



## Vietnam Veterans of America

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8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100, Silver Spring, MD 20910 • Telephone (301) 585-4000

Main Fax (301) 585-0519 • Advocacy (301) 585-3180 • Communications (301) 585-2691 • Finance (301) 585-5542

[www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)

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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  
August 8, 2017  
Approved by Board**

President John Rowan called to order the meeting of Vietnam Veterans of America National Board of Directors on Tuesday August 8, 2017, at 4:11 pm, at the Marriott Hotel in New Orleans, LA. National Chaplain Father Philip 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	Patti Dumin *	Dick Southern
Marsha Four, Vice President	Charlie Hobbs	Dan Stenvold
Bill Meeks, Secretary	Sharon Hobbs *	Kerwin Stone
Wayne Reynolds, Treasurer	Joe Kristek	Craig Tonjes
Dennis Andras *	Sara McVicker	Ted Wilkinson
Dottie Barickman	Rex Moody	Sandie Wilson
Tom Burke	Ron Morgan	Jerry Yamamoto
Richard DeLong	Felix Peterson	
Mike Demske	Dave Simmons	

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

*\* Alternate Region 1 Director designated by John Miner*

*\* Director Dennis Andras arrived late*

Present: Joseph A. Sternburg, CFO

Excused: Director John Miner



**Affidavit of John Rowan, National President, Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.**

John Rowan, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

1. I am the National President of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. (VVA). The purpose of this affidavit is to comply with the requirements of Article I, Section 4.G. of the VVA Constitution which authorizes VVA's President to submit a question to the VVA Board of Directors for a vote in between Board meetings when he determines that the matter requires the Board's immediate attention.

2. On June 7, 2017 the National Board of Directors was presented with a motion that was seconded by the National Secretary, Bill Meeks, Jr., seeking Board ratification on the following motion regarding obtaining legal representation in order to obtain documents related to the hydrogen bombing incident in 1966, no cost to National. The Board of Directors was asked to submit their vote no later than 8 am on June 10. The motion is as follow:

**Motion1: To authorize VVA to enter into an agreement, at no cost to National VVA, to be represented by The Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization of Yale Law School (LSO) regarding obtaining of documents that relate to the 1966 Hydrogen bomb incident in Palomares, Spain, and its aftermath.**


On June 10, 2017, the National Secretary notified me that the vote of each Board member who voted on the motion was as follows:

<b><u>Board Member</u></b>	<b><u>Motion #1</u></b>
John Rowan	No Vote
Marsha Four	Yes
Bill Meeks, Jr.	Yes
Wayne Reynolds	Yes
Dennis Andras	Yes
Dottie Barickman	Yes
Thomas Burke	Yes
Richard DeLong	Yes
Michael Demske	Yes
Charlie Hobbs	Yes
Joe Kristek	Yes
Sara McVicker	Yes
John Miner	No Response
Rex Moody	Yes
Ron Morgan	Yes
Felix "Pete" Peterson, Jr.	Yes
Dave Simmons	Yes
Dick Southern	Yes

Dan Stenvold	Yes
Kerwin Stone	Yes
Craig Tonjes	Yes
Ted Wilkinson	Yes
Sandie Wilson	No Response
Jerry Yamamoto	Yes

<b><u>Results</u></b>	
Yes	21
No	0
Abstention	0
Non Vote	1
No Response	2

4. As required by Article I, Section 4.G. of the VVA Constitution, I am filing this Affidavit with the National Secretary within seven (7) days of the Board's vote on the motions.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 John Rowan

**Preliminary Business**

Secretary Meeks submitted the following motions with a second from Treasurer Reynolds:

**Motion 1**

**To seat the Alternate Region 1 Director Patti Dumin as requested by Region 1 Director John Miner.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**Motion 2**

**To accept the 2017 August BOD meeting tentative agenda as presented.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**Motion 3**

**To accept the BOD meeting minutes from April 7-8, 2017.  
Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**National President/J. Rowan**

President Rowan presented a written report.

April 20-23 I attended the George Duggins Region III Convention in Frankfort, KY hosted by the KY State Council. As usual, it was a wonderful event.

