



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 April 12, 2019 Approved by Board

President John Rowan called to order the meeting of Vietnam Veterans of America National Board of Directors on Friday April 12, 2019, at 9:04 am, at the Double Tree by Hilton in Silver Spring, MD. Director Gumersindo Gomez delivered the opening prayer which was followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

John Rowan, President	Skip Hochreich	Dave Simmons
Bill Meeks, Secretary	Sharon Hobbs *	Dick Southern
Dottie Barickman	Francisco Ivarra	Dan Stenvold
Tom Burke	Allen Manuel	Kerwin Stone
Spence Davis	John Margowski	Ted Wilkinson
Richard DeLong	Sara McVicker	Sandie Wilson
Gumersindo Gomez	Charlie Montgomery	
Bob Grabinski	Felix Peterson	

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

Present: Joseph A. Sternburg, CFO

Excused: Marsha Four, Wayne Reynolds, Rex Moody and Father Philip Salois

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

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

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

Preliminary Business

Secretary Meeks submitted the following motions with a second from Director Southern:

Motion 1

To seat Richard Lindbeck (CSCP Vice Chair) for Rex Moody who is excused.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Motion 2

To accept the 2019 April BOD meeting tentative agenda as amended:

1. Striking the Committee Chairs Luncheon.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 21

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 2

Motion 3

To approve the 2019 January BOD Meeting Minutes 1/11/19.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 21

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 2

National President/J. Rowan

President Rowan gave a brief verbal report with a copy passed out.

On January 25-26 Mariann and I traveled to Tioga Downs Casino Hotel to attend the NYSC meeting.

On February 6-7 I went to the Headquarters.

February 28 to March 2nd I joined the other officers to participate in the Finance Committee's Budget Meeting.

On March 6th I travel to DC to present VVA's annual testimony before a joint hearing of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees. I highlighted our concern about the efforts to try and privatize the VA.

On March 6th I visited the Veterans Club and Student Veterans of America meeting at Queens College. Interestingly, one of the attendees was a dependent studying at Queens College on her father's GI Bill. He is still on active duty.

On March 12th I participated in a meeting of the NYC Veterans Advisory Board at the NYU Innovations Lab, a program assisting veteran entrepreneurs and a business incubator program run by Lt. Col. Herndon, NY NG, a member of the VAB.

March 22-24 I attended the George Duggins Region III Conference in Durham, NC. We had some great discussions on the future of VVA.

On Vietnam Veterans Day March 29th I attended Queens Chapter #32's monthly meeting. They were presented a proclamation from Governor Cuomo memorializing Vietnam Veterans Day.

On April 4th Mariann and I attended "Camouflage and Cocktails" a fund-raising reception at the Will Terrace Room at Carnegie Hall sponsored by America's Warrior Partnership. I was invited by Ms. Tiffany Dougherty, an Army veteran and a member of the NYC Veterans Advisory Board. Tiffany is involved in a national veterans' program for First Data, a major financial data corporation. The Honorary Host was Clint Romesha, an Army Medal of Honor recipient.

On April 9th I attended the Queens Veterans Resource Fair at Queens College, my alma mater.

National Secretary/B. Meeks

Secretary Meeks gave a brief verbal report which noted that the 2019 Convention Delegate List had been delivered by mail/e-mail and the Credentials Committee Chair Richard Lindbeck had been provided the current VVA suspension list so delegate list could be cross checked to make sure there are no errors.

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America/ S. Hobbs

AVVA President Hobbs noted with heavy heart that AVVA Vice President Elayne Mackey had passed away on the morning of April 10, 2019. Please keep Steve Mackey and his family in your prayers.

Since returning home from the January VVA Board meeting, the Board has conducted business and communicated through our online conferencing platform. The Officer, Regional, and Committee reports can be read on the AVVA website. (www.avva.org). The Finance Committee, Officers, and I met in January to complete the proposed 2020 budget. The BOD will be asked to accept it during our April board meeting.

IN MEMORY PLAQUE:

AVVA worked Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) and the governmental agencies in the repair of the ***In Memory Plaque***. I am pleased to announce that the rededication is scheduled for 10 am onsite this Memorial Day weekend. VVMF and VVA plan to broadcast live from their Facebook pages. This broadcast will offer all of the ***In Memory*** families the opportunity to attend. We have known since November 2015 that the repair would not be what we had envisioned; however, the plaque will now have a presence and will no longer be overlooked or stood-on by unsuspecting visitors. Without the partnership of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), I believe this project would still be ongoing. Jim Knotts, CEO, has been a true champion for AVVA in this repair.



CONDOLENCE PROGRAM:

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. Jim Knotts, VVMF CEO, has asked AVVA to help get the word out about the ***In Memory Registry***. AVVA now includes a small additional card in each condolence card that will encourage loved ones to submit their veteran's name to the ***In Memory Registry*** if eligible. VVMF supplies the information cards.

SPOUSAL BENEFITS PROGRAM

In an effort to educate and support the families of veterans concerning the benefits available to them through the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America has created a program focused on bringing awareness to what is currently available to the spouse, widow, widower, and family of the veteran. Federal benefits are constant for everyone; state-funded benefits can vary. With that in mind, this program is designed to be implemented at the state and chapter levels where both federal and in-state funded programs are relevant. This program is only available through our website. Included in this program are all the tools needed to plan and execute a seminar.

CONVENTION:

AVVA is gearing up for our 10th National Convention and our 20th anniversary in 2019. Award nominations, delegate registration, and the convention registration forms are still being accepted. All information and forms are posted to our website. By the time this report is distributed, the deadlines for both bylaw proposals and candidate declarations will have passed.

PROJECT FRIENDSHIP:

Volunteers of America Homeless Veterans Program (VOA) is this year's Project Friendship. On Monday before the convention, we are planning an onsite visit. If you are in Spokane and would like to accompany AVVA, please let me know in advance. A

special “thank you” to Sandy Miller (VVA National Homeless Committee Chair) for her recommendation of VOA. Thanks to the generosity of our VVA and AVVA members, we have had unprecedented years: over \$10,000 has been donated each year since 2014. Let’s make this another record year in Spokane! (See handout for details)

LUNCHEON SPEAKER:

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America is proud to announce that Jim Knotts, will be our guest speaker at the 2019 Convention Luncheon. Mr. Knotts is the current President/CEO of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. (See handout for details)



Sharon Hobbs, AVVA President

Conference of State Council Presidents/R. Lindbeck

CSCP Vice Chair Lindbeck noted that there were forty-two (42) presidents in attendance. The Presidents discussed the Vet Center Questionnaire and there was an update on the Welcome Guide.

HGDP Report/Q. Butcher

Quentin Butcher noted that revenues are down almost 9%.

President Rowan presented Quentin Butcher with the VVA Commendation Medal.

Veterans Benefits Program Director’s Report/Felicia Mullaney, Esq.

VETERANS BENEFITS REPORT

April 2019

Felicia Mullaney

Interim Director, Veterans Benefits Program

CONTENT

1. Director’s Note
 - a. IHP Deadlines Update
 - b. AVVA VSO Program Closure
2. VBP Activities
3. Notable Achievements
4. People & Staff Changes

APPENDIX

- i. Service Officer of the Year Nomination Form
- ii. Chairman’s Memorandum on IHP Deadlines

1. Director’s Note

a. IHP Deadlines Update

On March 5, 2019, the Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals ("Board") held a VSO meeting. During this meeting, she announced that the Board will implement a policy enforcing 120 days deadlines for VSO written briefs ("IHPs"), which would become effective on April 1, 2019.

On March 28, 2019, another meeting was held at the Board where VSOs were informed that the effective date for the 120 day deadlines will be pushed back to June 1, 2019. The Board explained that it moved the deadline back because VSOs have not yet been given the necessary tools in VA's Appeals Modernization Act ("AMA") databases to effectively manage AMA cases and meet the deadlines. On March 26, 2019, the Chairman issued a new memorandum on the IHP deadline policy. *See* attached. VVA's position is that there should be no deadlines attached to IHPs, especially not to the claims in our backlog. Many of the other VSOs are also strongly against the Board's policy on deadlines.

As the new effective date for deadlines approaches, the VBP has been working with other VSOs to come to an agreement with the Board on a realistic and reasonable approach to IHP deadlines. As discussions continue, the VBP is doing its best to clear the backlog as quickly as possible and triage its workload in an attempt to minimize harm caused to veterans by the Board's IHP deadline policy.

