



## Vietnam Veterans of America

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*A Not-For-Profit Veterans Service Organization Chartered by the United States Congress*

### **Vietnam Veterans of America National Board of Directors Meeting January 13, 2017 Approved by Board**

President John Rowan called to order the meeting of Vietnam Veterans of America National Board of Directors on Friday January 13, 2017, at 9:08 am, at the Double Tree by Hilton in Silver Spring, MD. National Chaplain Father Phil Salois delivered the opening prayer which was followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The National Secretary conducted the roll call of the National Board of Directors. Present were:

John Rowan, President	Mike Demske	Felix Peterson
Marsha Four, Vice President	Charlie Hobbs	Dave Simmons
Bill Meeks, Secretary	Sharon Hobbs *	Dick Southern
Wayne Reynolds, Treasurer	Joe Kristek	Dan Stenvold
Dennis Andras	Sara McVicker	Kerwin Stone
Dottie Barickman	John Miner	Craig Tonjes
Tom Burke	Rex Moody	Ted Wilkinson
Richard DeLong	Ron Morgan	Sandie Wilson

*\* AVVA President is a non-voting member of the National Board of Directors*

Present: Joseph A. Sternburg, CFO

Excused: Jerry Yamamoto, Director

Secretary Meeks conducted roll call of the State Council Presidents. Present were:

Alabama	Present	Nebraska	Present
Alaska	Absent	Nevada	Present
Arizona	Present	New Hampshire	Absent
Arkansas	Present	New Jersey	Present
California	Present	New Mexico	Present
Colorado	Present	New York	Present
Connecticut	Absent	North Carolina	Present
Delaware	Absent	North Dakota	Present
Florida	Present	Ohio	Present

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Georgia	Present		Oklahoma	Present
Idaho	Present		Oregon	Present
Illinois	Absent		Pennsylvania	Present
Indiana	Absent		Puerto Rico	Present
Iowa	Absent		Rhode Island	Absent
Kansas	Present		South Carolina	Present
Kentucky	Present		South Dakota	Absent
Louisiana	Present		Tennessee	Present
Maryland	Present		Texas	Present
Massachusetts	Present		Utah	Present
Michigan	Present		Vermont	Absent
Minnesota	Present		Virginia	Present
Mississippi	Present		Washington	Present
Missouri	Present		West Virginia	Present
Montana	Present		Wisconsin	Present

#### **Preliminary Business**

Secretary Meeks submitted a motion to accept the tentative agenda.

#### **Motion 1**

**To accept the BOD meeting tentative agenda as amended by moving the Communication Department report to Saturday morning.  
Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Secretary Meeks submitted the following motion:

#### **Motion 2**

**To accept the BOD meeting minutes from October 21, 2016.  
Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

#### **National President/J. Rowan**

President Rowan presented a written report.

October 26<sup>th</sup> I attended a briefing by the NYC Veterans Mental Health Advisory Committee on the Rand report on the Northport VAMC joint venture with the Northwell Health program for family mental health om Li, NY.

### 3rd Draft

On October 28<sup>th</sup> I gave blood at the Manhattan VAMC as part of the VA's Million Veteran Program.

November 10-11 Mariann and I traveled to DC for the Veterans Day Ceremony at the White House and Arlington.

November 12-15<sup>th</sup> I traveled to Seattle, WA to attend the annual meeting of the American Association of Medical Colleges with Rick Weidman and Tom Berger. We had a table in the exhibit hall and spoke with many leaders in the medical schools.

December 2-4 Mariann and I attended a VVA NYSC Executive Board meeting in Saratoga, NY.

December 5-6 I joined the other Officers in our HQs in Silver Spring, MD to choose the appointees for Panels A & B and other business.

December 7<sup>th</sup> I joined members of Chapter 32 in serving holiday dinner to the residents of the St. Albans Domiciliary.

On December 8<sup>th</sup> I attended a City Council hearing on Intro 1304-A to expand the veterans' real estate tax exemption to include school taxes which would considerably increase the benefit.

December 9<sup>th</sup> Mariann and I attended Manhattan Chapter 126's Holiday Party at the Soldiers/Sailors, Coast Guard and Airman's Club.

On December 14<sup>th</sup> Mariann and I joined Chapter 32 at their Holiday Party and Meeting at the NYS Veterans Home in St. Albans, Queens.

On December 20<sup>th</sup> I attended a Special Community Roundtable with Speaker Melissa Mark-Vieverito in the City Hall Council Chambers. I was able to speak on behalf of the proposed expansion of the NYC Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption.

President Rowan presented the following motions with a second from Secretary Meeks:

#### **Motion 3**

**To amend Motion # 19 from the October 2016 NBOD meeting: To establish two panels: Panel A) will formulate a strategic plan to "Transition" at a time certain in the future to be determined by the working group and communicated to the general membership for approval at a convention; and Panel B) will determine the feasibility of forming, chartering, funding and/or empowerment of a new veterans' organization to perpetuate our legacy and assure the tomorrow of all veterans which will be communicated to the general membership for approval at a convention. The proposed membership on these panels will be presented to the NBOD in January 2017 for approval. By striking in the last sentence of the existing motion after approval; and the chairs will be determined by their respective panels.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**Motion 4**

**To appoint Bob Seal as Chair of Panel A.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

President Rowan stated that after consultation with the Chair of Panel A Bob Seal and with a second from Secretary Meeks, President Rowan made the following motion:

**Motion 5**

**To appoint Jake Barsottini, Ray Breault, Nick DeLeo, John Margowski, Sandy Miller, Jerry Morano, Stephen Brady, Kerwin Stone as members of Panel A, and Rod Farley and Bill Norton as alternate members.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**Motion 6**

**To appoint Francisco Muniz, III as Chair of Panel B.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

President Rowan stated that after consultation with the Chair of Panel B Francisco Muniz, III and with a second from Secretary Meeks, President Rowan made the following motion:

**Motion 7**

**To appoint Robert Barquit, Frank Barry, Jack Mattingly, Jack McManus, Lynn McMillen, Felix Peterson, Jr., Frank Plichta, Dominic Yezzo as members of Panel B, and Ken Holybee and Keith King as alternate members.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

President Rowan presented the following motion with a second from Secretary Meeks:

**Motion 8**

**To appoint Joe Jennings as Chair of the VVA Convention Rules Committee.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

President Rowan presented the following motion with a second from Treasurer Reynolds:

**Motion 9**

**To fund Panel A & B for operations until February 28, 2019 for \$200,000 from funds donated in FY 2017.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**National Vice President/M. Four**

Activities for this period included the following:

- National Office Visits
  - October 17-19    December 5-7    January 9-11
- Activities
  - October 15: Represented VVA at the rededication of the second oldest Vietnam Veteran Memorial in the country located in Brandywine PA. It was found buried under shrubs and weeds while the land was being reclaimed for a shopping mall.
  - October 16: Represented VVA at a reception for WIMSA at the Army Navy Club in Arlington, VA
  - October 20: Represented VVA at American Academy of Nursing ceremony, on its Veteran Committee
  - October 29-30: Attended the PA State Council meeting. Presented updates from the national office.
  - November 4-5: Attended and present at the National Rolling Thunder Annual Convention. VVA again set up our information table. Government Affairs Department and the POW/MIA Committee were also present for presentations.

### 3rd Draft

- November 6: Represented VVA as a member of the Honorary Board of Directors and attended the 2nd annual Philadelphia Veterans Day Parade.
- November 10-11: Attended and represented VVA on the dais at the Washington DC Veterans Day program at the Wall.
- November 17: Represented VVA at the PA Veterans Freedom Medal Honors program for Delaware County, PA.
- December 5-7: Met at VVA National Office with other officers to review the resumes that had been submitted to take part in the selection of two panels as part of the VVA strategic planning process as approved by the Board of Directors.
- December 8: Invited and presented at the Harrisburg, PA VVA Round Table program that brings highlight to military service. Penn State University was also present to video my presentation as it related to its 2017 Vietnam Experience Program to be developed around the release of the Ken Burns documentary on Vietnam.
- Provided an article to Michael Keating for publication in the late fall issue of The VETERAN
- Continue to accumulating information and suggestions for the agenda of the New Board Orientation Program. *Please send any suggestions to me by email...This is an election year and will be important to the new elected leadership.*
- Discussed possible updates and revisions to the Employee Handbook with the Director of Administrative and Personnel Services along with President Rowan.
- Staff presentation on assisting distressed veterans who enter or call the national office for assistance. Presented by Dr. Tom Berger and Vonnie Cogdell, Director of Personnel and Admin. Services.
- October National Committee Chair Luncheon included shared information along with presentation on the convention resolution process, the annual budget preparation and the need to review the committee government affairs legislative priorities.

#### **National Secretary/B. Meeks**

I thank the State Councils and Chapters for their work to reduce the VVA suspension list for no reporting (financial & election).