April 24th I attended the Grant Monument Association at the Cornell Club in Manhattan. They raise funds to help maintain Grant's Tomb. General Patreus was one of the guest speakers. I met Col. Jake Jacobs a MOH recipient from Vietnam who is a VVA member.

April 27<sup>th</sup> Mariann and I met with the Korean Vietnam War Veterans Association in Northern New Jersey at the Ft. Lee VFW Hall. They are all American citizens. They wanted to join VVA but I explained that they had to serve in the US military. However, Kee Kim, the KVNWA Commander also served in the US Army after serving in Vietnam with the Korean Army. I made him a Life Member in VVA.

April 28<sup>th</sup> I attended the Queens Chapter #32 meeting and presented the VVA Achievement Medal to former Chapter President Paul Narson.

May 1 I attended the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of New York with the Masonic War Veterans

May 2nd Mariann and I attended a showing of "VA: The Human Cost of War" hosted by Ms. Lois Pope, who was the benefactor of the Disabled Veterans for Life Monument.

May 5-7 I attended the Region 5 Pre-convention Conference in Columbus, OH.

May 9<sup>th</sup> I spoke before two senior government classes at Cardinal Spellman HS in the Bronx. The kids were interested in what I had to say about the Vietnam War.

May 15-16 I met with VP Four at VVA HQ to review some personnel issues.

May 19-29 Mariann traveled to Hawaii with National Treasurer Wayne Reynolds and his wife Carol and NYSC President Ned Foote and his wife Jane to join in the state's week-long commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vietnam War. We were joined by Region 9 Director Dick Southern and his wife Carol. Part of the celebration was a great parade that had a great enthusiastic crowd.

June 2-5 I went to Sand Point, ID to attend the Idaho SC meeting. It was a great meeting with a good discussion on the “Choice” issue. Chapter 972 has a special program called the Veterans Mobility Corps, which gives veterans donated power wheelchairs. They have done over 100 to date. You can find them on [www.vmc.us.com](http://www.vmc.us.com).

I got there through Spokane, WA and stayed in the Grand Hotel where we will have our 2019 Convention. This is two year old very modern facility which may be the best hotel we were ever in. Spokane is an old city that is redoing itself. The falls on the river across from the hotel are fabulous and will be part of a new riverfront park that is being redone and should be ready when we get there.

June 8<sup>th</sup> I attended a meeting of Post 27 of the Masonic War Veterans of NY.

June 17-19 Mariann and I traveled to Owego, NY to attend a NYSC Council meeting where Ned Foote was reelected NYSC President.

June 23 I attended the Region 8/9 meeting in Denver, CO.

July 5<sup>th</sup> I attended a press conference with Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) regarding Cholangiocarcinoma at the home of VN Vet Jerry Chiano, who has the bile duct cancer. It was covered by local TV news stations and newspapers.

July 13<sup>th</sup> I attended a meeting of the NYC Veterans Advisory Board.

July 15<sup>th</sup> Mariann and I joined Ned Foote and his wife Jane in Fenway Park in Boston for a NY Yankee = Boston Red Sox game. They honored over 1400 Vietnam Vets on the field before the game.

July 19<sup>th</sup> I attended a rededication of the Glendale, NY WWI Monument. Later that day I drove to New Haven, CT to meet with Michael Wishnie and his students from Yale Law School’s Veterans Project along with Rick Weidman, Kelsey Yoon and our old friend Buddy Bucha, MOH recipient, to discuss plans to develop a proposal to totally revamp the VA’s appeals process, including the BVA and CVAC.

July 31<sup>st</sup> I attended a ceremony in the White House for the presentation of the Medal of Honor to James Mc Gloughan an Army medic in Vietnam.

