

NOTES OF VVA STATE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE TELECONFERENCE

The teleconference was held on 26 September 2020 starting at 1115 Eastern Time with 46 participants using both video and telephone connections.

It was arranged by Contina Foster of the VVA HQS staff. Only VVA State Council Presidents and a few uncontested candidates for State Council Presidents who are unelected at the time of the teleconference due to the inability of their state to hold elections.

Chair Rex Moody was in attendance but due to technical difficulties was unable to connect through video. He requested Vice Chair Richard Lindbeck (Wisconsin SCP) to act as moderator. Chair Moody noted that the teleconference was not a formal meeting as contemplated by Section 11 of Article I of the VVA Constitution. He also noted that he hoped the Conference would be able to meet in a manner that it is able to conduct business before the end of the year but he was not confident it would be able. He stated he had appointed Sam Brick (SC SCP) Secretary to fill the vacancy by Steve Mackey's resignation and that Sam would record these Notes. He also requested that the Conference avoid any political discussions or comments due to the overall nature of the VVA being a nonpolitical not for profit body.

Vice Chair Lindbeck started the teleconference by requesting Dan Stenvold (ND State Council President) to lead the Conference in the Pledge of Allegiance which he did. Lindbeck then asked for a moment of silence for POW's and MIA's. He then asked for an officer roll call. The Secretary conducted the call and notes Chair Moody, Vice Chair Lindbeck, Vice Chair Charlie Stapleton (MO SCP), and he as Secretary were in attendance. Lindbeck requested a roll call attendance of the states and Brick called the roll. Thirty-four States were marked attending with thirteen absent. Lindbeck then called for a Round Table discussion of each attending state's notes and items of interest. He started by stating that in Wisconsin he would continue to serve as State Council President until March, 2021 when he hoped an in person election could be held for his successor. He also stated he was due for a recent operation but was found during routine testing to be positive for having the Covid virus. He stated he was and still is asymptomatic.

Vice Chair Stapleton then reported that in Missouri that Covid has not affected many in MO, and out of five VA homes he only knew of two confirmed cases. See further MO input below.

AL Suffered from hurricane and all committee meetings on hold.

AK State Council in person meeting scheduled on Oct 13 near Anchorage. Had to move location due to city government prohibiting meetings due to Covid.

AZ Chapters have had 7 of 8 elections and Council election scheduled for 31 October. Randy Shriver may succeed Gene Crego. Gene noted nine VVA Achievement medals were awarded to VA employees.

- AR Have had no state council meetings since Covid. Experienced drive by flu shots. Arkansas' two veteran homes have had two Covid deaths.
- CA Last State council meeting was in February. In state elections have been rescheduled three times. VA homes have not suffered extreme losses due to Covid. CA has had five of biggest fires the state has ever had this summer.
- CT Three deaths from Covid at the Rocky Hill Nursing Home. They have had no State Council meetings and have elections scheduled for November. CT had Stand-down 2020 on the 24-25 of September.
- FL October State council election pending. John McGinty stands unopposed for President. Four or five members have died from Covid. Of VA homes, 250 have had Covid with 27 deaths.
- GA Similar Covid experiences as Florida. Have not missed council meetings.
- ID June State Council meeting elected Norm Peterson as President. Have had two state chapter meetings.
- IA One chapter president tested positive for Covid. Problems getting a quorum to do business. Two state chapters are meeting.
- KY Covid virus is controlling state activities. Need to keep chapters and members active. Uses chat sessions. Advises for all to wear masks.
- KS All KS VVA reports have been timely filed. KS asks whether Agent Orange News Letters are being received. Five KS VVA members have died and the names are being added to the Bell Tower Memorial. Kenneth Smith, Daniel Corbett, David Moran, Robert Goupil, and Ronnie Warnes. Many RVN veterans are suffering from food insecurity and lack of most important needs. Most urgent needs are gift cards from Walmart, Dillions, and Aldi to assist needy vets with food and gas. KS VVA has made donations of \$19,666.99 from 10/01.2019 to 09/14/2020. Medal Nomination made for John Musgrave, USMC Ret. D Co.,1st Bn., 9th Marines, 3d Marine Division. Three times wounded and disabled at Battle of Con Thien in Nov 1967. KS has info for various contacts re family caregivers, VA network facility locator, and community care. Contact Roland Mayhew at rdmayhew@cox.net for further info.
- MD State Council met September 19 where all Maryland State Council officers were reelected. Chapter 451's VP died from Covid. No other official meetings since February.
- MI First State Council meeting due 27 Sep. Council and chapter boards have been meeting. VSO's to include the State VVA have asked the Michigan governor to open up existing limits on meetings (currently 25%) and some other limitations. Have been advising open air meetings. The Purple Heart in Michigan has terminated its VSO programs. The VVA

