



Vietnam Veterans Of America Chapter One

www.vietnamvetschapter1.org
January 2018



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

JAN. 10, 2018

A nominal meeting of the Board of Directors took place. Directors present included President Andy Megrath, Secretary Jack Crowther and Dick Doyle. No business was conducted.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

President Andy Megrath presented the treasurer's report, which showed \$42,100 in the chapter's accounts.



The late John McLaughlin, who served as the Chapter 1 treasurer for several years, brought this Russian SKS rifle back from Vietnam. His son Chris recently presented it to Chapter 1 President Andy Megrath. The chapter has had it placed in the Plexiglas-covered box for display in the Chapter 1 offices. Photo - Andy Megrath.

Andy reported that the chapter had received from the possessions of our late treasurer, John McLaughlin, a Russian SKS rifle, which John had brought back from Vietnam. Andy arranged with Michaels, the art supply and craft store, to put it in a display case for viewing at the Chapter 1 offices.

Information on the SKS can be found online. It is a semi-automatic rifle, uses a 7.62 mm bullet, and was the predecessor of the better known Russian AK 47.

Andy noted it was used by the Viet Cong. Jack made a motion to approve the \$726.78 for the display case, which will also display John McLaughlin's dog-tag. Seconded by Jim Ficken. Approved unanimously. The price represented a steep discount from the original estimate.

Also reported were expenditures for \$660 for Vermont Crane Service for the installation of the new marble sculpture at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial and \$90 for a new American flag. A \$58 POW-MIA flag was donated by Green Mountain Awning Co.

Andy will present chapter certificates of appreciation to Giancola Construction, which owns the crane service; Don Ramey, who carved the new sculpture; Fabian Earth Moving, which transported the sculpture; and Kenny Heleba, who photographed the rededication of the memorial. Andy said Kenny took 450 still pictures, as well as a video.

Andy presented a payment request for \$450 for additional work on the chapter's new website, above and beyond the initial quote. The work included more graphic elements and training for Andy to enable him to

edit the website. Laurie Musick Wright, the graphic artist who set up the website, added a new page, titled "Activism," and set up an email account. Emails sent to the website will be forwarded to Andy's email account. Taking photos of memorabilia, photo processing, and putting in some edits that were made were other tasks Laurie performed. (If other members go on the site, www.vietnamvetschapter1.org, and can identify anyone in the photos, they can notify Andy and he'll add the caption.)

Jack moved to pay LMW Design Inc. \$450 for the additional work. Seconded by Jim Ficken. Passed unanimously.

Andy reported that Frederick Wallis of Belgium, a life member of Chapter 1, had again made a \$100 donation to the chapter. He had checked out the new website and found it "very well done and easy to negotiate." He said he would be in Vermont this coming summer and hoped to visit the chapter.

Andy has attended three of the recent "town meetings" conducted by the VA. They were in White River Junction, Burlington, and Rutland. These are outreach efforts by the VA. Andy noted that the White River facility has an acting director, pending the permanent choice of a new director. The meeting in Rutland Jan. 8 was described as an effort by the VA to receive feedback by vets and allow vets to ask questions as a way to improve VA services.

Andy said the main thing that came out of the meeting in Rutland was the need for better communication. That people call and never have their calls returned was a complaint made, according to Andy. He said the VA intends to add staffing to deal with an overload of work.

Jim Ficken, a new member from Rutland Town, agreed to serve as a director, replacing Mike Divoll, who recently resigned. Jack Crowther nominated Jim to fill the vacancy. Seconded by Dick Doyle. Passed unanimously.

In other business, Andy noted that the chapter had provided \$480 in assistance to pay for heating oil and wood pellets for a chapter member who had asked for assistance. Andy had called directors for approval of the assistance.

Jack Crowther won the \$50 drawing among those who attended.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, secretary,

**THE CHAPTER WILL HOLD ITS NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14,
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.**