



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vietnamvetschapter1.org

APRIL 2024



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING APRIL 10, 2024

At Chapter 1's April meeting, held on the Zoom app and in person at our office at the VFW, attendees included Bill Ellwood, president; Tim Lonergan, vice president; Richard Reed, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Directors Dick Doyle, Andy Megrath, Michael Murphy, Carl Baldwin, and Cliff Adams. Associate members Joan Ellwood and Penny Baldwin and members Larry Gold, Dave Potter, Jim Philbrook, Shawn Bryan, Gary Herbert, Marty McDonough, Tom Rousseau, and Jim Freese attended, in person or by Zoom.

A nominal meeting of the Board of Directors was held; no business was transacted.

The minutes of the March meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer Richard Reed reported on the chapter's accounts. Richard is planning to invest about half of the chapter's funds in a "term share certificate" very soon. This will earn interest at 4.2 percent over a year's time, compared to the negligible interest earned on a regular savings account. Richard's report was unanimously approved.

Membership Chair Richard Doyle noted the transfer to Chapter 1 of Perry Melvin from his home chapter 829 in Essex Junction. Chapter 829 is closing due to lack of participation. Perry is president of the Vermont VVA State Council. Dick said Chapter 1 has approximately 130 members, a figure that has held steady for some time. He urged each member to try to recruit one member during the coming year. A membership form can be had online at the VVA national website, vva.org, by calling Dick at 802-376-0846, or emailing him at richarddoyle35@comcast.net.

Secretary Jack Crowther, acting as the Nominating Committee, nominated the following officers and directors for the year: president, Bill Ellwood; vice president, Andy Megrath; treasurer, Richard Reed; secretary, Jack Crowther; and Tim Lonergan, Michael Murphy, Carl Baldwin, and Larry Gold as directors. Jack asked for any other nominations, but there were none. Members then voted unanimously for the slate of officers and directors.

Jack presented a proposed change in the chapter bylaws. The proposed change to ARTICLE XI — Expenditures, reads as follows: "2. The president, or vice president in the absence of the president, may authorize expenditures up to a total of \$2,000 between meetings with approval of a majority of officers and board members." The former limit was \$1,000. A motion was made and seconded and approved unanimously.

Jack then presented "guidelines" for approving assistance to individuals or organizations. These had been requested by Treasurer Richard Reed to assure uniformity in the handling of financial requests. The guidelines are as follows:

Requests for Chapter 1 assistance must include:

1. Amount requested and statement of need.
2. Proof of veteran status (individual) or veterans services (organization) or other charitable purpose of the applicant.
3. Individual grants must be made with a co-payee, i.e., landlord, utility company, etc.
4. Organizations must show involvement with veterans or be deemed appropriate by the Chapter 1 Board of Directors.
5. All grant requests must be approved by the Chapter 1 members during regular meetings, except as allowed under Article XI of the Chapter 1 Bylaws.
6. Grant applicants are responsible for providing needed documentation to the Board. It is not the responsibility of the Board or individual members to chase them down.

7. Third party requests may be considered when presented by known parties, i.e, Veterans Outreach, Vet Center, clinic workers, etc.
8. No individual may receive more than three grants unless otherwise approved by the Board.

Dick Doyle moved to approve the guidelines. Seconded by Mike Murphy. Passed unanimously.

Bill Ellwood thanked Tim Lonergan for his service as vice president for the last four years, Cliff Adams as a director for the past two years, and Andy Megrath, serving as a director the past year after 19 years as president and now elected vice president.

By writing, Richard Gallo, Vermont veterans outreach specialist, requested \$1,300 in assistance for a disabled Army and National Guard combat veteran to cover the cost of a partial denture. Richard provided details of the vet's need and available resources. The veteran is unable to work. Motion by Richard Reed to approve the donation. Seconded by Carl Baldwin. Approved unanimously. According to Chapter 1 guidelines, the money will go to the provider of the dental services.

Bill Ellwood proposed a donation to the Rutland Historical Society, which has collaborated with Chapter 1 in the preservation of our records and posting them on their website. The society is hoping to acquire a book scanner and equipment to improve air quality at their building. Andy proposed a \$2,000 donation. Seconded by Mike Murphy. Passed unanimously.

Bill Ellwood made a motion to establish four committees for chapter functions going forward. They include an AVVA Committee for associate members, a Liaison Committee to work with other organizations on joint projects, and a Digital & Technical Committee to handle online matters like the chapter website. Mike Murphy seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. Another committee will likely coordinate visits by members to veterans who are shut-in.

Jack Crowther proposed ordering 50 Chapter 1 patches at \$11 each and 50 Chapter 1 hats at about \$10 each. These will be given to members, one each. Members or non-members wishing to acquire an additional patch or hat will be charged \$10 apiece. Moved by Jack. Seconded by Cliff Adams. Approved unanimously.

Andy Megrath offered his vehicle for the Loyalty Day Parade May 5. We plan to acquire magnetic signs for the car to publicize Chapter 1's presence.

The annual picnic at the Vermont Veterans Home will be held Saturday, June 15. Vietnam vets from around the state assist in providing a picnic for the residents.

Finally, Bill ticked off several other areas for potential Chapter 1 activities. These included 4th of July celebrations, a possible booth at the Vermont State Fair in Rutland, a scheduled Veterans Town Hall in November, an update (probably on Veterans Day) to the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor Roll in Main Street Park, Honor Flights to the memorials in Washington, D.C., social gatherings and/or guest speakers, Zoom presentations on topics of interest, and visits to the state Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Sharon or the Vermont Veterans Cemetery in Randolph. There is an annual Memorial Day ceremony May 31 at the Randolph cemetery at 3 p.m.

Secretary's note: Usually I have a Zoom recording to help reconstruct the meeting while preparing the minutes. This time I failed to record it, so the above were written based on the notes I took. Feel free to suggest any errors or omissions.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE NEXT CHAPTER 1 MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, AT 4:30 P.M.
BY ZOOM AND IN PERSON AT THE CHAPTER 1 OFFICE AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND.**