- has stepped up to pick up the slack and they have hired five new employees. Notes that current VSO training videos are out of date and expects new ones soon.
- MS See above for Chair Moody and of f19 VA homes in Mississippi, 154 have tested positive with 76 dying and 31 in hospice from Covid. Has no clue when we can have a meeting; hopefully this year.
- MO Also see above for Vice Chair Stapleton. Missouri governor has been an opponent of masks and now has the Covid virus. MO does not allow electronic meetings. Charlie's chapter has had two in person meetings since March.
- NE Nebraska's four chapters have filed all required reports to the HQS. There are no reported deaths from the Covid virus in NE. Of the four VA homes, one currently is adding 30 additional beds to its facility.
- NY Maintaining the status quo. Most chapters not functioning.
- ND Had 92 attend the July State Council Meeting. All chapter elections have been reported. President Stenvold reported he got the Covid virus after attending the national meeting in January and had temperatures of 100.3 to 100.9. He is recovered but still suffers from some shortness of breath. In March North Dakota opened its first National VA cemetery.
- OH Annual elections were conducted at the State Council meeting.
- OK Experienced 10 deaths in June, and in August 35 deaths. Volunteers were brought in by the VA to help with the outbreak in Oklahoma. The hospital in Claremore was hit hard with the 35 deaths. One or more of the volunteers had tested positive and it spread through the hospital. Chapters have not met.
- OR VA homes have had 22 Covid cases with six deaths. State Council last met in June. It used Zillow for meeting. Existing officers to remain in their positions. Chapters are meeting outside as much as possible. Fires starting to diminish.
- PA Larry Googins is new State Council President (is Executive VP). Upcoming PASC conference for 31 Oct-1 Nov is cancelled. Chapters authorized to meet if can meet Covid guidelines. Chapters and Council communicate by newsletters on its web site.
- RI No State Council meetings and VA homes have no current cases.
- SC Elections held in Feb. Some chapters meet in churches or parking lots. All election and financial reports have been filed.
- TN State Council elections were held on June 28, 2020. The new SC President is Michael Cowger. Currently, the State has 27 Chapters, and Cowger has started to visit individual chapters with the caveat that all members must wear masks. One chapter did not, and he did not attend. TN has lost eight members due to COVID; twelve veterans have died in

TN Veterans homes. The State Council has had two Zoom meetings with Chapter Presidents to discuss their status and concerns. Twenty-one veterans organized in TN to lobby in behalf of the State's veterans with their representative in the legislature. As a group, they will meet with both the House and Senate members in February of 2021. Currently The State Council President is the Vice-Chair of the organization. The State Council web site is being re-mapped into a word press format, which allows each chapter to delegate an editor who may post individual articles and update the State Council calendar for any upcoming events without intervention by the TNSC.

TX Buddy Faringer standing in for Kermit Stone who is recuperating from a recent operation and for family care in Steventville, away from his home. An October State Council meeting is cancelled. One chapter held a zoom meeting and elected officers but it was considered unofficial but not before it took over the Chapter's accounts. A new election was held in accordance with guidelines and is attempting to straighten out the financial situation. A convoluted process with the banks. Buddy noted that Louisiana is having a tough time with Terry Courville being trapped in his home for a few days by a fallen tree.

Notes if anyone wants to contribute to the LA State Council send to:
Joe Jinkins
13606 Hico Drive
Baker, LA 70714

UT Held a May State Council meeting. The VA homes has had 295 Covid cases with nine deaths. One home of 80 residents had 41 residents and four staffers test positive. UT is building a War Dog memorial and conducting activities at its RVN replica wall. UT is operating under a colors program for restrictions, mostly Yellow and Green. Its parade has been cancelled. Dennis Howland further reported on the JROTC Program and awards to the top three states. CA, first place; Rhode Island, second, and Utah, third.

VA Reported a declining VA population. The VA governor and his wife tested positive for Covid. There have been no State Council meetings since February and they are attempting to get an OCT meeting going.

WV WV has been fortunate to have had a low Covid impact throughout the state. Elections have been held and of 16 chapters, nine hold meetings outside. The Governor has provided \$5,000 of the Federal Covid state relief funds to each chapter and the State Council. This is to alleviate the lack of a robust funding program during the pandemic.

Vice Chair Lindbeck continued the meeting for an open discussion period.

Topic discussed and other items of interest are:

That the VVA HQS is presuming administrative regularity on financial and election reports.

The Budget's use of professional fees for the various accounts and that they are not transparent as to the actual use of funds.

Dan Stenvold reported that in GA, an RVN veteran was in hospice and mentioned he had never been told thank you for his service. The VVA hurried through an VVA Achievement Medal to present him and when it got to him for presentation, it was three minutes late as the veteran died. The Medal was presented to the family to honor their loved one.

The Conference discussed the budget and the 2021 Convention and that to save funds decisions need to be made soon. It was understood that the VVA Board had this issue on the agenda for its next meeting.

The VVA's Reserve Fund was discussed and its viability and future.

Household Goods State Council distributions from state councils was discussed along with the HHG's program generally.

John Riling noted that he had learned the Minnesota State Council was going to discontinue operations as of the end of March, 2021 and the Conference discussed this.

Vice Chair Lindbeck terminated the teleconference at 1515 after hearing no further comments. He noted there would be a VVA Board meeting on 10 October at 1300 Eastern Time.

Respectively Submitted,
Sam Brick, Secretary