#### **National Treasurer/W. Reynolds**

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, Inc.**  
**UNAUDITED STATEMENT of ACTIVITIES**  
**For the Nine Months Ending November 30, 2016**

CASH BASIS FYE 2017		% to Date 75.00%
BUDGET	ACTUAL	

### 3rd Draft

#### REVENUE & SUPPORT

CONFERENCE/CONVENTION	50,000	57,310	
CONTRIBUTIONS	1,306,738	1,402,873	
DUES - ANNUAL	150,000	145,972	
DUES - LIFE MEMBER	250,000	178,108	
HOUSEHOLD GOODS DONATION PROGRAM	5,622,000	4,719,641	
PRIOR YEAR EXCESS (Other)	28,708	21,531	
MISCELLANEOUS	20,000	16,198	
ROYALTIES	5,000	1,477	
VSF GRANTS	170,000	164,889	
VVA CAR PROGRAM	382,613	231,269	
VVA VETERAN	181,370	136,717	
USAA/MOA	90,000	55,156	
WEBSITE MARKETING	10,000	8,700	
	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT	8,266,429	7,139,841	86.40%
	-	-	-

#### EXPENSES

OFFICE of the ADMINISTRATION	1,754,562	1,235,202	
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	585,754	436,671	
MEMBERSHIP AFFAIRS	339,268	258,431	
FINANCE DEPARTMENT	2,582,970	2,084,885	
VETERANS BENEFITS	1,121,374	748,941	
COMMUNICATION/PUBLICATIONS	232,804	172,534	
THE VVA VETERAN	804,320	620,133	
OFFICERS	356,676	290,256	
AT-LARGE DIRECTORS	48,500	34,843	
REGIONAL DIRECTORS	99,958	50,184	
STANDING COMMITTEES	269,818	152,201	
SPECIAL COMMITTEES & PROGRAMS	21,381	18,185	
OTHER	116,544	76,344	
TRANSFER to RESERVE ACCOUNT	0	0	
	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENSES	8,333,929	6,178,809	74.10%
	-	-	-

Report on age Demographics  
Members of Vietnam Veterans of America

December 2, 2016

Age Group	Number of VVA Members	Percentage of the Total Known
59 and Under	239	0.32%
60-64	4,960	6.60%
65-69	35,108	46.73%
70-74	26,522	35.30%
75-79	5,754	7.66%
80-84	1,785	2.38%
85-90	608	0.81%
90 and Above	153	0.20%
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>5,206</b>	
Total Known	75,129	100.00%
Total Members	80,335	

**Note: The Unknown data are due to the different data bases VVA has used over time.**

The data shows 82.03% of the VVA Membership is between the ages of 65 and 74.

The *VVA Veteran* published an article in the March/April 2011 issue by Patrick Brady titled "Not Dead Yet" which provides some data on Mortality Rates Among Vietnam Veterans.

Submitted by:  
Dr. Wayne Reynolds  
National Treasurer  
Vietnam Veterans of America

Treasurer Reynolds presented the following motion with a second from Vice President Four:

**Motion 10**

**To approve the MOU with the Veterans Health Council of America, Inc.**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC. AND  
THE VETERANS HEALTH COUNCIL OF AMERICA, INC.**

This Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) is hereby made and entered into, effective January \_\_, 2017, by and between Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. (VVA), a New York not-for-profit corporation and The Veterans Health Council of America, Inc. (VHCOA, Inc.), a Pennsylvania not-for-profit corporation.

**I. Parties:**

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. (hereafter VVA) at 8719 Colesville Road, Suite # 100, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and The Veterans Health Council of America, Inc. (hereafter VHCOA, Inc.) at 8719 Colesville Road, Suite # 100, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

**II. Purpose:**

The purpose of this Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU or Agreement) is to state the agreement between VVA and VHCOA, Inc. and the expectation, responsibilities, and relationship between the parties.

Whereas, VVA has long recognized: (1) that health care for all Vietnam era veterans and their families, as well as health care for veterans of other eras and their families, is a matter of paramount importance; (2) that the rigors and circumstances of military service, including exposure to a variety of toxic substances, give rise to a range of medical problems, diseases, and disorders usually not common to the civilian population; (3) that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) provides health care services and/or benefits for some veterans, but the vast majority (estimated to be 60%+) of veterans do not use the DVA for health care services and the needs of those veterans that it does serve generally overwhelms the capacity of the DVA to meet those needs in a timely manner; (4) that many of the health care providers who service veterans who don't use the DVA are often unfamiliar with or have limited experience with certain health problems that can arise from military service; and (5) that VVA needed to take a leadership role in creating a program that would involve all concerned parties in an ongoing, collaborative effort to address these problems effectively.

Whereas, VVA has launched The Veterans Health Council , whose mission is: (1) To promote greater awareness that certain illnesses, diseases, and disorders have been associated with military service in the several conflicts after the Korean War; (2) To improve health care for veterans by creating an ongoing forum for members of the medical and clinical professions, employee representatives, advocacy organizations, and healthcare firms to discuss, develop, and promote effective efforts to:

- a. inform veterans and their families about health issues and benefits available to them;
- b. educate health care communities about the multiple health issues associated with military service;

### **3rd Draft**

c. develop materials on veterans' health issues for medical schools, nursing schools, teaching hospitals, and related educational outlets; and

d. advocate, among the health care communities and involved interest groups, on behalf of veterans' healthcare initiatives; and

(3) To enhance the likelihood that that veterans get the proper diagnosis and treatment based on the impact of their particular military service;

Whereas, VVA has provided business supports for The Veterans Health Council and the general response of involved veterans, members of the medical and clinical professions, employee representatives, advocacy organizations, and healthcare firms to The Veterans Health Council has been positive and participatory;

Whereas, the development of The Veterans Health Council has matured to the point where interested parties external to VVA want to contribute to an organization that does veterans health care work only and that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) and want to be certain that any such financial support is used for the mission of The Veterans Health Council and not for general VVA support unrelated to veterans health care;

Whereas, to respond to these concerns and to utilize the emerging potential opportunities, VVA has incorporated The Veterans Health Council of America, Inc. in Pennsylvania as a not-for-profit corporation and is in the process of applying to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for recognition of The Veterans Health Council of America, Inc. as an organization with charitable, scientific and educational purposes that are exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), as amended; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties hereby agree as follows:

### **III. Scope of Work:**

- A. VVA shall continue to provide such office space and business support for the VHCOA, Inc. program as is feasible, subject to the financial constraints of its finances.
- B. VHCOA, Inc. shall make every effort to solicit funds for VVA's VHC program; use all funds received for VVA's VHC program for the support of VVA's VHC program; and keep VVA's VHC program fully informed on a regular basis about VHCOA's plans, activities, and accomplishments.

### **IV. VHCOA, Inc. and VVA Logo**

### **3rd Draft**

Although VVA has developed a logo for its VHC program, the VHC program has also periodically made use of the VVA logo to strengthen the public's identification of the VHC as a VVA program. If, in the course of raising funds for VVA's VHC program, VHCOA, Inc. thinks that it would be useful to display the VHC logo and/or the VVA logo, not as VHCOA Inc.'s logo, but to help identify the VHC as a VVA program, VHCOA, Inc. may request permission to use the VHC logo and/or the VVA logo in accordance with VVA's Logo Policy and, if the requested use is consistent with VVA's Logo Policy, VVA's Director of Communications may approve the requested use of the VHC logo and/or the VVA logo. No alteration of the VHC logo or the VVA logo is allowed.

#### **V. Term and Termination:**

This MOU commences on the effective date above and ends on the fifth anniversary of the effective date unless otherwise terminated in accordance with this Agreement. This MOU will automatically extend for successive periods of two (2) years at the end of the then current period unless either VVA or VHCOA, Inc. notifies the other in writing, return receipt requested, at least one hundred and eighty (180) calendar days prior to expiration of this Agreement of the desire not to renew this Agreement (a "Non-Renewal Notice").

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Agreement, either party may terminate this Agreement upon three-hundred and sixty-five (365) calendar days written notice, return receipt requested, to the other party (a "Termination Notice").

#### **VI. VVA Confidentiality:**

VVA acknowledges that, during the course of this agreement with VHCOA, Inc., it may be entrusted with certain business, financial, technical, and other information and material, which are the property of VHCOA, Inc. and which may involve confidential information. VVA agrees that, absent written consent from VHCOA, Inc., it will not communicate or disclose to any third

### **3rd Draft**

party, or use for its own purposes independent of the VHCOA, Inc., any of the non-public aforementioned information or material, except as required by law. Upon cancellation or termination of this Agreement, VVA shall promptly return to VHCOA, Inc. all non-public VHCOA, Inc. property, the originals of any written business records of VHCOA, Inc., and ensure that any VHCOA, Inc. proprietary information maintained on computer or computer media, which are or were subject to VVA's custody or control, are obfuscated in a manner acceptable to both parties and shall certify that this has been done, after diligent search and inquiry, to the best of his knowledge and belief.

#### **VII. VHCOA, Inc. Confidentiality:**

VHCOA, Inc. acknowledges that, during the course of this agreement with VVA it may become privy to certain privileged and/or confidential VVA information including but not limited to confidential business, financial, technical and other information and material including key contacts and vendors of VVA. VHCOA, Inc. agrees that they will not communicate or disclose to any third party, or use for its own purposes independent of VVA, any of the aforementioned information or material unless expressly permitted by written consent. Upon cancellation or termination of this Agreement, VHCOA, Inc. shall promptly return to VVA, any and all privileged information and refrain from use of same.

#### **VIII. Assignment:**

VVA may not assign any of its responsibilities under this Agreement without VHCOA, Inc.'s prior written consent. VHCOA, Inc. may not assign any of its responsibilities under this Agreement without VVA's prior written consent.

#### **IX. Notice:**

All notices or other communications to a party under this Agreement shall be effective only if in writing and delivered to the following person(s) and/or designated representative(s)

### **3rd Draft**

(VVA President, VVA Treasurer, and VHCOA, Inc. Board members,), by most expeditious means available (i.e., facsimile transmission and email):

#### **For VHCOA, Inc.**

Marsha Four

Chair

The Veterans Health Council of

America, Inc.

8719 Colesville Road, Suite # 100

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Cell: (610) 608-6608

Fax: (301) 585-3180

#### **For VVA**

John Rowan

President

Vietnam Veterans of America

8719 Colesville Road, Suite # 100

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Cell: (917) 968-6710

Fax: (301) 585-3180

#### **X. Waiver:**

The failure of either party to insist upon strict compliance with any of the terms, covenants, or conditions of this Agreement by the other party shall not be deemed a waiver of that term, covenant, or condition. Nor shall any waiver or relinquishment of any right or power at any one time or times be deemed a waiver or relinquishment of that right or power for all or any other times.

#### **XI. Governing Law:**

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed under the laws of the State of Maryland.

#### **XII. Severability:**

### **3rd Draft**

If any provision of this Agreement is unenforceable under applicable law, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

#### **XIII. Binding Agreement:**

This Agreement will insure to the benefit of and will be binding upon the parties, their heirs, assignees, successors, subordinates, and agents.

#### **XIV. Continuation:**

Subject to the Term and Termination provisions set forth above in Article IV of this Agreement, the parties may by mutual consent extend and amend this Agreement in writing and signed by the parties.