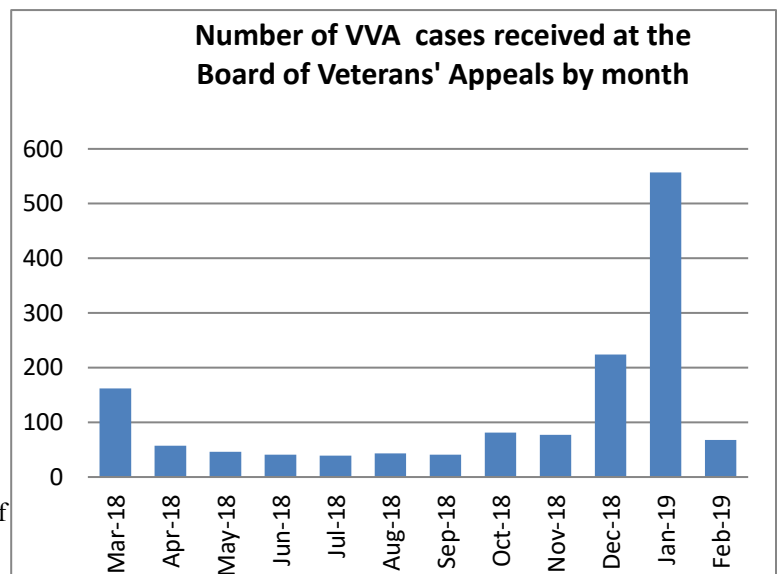
b. AVVA VSO Program Closure Update

Effective March 1, 2019, AVVA's VSO Program has officially closed. We want to thank AVVA for its many years of hard work and dedication to representing veterans for VA benefits. Veterans who were represented by AVVA and who had pending claims with the VA were notified and given an opportunity to switch representation to VVA. All AVVA represented veterans were notified of the closure and given instructions on how to obtain new representation. If you come across a veteran who was represented by AVVA and who is unsure how to find representation, please have them call VVA National at 301-585-4000 and we will get them in touch with a local representative.

2. VBP Activities

The VBP continues to achieve a "win rate" at the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) about 76%. From March 2018 until February 2019, 31.5% of VVA cases were granted and 44.8% of its cases remanded.¹ Since the last report in January 2019, and not including hearing request cases, we have received 625 additional new cases. Due to the large influx of cases, unfortunately, VVA cases are still being held up by our office, not VA.

¹ VVA recorded a denial rate of 17.1% and 6.6% of



TOTAL APPEALS BACKLOG AT BOARD OF VETERANS APPEALS

LOCATION	Number of Cases (Apr '18)	Number of Cases (July'18)	Number of Cases (Oct' 18)	Number of Cases (Dec' 18)	Number of Cases (Jan' 19)	Number of Cases (Apr '19)
Pending Attorney Review	1273	1048	1044	1107	1751	1753
Pending Travel Board Hearing	207	203	185	458	211	218
Pending Video Hearing	725	715	662	631	654	572
Pending Central Office Hearings	12	15	12	9	18	20
TOTAL VVA BACKLOG AT BOARD	2,217	1,981	1,903	1,905	2,634	2,561

Source: VACOLS; Board of Veterans' Appeals

As shown in the table below, VVA filed over 100 NODs and nearly 100 Form 9s each month. It is unclear whether the recent dip in NODs will be a continued trend or a one-time occurrence. Most of these claims will eventually make their way up to the BVA. The below data indicates that VVA's benefits program continues to remain highly active at all levels.

VVA Appeals Filed Nationwide (February 2018-February 2019)		
	NODs Filed	Form 9s Filed
Feb	123	105
Mar	143	95
Apr	130	109
May	136	94
Jun	108	96
Jul	116	104
Aug	111	95
Sep	122	91
Oct	127	92
Nov	117	91
Dec	110	72
Jan	86	66
Feb	61	72

Source: Veterans Benefits Administration (12/2018) and VVA staff reporting

The VBP Offices at the AMO and BVA continue to be high-volume offices as we continue to experience an increased workload on almost all aspects.

Correspondence & Visitors Report (2018-2019)												
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Phone Calls	227	264	284	232	208	263	167	182	196	152	214	177
Voice Messages	91	75	61	130	86	122	103	74	59	63	107	95
Emails	308	262	231	308	240	262	268	294	264	220	326	336
Appointment/Walk-In	8	5	4	0	5	3	3	2	4	3	5	2
Mail/Faxes	92	86	131	106	122	134	77	105	106	86	93	79

Source: VetPro (12/11/2018)

Number of Tracked Appealed Claims by EVSO													
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
134	111	93	147	110	132	116	73	72	71	67	61	58	47

We continue to methodically track substantive appeals nation-wide. From January 2018-February 2019 our AMO office tracked, on average, over 92 appeals each month. We had a drop after August 2018 and September 2018 due to an update in our Chief Veteran Service Officer Notification process, which helped our state programs better manage appeals for their own veterans.

Rating Decisions Reviewed (VSO Queue)													
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
29	16	28	39	46	54	41	50	37	60	57	24	32	30

Fortunately, the number of rating decision reviews our office conducted this year continue to stay low due to the VBMS update of the “Station of Origin” search feature. Now, our service officers in the field can track, monitor, and check *their* claims, regardless of where they are adjudicated.

3. 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:

Deputy Director Attorney Alec Ghezzi submitted an IHP arguing for service-connection for a neck, back, scar, and toe conditions. **The Board granted service-connection** for all four claims. The **Board also agreed to re-instate a claim**, for a gynecological condition, improperly withdrawn by the RO.

Lead Appeals Attorney Alexandra Rigby successfully persuaded the Board that a veteran was near the perimeter of an Air Force Base in Thailand and; therefore, exposed to Agent Orange. The veteran was awarded **service connection** for two presumptive diseases, diabetes and prostate cancer, awarded a rating of 100%, and received a retroactive award of **\$45,607.96**.

Appellate Attorney Aviana Cooper represented the daughter of a deceased veteran, who is now homeless, and *persuaded to the Board to grant DIC benefits*.

Appellate Attorney Fatmata Conteh successfully argued that **two** veterans' PTSD rating should be increased and from an earlier date than previously assigned. The Board granted **both**, resulting in a retroactive payment of **\$61,829.31**, and **\$4,578.51**.

Appellate Attorney Heather Olson successfully argued that a veteran was *unable to work due to his PTSD symptoms* since 2005. This resulted in a retroactive award more than **\$200,000**.

Appellate Attorney Mylee Sabarre was able to *corroborate a veteran's PTSD stressor using a New York Times article*, *New evidence says East German border guards had orders to shoot*, which kept the appeal alive for further development.

Contract Attorney Joshua Leach submitted an IHP in support of entitlement to compensation for muscle fatigue, *the Board granted the claim*, resulting in a retroactive award of **\$28,954.59**.

Electronic Veterans Service Officer (EVSO) Kenny Bouy disputed a Rating Decision because the VA examiner described the veteran's symptoms for migraine headaches as being consistent for a rating higher than the non-compensable rate prescribed by VA. The VA agreed and subsequently notified him that *a 10% rating would be issued for the veteran's disability with an effective date back to October 2017*. This dispute saved the veteran countless years locked in VA's appeals process.

Senior Managing Attorney Homer Richards submitted an IHP for a veteran at the Board who was seeking a compensable rating *for hearing loss and entitlement to TDIU*. The VA said the veteran was not entitled to hearing loss benefits because the examiner was unable to test his left ear due to "cognitive disabilities," even though she successfully tested his right ear. The Board agreed with Homer's argument that a cognitive disability cannot affect one ear but not the other and *ordered a new examination* and precluded the VA from deciding on TDIU until that examination is complete.

VSO Counsel Joe Scott wrote an argument to persuade the VA that the veteran was entitled to unemployability benefits related to his PTSD. After being denied this benefit for years, the brief persuaded the VA that the veteran is unemployable, and he will receive a *retroactive payment of roughly \$22,000*; his monthly compensation will *increase by roughly \$1,700.00 moving forward*.

Senior National Service Officer Dee Wallace helped a veteran file a claim for an increase in PTSD, service connection for hypertension, gout, right shoulder, hearing loss, tinnitus, erectile dysfunction, a finger condition, and unemployability. In April 2017, VA granted tinnitus and hearing loss but denied the other issues. Dee continued to develop the evidence through the Notice of Disagreement stage. In January 2019, the veteran was

granted hypertension and unemployability back to 2015 *with a retro payment of \$79,327.80.*

4. People & Staff Changes



Alec Ghezzi (left) has been *promoted* to **Deputy Director**. As Deputy Director, Alec will be primarily responsible for legal training of new VBP staff and assisting the Director with managing the two downtown offices. If you see Alec around please congratulate him on the promotion or reach out to him by email at aghezzi@vva.org.



Alexandra (Alex) Rigby (right) has been *promoted* to **Lead Attorney**. As the Lead Attorney, Alex is responsible for managing admin duties at the Board office and assisting with the management and training of attorneys at the Board office. If you see Alex around, please congratulate her on the promotion or reach out to her by email at arigby@vva.org.



Brenaé (Bre) Fletcher (left) has left VVA to move on to a new position with the federal government. We wish Bre all the best on her future endeavors and appreciate the time she spent with us here at VVA.

VAVS

Report

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

Rick Weidman spoke about our legislative efforts with Congress on the Blue Water Navy Bill.

