



VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

www.battleofthebulge.org

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Bowling Center

Fort George G. Meade

5 March 2013

PRESENT:

Douglas C. Dillard	Ruth L. Hamilton	Robert G. Rhodes	Demetri Paris
Alan Cunningham	John D. Bowen	Louis Cunningham	Madeleine Bryant
Mike Levin	Mary Ann D. Bowen	George Chekan	Doris Davis
John Shaffner (Guest)			

ABSENT:

Ralph W. Bozorth	Thomas Chambers	John J. Dunleavy	Kevin Diehl
Alfred H. M. Shehab	Robert Bowles	William P Tayman	Tracey Diehl
Hope Kirkendall	Bert L. Rice	Stanley Wojtusik	
J. David Bailey	Gary Patucci	Sally Lung (Guest)	

President Douglas Dillard called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. in the Ft Meade Bowling Center Lounge.

Acting Chaplain John Bowen gave the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag led by President Dillard in the absence of Alfred Shehab. Recording Secretary Ruth Hamilton then took the Roll Call as indicated above.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: The Minutes of the last meeting, 8 January 2013, were emailed to all Executive Council members with email addresses. Printed copies of the minutes were available at the meeting. Both President Doug Dillard and Alan Cunningham stated that there are minor corrections to be noted. Doris Davis, who attended via teleconference, indicated that there were some statements made in the Treasurer's Report that she believed should be stricken from the record or amended. These items were later confirmed with Ralph Bozorth and amendments were made to the minutes. President Dillard made a motion to accept the minutes with corrections which was seconded and the motion carried without dissent.

PRESIDENT'S GENERAL COMMENTS & STATUS REPORT: President Doug Dillard recognized the Past Presidents in attendance. He read an invitation to attend an event at the Luxembourg Embassy on 4 February 2013. President Dillard wanted to congratulate Alfred Shehab for recently receiving the French Legion of Honor during a ceremony at the French Embassy in Washington, DC. He said that he plans to attend the 17 March 2013 St. Patrick's Day event if there are no other schedule conflicts. In the absence of Ralph Bozorth, President Dillard indicated that plans are continuing for the 2013 reunion. Significant issues will appear in the *Bulge Bugle*.

FUTURE ACTIONS COMMITTEE: Alan Cunningham, chair of this committee, is working with the Army History Foundation coordinating contributions to the Infantry Museum & Soldier Center when it is built at Fort Belvoir, VA. The Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation made a contribution. Both the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation will be designated on a donor wall in the museum. The *Bulge Bugle* gave a good account of what happened at the National Infantry Museum & Soldier Center. The main thrust will culminate in the next 2 years at the time of the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. We hope to build up associations with the Army Museum.

With regard to the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc. Alan said that the plan is not to terminate the organization, but we need to have a plan for its dissolution. What is it that will trigger the need for dissolution? In accordance with the bylaws, such an action must be determined by a majority vote of members at an annual reunion. We do not foresee this within the next 5 years. The Internal Revenue Service states the percentage of veterans our organization must have to maintain its current status; it is possible that we may need to change our

tax status from a 501(c)(19) to a 501(c)(3) organization or our name (e.g., Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc./Friends of the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation) in the future. We need to have Ralph Bozorth conduct an inventory of VBOB's membership to accurately determine our status and/or survey our entire membership. John Bowen said that descendants of veterans are included in the percentage of veterans. Alan commented that the number is fairly high to maintain a veterans organization status. Following a question by Past President George Chekan asking if this information will be presented at the next annual reunion or in the *Bulge Bugle*, Alan stated that he can prepare a short article for the *Bulge Bugle*. However, John discourages mentioning anything about dissolution in the *Bulge Bugle*. Alan talked about the potential transition to a new name at some point; discussion with others ensued. The statistics for each class of membership must be analyzed. Mary Ann Bowen suggested that it is important to let the membership know what the plans are for the future of the organization. Madeleine Bryant said that this is a good thing, but it needs to be presented in a positive manner. Efforts will be made to prepare something for the upcoming reunion on lifetime memberships.

