



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vietnamvetschapter1.org

JANUARY 2020



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING JAN. 8, 2020

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

Members Bill Ellwood and Tim Lonergan were also present.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter, except for the fact that tonight's meeting was mistakenly printed as Jan. 4. Andy send out an email to notify members of the correct date.

Treasurer Richard Reed presented his report. The total in all our accounts is \$72,777.47. Net income from ripoff tickets sold at Tomasi's bar in Fair Haven stands at \$25,957 for the fiscal year beginning in March. The report was approved unanimously.

Andy Megrath reported that the VVA State Council planned to meet Saturday, Jan. 11, at our offices here in Rutland. Jack Crowther moved that the chapter provide refreshments. Seconded by Richard Reed. Approved unanimously.

We are looking for a vice president. With elections due in April, anyone interested in that office or a seat on the Board of Directors should express their interest.

There was brief discussion of the proposed Vietnam "memory book," the photo history of Vermont with a short section of Vermont content. This was discussed at the November meeting. If the \$250,000 in funding could be found, each Vietnam vet in Vermont would get a free copy. Andy said he would bring the issue up at a meeting the following week of the the Governor's Veterans Advisory Committee.

Elaborating further on the GVAC agenda, Andy said Gov. Scott was supporting three of four current issues the committee is backing. One is a measure to exempt military retiree pay from state income taxes, as is done in the adjoining states of New Hampshire, New York, and Massachusetts. This would encourage military retirees, many of whom are still working, to stay in Vermont. Andy encouraged members to speak to their legislators in support of the legislation.

Another measure with GVAC support is exempting military disability pay from inclusion in the household income form that is filed with state income tax returns. Household income is used to determine property tax rebates for people who meet certain income guidelines. Under the proposal, vets with disability income would not be penalized, as they are now, on their property tax reductions. Gov. Scott reportedly wants to see what the impact is on the state expenses before endorsing the measure.

Two other measures the GVAC supports are including reservists in the education benefits for the National Guard and making the state's military leader, the adjutant general of the National Guard, a position appointed by the governor rather than one elected by the Legislature.

Finally, GVAC wants the state to investigate and implement a reporting system to identify veterans in the state. This would be done by having your veteran status noted on various state forms. "Right now there is nobody in Montpelier that actually knows how many veterans are in the state of Vermont," Andy said. "That's basically what it boils down to."

Bill Ellwood again reported on the "archiving project," which he and Jack Crowther have undertaken to preserve Chapter 1's story. The two have digitally scanned newsletters from 2004 to the present, several dozen photographs, and some other records. With the help of the Rutland Historical Society, some material is now on the Historical Society's website, rutlandhistory.com. Other, more voluminous material will be stored on the website archive.org for permanent storage and access by the public.

Following the presentation, Bill suggested a \$500 donation be made to the Rutland Historical Society as a gesture of appreciation for their help in preserving the Chapter 1 legacy. He noted that the society's members have generously volunteered their time to help us in the archiving process and have let us use their scanning equipment.

Bill's motion to donate \$500 to the historical society was seconded by Jack Crowther. Passed unanimously.

Dick Doyle won the \$50 drawing among those who attended the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, secretary

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, AT 4 P.M.
AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND. A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WILL PRECEDE THE REGULAR MEETING.**