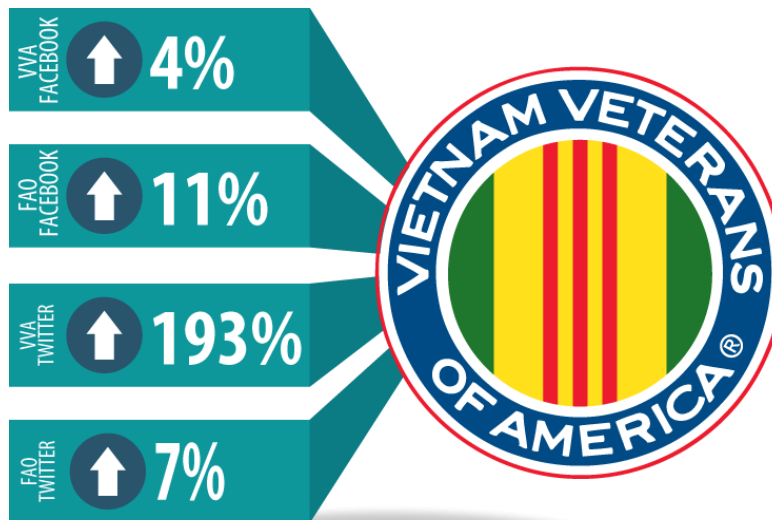
Communication Department/M. Porter

Mokie Porter spoke about the web, social media, news and publications.

COMMUNICATIONS STATISTICS SOCIAL MEDIA, NEWS, PUBLICATIONS

April 12, 2019

SOCAL MEDIA



Our VVA Facebook pages continue to gain followers, as measured by “Likes.”

VVA Facebook FY 2019

The VVA Facebook had a **4%** increase in followers in a 12-month period (March 1, 2018- February 28, 2019) ;

On March 1, 2018, VVA’s Facebook page had **127, 856** likes; on March 1, 2019, VVA had **134, 021 likes**.

We have gained nearly **6, 000** additional followers since March 1, 2018.

Faces of Agent Orange Facebook FY 2019

The Faces of Agent Orange Facebook page had an **11%** increase in followers in FY 2019 (March 1, 2018- February 28, 2019).

On March 1, 2019, FAO Facebook has **19,431** likes, an increase from **17, 499** on March 1, 2018.

VVA Twitter

VVA’s twitter account, on April 1, 2019, had **13,000** followers, up **193%** from April 1, 2018, when it had **4,429** followers) .

VVA has issued over 7,300 tweets. Followers often “retweet” our messages to their followers, some of whom have thousands of followers.

This expands VVA's visibility exponentially, which has reached heights of over **100,000** impressions (or viewers).

Faces of Agent Orange Twitter

VVA's FAO twitter account, on April 1, 2019, had **1,247** followers: This is a **7%** increase from April 1, 2018, when it had **1,165** followers).

VVA FAO has issued over **4,700 tweets**. Followers often "retweet" our messages to their followers, many of whom have thousands of followers.

This expands VVA's visibility exponentially, which has reached heights of over **10,000** impressions (or viewers)!


YouTube

Our Vietnam Veterans of America YouTube channel had **101,021** views and **531** subscribers as of April 1, 2019.


Our Faces of Agent Orange YouTube had **98,747** views and **502** subscribers as of April 1, 2019.



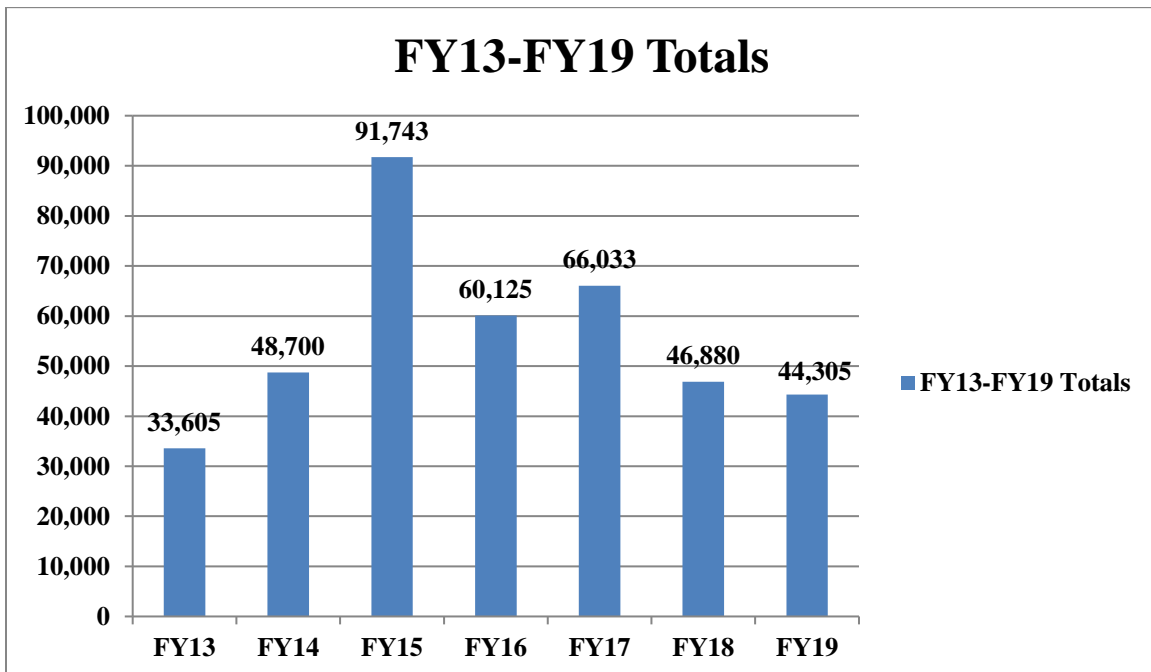
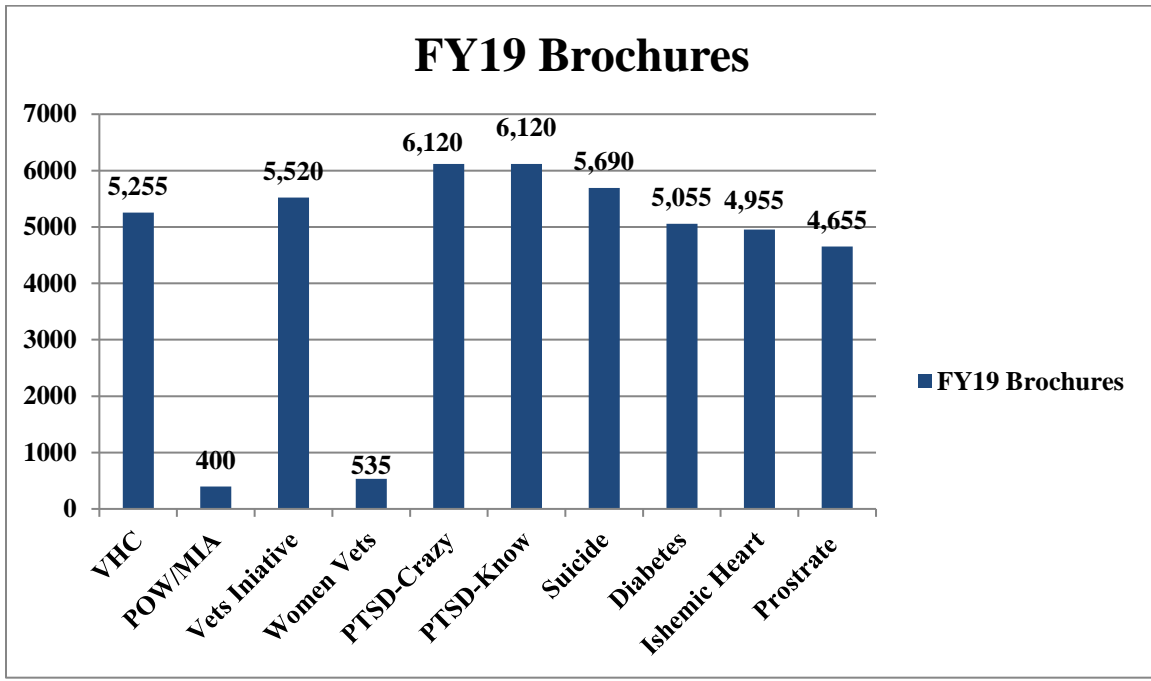
Join VA and VVA for a
Facebook Live event on
**VA Programs to
End Homelessness.**