MEMBERSHIP: President Doug Dillard provided statistics that he had received from Tracey Diehl. We have 71 new members including 63 new associate members and 8 new regular members (2 regular members upgraded to lifetime memberships). A total of 224 members did not renew or are deceased; 287 members paid their annual dues. The net loss in membership over the past 2 months is 153. For the period 1 January – 28 February 2013, we have a total membership of 3761 with 1580 lifetime members.

Bob Rhodes emphasized that the goal of two solicitation letters to veteran members was to generate 500 new associate members. His first letter to the regular veteran membership brought in 305 new associate members; the second letter brought in another 112, so we are nearly at our goal. Bob reiterated that he is seeking a new associate member who is savvy in using Facebook, Twitter, etc. to take over his responsibilities because that is how young people today communicate. He also spoke with Kevin and Tracy Diehl about being cautious in protecting members' email addresses. Bob also said that he is concerned about "new renewals." Organizations typically have a difficult time getting renewals after the first year even though renewal notices are sent in the mail. As a result, the number of non-renewals is creating a net loss in membership, and we need to be aware of this. A number of people signed up in New Orleans to join, but we did not do a good job on following up with these people.

Even though we have dues renewal dates annotated on *Bulge Bugle* address labels, many do not pay attention to the date. Perhaps there's another way to solve or mitigate this problem so people will be more inclined to renew. As members get older, unless they are life members, many will have forgotten about their membership renewals. Doris Davis suggested that perhaps an email reminder would be helpful [for those who have email]. But it was pointed out that often members choose to not provide email addresses. President Doug Dillard suggested that Chapters should go after those members whose dues are delinquent. John Bowen said that we need to send out dues notices a couple of months before the annual dues renewal date. Past President Demetri ("Dee") Paris recommended a single dues reminder date. Alan Cunningham said that if we send dues notices including a return envelope, it would help; however, Past President Paris pointed out that doing so would be a lot of work. Alan asked about how the *Bulge Bugle* is packaged. Is it possible to include a notice in the newsletter or is it better to send a separate notice?

President Dillard said that he will take up the matter of dues notification with Ralph Bozorth and Kevin and Tracy Diehl, so they can look at the best method to manage the process. John Bowen said that we have been sending dues notices after-the-fact (after the dues date); sending out separate dues notices ahead of time (before the dues date) would be costly.

FINANCIAL REPORT/TREASURER'S REPORT & ANALYSIS OF NEW ORLEANS REUNION EXPENSES: In the absence of Sally Lung, Accountant, and Ralph Bozorth, Vice President and Treasurer,

President Doug Dillard reviewed the last Profit & Loss Statement from 1 December 2012 - 7 January 2013 and the Balance Sheet as of 7 January 2013. The Profit & Loss Statement shows Total Income of \$6,573.38,

Expenses of \$8,281.29 (Bugle \$2,074.64 + Operations \$6,206.65) for a Net Income as of \$-1,707.91. Total Assets on the Balance Sheet are \$171,446.95. President Dillard said that he would ask Sally & Ralph for current data to be sent to Ruth Hamilton for inclusion with the minutes and a review of our financial status.

BULGE BUGLE. Past President George Chekan said that we are now down to 3700 dues-paying members. At one time, it cost over \$100,000 to operate. Where is the money coming from now? Current Dues do not cover operating expenses. He added that the *Bulge Bugle* with a photo of the Executive Council on the front was published and mailed to members. Alan Cunningham was given the center spread and he did a fine job explaining the \$25,000 donation to the National Infantry Foundation.