### **National Vice President/M. Four**

Activities for this period included the following:

- Committee Chair Meeting: April 2017 Board Meeting
  - Discussion on Convention Procedures as it relates to their positions and the Amendments and Resolutions.
- Activities

- Continue to assisted with the logistics of the two working groups; Contacting members; establish training arrival/departure dates; coordinating hotel reservations with Wes Guidry; orienting members to national office, the local community; and arrangements for meeting set up and meals.
- April 20-23: Attended Region 3 Annual Conference in Lexington, KY
- April 25: met with Former Vietnam POW, Ralph Galati, who is currently Director of Veteran Services. He has organized a veteran business education program which is part of a consortium of colleges aimed to integrate post 9/11 veterans into corporate America.
- May 5-7: Attended Region 5 Conference in Columbus, Ohio.
- May 11: Gave a video interview to crew from Penn State University for a program in the fall surrounding the release of the Ken Burns Documentary on Vietnam.
- May 15-17: In National Office. President Rowan also at the office. We attended the full Government Affairs staff meeting to get review of current work and discuss priorities. Spoke individually with the Directors of Administration and Personnel Services, Government Affairs, the Veterans Health Council, Communications, Membership, Benefits, Household Goods Donation Program
- May 27-30: in Washington DC for Memorial Day and working at the VVA tent on the mall. Placed wreathes at the In Memory Plaque and the Vietnam Women's Memorial. Represented VVA at the ceremony at the Women's Memorial in Arlington (WIMSA)
- May 30-June 2: Attended the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans Conference
- June 14-16: Attended VVA Senate Testimony delivered by President Rowan in Washington. Also was invited with President Rowen to attend a preview of the Ken Burns Vietnam Documentary. Ken Burns was present and held a Q and A.

**National Secretary/B. Meeks**

The VVA suspension list for no reporting (financial & election) will be coming out after the convention is completed and it may take a couple of weeks before distribution to state councils and chapters.

**National Treasurer/W. Reynolds**

**Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America/ S. Hobbs**

VVA Board:

First of all, it has been a pleasure working with all of the VVA Board. AVVA has spent the last 6 weeks preparing for the Convention. A well-executed Convention just doesn't happen, it takes planning. Below is a synopsis of AVVA's 2015 – 2017 term.

-Sharon Hobbs

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- Suffered the unexpected loss of the National Vice President.
- Elected a new Vice President to fulfill the unexpired term
- Reduced life membership dues permanently to \$100 age 60 and above; \$175 age 59 and younger.
- **SECONDARY PTSD (PTSD '2) PROGRAM:** Our newest peer-support program was launched during the 2016 Leadership Conference in Tucson, AZ; facilitators currently in training.
- **PROJECT FRIENDSHIP:** 2016 *Esperanza En Escalante (EEE)*, Tucson, AZ \$11,000+ raised, *Volunteers of America Greater New Orleans* (collections still in progress)
- **CONDOLENCE CARD PROGRAM:** AVVA's Chaplain worked with Father Phil in sending sympathy cards to the families of all reported deceased members of VVA and AVVA. We averaged 70/month. AVVA now includes a small card in each envelope that encourages loved ones to submit their veteran's name to the *In Memory Registry* if eligible.
- **SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM:** Currently we have eighteen (18) active Service Officers working in ten (10) states; three (3) in the training phase.
- **PAPER SAFE PROGRAM:** We are currently in our fourth (4) printing of the Paper Safe; AVVA continues to give them without charge to our members and to all veterans.
- **HELPING HANDS GRANT:** (formally Homeless Grant) although no applications were accepted this term, our program remains active and funded.
- **TWO PARTNERSHIPS:** (1) Military and Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN) to provide online peer support services to caregiving members. (2) Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) in the repair of the In Memory Plaque.
- **IN MEMORY PLAQUE PROJECT:** After six long years, a design has been accepted by all three governmental agencies; we move on to the fundraising phase
- **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:**
  - 2-hour Board Orientation in Oct 2015 & 2016
  - "At-large Elections" (classroom)
  - "Legislative Advocacy" (classroom)
  - "More Than a Name Badge" (classroom)