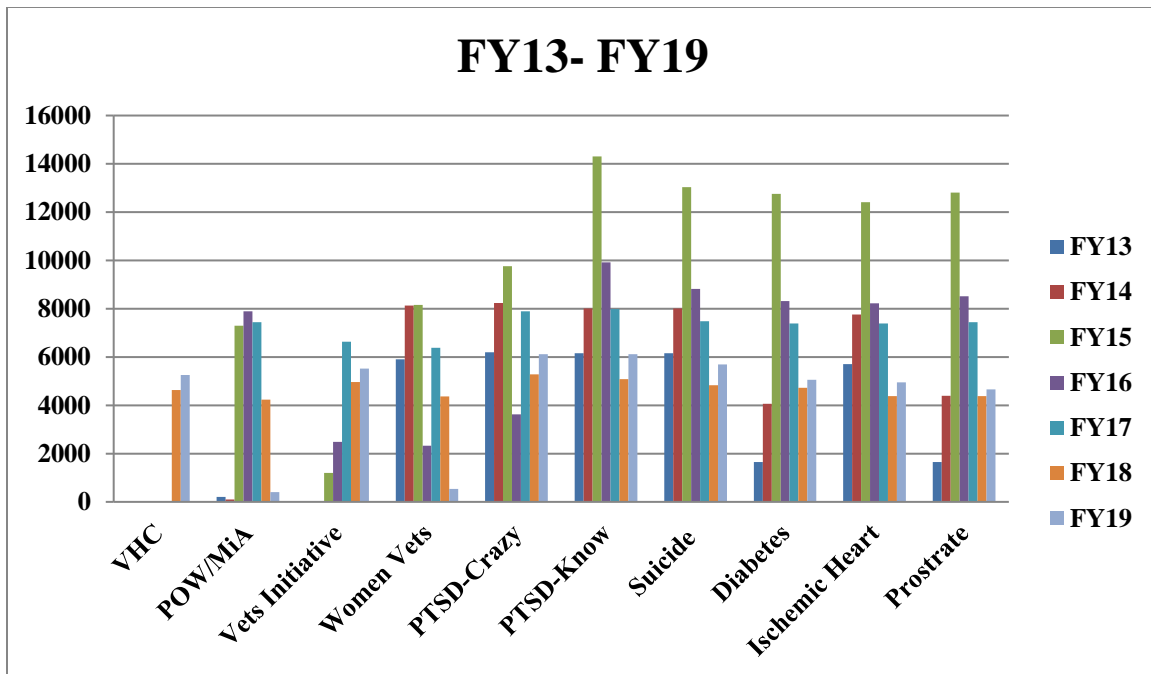
Visit VVA's Facebook page on
February 12 at 2 p.m. EST.



Brochure Totals for Fiscal Year 2019: 44,305 Brochures



Brochure Totals for Fiscal Years 2013-2019: 391,391 Brochures



NEWS

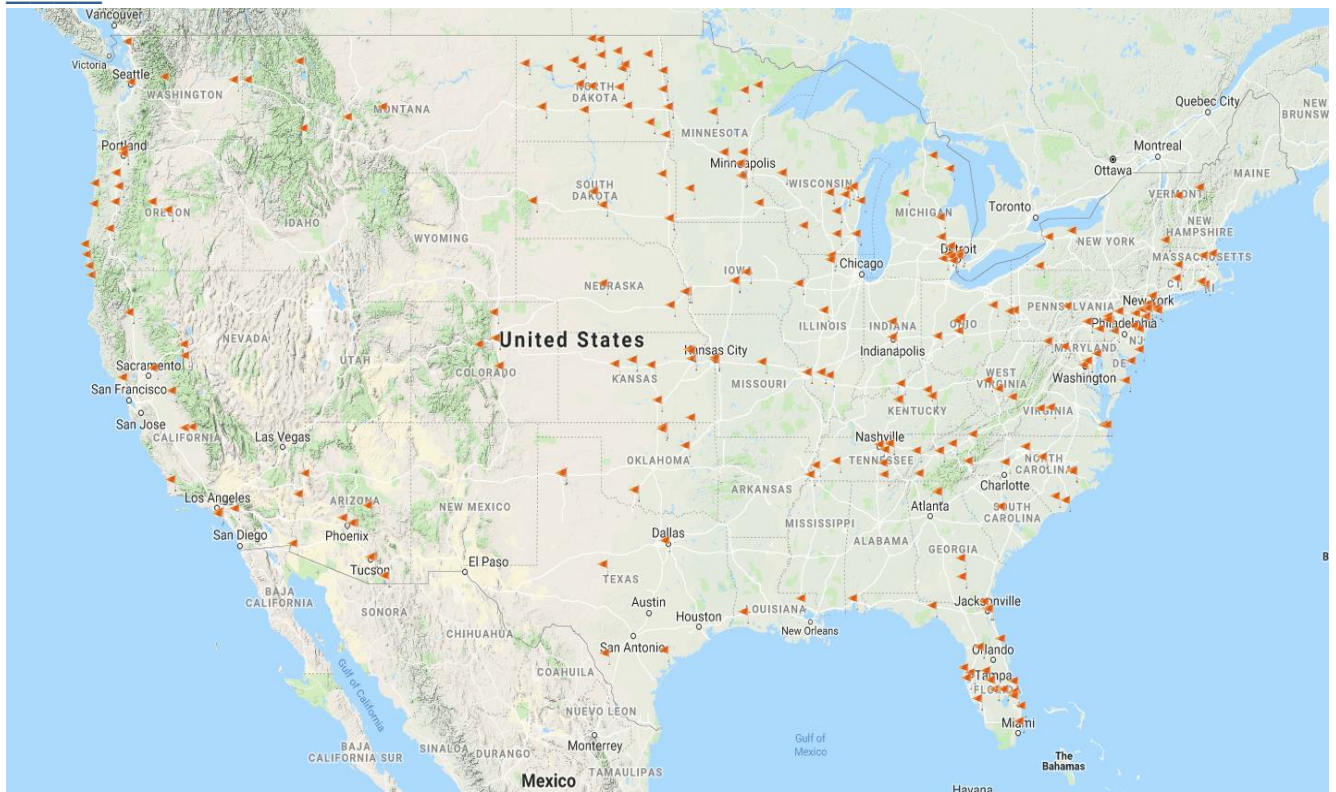
Press Releases

In FY19, VVA's Communications Department issued 29 press releases on topics of import to VVA policy and government affairs. Follow-up outreach was conducted, providing journalists with VVA spokespersons on relevant topics to our veterans— Toxic Exposure--Blue Water Navy veterans, Military Base Contamination; The appointing a VA Secretary;The Mission Act, Military Sexual Trauma, The VA Healthcare System and Privatization, Military Base

Web Weekly

In FY19, we produced and distributed 36 editions of VVA's Web Weekly to our 30,000 + VVA members, supporters, and members of the media. The open rate for the Web Weekly at 30 % remains well above the industry average for non-profits, which is 20%.

AGENT ORANGE TOWN HALLS



Google Map of Agent Orange Town Hall Meetings to date

323 Faces of Agent Orange Town Hall Meetings have been convened since the first on August 1, 2009; In **FY 2019**, **25** town hall meetings were held

There are 10 town hall meetings scheduled in **FY20**.

Agent Orange Folders Sent

30,176 Agent Orange folders have been sent in past 7 years--began tracking in 2012

FY19-2,325 | **FY18-3,240** | **FY17-5,283** | **FY16- 6,762** | **FY15-7,310** | **FY14-3,206** | **FY13-2,050**

Cases of Agent Orange Booklets Sent

119,101 Agent Orange Self-help Guides distributed over past 5 years--began tracking in 2014

FY19-9,103 | **FY 18-17,640** | **FY17-18,583** | **FY16- 29,887** | **FY15-36,810**

MEDALS

Achievement - 229

Commendation– 4

JROTC - 294



TOTAL MEDALS – 527

10 State Councils submitted their top JROTC cadets for consideration in the VVA JROTC Scholarship Program.

Veterans Health Council/Dr. A. Shelton

President Rowan introduced Dr. Artie Shelton as the new Director of the Veterans Health Council who spoke on the upcoming endeavors.

Membership Department/A. Williams

Alphie Williams spoke about shortage of staff causing delays in answering phones messages or e-mails and introduced Sean Webb as the Membership Coordinator.

Working Group I Presentation: Chair Bob Seal delivered a brief summary to the VVA Board of Directors on the workload done by Working Group I and answered questions.

Felicia Mullaney introduced guest speaker Under Secretary for Benefits, Paul R. Lawrence, Ph.D. who spoke to those in attendance at the BOD meeting about his work on Veterans Benefits and answered questions.

Working Group II Presentation: Chair Francisco Muniz III delivered a brief summary to the VVA Board of Directors on the workload done by Working Group II and answered questions.*

**(the full report was delivered to the National Secretary on Monday April 15, 2019 by e-mail which was then distributed to the VVA Board of Directors by e-mail)*

BOD Meeting recessed until Saturday morning: 9:00 am

President Rowan reconvened the meeting on Saturday April 13, 2019, at 9:05 am. Roll Call by Secretary Meeks of the National Board of Directors & State Council Presidents and other preliminary business.