#### **XV. Default or Material Breach of Contract:**

If either party defaults or materially breaches any provision of this Agreement, the complaining party shall serve or deliver to the other party a written notice of such material breach or default, giving the other party thirty (30) days within which to cure the default or material breach and to comply with the terms of this Agreement. Failure to correct such material breach within the above-stipulated time shall be grounds for termination of this Agreement in accordance with this Agreement, and shall render the party at fault liable to the other party for damages occasioned by such material breach of default, to include reasonable attorneys fees and costs incurred in the enforcement of the provisions of this Agreement.

#### **XVI. Integrated Agreement:**

This Agreement sets forth the terms agreed upon by the parties with respect to the subject matter of this Agreement and supersedes all prior oral or written agreements, arrangements, and communications between the parties concerning such subject matter. No modification or waiver of any of the terms of this Agreement shall be valid unless in writing and signed by the parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties to this Agreement have affixed their signatures below:

### 3rd Draft

Veterans Health Council of America, Inc.

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Marsha Four

Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_

John Rowan

President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

President Rowan presented the following motions with a second from Director DeLong:

#### **Motion 11**

**To retire Motion # 5 of April 2008 as follows: “To approve a Veterans Health Council (VHC) program and to establish a VHC cost center to be funded by specific donations from the Veterans Support Foundation as well as any other donations specified for the VHC.”**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

#### **Motion 12**

**To modify Motion # 7 of July 2008 as follows: “To endorse the creation of the Veterans Healthcare Council as a program of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. and to approve the creation of a new cost center with a proposed budget funded primarily by external contributions.”**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

### 3rd Draft

#### **National Chaplain Report/Fr. P. Salois**

I am continuing to work on my Taps file and the report for The Veteran.

#### **Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America/ S. Hobbs** ***HAPPY NEW YEAR!***

Since returning home from the October Board meeting, the Board has conducted business and communicated through our online conferencing platform. The minutes from the October meeting have been approved. The minutes and all Officer, Regional, and Committee reports can be read on the AVVA website. ([www.avva.org](http://www.avva.org)). All budget proposals were due to the Finance Committee by December 1<sup>st</sup>. We worked diligently until the week before Christmas; we took two weeks off to be with our families during the holidays and the New Year.

In October, the Board approved the Cathy Keister *SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE* award. Nominations will be accepted beginning January 2017. Criteria and nomination form can be found on our website. We hope to have our first recipient at the 2017 Convention in New Orleans. The *SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE* is a very prestigious award; second only to the Commendation Medal.

In November, AVVA attended the ceremonies in Washington DC and worked in the Membership/Information tent. Sharon Hodge (AVVA Governmental Affairs Chair) laid the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; Cecilia Essenmacher (Region 5 Director) and Shirley Post (AVVA member) laid a wreath at The Wall and at the In Memory Plaque.

Our holiday edition of our online newsletter, *UPDATES*, is posted on the AVVA website. Elayne Mackey along with the Public Relations Committee do an excellent job in gathering information and publishing our E-newsletter.

AVVA continues to work with JC Cummings, design architect, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) and the governmental agencies in the repair of the In Memory Plaque. The proposed design is now in the hands of the Council of Fine Arts (CFA) for approval.

Fran Davis, AVVA Chaplain, continues to work with Father Phil in sending sympathy cards to the families of all reported deceased members of VVA and AVVA. Fran will also finish this term as our Region 6 Director. Diane Nicholson has resigned; she is needed at home due to the failing health of her husband.

January is budget time for AVVA. Our Finance Committee is meeting to prepare the 2017 proposed budget; the budget will be presented and hopefully approved by the Board during the April meeting.

AVVA is gearing up for the 2017 Convention. Award nominations, bylaw proposals, candidate declarations, and delegate registrations are now being accepted. All information and forms are posted to our website. We will announce our Project Friendship during the April Board meeting.

#### **Sharon**

Sharon Hobbs, President

**Conference of State Council Presidents/R. Moody**

The CSCP had thirty-seven (37) Presidents in attendance at the Thursday meeting and the meeting went well with a full agenda of business. The CSCP approved the proposed revisions to the VVA National Disciplinary Policy, the VVA At Large Membership Policy and The VVA Board of Directors (BOD) Chapter Charter Revocation Policy.

**Veterans Benefits Program Director's Report/K. Yoon**

# **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

## **January 2017**

**Kelsey Yoon, Esq.**  
Director, Veterans Benefits Program  
Vietnam Veterans of America

### **1. Director's Note**

Vietnam Veterans of America's Veterans Benefits Program (VBP) continues to work tirelessly each month to improve the operation and performance of our nationwide program. I am proud of the work that the VBP National Staff and service officers across the country are accomplishing every day. Some notable updates for this quarter include:

- The VBP has decreased its total number of accredited service officers from 1,004 to **584** by cancelling the accreditation of individuals who have retired, resigned, or no longer use their VVA accreditation.
- The VBP submitted proposed revisions to the VVA Service Officer Application, Service Officer Quarterly Activity Report, and VVA Representation Agreement Form for preliminary review by the Veterans Benefits Committee. If implemented, these updated Forms will reduce VVA's liability and increase accountability and transparency of our program.
- The VBP developed a Non-Disclosure Form for non-VVA accredited individuals to assist with scanning and shredding of sensitive claims documents across the country. With the express approval from VA, the VBP is pleased to announce that we can use non-accredited individuals to assist with scanning of claims files into our database. Please contact me for more information.
- Anyone who has a VetPro account can now access every VVA claim entered into the program, regardless of where it was entered and who entered it in. This is an important development and necessary tool to effectively represent veterans across the country.

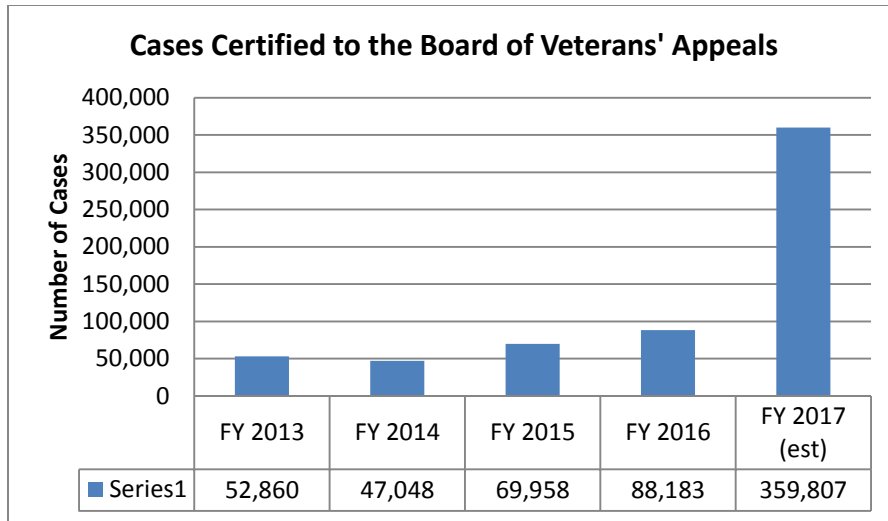
### 3rd Draft

The VBP National Staff continue to consistently achieve a “win rate” above the Board’s total average, which supports the VBP’s reputation as a nationally-recognized program for advocacy on behalf of the veteran community. However, I write this report at a time where urgent support from VVA National is needed as we are **unable to provide adequate claims support with the current level of staffing and high attorney turnover rate**. To ensure that the program is able to continue, it is crucial that VVA embraces the changing nature of the veterans benefits claims process and provides sufficient resources for the program to continue serving the veteran community.

The changing nature of the benefits claims process is something that we all knew was coming. Unlike just a couple of years ago, the claims process is almost 100% paperless, VA is sending claims across state-lines to be adjudicated on a daily basis, and VA has stopped sending paper courtesy copies to local representatives. As you can imagine, these recent changes have a dramatic impact on VVA’s service officer program, in both positive and negative ways. First the positive: because almost all claims files are accessible online, our service officers and attorneys are able to view a claims file immediately, regardless of where it is filed. Now, multiple service officers and attorneys can work on a veteran’s claim at the same time. This real-time access to claims files increases transparency and permits VVA to more accurately track and assist claims anywhere across the nation.

Unfortunately, changes to the claims process have also created new problems for our program: because VVA does not have an active service officer program in every state, claims are often adjudicated in states where we do not have a program. Moreover, the process to obtain a government-issued PIV card to access VA’s databases is cumbersome, and service officers who do not have access to these databases are prevented from viewing a veteran’s claims file.

In addition, VA has publicly announced, for years, that it expects a significant increase in cases at the Board. In anticipation of this increase, VA increased its staff at the Board by 33% since June 2016. In June 2016, the Board employed 651 FTEs, and as of January 10, 2017, the Board now boasts 868 FTEs. Indeed, **VA expects that the number of cases certified to the Board will increase more than 300% in 2017** (see below).



Source: Board of Veterans' Appeals Annual Report (2015)

As of May 2016, VVA is the representative of record for approximately **9,000 active pending original claims and 6,000 active appeals across the country and in Washington, DC.** As shown in the table below, VVA is filing over 100 NODs and almost 100 Form 9s each month. Most of these claims will eventually make its way up to the Board.

VVA Appeals Filed Nationwide (Oct-Dec 2016)		
	NODs Filed	Form 9s Filed
<b>Oct</b>	129	116
<b>Nov</b>	145	69
<b>Dec</b>	143	99

Source: Veterans Benefits Administration (1/4/2017)

With our current staffing levels, it would take our staff more than eight (8) years to process 6,000 appeals. And, this is assuming that we stop receiving new claims, we are able to retain our attorneys for 8 consecutive years, and we do not have any local programs that need emergency assistance.

At the Board, VVA's backlog continues to climb; as of January 10, 2017, we have 1,359 known cases in appeal-status (see below). Currently, VVA's cases are being delayed by *our office*, not VA.