In addition to the notification of the 2013 reunion, Past President Dee Paris pointed out that there is also a listing of tours (an advertisement). Are we supposed to be doing this? He suggested that it may not be in accordance with our bylaws. Mary Ann Bowen also stated that perhaps this goes against the bylaws. Madeleine Bryant indicated that the full column of tours listed on page 19 of the February 2013 issue of the *Bulge Bugle* is focused on the Battle of the Bulge; the advertisement money has been provided Doris Davis has given \$3000 to advertise these tours. Doris said that second and third generation descendants of our veterans look for way to find about their father's/grandfather's military service during World War II and this is a way for them to do so. MilSpec Travel is a commercial organization that features trips to World War II locations; the tour guide, Patrick Hinchy, is an excellent historian and he gives informative tours. Additionally, he is contributing to VBOB behind the scenes (for every participant who said they saw the ad in the *Bulge Bugle*, VBOB gets \$100). She explained that there have been some trips that occurred with less than the required number of people to give the participants the tour of their life; his heart is in and so is mine.. We need to publicize this information in the *Bulge Bugle* because that's where people go to find out about such events, the company is reputable, and the VBOB benefits from such tours. Mary Ann indicated that as we look at the advertisements, we do not know who will give the tour.

President Dillard stated that it is good exposure for families and friends and some of the money from the trips goes to VBOB, if the tours occur. Trips have also brought in Associate Members. Past President Paris said that the section should be labeled as "advertisement."

2013 REUNION. President Doug Dillard covered an overview of the schedule for the 2013 Reunion. The contract is with an Embassy Suites hotel in Kansas City, 4-8 September 2013. Sites to be visited include the Truman Library, Fort Leavenworth World War I Museum, a Harley-Davidson Plant tour (with possible barbecue meal included). The Embassy Suites hotel is near the airport (1/2 hour to 45 minutes drive) across the river from the airport.

Alan Cunningham added that Fort Leavenworth has done a lot of coordination and they are looking forward to having us there. The Installation Commander wants to address our group and welcome the veterans. We will have a color guard salute, briefings, lunch in the Conference Center (approximately \$10) with students from the command and leadership courses.

We will also have a chance to spend time at the Frontier Museum. On the way out of the installation, is the Buffalo Soldiers; Monument. These events will occur 0930-1500 and we should be back at the hotel by 1600.

The hotel is situated between attractions with very nice rooms, breakfast in the morning and a Manager's Reception in the evening. It should be a good time with a good schedule.

The members should know that the students at Fort Leavenworth are not just U.S. officers. If there are any officers of Belgium or Luxembourg, perhaps we should invite them to the dinner.

2014 REUNION. We need to look at the reunion in 2014 regarding the proposed agenda and costs. (We also need to look at costs from a sequestration standpoint.)

FINAL COMMENTS. John Bowen pointed out that the 10 September 2013 VBOB Executive Council meeting is just 2 days after the reunion; discussion among attendees ensued. A recommendation was made to hold the meeting on 27 August 2013 before the reunion. The recommendation was accepted. President Dillard said that he will coordinate with the Fort Meade Bowling Center staff for the use of the room on that date. Ruth Hamilton stated that she could not attend the August meeting, so someone else will need to record the minutes.

John also added that President Dillard will be honored at the St. Patrick's Day Parade as Marshal of "C Division" and President of VBOB. He will lead C Division with veterans in vehicles behind his. Others to be honored include ADM Michael Mullen, USN (Ret,) former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and a colonel from the Vietnam period. Additional details of the event were provided.

Past President Dee Paris mentioned that he was featured at a school presentation in Olney, MD in their 2000-seat auditorium. He sent a fact sheet about the Battle of the Bulge to the school ahead of time, which was photocopied and distributed to all of the students. The principal introduced him and he was interviewed by two students and he also addressed questions from the audience. He said it was a good experience.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:13 a.m. The next meeting will be on 7 May 2013.

Respectfully submitted,



Ruth L. Hamilton, Recording Secretary
1045 N. Utah Street, Apt. 408
Arlington, VA 22201-5753
703-527-8235
ruth12345@aol.com

Chapters should provide any changes in officers or meeting dates/times to Ruth Hamilton, 703-527-8235, or email ruth12345@aol.com. These changes will update information on the VBOB Web Site at www.battleofthebulge.org.

2013 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS:

10:00 a.m. Fort Meade Bowling Center

(Between PX and Commissary)

Fort George G. Meade, MD

Tuesday, 7 May 2013

Tuesday 9 July 2013

Tuesday, 27 August 2013

Tuesday, 12 November 2013