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

John Rowan, President	Skip Hochreich	Dave Simmons
Bill Meeks, Secretary	Sharon Hobbs *	Dick Southern
Dottie Barickman	Francisco Ivarra	Dan Stenvold
Tom Burke	Allen Manuel	Kerwin Stone
Spence Davis	John Margowski	Ted Wilkinson
Richard DeLong	Sara McVicker	Sandie Wilson
Gumersindo Gomez	Richard Lindbeck	
Bob Grabinski	Felix Peterson	

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

Present: Joseph A. Sternburg, CFO

Excused: Marsha Four, Wayne Reynolds, Rex Moody, Charlie Montgomery and Father Philip Salois

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

Alabama	Excused	Nebraska	Present
Alaska	Present	Nevada	Present
Arizona	Present	New Hampshire	Absent
Arkansas	Present	New Jersey	Present
California	Present	New Mexico	Present
Colorado	Present	New York	Present
Connecticut	Present	North Carolina	Present
Delaware	Absent	North Dakota	Present
Florida	Present	Ohio	Present
Georgia	Present	Oklahoma	Present
Idaho	Present	Oregon	Absent
Illinois	Absent	Pennsylvania	Present
Indiana	Suspended	Puerto Rico	Present
Iowa	Present	Rhode Island	Absent
Kansas	Present	South Carolina	Present
Kentucky	Present	South Dakota	Present
Louisiana	Present	Tennessee	Present

Maryland	Present		Texas	Present
Massachusetts	Present		Utah	Present
Michigan	Present		Vermont	Present
Minnesota	Present		Virginia	Excused
Mississippi	Absent		Washington	Present
Missouri	Present		West Virginia	Present
Montana	Present		Wisconsin	Present

Finance Committee Report

Chair Ned Foote made the following motions out of committee.

Motion 4

Move to approve the VVA Investment Policy as amended.

INVESTMENT POLICY

(Approved Motion #7, 6-17-00)

(Amended Motion #6, 4-23-05)

(Amended Motion #4, 4-17-10)

(Move to continue as written – Motion # 5 CC # 8, 1-9-16)

PURPOSE

Recognizing changes have occurred over the years, updates to the Investment Policy have become necessary to accommodate current investment thinking. The policy provides operational guidelines for the investment of VVA funds. These invested funds include but are not limited to the “Cash-Life Membership Fund”, and “Cash-Reserve Fund”. It should be noted these funds do not include the operational funds of VVA, nor do they include HGDP funds. This document articulates VVA's investment goals, policy, plan, and establishes an oversight Investment Sub-Committee of the Finance Committee.

GOALS

The goals of VVA's investment policy are as follows:

1. To invest VVA's non-working and reserve funds.
2. To maintain the security of funds by diversifying investment.
3. To provide for the growth of funds through investment policy.

INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The Investment Sub-Committee was established within the Finance Committee to oversee VVA's investments. The Investment sub-committee is required to report to the VVA Board of Directors through the Chair of the Finance Committee and should be a portion of the Committee report. The Chair of the Finance Committee, the Chair of the Investment Sub-Committee and the National Treasurer of VVA work closely with the Chief Financial Officer of VVA in

recommending and authorizing implementation of investment policy. The Investment Sub-Committee is free to seek the advice of outside sources such as VVA's auditor, banker, investment broker or any other professionals deemed appropriate.

The Investment Sub-Committee conducts the operational planning and implementation of the VVA investment policy.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

This operational plan is designed to implement an investment policy. The Investment Sub-Committee will provide order and control to the investment of VVA funds.

A. Preservation of Capital

The investment policy concentrates on investing the Funds identified under Purpose. In the case of the Cash-Life Membership Fund annually some assets are converted to cash to enable the annual payment to affiliates. Fund earnings are reinvested.

B. Maintain Security of Funds by Diversification

The policy assumes VVA's success in investment strategy and portfolio management. The portfolio will be diversified for greater return. Portfolio diversification provides a factor of safety of a good investment strategy.

C. Maturing the Portfolio – Growth with Risk Management

VVA is willing to undertake a posture of growth in its portfolio by adding sensible risk for a greater return on investment. Our strategy positions the portfolio for continued growth using risk management tools, and continued oversight to limit risk.

D. Asset Allocation Strategy:

1. Asset Allocation of the portfolio should be consistent with the strategy established in items A, B, C, above.

2. Target portfolio allocation will be forty percent to bonds, sixty percent to stocks (plus or minus ten (10) percent in either category). VVA's Financial Advisor will identify appropriate stock and bond investment for the portfolio as well as overall percentage allocations to these investments in order to promote investment risk management at all times. Allocations ranging from a zero percent minimum to the target allocations referenced herein are authorized.

3. Periodic review of performance will be expected at least once a quarter. Further review as may be deemed necessary according to market conditions. Departure from these investment parameters for risk management purposes must

be approved in concert by the National Treasurer of VVA, Chief Financial Officer of VVA and the Chair of the Investment Sub-Committee.

Applications of these policies begin with the approval of the National Board of Directors and remain in effect until or unless the policy is amended or rescinded by said board.

IMPLEMENTATION of these POLICIES

A. The VVA Financial Advisor will be appointed every two (2) years by the VVA Treasurer; with approval by a vote of the Finance Committee beginning in 2010.

B. Selection of Portfolio -- With the advice of VVA's Financial Advisor, the portfolio was selected and in place.

C. Portfolio Management. The Chief Financial Officer and National Treasurer of VVA will interact with Financial Advisor on a regular basis. They will prepare, and present to the Investment Sub-Committee periodic reports on the status of the portfolio. The Chair of the Investment Sub-Committee may at his or her discretion request status reports of the portfolio at any time deemed necessary. The Investment Sub-Committee in turn through the Finance Committee Chair make periodic reports to the National Board of Directors.

DISCRETION of the USE of VVA FUNDS

The overall investment fund, the earnings from those funds and the resultant decision of how those funds are to be used remain with and are intended to be at the discretion of the VVA's National Board of Directors.

Note: Policy approved by Mike Hearn, VVA Investment Advisor, e-mail 4-11-19.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Motion 5

Move to approve the VVA National Leadership & Education Conference (July, 2020)

Proposed FYE 2-28-21 budget as presented.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Motion 6

**Move to approve the Proposed FYE 2-29-20 Budget as presented.
Without objection motion passed.**

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

CSCP Vice Chair Richard Lindbeck with a second from Director S. Davis made the following motion:

Motion 7

I make a motion that we, CSCP, request the Finance Committee reinstate cutting the CSCP budget by \$40,000.00 funding from Prior Years' Excess.

President Rowan requested a roll call vote:

Board Members	Vote
John Rowan	Non-vote
Marsha Four	Not Present
Bill Meeks, Jr.	Yes
Wayne Reynolds	Not present
Dottie Barickman	No
Tom Burke	Yes
Spence Davis	Yes
Richard DeLong	Yes
Gumersindo Gomez	Yes
Robert Grabinski	Yes
Herman Hochreich	Yes
Francisco Ivarra	Yes
Allen Manuel	Yes
John Margowski	Yes
Sara McVicker	No
Charles Montgomery, Jr.	Not Present
Richard Lindbeck	Yes
Felix Peterson, Jr.	Yes
Dave Simmons	Yes
Richard Southern	Yes
Dan Stenvold	No
Kerwin Stone	Yes
Ted Wilkinson	No
Sandie Wilson	Yes

Motion passed.

Yes: 16

No: 4

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Consent Calendar – Secretary Meeks with a second from Director Southern made the following motion:

Motion 8

- 1. Move to amend the VVA BOD Motions Reference Guide – Membership Committee Section by retiring all of the motions indicated.**

October 2012

Motion #13 – To amend the Life Membership dues structure by deleting the age bracket 50-55 (\$225), revise the age bracket of 66-+ to 66-71 (\$150) and establish a new age bracket 72+ (\$100).

January 2013

Motion #6 – To accept the newly created trifold membership application with the following change: delete the entire paragraph “VVA is a “home of our own” – a community of fellowship with people who share your experiences, needs, and hopes for the future. We are rebuilding the camaraderie of Vietnam Veterans and providing a sense of self-worth and pride in service.”

April 2014

Motion 14 - To rescind the BOD motion from January 1998: National will no longer require a DD 214 from a member when the application comes from the chapter level. This does not include incarcerated chapters. Life members still must submit a DD 214 to process life memberships. A SF-180 will alleviate this problem.

Motion 15 - Motion that each chapter shall file with the Corporation a copy of a DD Form 214, or other proof of qualification for membership for each member.

April 2015

Motion #11 - To have a “Life Member Fire Sale” at \$100 starting August 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2015.

January 2016

Motion # 13 - To amend the Life Membership dues structure by deleting the age bracket requirements and to set the Life Membership dues at \$100 effective January 1, 2016.

July 2016

Motion # 4 - 1. Motion to approve requests for honorary life memberships for the following individuals:

Name	Requested By
LA Lt Governor William Nungesser	National Secretary
Eric Da Rosa	CA State Council
Tony T. Lamson	CA State Council
KY Senator Dennis Parrett	Chapter 1051 (KY)
Nancy Berarbo	Chapter 317 (MO)
Colin Ford	Chapter 317 (MO)
Charles Jean-Baptiste	Chapter 317 (MO)
Brain Lauderdale	Chapter 317 (MO)

Senator Joe Manchin (WV)	WV State Council
John O'Neal	Chapter 820 (OR)

January 2018

Motion 10 - To remove the certification section of the VVA Election Report.

Motion 15 - To approve the honorary life membership requests.