#### **TOTAL APPEALS BACKLOG AT BOARD (1/10/2017)**

LOCATION	Number of cases
Pending Attorney Review	569
Pending Travel Board Hearing	227
Pending Videoconference Hearing	563
<b>TOTAL VVA BACKLOG AT BOARD</b>	<b>1,359</b>

Source: VACOLS; Board of Veterans' Appeals

### 3rd Draft

The VBP National Office at the AMC and Board continues to be a high-volume office as we experience an increased workload on almost all aspects. Some of the responsibilities of the VBP National Office include:

- (1) Representing VVA claimants whose cases are certified to the Board;
- (2) Assisting VVA claimants whose cases are remanded to the AMC;
- (3) Representing VVA claimants residing in areas without a service officer;
- (4) Covering any service officer or program that no longer is able to or wants to work;
- (5) Providing legal support to VVA Service Officers in the field around the country.

Correspondence & Visitors Report (2016)						
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Phone Calls	325	358	265	200	236	258
Voice Messages	146	178	86	116	99	66
Emails	376	374	237	310	319	367
Appointment/Walk-In	3	11	4	7	3	6
Mail/Faxes	91	116	61	59	67	44

Source: VetPro (1/5/2017)

Number of Tracked Appealed Claims by E-VSO (2016)					
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
117	173	94	106	153	169

We continue to methodically track substantive appeals nation-wide. For the months of October, November, and December, our E-VSO tracked over 100 claims each month.

Rating Decisions Reviewed (VSO Queue)					
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
50	92	91	74	73	134

Similarly, the number of Rating Decision reviews continue to increase in volume. Due to the NWQ, we are currently responsible for the following eleven (11) stations: DC RO (372), AMC (397), Baltimore (313), Roanoke (314), St. Louis (331), Honolulu (459) Manila (351), Sioux Falls (438), VACO (101), Wichita (452), and Columbia (319).

These data shows the urgent need for more staffing support and the need to retain attorneys for at least three years. As the VVA Benefits Office of last resort, we must be able to appropriately provide necessary assistance across the country and in Washington, DC.

Although there is still much that needs to be done, with the support of the Veterans Benefits Committee and the Board of Directors, I am confident that we can

### 3rd Draft

continue to improve the services we provide veterans, family members, and our service officers across the country.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Yoon, Esq.  
Director, Veterans Benefits Program

## 2. Notable Achievements

The VBP Team is busy zealously advocating for the veterans we serve. Some notable accomplishments for this quarter of the VBP Team are highlighted below:

- [Administrative Assistant Elaine Chaney](#) assisted in updating all databases, two websites, and managing the cancellation of accreditation of over 400 service officers; **we went from 1,004 to 584 currently active service officers.** Because of Elaine's attention to detail, the VBP list of accredited service officers is more accurate and up-to-date than ever before.
- After a local service officer represented a veteran at a travel board hearing, [Senior National Appellate Attorney Katherine Ebbesson](#) reviewed the file and identified an additional disability that the Veteran qualified for. Because of Katherine's meticulous attention to detail and crafty legal arguments, the Board accepted Katherine's argument and **increased the Veteran's rating for erosive gastritis from 10% to 40% with an effective date going back to 2005.**
- In December 2016, [Administrative Assistant Janelle Hardy](#) helped a Veteran struggling with alcoholism and a mental health condition connected with the Veterans Crisis Line and his VA Medical Center. Due to Janelle's quick thinking and compassionate service, **Janelle helped this Veteran find the mental health and claims support services he urgently needed.**
- [E-Veterans Service Officer Christina Manning](#) made a triumphant return from maternity leave by **assisting 62 Veterans by filing substantive appeals** during the first month of her return. Because of Christina's herculean efforts, these 62 Veterans will all get their due process before the Board of Veterans' Appeals.
- [National Appellate Attorney Jordan Hansbrough](#) wrote an appellate brief in support of a Vietnam Veteran's diabetes claim based on Agent Orange exposure. As a result of Jordan's advocacy, the Veteran's case was **remanded for a new examination to gather information it needed to grant the claim.** The Veteran called Jordan in tears and thanked her for giving him hope.
- In October 2016, newly-hired [VSO Counsel Homer Richards](#) completed a project reviewing VVA's training materials for newly-appointed Service Officers. His

### 3rd Draft

meticulous review ensured that **all of our video training material is legally accurate and covers current law.**

- In October 2016, [Senior National Service Officer Dee Wallace](#) helped a Veteran file an appeal after noticing VA rated this Veteran's PTSD and Anxiety Disorder too low. Dee convinced VA to **grant a 70% rating for PTSD and award Individual Unemployability (100%) based on the Veteran's PTSD, Diabetes, and Peripheral Neuropathy.** Because of Dee's efforts, this Veteran now has enough income every month to pay his bills.

### 3. People & Staff Changes

In November 2016, our most experienced Appellate Attorney, Stephanie Vang, Esq., left VVA to work at the Board of Veterans' Appeals. We wish her well in all of her future endeavors.



In December 2016, [Katherine Ebbesson, Esq.](#) (left), was promoted to Senior National Appellate Attorney. Katherine previously served as a National Appellate Attorney at VVA's Office at the Board of Veterans' Appeals. We congratulate Katherine on her recent promotion!

On January 17, 2017, [Amanda Bedford, Esq.](#) (right), will start as a National Appellate Attorney at VVA's Office at the Board of Veterans' Appeals. Amanda served in the U.S. Marine Corps in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, and she entered law school with the goal of working with veterans. We are excited for Amanda to join our team!



### 4. Financial Awards

For the month of October and November 2016, VVA assisted claimants in receiving a combined total of \$391,740.21 in awards for compensation, pension and DIC claims. Moreover, as of November 2016, VVA is responsible for representing 53,448 claimants receive a total of \$77,705,543.80 worth of monthly disability benefits. Despite not having active programs in every state, VVA is the power of attorney for at least one person in every U.S. state. It is a testament to the broad-reach of VVA's benefits program and reaffirms the urgent need to support our program.

#### AWARDS FOR OCTOBER 2016 WHERE VVA IS THE REPRESENTATIVE

State	TOTAL AWARDS ISSUED	TOTAL BENEFITS	NEW AWARDS ISSUED	NEW BENEFITS PAID
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3rd Draft

VVA Total	53344	\$77,549,364.59	219	\$211,373.30
AL	142	\$235,579.02	0	\$0.00
AK	329	\$394,791.82	10	\$10,839.22
AZ	1541	\$1,969,116.36	12	\$6,285.99
AR	125	\$251,700.46	0	\$0.00
CA	2152	\$4,272,478.18	9	\$10,705.56
CO	238	\$421,302.01	0	\$0.00
CT	343	\$483,479.72	1	\$587.36
DC	38	\$49,062.70	0	\$0.00
DE	378	\$679,227.64	3	\$4,374.71
FL	1454	\$2,463,823.34	3	\$3,876.13
GA	199	\$350,071.50	1	\$1,840.48
HI	110	\$183,406.66	1	\$1,323.09
ID	216	\$295,883.69	1	\$1,654.71
IL	2348	\$3,747,002.49	11	\$15,525.14
IN	1312	\$1,706,468.94	15	\$11,713.20
IA	3349	\$3,921,361.31	14	\$15,908.72
KS	273	\$506,028.05	0	\$0.00
KY	344	\$492,450.10	1	\$407.75
LA	205	\$311,209.13	3	\$782.09
ME	38	\$69,268.12	0	\$0.00
MD	318	\$505,338.45	1	\$917.13
MA	1407	\$2,366,874.20	11	\$13,293.31
MI	3733	\$6,193,823.43	10	\$12,950.33
MN	4700	\$5,667,341.55	8	\$7,475.14
MS	175	\$297,382.32	1	\$407.75
MO	1131	\$1,808,851.74	6	\$6,007.47
MT	127	\$183,095.59	1	\$455.75
NE	927	\$1,061,577.68	3	\$1,047.76
NV	198	\$402,677.48	0	\$0.00
NH	136	\$225,592.52	1	\$455.75
NJ	1399	\$2,669,089.63	5	\$4,785.01
NM	42	\$71,294.65	1	\$836.13
NY	2955	\$4,412,812.76	26	\$21,608.44
NC	365	\$611,328.38	0	\$0.00
ND	34	\$38,553.63	0	\$0.00
OH	1387	\$1,661,635.02	3	\$2,915.59
State	TOTAL AWARDS ISSUED	TOTAL BENEFITS	NEW AWARDS ISSUED	NEW BENEFITS PAID

3rd Draft

OK	174	\$328,321.37	0	\$0.00
OR	272	\$492,773.62	0	\$0.00
PA	4180	\$5,572,763.15	12	\$13,025.31
Puerto Rico	283	\$681,121.41	0	\$0.00
RI	441	\$765,622.95	0	\$0.00
SC	57	\$109,310.95	1	\$1,275.09
SD	26	\$41,621.84	0	\$0.00
TN	802	\$1,419,286.16	5	\$3,037.95
TX	2853	\$4,235,882.35	7	\$3,515.91
UT	79	\$105,602.79	0	\$0.00
VT	206	\$354,430.40	0	\$0.00
VA	322	\$498,361.09	1	\$836.13
WA	5976	\$7,412,665.01	22	\$20,162.53
WV	1178	\$1,887,029.51	4	\$937.32
WI	2415	\$2,804,323.72	5	\$9,603.35
WY	12	\$20,358.87	0	\$0.00
Manila	24	\$56,852.09	0	\$0.00
Other	1	\$1,437.94	0	\$0.00
TOTAL	21677	\$31,763,273.36	89	\$91,753.70
TOTAL	1874	\$3,351,419.73	6	\$5,699.33

AWARDS FOR NOVEMBER 2016 WHERE VVA IS THE REPRESENTATIVE

State	TOTAL AWARDS ISSUED	TOTAL BENEFITS	NEW AWARDS ISSUED	NEW BENEFITS PAID
VVA Total	53448	\$77,705,543.80	190	\$180,366.91
AK	334	\$399,447.28	1	\$836.13
AL	141	\$232,998.39	0	\$0.00
AR	127	\$255,816.58	2	\$4,842.31
AZ	1552	\$1,989,759.18	4	\$4,534.72
CA	2159	\$4,285,588.58	8	\$6,664.80
CO	237	\$416,154.17	0	\$0.00
CT	347	\$487,304.43	2	\$2,170.84
DC	172	\$276,479.00	0	\$0.00
DE	385	\$691,047.88	6	\$6,931.62
FL	1461	\$2,465,914.28	5	\$3,109.70
GA	200	\$353,485.01	0	\$0.00
HI	109	\$182,601.53	0	\$0.00

