapter Board meeting is April 25<sup>th</sup> and next Chapter meeting is May 2, 2019. The next State Council meeting will be held June 2, 2019.

**Respectively submitted by**



Pete Lund  
Chapter 120 Secretary