- “Budgets & Finance” (online)
  - “PTSD ‘2” (classroom)
  - “Electronic Motions” (classroom)
  - Pre-planning for the 2017 National Convention (online)
- **INCORPORATIONS:** New incorporated chapters this term. AVVA Chapters 240 & 1004 in TN; AVVA Chapter 975 in AZ; AVVA Chapter 1079 in Utah; AVVA Chapter 805 in OR; and AVVA Chapter 415 in Pennsylvania.
  - **TOXIC EXPOSURE COMMITTEE:** Participated in 52 Faces of Agent Orange Town Hall meetings across the US.
  - **MEMBERSHIP:** Over 9,200 members; and all-time high.
  - **UPDATES** (e-newsletter): Seven (7) issues posted on the AVVA website
  - **PAPER SAFE GRANT:** AVVA received a \$10,000 grant from the National Foundation for Veterans & Families (NFVF) for the fourth printing of the Paper Safe. NFVF is a 501(c)(3) foundation and is the fundraising arm of AVVA.
  - **FOUR EDUCATIONAL BROCHURES:** added PTSD ‘2 and Legislative Priorities. Continue supplying Spousal Benefits and Agent Orange to our membership.
  - **DONATIONS:** \$1,000 to the *Veterans Voice Writing Project.*; \$2,000 to *Esperanza En Escalante* (Project Friendship- Tucson, AZ); \$1,000 to the *In Memory Plaque*; \$2,000 to *Volunteers of America* (Project Friendship- New Orleans, LA)
  - **LEGISLATIVE ACTION:** Actively participated in “call-in” to Congress Days supporting S901 & HR1769 (Toxic Exposure & Research Act of 2015)
  - **SPONSORED SEMINARS DURING 2016 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE** (Tucson, AZ): “*Recognizing and Living with Secondary PTSD*” and “*Proud of our Past; Poised for our Future*”.
  - **WEBSITE:** Over 140,000 visits since its debut in 2013.
  - **VENDORS:** Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with (1) *Ideal Images* for women’s clothing. And, (2) *Military Best* added the AVVA logo patch, Life member patch, the AVVA Membership pin, the AVVA Life Member pin and the AVVA challenge coins
  - **POLICIES & PROCEDURES:** Numerous policy revisions and the Section 11 addition. (program and committee descriptions)
  - **WEB ROSTERS:** National Membership Department & AVVA introduced real-time roster to our members.



- **DIRECT DEPOSIT:** Implemented in 2016 by the VVA Finance Department. All reimbursements to AVVA Board members are now paperless.
- **VISTA PROGRAM:** Continues to thrive. Over 53,000 reported since its introduction in 2014.
- **NEW AWARD:** Cathy Keister *SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE* Award created and first recipient chosen. Plaque to be hung in National Office after 2017 Convention.
- **MOU with VVA:** Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Vietnam Veterans of America revisited and passed by both organizations in April of 2017.

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

The CSCP will next meet on October 19, 2017 @ the Double Tree by Hilton in Silver Spring, MD.

**Consent Calendar**

Secretary Meeks stated there was nothing turned in for the consent calendar.

**Unfinished Business**

Secretary Meeks stated there was no unfinished business.

**New Business**

**Honorary Life Membership**

Secretary Meeks submitted the following motion with a second from Treasurer Reynolds:

**Motion 4**

**To approve the requests for honorary life memberships.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Requested By</b>
Don Phillips	Chapter 1119 (MO)
Carole Hanson Hickerson	Chapter 858 (HI)
Eddie Mannis	Chapter 1078 (TN)
Michael Rothfeld	Chapter 1084 (FL)
Robert E. Welch	AZ State Council
Jack Hakim	AZ State Council
Sonny Borrelli	AZ State Council

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 22**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 1**

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VVA Gala 2018**

Treasurer Reynolds spoke about the importance of the upcoming event and more discussion by board members followed.

Director Southern made the following motion with a second from Director Wilkinson:

**Motion 5**

**To authorize the National Treasurer to work with the meeting planner to initiate planning for a 40th gala in 2018 and return to the NBOD for discussion/approval.**

**Without objection motion passed.**

**Yes: 23**

**No: 0**

**Non Vote: 1**

**Not Present: 0**

President Rowan made a presentation of appreciation to the members of the 2015-2017 National Board of Directors for their work during the last two years.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Meeks, Jr.  
National Secretary  
Approved 10/13/17