3rd Draft

State	TOTAL AWARDS ISSUED	TOTAL BENEFITS	NEW AWARDS ISSUED	NEW BENEFITS PAID
IA	3357	\$3,937,605.35	11	\$9,511.29
ID	217	\$297,923.28	0	\$0.00
IL	2353	\$3,751,708.57	12	\$11,643.88
IN	1298	\$1,683,127.42	4	\$3,436.40
KS	276	\$513,814.00	1	\$407.75
KY	349	\$500,773.89	2	\$4,240.00
LA	205	\$310,731.96	2	\$914.59
MA	1419	\$2,376,481.41	9	\$8,212.69
MD	319	\$514,778.70	0	\$0.00
ME	38	\$69,268.12	0	\$0.00
MI	3712	\$6,165,853.15	9	\$7,022.82
MN	4701	\$5,676,076.56	9	\$8,183.12
MO	1131	\$1,813,830.82	4	\$6,262.72
MS	174	\$297,736.45	0	\$0.00
MT	127	\$183,097.82	0	\$0.00
NC	369	\$614,424.60	0	\$0.00
ND	35	\$38,816.86	1	\$263.23
NE	927	\$1,060,707.46	6	\$929.08
NH	134	\$225,163.11	1	\$2,950.47
NJ	1401	\$2,682,186.05	4	\$9,023.41
NM	42	\$71,456.72	0	\$0.00
NV	197	\$404,307.44	0	\$0.00
NY	2974	\$4,429,168.32	16	\$12,052.45
OH	1398	\$1,664,670.68	7	\$2,277.69
OK	171	\$323,990.02	1	\$1,991.71
OR	270	\$491,590.04	2	\$1,898.65
PA	4208	\$5,618,342.06	18	\$22,058.83
RI	441	\$766,844.06	1	\$133.17
SC	58	\$110,147.08	0	\$0.00
SD	25	\$38,981.32	0	\$0.00
TN	806	\$1,418,536.04	3	\$1,422.43
TX	2853	\$4,230,437.09	6	\$4,574.98
UT	81	\$105,960.59	0	\$0.00
VA	327	\$505,359.49	1	\$133.17
VT	209	\$356,365.89	2	\$1,672.26
WA	5971	\$7,404,827.28	22	\$20,774.87
WI	2401	\$2,797,718.44	4	\$5,173.94
WV	1189	\$1,898,063.38	5	\$7,061.66
WY	13	\$23,427.77	0	\$0.00

### 3rd Draft

State	TOTAL AWARDS ISSUED	TOTAL BENEFITS	NEW AWARDS ISSUED	NEW BENEFITS PAID
Puerto Rico	282	\$679,617.70	0	\$0.00
Manila	24	\$58,096.10	0	\$0.00
Other	1	\$1,437.94	0	\$0.00
TOTAL	21720	\$31,835,169.38	70	\$66,372.49
TOTAL	2014	\$3,596,901.92	7	\$3,491.39

#### **HGDP Report/Q. Butcher**

The current revenue picture shows that HGDP is down; the program in/around Washington, DC is going good, that Minnesota may get back in operation and that postal rates are affecting the cost overall.

#### **Government Affairs, Executive Director's Report/R. Weidman**

Mr. Weidman introduced Sabrina Clark, VAVS for the Veterans Health Administration who noted the VAVS strategic goals as leadership, collaboration, impact and result on VA voluntary service.

#### **Meeting recesses: 11:02 am**

#### **Saturday, January 14, 2017**

The meeting of VVA National Board of Directors reconvened at 9:10 am on Saturday, January 14, 2017 at the Double Tree by Hilton in Silver Spring, MD.

The National Secretary conducted the roll call of the National Board of Directors. Present were:

John Rowan, President	Mike Demske	Felix Peterson
Marsha Four, Vice President	Charlie Hobbs	Dave Simmons
Bill Meeks, Secretary	Sharon Hobbs *	Dick Southern
Wayne Reynolds, Treasurer	Joe Kristek	Dan Stenvold
Dennis Andras	Sara McVicker	Kerwin Stone
Dottie Barickman	John Miner	Craig Tonjes
Tom Burke	Rex Moody	Ted Wilkinson
Richard DeLong	Ron Morgan	Sandie Wilson

*\* AVVA President is a non-voting member of the National Board of Directors*

Present: Joseph A. Sternburg, CFO  
Excused: Jerry Yamamoto, Director

Secretary Meeks conducted roll call of the State Council Presidents. Present were:

Alabama	Present		Nebraska	Absent
Alaska	Absent		Nevada	Present
Arizona	Present		New Hampshire	Absent
Arkansas	Absent		New Jersey	Present
California	Present		New Mexico	Absent
Colorado	Absent		New York	Present
Connecticut	Absent		North Carolina	Present
Delaware	Absent		North Dakota	Present
Florida	Present		Ohio	Present
Georgia	Present		Oklahoma	Present
Idaho	Present		Oregon	Present
Illinois	Absent		Pennsylvania	Present
Indiana	Absent		Puerto Rico	Present
Iowa	Absent		Rhode Island	Absent
Kansas	Present		South Carolina	Present
Kentucky	Present		South Dakota	Present
Louisiana	Present		Tennessee	Present
Maryland	Absent		Texas	Present
Massachusetts	Present		Utah	Present
Michigan	Present		Vermont	Absent
Minnesota	Present		Virginia	Present
Mississippi	Present		Washington	Present
Missouri	Present		West Virginia	Present
Montana	Present		Wisconsin	Present

### **Finance Committee Report**

Committee Chair Ned Foote submitted the following motions:

#### **Motion 13**

**Move to approve the changes to the VVA Travel Policy as recommended by the Finance Committee.**

#### **TRAVEL POLICY**

(Approved January 21/22, 2006)  
(Amended Motion # 38, October 12, 2013)

### **BACKGROUND**

A significant percentage of each VVA budget consists of travel-related expenditures. It is imperative that such expenses be as cost effective as possible. Additionally, it is incumbent upon all Cost Center managers to make every effort to ensure that their travel expenses are kept within the parameters of their approved budget lines.

### **PURPOSE**

The VVA Travel Policy provides a mechanism for an established set of rules and procedures for travel-related expenditures. This policy applies to all personnel traveling on VVA funds.

## **EXCEPTIONS**

Once the VVA budget has been approved by the VVA Board of Directors, travel funding within the various Cost Centers has also been approved, further approval, is not needed with the exception of the following:

- \* All international travel funded by VVA must be approved by the Board of Directors in advance and the trip participants must be identified and approved.
- \* If a Cost Center manager is responsible for more than one Cost Center, the manager is prohibited from expending the resources of one Cost Center for the purpose of fulfilling the responsibilities of another Cost Center
- \* For all VVA functions for which there is a “Hotel Master List” of individuals to be paid for by VVA, reimbursement of hotel expenses will not exceed the single room cost of the VVA designated hotel should someone choose to move to another hotel for their own convenience.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **A. Transportation**

1. Travel on official VVA business will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS rate for travel by privately owned vehicle and at the economy airfare rate ONLY for travel by air. In no case will ground travel by privately owned vehicle be reimbursed at more than economy airfare plus other expenses that would be incurred by air travel (baggage fees, mileage or transportation to/from airport, rental car at destination).

2. Airfare travel must be scheduled no later than 21 days in advance of departure. This is to ensure that VVA obtains the best rates for airfare travel. Airfare travel with less than 21 days advance notice must be approved in writing by the Chief Financial Officer.

3. Individuals not adhering to this policy will be responsible for making and paying for their own travel reservations and will be reimbursed to the extent that they would have been had they made their travel reservations prior to the twenty one day cut off.

4. Airline reservations may be made through VVA’s travel agent Let’s Travel (800-659-4441). Travelers may make their own travel arrangements but will not be reimbursed in excess of what the fare would have been through Let’s Travel.

5. When renting an automobile, travelers will be reimbursed only the rate for a full sized car. Any upgrades are the responsibility of the traveler unless prior written approval is obtained from the CFO. Travelers must accept all insurance coverage which the rental company offers.

## **B. Lodging**

1. VVA will pay for a single room for all individuals traveling on VVA funds.
2. If you are on the VVA Hotel Master List, you must use the VVA E-reservation form on the VVA web site.
3. Room reservations must be made at least thirty (30) days in advance of VVA approved functions, e.g., BOD meetings, National Convention, Leadership Conference. (The 30 day cutoff dates are determined by the first day of the block of rooms covered in the contract and will be determined in advance by the VVA Meeting Planner. The day you arrive has no bearing on the 30 day cutoff date.)
4. If you do not make room reservations at least thirty (30) days in advance, you will be responsible for arranging for a room directly with the hotel and you will be responsible for paying the entire bill. You will be reimbursed only the "VVA's negotiated rate" and you will be responsible for the balance of any higher rate.
5. Any person who does not check in on the booked arrival date is considered a "no-show". VVA will be charged Room and Tax for one night. By hotel policy, the remaining days reserved are automatically cancelled. The individual will be responsible for paying VVA for the "no-show" date and, if appropriate, for making new arrangements for any rooms needed. In emergency situations, the traveler should contact the VVA Meeting Planner.

## **C. Per Diem**

Per diem will be paid at the rate established by the Board of Directors.

## **D. Unauthorized Expenses**

1. VVA will not reimburse for airline seat upgrades such as economy plus, etc. In addition, VVA will not pay for additional bags fees (over 1), overweight bags fees, oversized bags fees, ticket change fees and seat selection fees.
2. The VVA Chief Financial Officer is hereby directed to bill individuals for or to deduct from any reimbursement charges incurred in changing airline reservations, "no show" on hotel room reservations, or other charges that are not authorized under the VVA Travel Policy.

