



Vietnam Veterans Of America Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

APRIL 2016



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

April 21, 2016

A nominal meeting of the Board of Directors took place at the start. Directors present included President Andy Megrath; John McLaughlin, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Bill Whitney, director. There being no business for the board to conduct, the regular meeting began.

The minutes of the March meeting were approved unanimously.

Treasurer John McLaughlin reported \$57,534 in the chapter's bank accounts. His report was approved unanimously.

Membership stands at 145 regular members, plus five lifetime associate members.

President Andy Megrath reported that member Richard Romano, a Chapter 1 member from North Carolina, had recently passed away. In addition, the Rutland Herald recently reported the death on March 25 of James P. Dorsey, 75, of Brandon, a 32-year Army veteran who served two tours in Vietnam. Chapter 1 extends our sincere condolences to their loved ones.

A Council on Aging community development coordinator from Morristown has approached Chapter 1 (and other veterans groups in Vermont) for a donation to help clean up the property of a Vietnam Veteran who was said to have a hoarding problem, leading to a health hazard. The coordinator indicated to Andy Megrath that the town was getting ready to evict the veteran from the property. It was noted that the veteran had suffered a stroke and had limited ability to deal with the problem. Andy Megrath related that volunteers and business donors have already contributed dumpsters and the use of trucks and trailers to haul away some of the debris, but that further help was requested.

The specific request was for \$1,200 to dispose of tires accumulated on the property. It was noted that another VVA chapter had declined to assist in the case.

Jack Crowther moved that the chapter contribute up to \$250 if further inquiries by Andy Megrath determined that the assistance was truly needed. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Passed unanimously. If the donation is made, it will not be made to the individual but to the Council on Aging or tire removal firm.

In old business, Andy presented a quotation from Rutland Marble & Granite Products for a granite marker added to the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Main Street Park. The suggestion had been made by David Potter last fall that because some parts of the memorial — notably the four plaques that are printed on a vinyl material — won't last forever, a more permanent honor roll would be appropriate. The recent World War II memorial installed in West Rutland was cited as an example of what might be done.

It is noted that while the 18 names of those killed in action in Vietnam from Rutland County has not changed from the initial installation of the memorial in 2000, the Honor Roll of those who served has been continually added to, and additions will continue. The 300-plus names on the Honor Roll would take up a considerable space on a stone monument and involve a corresponding expense.

Andy Megrath presented a quotation of something less than \$15,000 for a single slab of U.S.-quarried Gem Mist granite on a foundation, with lettering, setting of the monument, and landscaping, with a bronze eagle on top. The single slab, however, would not have room for all the names on the Honor Roll and those that might be added.

Jack Crowther acknowledged that the current memorial was prone to deterioration, but he felt that at the same time it was complete in its present state and not lacking of anything. He thought the addition of a monument stone as envisioned would be “redundant.” Instead he suggested the alternative of providing some kind of “perpetual care” in anticipation of the day when Chapter 1 would no longer exist. The matter was tabled, at least for the time being.

Being that April is our Annual Meeting, we proceeded to election of officers. President Andy Megrath stepped down from presiding, turning the meeting over to Jack Crowther, who had been appointed head of the Nominating Committee.

Jack noted that at the March meeting we had nominated the existing slate of officers to continue for another year. The slate consisted of the following: Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; John McLaughlin, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and George Henry, Dick Doyle, Joanne Reynolds, Mike Divoll and Bill Whitney, directors.

Bill Whitney moved to elect the slate with a single vote. John McLaughlin seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. The slate was elected unanimously.

In relation to his long tenure as president, Andy noted that this will probably be his last year as president. He first was elected in 2004. This led to some discussion about the eventual end of Chapter 1, the nation's first Vietnam Veterans of America chapter. Jack Crowther tossed out a few thoughts about finding a suitable spot for some of the chapter's historically valuable items.

In the meantime, however, members are notified that the leadership of Chapter 1 is apt to be open in a year, and those concerned that the chapter continue on should come forward and get involved.

In related business, John McLaughlin and Dave Mathis were named to continue as representatives to the State Council. As Andy Megrath is stepping down from that role, a third spot is open. Attendance at the State Council meetings comes with a \$50-per-meeting stipend. The next council meeting will probably be in June at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington.

In other business, Treasurer John McLaughlin proposed changing credit cards to Heritage Family Credit Union. The change from our Chase card will allow the chapter to accumulate “points” that can be converted to cash. In addition, the chapter’s regular accounts are with Heritage. Jack Crowther moved to have John make the switch, allowing for a suitable overlap with our present Chase card.

The winner of the \$50 attendance lottery was John McLaughlin.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, secretary

**THE CHAPTER WILL HOLD ITS NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, MAY 26, AT 6 P.M.
AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND.
A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL PRECEDE THE REGULAR MEETING.**