Name	Requested By
Billie Eugene Stephens	Chapter 1124 (TN)
Harrison Conyers	Chapter 1046 (FL)
Mitchell D.K. Kalauli II	AZ State Council
Mark Nexsen	AZ State Council
Many-Bears Grinder	TN State Council
Peter Radford	UT State Council
Carolyn Collins	Chapter 1087 (MT)

April 2018

Motion 9A - As of April 14, 2018 there will be one class of membership; 1) life membership will be \$50.00; 2) all individual members (April 1, 2017 to April, 2018) who have paid \$20.00 will need to add \$30.00 by December 31, 2018 to meet the requirement; and 3) all 3 year members who paid \$50.00 will automatically become a life member. **(Motion 9B to postpone)**

Motion 9B - To postpone motion on the floor to change membership fee and category.

Motion 15 - To approve the honorary life membership requests.

Name	Requested By
Diane Shufelt	Chapter 101 (WI)
Shon Pernice	Chapter 70 (MO)
James N. Mathias, Jr.	MD State Council
Judge Margie Enquist	Chapter 1071 (CO)

July 2018

Motion 3 - To move the Life Membership question to the 2018 October BOD meeting.

Motion 4 - To approve the honorary life membership requests.

Name	Requested By
Reagan Taylor	Chapter 1066 (KY)
Bill Byers	Chapter 669 (IL)

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

National Meetings and Special Events/W. Guidry

Wes Guidry gave an update on several items.

Human Resources and Administration/S. Parker

Good morning everyone,

I continue to partner with Department Directors to help strategize and carry out the mission and vision in their department by helping them to define their purpose and put that into action.

We are also looking into the health and wellness of our employees, Coach Joy has started a weight loss challenge which you all can see I'm failing miserably at however; we've had some employees like Elaine Chaney who has lost 30lbs in the last 2 months, Deborah Williams who has lost 15lbs, and Deborah Johnson who has had tremendous success in losing inches. As we all know health, wellness, and a good work life balance is very important even in the workplace.

The employee handbook is in the final phases of being edited, and we should have that back soon.

Last but not least I am working with the Benefits Department, on May 1st we will be doing a leadership training focusing on follow-up, time management, and dealing with change effectively. We will be doing several training sessions to ensure that there is consistency in the areas discussed.

Any questions?????

Thank you

VAVS Report/K. Rose

Ken Rose spoke to the CSCP about getting help on the VAVS Program so there would be contacts at the chapter level.

Committee – MOTIONS ONLY

Veterans Incarcerated and In The Justice System – D. Yezzo – No motions.

Minority Affairs – G. Gomez made the following motion.

Motion 9

To sit Mr. Kim Kee as a member of the Minority Affairs Committee at no cost to VVA National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Veterans Against Drugs – D. Simmons made the following motion.

Motion 10

To add Jay Pinsky as a Special Advisor to Veterans Against Drugs at no cost to VVA National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

POW/MIA – G. Coates made the following motion.

Motion 11

To authorize international travel for Veterans Initiative Mission to Vietnam, Grant Coates & Mokie Porter, mission date projected for October 2019 time frame.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Membership Affairs – C. Hobbs – No motions.

Homeless Veterans - S. Miller – No motions.

Public Affairs – D. Howland made the following motions.

Motion 12

To change the National Monetary JROTC Awards to cash instead of scholarships at the same breakdown as already passed by the BOD: 1st \$2,500; 2nd \$1,500; and 3rd \$1,000.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Motion 13

To designate the new Eagle Scout Medal as the official Vietnam Veterans of America Eagle Scout Medal. Available to Chapters and State Councils at a price of \$15.00 per unit. Coordination and sales to be handled thru National Communications office.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

2019 National Convention Planning Committee – D. Stenvold – No motions.

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

Veterans Benefits – T. Burke made the following motions.

Motion 14

Board to approve MOU between VVA and ODVS (Ohio Department of Veterans Services).

Memorandum of Understanding
Between Vietnam Veterans of America

And
Ohio Department of Veterans Services

1) **BACKGROUND:** This memorandum of understanding (MOU) memorializes an agreement benefit for and between the Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS) and the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA).

2) **PURPOSE:** The purpose of the MOU is to set forth the principles of the working relationship between VVA and ODVS to facilitate our common goal of service to veterans.

a) This MOU will provide the VVA with a trained, competent, and accredited cadre of County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO) to complement the VVA's accredited National Service Officer Corps.

b) This MOU will provide eligible ODVS members who submit complete and approved VVA applications, as detailed below, dual accreditation with VVA. Once dually accredited with VVA, the dually accredited ODVS member will have access to all records for which the VVA is POA via VA's databases, such as, VBMS, VACOLS, and SEP. In addition, this MOU will provide ODVS members who are dually accredited with VVA access to VVA's Accredited Representatives, co-located within VA Regional Offices, to assist in the development, presentation, prosecution, and appeals of veterans' claims.

3) **VVA ACCREDITATION:** Each ODVS member seeking accreditation with VVA will be provided a copy of this MOU, along with the VVA Accreditation Agreement. The eligible ODVS member must then submit a completed application to VVA's National Service Director through the designated ODVS point of contact. A completed application will include (1) a VVA application; (2) DD-214; (3) VA Form 21; (4) proof of ODVS accreditation (which is only received after ODVS course completion and successfully passing VA approved State exam) and (5) a copy of TRIP training certificate. VVA will only accept ODVS applicants from Ohio that have been pre-approved by both VVA's national Service Director and VVA's Ohio State Council President. In recommending a CVSO for accreditation, ODVS shall certify:

a) The CVSO is a paid employee of a specified county working for not less than 1,000 hours annually or the CVSO is accredited and functioning as a representative of another recognized organization IAW 38 C.F.R. 14.627 (f) and 14.629 (a)(2);

b) The CVSO has successfully completed, at a minimum, the ODVS 32-hours course of training and successfully passed an examination approved by the VA;

c) The CVSO will receive annual training to assure continued qualification as a representative in the claims process;

d) The CVSO is accredited by ODVS

4) **CVSO ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- a) When requesting VVA Accreditation for the first time, the CVSO will be given a USER ID and PASSWORD by VVA to view required videos on the Advanced Log Form.
- b) The applicant must satisfactorily complete the Advanced Video Log Form within 6 months of receiving a USER ID and PASSWORD.
- c) The CVSO is not required to complete the training prior to being eligible for VVA Accreditation.
- d) Failure to review the required videos within the 6-month period may result in revocation of VVA Accreditation.

5) VVA TERMS AND LIMITATIONS OF CVSO ACCREDITATION

CVSOs must agree to abide by the following VVA terms and limitations of accreditation:

- a) CVSOs must agree to distribute VVA Statement of Policy for Representation to all clientele electing VVA representation;
- b) CVSO must submit VA form 21 and proof of ODVS accreditation to VVA to successfully be accredited;
- c) CVSOs must process all client related information (i.e., correspondence, forms etc.) in a prompt and timely manner through the VVA Claims Division for review prior to submission to the VA;
- d) CVSOs may not prepare appellate briefs (VA Form 646) on behalf of the VVA clientele; and
- e) CVSOs may be present but not represent VVA clientele before administrative hearing personnel and /or panels (i.e., DRO, BCA, CAVC, etc.).

6) REVOCATION OF ACCREDITATION: In addition to the circumstances described in 38 C.F.R. - 14.633, either party reserves the right to revoke accreditation for failure to uphold the terms of this MOU.

7) INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND DATA SHARING

- a) ODVS agrees to provide annual certification of continued employment as a CVSO and accredited member of the ODVS via complete listing of those eligible for VVA accreditation. In addition, ODVS will promptly notify VVA of those holding VVA accreditation and who are no longer members of ODVS for any reason.
- b) ODVS agrees to provide VVA quick notice of any and all CVSOs whom no longer hold accreditation or membership through ODVS.

8) POINTS OF CONTACT: Principal points of contact for accreditation processing and MOU accountability.

VVA
Felicia Mullaney
Director, Veterans Benefits Program
Vietnam Veterans of America
Services
(240) 485-1625
fmullaney@vva.org

ODVS
Robin Mahady
Deputy Director, Education & Compliance
Ohio Department of Veterans
(614) 752-8942
robin.mahady@dvs.ohio.gov

9) DURATION, MODIFICATION, AND TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT: This MOU shall become effective upon the date of signature of both approving parties, and shall remain in effect until five (5) years after the effective date. Either party may terminate this MOU at any time, with or without cause, upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other party's point of contact.

10) APPROVALS

Approved and accepted on behalf of Vietnam Veterans of America:

John Rowan
National President
Vietnam Veterans of America

Date

Approved and Accepted on behalf of Ohio Department of Veterans Services:

Deborah Ashenhurst
Director
Ohio Department of Veterans Services

Date

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Motion 15

Add Gerald Corrigan to the VBC Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Women Veterans – K. O’Hare-Palmer made the following motion.

Motion 16

To remove Chuck Byers from Women Veterans Committee.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Veterans’ Health Care – C. Baker made the following motion.

Motion 17

Add Gerald Corrigan President Arkansas State Council Chapter 184 to the Health Care Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Government Affairs – P. Peterson – No motions.

Agent Orange/Dioxin – Vice Chair Jack McManus made the following motions.