## **E. Reimbursement**

1. Reimbursement of authorized expenses must be requested by submitting a Request for Reimbursement / Advance form within thirty (30) working days after completion of the travel. If an expense voucher is submitted more than 30 working days after the expenses are incurred, the expense will only be paid if approved by the CFO.

2. Receipts are required for:

- a. Air travel not arranged through Let's Travel.
- b. Lodging not billed to a VVA Hotel Master Account
- c. Baggage checking fees
- d. Automobile rentals

3. Receipts are not required for per diem reimbursement.

## **F. Expense Advances**

You may receive an advance for official VVA travel by completing the Reimbursement/ Advance form and submitting it to the Finance Department. To allow adequate time for processing, expense advance requests must be received in the Finance Department seven working days prior to commencement of travel.

## **G. Additional Criteria**

1. If a Cost Center Manager, or an authorized alternate, incurs travel expenses while performing duties within another Cost Center's area of responsibility, the expense will be charged to the Cost Center in whose area of responsibility it falls, provided that the manager of the responsible Cost Center has approved the expenditure in advance.

2. The expenditure, use, or obligation of VVA budgeted funds by any incumbent VVA officers, board members and committee/task force chairs for the purpose, in whole or in part of running for, campaigning for, or otherwise seeking an elected position within VVA is prohibited.

a. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to travel charged by any incumbent to a VVA Cost Center during any fiscal year with particular emphasis on travel to Regional and State Conferences.

b. This prohibition further eliminates any and all pro rata of expenses by any incumbent between VVA business and political. The two may not be combined in one trip.

c. Honoraria paid to VVA officers, board members or staff as a result of representing VVA or as a result of using VVA funds to travel are the property of VVA, Inc. and should be turned in to the Finance Department as soon as paid. Honorees will receive an IRS Form 1099 in January or February of the following year. The Chief Financial Officer will provide advice to honorees as to how to make adjustments to personal income tax returns when asked.

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**  
**No: 0**  
**Non Vote: 1**  
**Not Present: 1**

**Motion 14**

**Move to amend the VVA Travel Policy, page 2, Implementation, Section A., number 5, last line to read “Travelers must accept all insurance coverage which the company offers.”**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**  
**No: 0**  
**Non Vote: 1**  
**Not Present: 1**

**Communication Department/M. Porter**

Mokie Porter spoke about the web, social media, news and publications. Mokie Porter introduced an Iraq War veteran Colt Romberger and Colt explained that Expedition Orange is a 3,000 mile horseback ride starting on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 in Santa Monica, CA and ending at the Vietnam War Memorial “The Wall” in Washington, DC. The purpose of the ride is to raise support and awareness for Vietnam veterans suffering from the effects of the toxic chemical Agent Orange. Among the countless veterans exposed was my father, SSgt Cliff Romberger USAF who passed away from a brain disease caused by exposure.

**Veterans Health Council/Dr. T. Berger**

- Thanks to SC Presidents (Steve Mackey of CA) and others...
- sequestration starts after the expiration of the CR this spring...
- MOU between VVA and The Veterans Health Council of America, Inc.
- President Rowan, Rick Weidman and myself attended the annual meeting of the American Association of Medical Colleges where we staffed a booth focusing on veterans’ healthcare
- attended meeting at Orasure (i.e., company that developed the oral test for HIV) re: newest test for hep-C
- meeting with NAVREP re: research at the VA
- participated in several teleconferences re: impact of ACA repeal on veterans’ health
- worked with VVA’s PTSD/SubAbuse Chair for attendance at New York City premiere of a Hollywood movie “Man Down” (deals with PTSD)
- continue to work with VHC partners on hep-C education
- attended the PIPC (Partnership to Improve Patient Care) meeting

-attended the Chronic Pain Summit

-met with MyVA reps

-latest on HEROeS project: A summary of the returns received to date was reviewed. Of note, as of December 5, 29.8% of the Veterans and 31.4% of the US arm returned surveys after the initial mailing of the survey and one reminder postcard. During the call, Westat also stated that the return rate had increased to 31.2% for the Veteran sample and 36.4% for the US group as of the morning of the call. This is considered a very good return rate this early in and looks promising for us to meet our target goals of 40% for the Veteran arms and 60% for the US arm.

-since October BOD meeting, the VHC has received \$95,750.00 in donations

### **National Meetings and Special Events/W. Guidry**

Mr. Guidry noted that National Board Members and Committee Chairs should not send in registration forms for the 2017 National Convention until after the 2017 April National Board meeting.

### **Membership Department/T. Houston**

T. Houston gave a status update on the web roster project that is ongoing.

### **Consent Calendar**

Secretary Meeks submitted the following motion:

#### **Motion 15**

- 1. To revoke the charter of VVA Chapter 681 (NY) as they have voluntarily dissolved their operation and the NY State Council has confirmed the request;**
- 2. Move to approve the changes to the VVA Annual Financial Report Form and Instructions as recommended by the VVA Finance Committee;**
- 3. Move to approve the revisions to the VVA Credit Card Policy as recommended by the VVA Finance Committee.**

#### **VVA CREDIT CARD POLICY**

(Approved 10-7-11, Motion # 28 Consent Calendar # 8)

### **BACKGROUND**

The Vietnam Veterans of American has authorized VVA credit cards to be used by VVA officers as well as selected staff, generally managers. Card recipients are those personnel whose duties are expected to take them on the road frequently or who are expected to have ready credit available in the performance of their duties and have been approved by the VVA President. Holders of VVA credit cards have special responsibilities to assure cards are used for VVA business, only.

### **POLICY**

At no time may a cardholder use a VVA credit card for non-VVA business or personal use.

A lost or stolen company credit card must be reported to the Chief Financial Officer immediately.

On the date an officer ceases to hold any executive officer position, the officer's credit card privileges shall be terminated.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

On a monthly basis, the VVA Accounting Department receives credit card bills for the past month. The Accounting Department will pay these bills in accordance with normal invoice processing, thus eliminating the possibility of "late charges". At the same time two processes take place. A copy of the credit card bill is sent to all cardholders for expense identification and reconciliation AND an Account Receivable is established in the Accounting System to ensure that all card holders have responded with their credit card expense report.

## **CREDIT CARD EXPENSE REPORT**

Credit card holders are to fill out the standard VVA Expense Reimbursement form attaching the copy of their credit card bill along with receipts for all purchases, identifying all purchases and indicating either verbally or numerically which accounts in their respective Cost Center should be charged for the various expenses. The Expense Reimbursement form must be used exclusively for the monthly credit card bill with no other reimbursements included on the form and must be turned in within **ten (10) days** of receiving the bill.

**It is herein emphasized that there must be receipts attached for all charges and all charges must be identified as to purpose.**

## **DELIQUENCY of SUBMISSION of the CREDIT CARD EXPENSE REPORT**

The VVA Accounting Department will advise the VVA Treasurer, through VVA's President and Chief Financial Officer, on a monthly basis as to whether all cardholders have submitted their credit card expense reports. Failure to submit a timely report will result in a warning for the first occasion; revocation for three months of the offending individuals credit card privileges for a second occasion; and permanent revocation for a third failure.

I have read and understand my responsibilities as a VVA Credit Card holder.

---

Signature

---

Date

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Director Wilkinson presented the following motion with a second from Secretary Meeks:

**Motion 16**

**To designate Ned Foote as the Region 2 Alternate Director.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Director Tonjes presented the following motion with a second from Director DeLong:

**Motion 17**

**To designate Ken Rollins as the Region 4 Alternate Director replacing Rex Moody.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**Committee – Motion Only**

PTSD and Substance Abuse – Dr. T. Hall – No motions

Veterans Benefits – T. Burke – No motions

Women Veterans – K. O'Hare-Palmer made the following motions:

**Motion 18**

**To remove Cecelia Essenmacher as a AVVA special advisor of the Women Veterans Committee.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**Motion 19**

**To request to VVA National for \$5,000 financial contribution for 2017 National Women Veterans Summit March 17-18 in Dallas, TX.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Veterans Health Care – S. Wilson – No motions

Government Affairs – P. Peterson had the following motion out of Committee:

**Motion 20**

**To approve the MOU between VVA and the High Ground Veterans Advocacy.**

**NON-FINANCIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
AND  
HIGH GROUND VETERANS ADVOCACY**

This Non-Financial Agreement (NFA) indicates a voluntary agreement to cooperate in the preparation for, promotion of, and implementation of the “High Ground Veterans Advocacy Fellowship Program”, a training course for veterans interested in policy-making. This NFA describes a non-fiduciary partnership between Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and High Ground Veterans Advocacy (HGVA).

Whereas, the founding principle of VVA is “never again will one generation of veterans abandon another;” and

Whereas, the founding principle of HGVA is “to strengthen veteran communities by training advocates and leaders;”

This partnership is being forged to bring two generations of veterans closer together for the purpose of training veterans from across the country to become advocates, activists and grassroots leaders so that they may become more effective leaders, working in their respective communities as members of military and veterans organizations.

*Goals, Services and Outcomes:* The purpose of this partnership is to impart the knowledge and experience of veteran advocates at VVA and other Military and Veteran Service Organizations onto a new generation of veterans; to form strong bonds among veterans affiliated with a variety of military and veterans organizations and of different age groups and military experiences; and to prepare young veterans for the decades ahead where veterans will need new champions to protect and defend the rights, care, and the benefits that all veterans deserve. HGVA and VVA will coordinate efforts to develop and support veteran-friendly advocacy initiatives. The partnership will collaborate in training and mentoring HGVA Fellows by supporting the development, promotion and implementation of joint advocacy campaigns. During that time the HGVA Fellows will be trained to effectively communicate with elected and appointed officials and will spend up to three days participating in Hill meetings with Members of Congress and congressional staffers.

Term One: This NFA shall take effect upon signature of the agreement by both parties. This agreement automatically renews every year, unless either party terminates the NFA.