Motion 18

Request VVA President to send letter to all VSOs as written by Veterans Benefit staff outlining proper procedures for filing VA Form 21-0304 for veteran descendent VA claims.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Motion 19

Consider a new proposal to provide BDRC with a matching grant not to exceed \$50,000 to match other donations contributed for Birth Defect Registry. Effective to replace previous request on October 20, 2018 over the next 6 months.

President Rowan requested a roll call vote:

Board Members	Vote
John Rowan	Non-vote
Marsha Four	Not Present
Bill Meeks, Jr.	Yes
Wayne Reynolds	Not present
Dottie Barickman	Yes
Tom Burke	Yes
Spence Davis	Yes
Richard DeLong	Yes
Gumersindo Gomez	Yes
Robert Grabinski	Yes
Herman Hochreich	Yes
Francisco Ivarra	Yes
Allen Manuel	Yes
John Margowski	Yes
Sara McVicker	Yes
Charles Montgomery, Jr.	Not Present
Richard Lindbeck	Yes
Felix Peterson, Jr.	Yes
Dave Simmons	Yes
Richard Southern	Yes
Dan Stenvold	No
Kerwin Stone	Yes
Ted Wilkinson	No
Sandie Wilson	Yes

Motion passed.

Yes: 18

No: 2

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Constitution – L. DeLong – No motions.

Resolutions – D. Southern – No motions.

Economic Opportunities – F. Barry – No motions.

Convention Rules – J. Jennings – No motions.

Credentials – R. Lindbeck made the following motion.

Motion 20

Amend 1999 motion requiring 2 signatures on the convention registration form to only one signature of an Officer at Chapter level/or State Council level.

President Rowan asked for a hand vote and Secretary Meeks found it necessary to reference the previous motion for the record in the BOD meeting minutes.

October 1999 (Credentials Committee)

Motion #42 – To adopt the following proposals as policy concerning convention delegate selection and rule for ensuing conventions. 1) All delegate registration forms will require the signature of at least two (2) officers from the appropriate state council/chapter. (2) Members transferred between states or chapters within ninety (90) days prior to the convention, are prohibited from being delegates. 3) Chapters unable to seat a delegate to the convention, may authorize the appropriate state council president, in writing, permission to assign a delegate(s) to represent them. Letters should specify the number of delegates not names of individuals. 4) The membership of any suspended chapter shall be counted in the state council total for purposes of computing delegate strength. 5) The Elections Committee shall establish a cut-off time and date for on-site registration of new delegates. 6) Employees of Vietnam Veterans of America, national office staff are prohibited from being a delegate to the national convention.

Motion passed.

Yes: 19

No: 1

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Post Vietnam Outreach – K. Holybee made the following motion:

Motion 21

To appoint the following as members of the Post Vietnam Outreach Committee Frank Barry, Kate O'Hare Palmer, Pete Peterson, Charlie Stapleton, Dennis Andras and Chuck Byers. To appoint Maureen Elias as special staff advisor at no cost to VVA National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

Honorary Life Membership – Secretary Meeks made the following motion:

Motion 22

To approve the honorary life membership requests.

Name	Requested By
Terry W. Wilson	Chapter 1128 (TN)
Judy Squire	Chapter 649 (OH)

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Chapter Charter Revocation – Secretary Meeks made the following motion:

Motion 23

Recommendations from the New Mexico, Missouri and New York State Councils to revoke the chapter charters of Chapter 998 (NM), Chapter 1023 (MO) and Chapter 205 (NY) as all efforts to save the chapters had failed.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Disciplinary Action – Secretary Meeks made the following motion upon the recommendation of the Chair of the National Disciplinary Committee Butch Huber:

Motion 24

Upon receipt of the charges filed by the California State Council against chapters 1065 and 1081. The charges are in compliance the National Disciplinary Policy Section VIII; therefore the National Board of Directors should move them forward to revoke the chapter charters.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

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

Motion 25

To appoint Dennis Beauregard past SCP from NJ as Special Advisor to the President for the Chapel of Four Chaplains at no cost to VVA National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 20

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 3

Committee Reports Only

Election – S. DeArman – verbal and written report

Veterans Incarcerated and In The Justice System – D. Yezzo – verbal report

Minority Affairs – G. Gomez – verbal and written report

President Rowan presented the VVA Commendation Medal to Scott DeArman, Richard Lindbeck and Leslie DeLong.

Veterans Against Drugs – D. Simmons – verbal report

POW/MIA – G. Coates – verbal and written report

Membership Affairs – C. Hobbs – verbal and written report

Homeless Veterans - S. Miller – verbal and written report

Public Affairs – D. Howland – verbal report

2019 National Convention Planning Committee – D. Stenvold – verbal report

PTSD and Substance Abuse – Dr. T. Hall – verbal report

Veterans Benefits – T. Burke – verbal report

Women Veterans – K. O'Hare-Palmer - verbal report

Veterans Health Care – C. Baker – verbal report

Government Affairs – P. Peterson - verbal and written report

Agent Orange/Dioxin – M. Kaderlik – verbal and written report

Constitution – L. DeLong - verbal and written report

Resolutions – D. Southern – verbal report

Economic Opportunities – F. Barry – verbal report

Convention Rules – J. Jennings – verbal report

Credentials – R. Lindbeck – verbal report

Post Vietnam Outreach – K. Holybee – verbal report

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Meeks, Jr.

National Secretary

Approved 7/16/2019

Elections Committee Report to the Officers and Board of Directors of VVA

The following chronological events have been done in preparation for the VVA National elections at the 19th national convention. This is not all that has been done but is highlights of actions that have thus far transpired in preparation for the national elections.

- Made contact with the League of Women Voters of Spokane on January 19, **2018**. Emailed them the basic requirements for conducting our elections. The league president said, she will take it to the board and will contact the other leagues we have worked with in the past.
- On February 19, 2018, I was copied on an email from the Peoria, Ill LOWV letting me know that they had been contacted by the Spokane LOWV. They were requesting information about VVA and were also requesting information on how the Peoria league had the voting process.
- On February 19, 2018, I made contact with Pat Landes of the Peoria LOWV asked if she would reach out to the LOWV of Spokane as soon as possible with information on their voting procedures.
- Also on February 19, 2018, I contacted Jessie Neibles of the LOWV of New Orleans and asked her to pass on her procedures for election process to the Spokane LOWV.
- On February 27, 2018, I received an email from the LOWV President Pam Behring that the Spokane chapter has agreed to work with the Elections Committee and conduct our elections for us.
- Received an email from LOWV Spokane Chapter, introducing me to Jan Carrington who will be the key contact person for the league and would spearhead the operation for the league.
- Met with Mike Keating and Quentin Butcher, at the national leadership conference in July 2018 to discuss the possibility of placing the candidate's statement on the VVA webpage. This is to allow more exposure for the candidates to be known by the general members before they send delegates to the convention. Mike and Quentin both felt it was an achievable goal.
- Met with Tracie Houston at the national leadership conference in July 2018 to discuss possible issues on who would create documents for the elections process since Frankie Presley is no longer working for VVA.

- Nov. 14, 2018 sent Letter of Intent article to Mike Keating for the November/December issue of the VETERAN.
- Dec. 27, 2018 sent the second announcement to Mike Keating for the January/February issue of the VETERAN
- Sent the 2019 Candidates Packet to Tracie Houston to be converted to PDF format on Jan. 10/19. After they were converted the packet was sent to Adolph Gardner for distribution to individuals who sent it there letter of intent. Some difficulties arose in getting a SF-180 to convert into a PDF format and had to create a work around.
- January 24, 2019 met with Wes Guidry and Dan Stenvold and hotel and convention representatives. Discussed parking for the LOWV and food. Plus saw the voting room.
- January 25, 2019 met with the Spokane, WA, League of Women Voters to go more details on the elections process and addressed any concerns they had at the time regarding the elections process. Gave the league representatives a tour of the voting room.
- Elections Committee budget justification was sent to the Finance Committee for review and approval on Jan. 29, 2019.
- On February 13, 2019, Sent Mike Keating the announcement for the VETERAN on how to Run from the Floor.
- March 2019 the candidate's statements are also available online by going to this direct link: <https://vva.org/national-convention/2019/candidate-statements/> . Hopefully this will give all members greater access to knowing more about who the candidates are.
- March 2019 the candidates roster are also available online by going to the direct link: <https://vva.org/national-convention/2019/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019-Official-Candidates-Roster.pdf>
- March 11, 2019 Candidates Roster is being posted on the Web Weekly with the assistance of Mokie Porter. She also placed a statement from the Elections Committee, reminding potential candidates of the deadlines for the forms that must be sent to the committee.
- March 20, 2019, I notified the LOWV of Spokane that is a very high probability that there will be a run-off election in one of the officer position's so they could prepare for it with their members.

March 20, 2019, I sent Sec. Bill Meeks an email with the March 20, 2019 with the most current roster and also a reminder to the regional directors and state council presidents letting them know of a possible run-off, so they could make plans to stay through Saturday. This was for distribution to all.