Term Two: Agency Provisions: HGVA will provide the following services in specific support of this partnership:

1. Once trained to become advocates, HGVA Fellows will work to advance the legislative priorities of VVA and other Military and Veteran Service Organizations through grassroots initiatives upon returning to their respective local communities.
2. HGVA Fellows will work to educate the general public about veterans issues that impact any and all generations of veterans by participating in media interviews as appropriate and will submit opinion editorials in support of VVA-HGVA initiatives.
3. HGVA will share their stories of working with VVA in online, print and social media in order to highlight the importance of veterans joining forces to strengthen their advocacy campaigns.
4. HGVA will “pay it forward” and work to pass on the knowledge and skills gained through this initiative with VVA to other veterans.

Term Three: Agency Provisions: VVA will provide the following services in specific support of this partnership:

1. VVA will advise HGVA’s selection committee in screening and interviewing applicants to the HGVA Fellowship program.
2. VVA will assist in training and advising HGVA Fellows when they travel to Washington, DC, for their week of advocacy training during the week of January 8th through January 14th 2017, at no cost to VVA.
3. VVA will educate HGVA Fellows on VVA’s history of veterans advocacy, and the accomplishments of the organization.
4. VVA will educate HGVA Fellows on VVA’s legislative priorities, and involve the Fellows in advancing VVA’s initiatives.

Term Four: Limits:

1. All parties shall be responsible for their own expenses, to include travel and any other activities performed pursuant to this NFA.

Term Five: Marketing: Each organization may publicly use the name of the other in reference to agreed upon projects to promote the partnership and advocacy campaigns, including online. Each organization must receive written permission before using the other’s logo in any printed or digital material. VVA and HGVA may publicly refer to one another as “partners” in promoting the HGVA Fellowship.

Term Six: Termination: This NFA may be terminated by either party, for any reason, by giving 30 days written notice to the President of each respective organization.

Signatures:

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Kristofer Goldsmith  
President and Chairman  
High Ground Veterans Advocacy  
Date:

John Rowan  
CEO and National President  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
Date:

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Agent Orange/Dioxin – M. Kaderlik made the following motion:

**Motion 21**

**To revise the Agent Orange Education pamphlet to include Gulf War disease and other diseases contributed to service in Iraq and Afghanistan.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Constitution – L. DeLong – No motions

Economic Opportunities – F. Barry – No motions

Veterans Incarcerated – D. Yezzo – No motions

Minority Affairs – Vice Chair D. Simmons made the following motion:

**Motion 22**

**To add Rossie Nance as a member of the Minority Affairs Committee at no cost to National.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Veterans Against Drugs – D. Simmons – No motions

POW/MIA – R. DeLong/G. Coates – No motions

Membership Affairs – C. Hobbs made the following motion:

**Motion 23**

**That incarcerated members upon discharge from prison will be given a one year membership.  
Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Homeless Veterans - S. Miller – No motions

Public Affairs – D. Howland made the following motion:

**Motion 24**

**To remove the current Resource button on the website Home Page and replace it with an “Info For Members” button located at the top of the Home Page between the Donate and Join/Renew buttons. Recommend white letters to fit the red, white & blue format.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

2017 National Convention Planning Committee – D. Stenvold – No motions

Resolutions – D. Southern – No motions

Rules – J. Jennings – No motions

**Unfinished Business**

**VVA National Disciplinary Policy:** Secretary Meeks made the following motion:

**Motion 25**

**To approve the revised VVA National Disciplinary Policy.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**New Business**

**VVA Board of Directors (BOD) Chapter Charter Revocation Policy:** Secretary Meeks made the following motion:

**Motion 26**

**To approve the revised VVA Board of Directors (BOD) Chapter Charter Revocation Policy.**

## **VVA Board of Directors (BOD) Chapter Charter Revocation Policy**

**(Approved 10/10/09)**

**(Amended Motion # 22 - 4/21/12)**

The purpose of this VVA Membership policy is and establish a consistent process by which State Councils may address the possible revocation of a Chapter Charter: 1) A Chapter is placed in a suspended status by the National Corporation for failure to submit an annual Chapter financial report and/or an annual or biennial Chapter election report; 2) A Chapter has become inactive; and 3) A Chapter has decided to voluntarily dissolve.

### **A. Chapters Suspended for Failure to Submit Required Reports to the VVA**

**Financial Report:** A Chapter is placed in a suspended status by the National Corporation for failure to submit an annual Chapter financial report to both its State Council and with the VVA Finance Department by July 15 of each year as required in **Article IV, Section 1.A of the VVA Constitution**.

**Election Report:** A Chapter is placed in a suspended status by the National Corporation for failure to submit an annual or biennial Chapter election report to both its State Council and the VVA Membership Department not later than July 15 of the year in which the elections take place. As required in **Article III, Section 9 of the VVA Constitution**. Chapter elections are to be held in April. Officers shall hold office for a term of one or two years as specified in the chapter bylaws. Chapters may choose to stagger terms of office for continuity purposes.

1. When a Chapter does not file an election or financial report by the deadline, the National Corporation will notify the Chapter of its suspension and inform them that charges will be filed to revoke the Chapter's charter under provisions of VVA National Disciplinary Policy if the delinquent reports are not filed with its State Council and the VVA Membership Department. The appropriate State Council President and Regional Director will receive copies of this notice.
2. While suspended, a Chapter may continue to use the VVA name and logo and continue to receive unsolicited tax-deductible contributions. The Chapter may not engage in fund-raising activities, regardless of contractual arrangements; receive revenues generated by VVA, to include member dues rebates or Household Goods Solicitation Program funds; send delegates to the National Convention; or send delegates to State Council Conventions. (VVA National Disciplinary Policy) State Council bylaws may also restrict suspended Chapters from participating in certain State Council activities.

While suspended under the provisions of this policy, Chapters may conduct Chapter business only for the purposes of calling meetings for disbursing funds previously raised in VVA's name to pay Chapter obligations unless specifically exempt from this restriction by the National Board of Directors. Such exemptions shall not be granted when suspensions are due to filing of charges or imposition of sanctions under the VVA National Disciplinary Policy. When such exemptions are granted by the National Board of Directors, Chapters may hold business and informational meetings, hold elections, and otherwise engage in organized Chapter activities.

3. Upon notification by the National Corporation that a Chapter has been suspended, the State Council President or designee is responsible for contacting the Chapter Officers/Board of Directors for the purpose of determining the reason the report(s) was not filed as required, and to assist the Chapter in meeting any delinquent reporting requirements.
4. If the State Council President believes circumstances justify it, he/she may petition the National Board of Directors to relieve the Chapter of the responsibility for filing the report(s) in question.
5. If the State Council President determines that the Chapter has become inactive (no longer holds meetings, is unable to establish a quorum to conduct business, the terms of elected officers have expired, etc.), he/she will initiate the procedures in Section B of this policy.
6. If the Chapter fails to provide the delinquent report(s) after being suspended, the State Council and the Regional Director will be notified by the VVA Membership Department, and the State Council or Regional Director may file charges under the provisions of VVA National Disciplinary Policy which addresses the process to be used.

The charge would be GROSS NEGLECT under the Code:

- a. The chapter failed to comply with the duty to submit annual financial report or election report.
  - b. The charge(s) are sustained by the evidence consisting of a copy of the VVA Membership Department notice of non-compliance and suspension which has been verified to be true and accurate and any correspondence between the State Council and the Chapter (including e-mails).
7. The National Secretary under a special exception authorized by Section VIII of the National Disciplinary Policy shall file an SOC against a Chapter or a State Council that has already been suspended for twelve (12) consecutive months for failing to file the annual financial report and/or the election report.

### **B. Chapters That Have Become Inactive**

If the State Council determines that a Chapter has become inactive (no longer holds meetings, unable to establish a quorum to conduct business, the terms of elected officers have expired, etc.), the State Council will:

1. Send a letter to all members of the Chapter calling a special meeting to determine if the membership of the Chapter wishes to continue as a Chapter or decide to dissolve. In accordance with the VVA Constitution, Article III, Section 4.E, notice to the members will be at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting date.
2. If the Chapter members decide to reactivate the Chapter, the State Council will assist the Chapter in meeting any delinquent reporting requirements (VVA; State , Commonwealth, or

Territory, hereafter referred to as “State”; or “Federal”), and in completing any other activities required to resume functioning as a Chapter. This assistance may involve assigning a duly elected or appointed member of the State Council as a temporary mentor, obtaining Chapter records and/or Chapter property from previous Chapter officers, or other assistance warranted by the situation.

3. If the Chapter members decide to disband, the State Council will initiate the procedures in Sections D and E of this policy to dissolve the Chapter, to revoke the Chapter’s VVA Charter, and to dissolve the Chapter’s incorporation within the State.

### **C. Chapters That Decide to Voluntarily Dissolve**

1. A Chapter may initiate voluntary dissolution by a majority vote of members at any regular, annual, or special meeting where a quorum is present.  
Although not required by the VVA Constitution, if the decision is to be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, the Chapter Board of Directors should consider sending a notice at least ten (10) days of advance of the meeting to inform all members that such action is being considered and will be voted on.

If the decision is to be made at an annual or special meeting, notice of the meeting, specifying the purposes for which such meeting is called, the date, time, and place it is to be held, shall be delivered either personally or by mail to each member entitled to vote at such meeting, at least ten (10) days before any special meeting, and not less than thirty (30) days nor more than fifty (50) days before any annual meeting.

If after proper notification has been made by the Chapter for a regularly scheduled, annual or special meeting to discuss voluntarily dissolving the Chapter and the actual meeting fails to obtain a quorum, the Chapter be deemed inactive.

2. The Chapter will notify the State Council by letter of the action determined by the Chapter or the fact the meeting failed to obtain a quorum. Documentation may be requested by the State Council to verify appropriate notice was given and attendance at the meeting.
3. If the Chapter has voted to dissolve or the State Council President has determined the Chapter to be inactive, the State Council will assist the Chapter officers in following the procedures in Sections D and E of this policy to dissolve the Chapter, to revoke the Chapter’s VVA Charter, and to dissolve the Chapter’s incorporation within the State.

### **D. Revocation of a VVA Chapter Charter**

The National Corporation can revoke only a Chapter’s VVA Charter. Because each Chapter is an independently incorporated entity, un-incorporation is under the purview of State laws and regulations. Chapters voluntarily dissolving and State Councils needing to dissolve inactive Chapters or Chapters whose Charter has been revoked must consult with the State office which issues incorporations, and any other State offices which govern non-profit organizations or charitable fund-raising.

The following applies to all Chapters being dissolved, whether as a result of disciplinary action, voluntary action by the Chapter, or when a Chapter is determined by the State Council to be inactive.

#### 1. Revocation of VVA Chapter Charter

- a. Article IV, Section 1, paragraph A of the VVA Constitution allows the revocation of a Chapter Charter upon filing of the charges under the National Disciplinary Policy for failure to file required election or financial reports. In accordance with this provision, the Chair of the National Disciplinary Committee will take action immediately upon receiving charges to determine if the charges are justified under the VVA Constitution and the. See Section 1.C of the VVA National Disciplinary Policy for procedure.
- b. When a Chapter has decided to voluntarily dissolve, the State Council President will forward the notification from the Chapter to the VVA National Secretary requesting revocation of the Chapter's Charter.
- c. When a Chapter is determined to be inactive, the State Council President will request in writing that the VVA National Secretary revoke the Chapter's Charter. The letter of request should include the circumstances (period of time during which no meetings have been held, date of expiration of the terms of the last elected officers, etc.) and efforts the State Council has made to contact the Chapter, and whether Chapter property/records/etc. were located and secured.
- d. The VVA National Secretary will notify the State Council and the VVA National Membership Director of the revocation. The National Membership Director will include all documentation in the Chapter file and annotate the file and the database to indicate the date of Charter revocation.
- e. The State Council will notify all Chapter members of their status as VVA members, that the Chapter has been dissolved, and that all members will revert to at-large status unless they wish to transfer to another Chapter.

### **E. Dissolution of a Chapter**

Dissolution of a Chapter requires several steps: 1) review and compliance with any state law/regulation pertaining to Chapter dissolution; 2) notification to the Federal Internal Revenue Service and notification to the VVA Finance Department of Chapter dissolution; 3) the actual disposition of Chapter assets and records; and 4) disposition of Chapter financial accounts.

#### 1. Chapter Dissolution With the State

As State laws vary, the State office which incorporated the Chapter must be contacted to determine what steps must be taken. If the Chapter is voluntarily dissolving, the Chapter officers should complete this process. If the Chapter is inactive or non-functional, the State Council is responsible for completing the process.

a. Answers to the following questions should be obtained:

- What is the process to un-incorporate?
- What forms/ documents must be filed?
- Are there fees?
- Does state law/regulation dictate disposition of property/assets and records?
- Does the State dictate a process that must be followed (e.g., if monetary assets must be donated to a charitable organization, does state law/regulation dictate how that charity is chosen?
- For Chapters numbered 1 through 799, could the assets be donated to the parent organization (i.e., the State Council or VVA National)?
- What final reports (annual report, tax returns, etc) need to be filed?

## 2. Chapter Dissolution With the Federal Internal Revenue Service

- a. File final return. Forms 990/990E-Z/~~990PF~~ include a Termination box in the header area on page 1 which should be selected to indicate the organization is ceasing to exist. Form 990 and Form 990-EZ filers must also attach Schedule N, *Liquidation, Termination, Dissolution or Significant Disposition of Assets*. See [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov); search “termination of an exempt organization”
- b. Notify the IRS so that it will no longer expect the chapter to file annual returns. To do this, send a letter to:

### EO Determinations

Internal Revenue Service  
Exempt Organizations Determinations  
P.O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201

The following items must be submitted with the request:

- 1) A list of the last set of officers or trustees and their daytime telephone numbers
- 2) One of the following:
  - a) Articles of Dissolution filed with state officials
  - b) Minutes of the meeting where the vote was taken to dissolve (signed and dated by an officer)
- c. The VVA Finance Department will be notified so that the Chapter will not be included on the annual list sent to the IRS of which Chapters and State Councils are covered by VVA's group exemption letter.

## 3. Disposition of Chapter Assets and Records

- a. Any such distribution of Chapter assets will be determined by the State Council and/or members and this decision should be recorded in the State Council meeting minutes.

- b. For Chapters numbered 1 through 799, disposition of Chapter assets is by State law/regulation. If not specified by State law/regulation, Chapter assets and records will revert to the State Council.
- c. Disposition of assets should be documented in the Chapter records.
- d. Disposition of Chapter records is up to the State Council unless otherwise prescribed by State law or regulation.

#### 4. Disposition of Chapter Financial Accounts

To determine disposition of Chapter financial accounts for Chapters numbered 1 through 799 and Chapters numbered 800 and above, the State Council will initiate the procedures in Section E of this policy.

- a. All financial assets remaining after paying expenses associated with dissolution (e.g., fees to un-incorporate, legal or accountant fees if incurred) of the Chapter is by State law/regulation.
- b. When all obligations have been settled, all financial accounts must be closed and the final statements included in the Chapter financial records.

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**VVA At Large Membership Policy:** Director Hobbs made the following motion:

#### **Motion 27**

**To approve the revised VVA At Large Membership Policy.**

#### **VVA At Large Membership Policy 08/10/10**

The VVA Membership Affairs Committee has developed a written guideline or policy pertaining to at large members in order to clarify procedure for the VVA Membership Department staff to properly record the membership in the VVA database.

The relevant parts of the VVA Constitution state: Article I National Provisions, Section 3 – Membership, paragraph C:

**C. The Board of Directors shall have the authority to designate classes of members, and the dues, entitlements, eligibility requirements, and available services concerning such members,** and shall have the authority to restrict from membership a person or group of persons

when, in their judgment, admission of such person or persons would be inconsistent with, or detrimental to, the purposes, principles, objectives, or goals of the Corporation or otherwise. and

Article I, Section 6 – National Conventions, Paragraph C, item number 2:

**"Each State Council President shall be entitled to one (1) vote at the National Convention. In addition, each State Council shall be entitled to one (1) vote for each full block of one-hundred (100) members of Vietnam Veterans of America, who are either not affiliated with a Chapter or who are members of a Chapter whose membership is less than twenty-five (25) as set forth above."**

This policy defines: 1) the options available to new or current VVA At Large members; 2) inclusion for delegate representation at National Convention; 3) dues rebates; 4) transfer of membership; and 5) change of status upon chapter charter revocation.

#### **Options Available to New or Current VVA At Large Members:**

Any new VVA member who requests to be in an At Large status will be offered the opportunity to be affiliated with any Chapter/State of his/her choosing by letter from VVA National.

Current At Large members shall remain at their present status in the VVA database unless they request a transfer which is covered under "Transfer To or From Chapter" section of this policy.

**Delegate Representation:** At Large members will be credited to the state roster of his/her choice and included in membership counts for representation at VVA conventions.

**Dues Rebates:** At Large members will be credited to the state roster of his/her choice and counted for dues rebate that will be sent to that State Council.

**Transfer To or From Chapter:** all At Large members whether new or current VVA members must submit signed membership transfer form before the transfer will be recorded in the VVA database. The only exception would be no member transfers prior to VVA Convention as per the Credentials Committee Guidelines.

**Options Upon Chapter or State Council Charter Revocation:** upon Chapter charter revocation, chapter members will be offered the option of affiliating with another chapter/State of his/her choice. If no choice is made, the member will be recorded as At Large status in the State of the chapter which was revoked.

Upon State Council charter revocation, At Large members will be offered the option of affiliating **with a chapter** of his/her choice or to become an at-large member in another state of his/her choice.

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#### **Example Letter At Large Membership:**

April 27, 2017

Dear At-Large Member:

We recently received your application for membership in Vietnam Veterans of America as an at-large member. While we have processed your application as an at-large member, we encourage you to review the enclosed list of VVA Chapters that are located near you and consider joining a VVA Chapter. Should you have interest in becoming actively involved with VVA sponsored events, you can contact your local VVA chapter to let them know you are interested in attending a meeting or joining the chapter. You may also want to ask them when and where their meetings are held.

Also, you can find the most current listing of chapters in your state on our website at [www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org). If you have any questions, please call Khaila Hamilton, Membership Coordinator at 1-800-882-1316, extension 120. Thank you very much for joining VVA and Welcome Home.

Sincerely,



Priscilla Wiley  
Membership Affairs

Enclosure

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Director Barickman presented the following motion with a second from Director Stone:

**Motion 28**

**To form a committee to incorporate At Large Director language into the unapproved Regional Director Handbook document. This will be one handbook.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

Director Barickman presented the following motion with a second from Director Stone:

**Motion 29**

**To appoint committee members at no cost to National the following members: Dick Southern, Ted Wilkinson, Kerwin Stone and Dottie Barickman.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**Committee – Reports Only**

PTSD and Substance Abuse – Dr. T. Hall – Verbal

Veterans Benefits – T. Burke – Verbal

Women Veterans – K. O'Hare-Palmer – Verbal

Veterans Health Care – S. Wilson – Verbal

Government Affairs – P. Peterson – Verbal & written

Agent Orange/Dioxin – M. Kaderlik – Verbal & written

Constitution – L. DeLong – Verbal & written

Economic Opportunities – F. Barry – Verbal & written

Veterans Incarcerated - D. Yezzo – Verbal

**Meeting recesses for lunch: 12:04 pm**

The meeting of VVA National Board of Directors reconvened at 1:20 pm

**Committee – Reports Only**

Minority Affairs – Vice Chair D. Simmons – Verbal

Rules – J. Jennings – Verbal

Veterans Against Drugs – D. Simmons – Verbal

President Rowan ruled that D. Simmons could present the following motion under Committee Reports:

**Motion 30**

**To remove Paul Crowell from the Veterans Against Drugs Committee.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

POW/MIA – R. DeLong/G. Coates - Verbal & written

Membership Affairs – C. Hobbs – Verbal & written

Homeless Veterans - S. Miller – Verbal

Public Affairs – D. Howland – Verbal

2017 National Convention Planning Committee – D. Stenvold - Verbal  
Resolutions – D. Southern – Verbal

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bill Meeks, Jr." in a cursive script.

Bill Meeks, Jr.  
National Secretary  
Approved: 04/07/2017