Finally, I would like to especially think, Mike Keating, Quentin Butcher, Mokie Porter and Jeff Greulich for their outstanding assistance in helping the committee get the Candidates Roster and Candidates statements posted to the VVA web page and a link on the Web Weekly to the election information. I would also like to thank Tracie Houston for assisting us in converting the candidate's packet to a fillable format for the candidates. Without the staff we would not be able to get our mission accomplished.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott De Arman, Chair, Elections Committee

Constitution Committee Report April 13, 2019

2019 Convention

The committee has reviewed 12 proposed constitutional amendments. Ten of the amendments will be reported out of the committee. The proposed amendments along with the committee's recommendations will be posted on the VVA website and sent out to the chapters and state councils no later than May 17, 2019. The constitution committee hearing will be held on Wednesday July 17 from 4 to 5:30 pm. Please encourage your chapters and state councils to send at least one representative to the hearing to voice the opinions of your members, hear the comments of others and to report back what they have heard. A tremendous thank you to the committee members: Grant Coates, Ken Holybee, Shelby Pinkerton, Barry Rice, Cliff Riley, Beverly Stewart, Nancy Rekowski (AVVA) and Tracie Houston (Staff).

Leslie DeLong, Chair
National Constitution Committee

EOC Report April, 2019

The committee hosted a Veteran Business Roundtable, organized by Joe Wynn of VET-Force, Special Advisor to the EOC. We were honored to have two guest speakers.

Mr. Larry Stubblefield is the Associate Administrator for the Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD) at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Mr. Stubblefield has first-hand military experience, having served 30 years as an enlisted soldier and active duty officer in the U.S. Army.

He spoke about staffing and the annual twelve million dollar budget, six million of which goes to the VBOCs-Veteran Business Outreach Centers. He updated the committee on the Transition Assistance program (TAP) for those about to be discharged. The program starts 365 days out and now has a mandatory five day core curriculum with outcomes of employment, vocational education, higher education, or entrepreneurship. The other programs discussed were the Boots to Business/Reboot and the Women Veterans Entrepreneurship Training Program.

Ms. Charmain Bogue is Interim Executive Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs Education Service which ensures efficient execution of all education benefit programs used by nearly two million veterans, Service Members, and dependents.

The focus of her presentation was the VETTEC Program (Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses). This is a new five-year pilot program which offers a limited number of eligible Veterans the opportunity to get accelerated training in high tech skills employers want. Veterans will acquire the high-tech skills through non-degree training programs which generally take less than a year to complete, helping them to move quickly into in-demand jobs. VA will pay both for the Veteran's tuition, as well as offer Veterans a living stipend while they are in training. Participating in the pilot program will not count against a Veteran's GI Bill Benefits.

VET TEC's five areas of high tech training are: computer software, information science, computer programming, media application, and data processing.

While all eligible Veterans are welcome to apply for participation in the pilot, they must meet entry requirements and be accepted into the training program which roles out April 26th and is projected to serve 800-1200 Veterans a year. For more information visit:
www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/fgib/VetTec.asp.



**Veterans Initiative Program
POW-MIA Committee
Vietnam Veterans of America,
Inc.
8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910**

13 April 2019

Report to the Board
VVA National Board of Directors Meeting

- **To Date: Missing** – 1,589
 - 1,589 Americans are listed by DOD as missing and unaccounted.
 - a. Loss Locations: Vietnam – (South- 794, North – 452) 1,247, Laos – 288, Cambodia – 48, and the PRC – 7.
 - Accounted: 991 since 1975
 - a. Recovery Locations: Vietnam – 727, Laos – 285 Cambodia – 42, PRC – 3
 - b. In addition, 63 US personnel were accounted for between 1973 and 1975.
- 2) Chair gave a presentation on March 29th at Clear Path for Veterans, a 501(c) (3) non-profit Veteran Service Organization.
 - 3) Received support request for assistance from Vietnam Office Seeking Lost and Missing Personnel re: V.I. case 177, September 1995.
 - 4) Article in “ABC Spanish Daily Newspaper in Asia” titled “Vietnam, in search of the lost tomb” documenting the V.I. history.
 - 5) Article in Cleveland Plain Dealer, 11 February titled “Diplomacy of death: Vietnam Vets return to battlefield, help find lost enemy graves.” Story based on V.I. case 143, with 3.47 minute video titled “Vietnam vet part of veterans initiative to recover enemy dead”.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zug3XB7GX2Y>
 - 6) POW-MIA Bracelet program “Remembering Our Missing Warriors” continues with committee members in schools.
 - 7) V.I. mission planned for October 2019. Details in planning stage.

Report filed with National Secretary

Viet Nam Veterans of America Women Veteran Committee Meeting 4.12.2019

This was the last meeting prior to our 19th VVA convention in Spokane, Washington July 15-20, 2019.

We took a few minutes to introduce everyone at the meeting to share to great wealth of experience that we have with this great group of committee members and visitors. The January meeting minutes were accepted without changes.

We mourn the loss of Elayne Mackey who was such a great part of our AVVA and our AVVA advisor on our committee. She will be replaced by Kay.....

Chuck Byers will not be returning to our committee due to other commitments in Arizona.

Thank you to all members for our hard work this past year.

Report of the chair included many events in California related to Women's history month and urged all members to create a panel of women veterans of various eras for an event in their parts of the country. We met a photographer in northern California, Tom Snyder, who has made a book of pictures and essays by WWII veterans. His current project is Vietnam Veterans. He took pictures of many of us for his upcoming book. He has a website that is interesting to review with some of the current Vietnam vet photos. April is Sexual Harassment Awareness month and there are flyers at the back table of the BOD room.

Budget: we reviewed the 2019-2020 budget. Our last year budget was over by 29% due to: the trip to Atlanta for the SWAN meeting and because of the extra funds spent for the November Women Veteran Reception at the DAR O'Bryne Gallery in D.C. for the 25th Anniversary of the Vietnam Women's Memorial. (there was an increase cost of renting the room and for security costs.)

Reviewed Resolutions for upcoming convention. Amendments were reviewed for WV-2, WV-3, WV-5, WV-8, and recommend retiring WV-7 and WV-10.

Speaker for our Women Veteran Breakfast at the Convention: Heather Drake, CVSO for Spokane- Washington Eastern Regional Veterans Service Office, will be our speaker. She is a former Air Marshall who retired after 21 years with the Air Force and has been with the CVSO office in Spokane for last two years. She will be speaking on Veterans Benefits focusing on Vietnam veteran issues and presumptive emphasis and those less known women veteran eligibility criteria.

For the Good of the order: Dr. Linda Schwartz briefly discussed the incidence of 250% women veteran suicide increase over the incidence in general women population. The other startling statistic for women veterans is the alarming rise in homelessness.

Meeting adjourned at :4:10 pm.

Kate O'Hare-Palmer- Women Veteran Committee Chair.

Minority Affairs Committee Report

April 12, 2019

The committee met, the first order of business was to sit Mr. Kim Kee as a member of the committee. Mr. Kee served with the ROK in Vietnam and then volunteer his service in the U.S. Army where he served after Vietnam.

We worked with two of our resolutions; first we discuss the ROK resolution for the 2, 800 Korean American citizens to which they are seeking health care through the VA for their Agent Orange and PTSD issues, acquire by them as we, through our involvement in the Vietnam War. The resolution was approved by the committee to go forward to the benefits committee for their approval, as these issues concern benefits. The second resolution was the Self-determination for Puerto Rico, we did an amendment to the resolution, in adding the last plebiscite of 2017 in Puerto Rico where the voters voted 97% for Statehood and 98% against the current territorial status, this resolution was first adopted in 2003.

The Minority Affairs Committee award was discussed, which is to be awarded at the Convention. Two minority veterans from Spoken WA who have been doing an outstanding job with veterans in their respective communities', were nominated for the award, approved by the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 3: 40 pm.

Gumersindo Gomez, MAC Chair

Membership Department Report to the Board of Directors April 12, 2019

Membership Temp

- If you've been over to the office you may have noticed a new face in the Membership Department. He is our new temp Sean Webb.

Month-end

- We will begin the month-end process later today.

Life Members

- The Membership Department has been hard at work. All of the life member packets for the 3 year conversion have been mailed. The amount of applications received through the lockbox has increased. The amount of life member packets mailed on a weekly basis has increased from 235 in January to 539 in March. Give a big thanks to Mike Najarian, Charlie Hobbs for their assistance in dealing with the influx.

Membership Directory

- The Membership Directory has been completed and mailed. As with past years, the version of the directory contains photos and essays submitted by our members. There is also a Membership Directory Disc which contains more detailed information. We have received some complaints from members who received package with no directory enclosed. Those members are asked to contact PCI at – 1-800-982-1590, or by email at customerservice@publishingconcepts.com and a new directory will be shipped.

Convention

- Delegate letters have been sent out and credentialing registrants for the convention is in full swing. State council presidents should reach out to their chapters and remind them that each delegate registration form must have two signatures of the officers of the chapter or state council that they are representing. The signature of a state council/chapter board of directors is not accepted.
- In accordance with the Credentialing Guidelines, member transfers are not allowed 90 days before the start of the convention. That is Thursday, April 18th.