

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc.
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MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING (teleconference) Tuesday, January 13, 2015

PRESENT:

David Bailey	Mark Collins (Guest)	Doris Davis	Sherry Klopp
Duane Bruno	Alan Cunningham	Tracey Diehl	Barbara Mooneyhan
Madeleine Bryant	Lou Cunningham	Gary Higgins	

ABSENT:

Thomas Chambers	Ruth Hamilton	Robert Rhodes	Jim Triesler
George Chekan	Thomas Ingram	Bert Rice	Stanley Wojtusik
Douglas Dillard	Mike Levin	Alfred Shehab	
John Dunleavy	Sally Lung (Guest)	William Tayman	

1. CALL TO ORDER: President Alan Cunningham called the teleconferencing meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Madeleine Bryant was recognized to deliver the invocation and all phone contacts were open for everyone to say the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Tracey Diehl, Recording Secretary was recognized to take the roll call, the results of which is shown above. Alan Cunningham reminded everyone that the teleconference is being recorded.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: The minutes of the 3 November 2014 meeting were emailed to all Executive Council members with email addresses. Minutes were approved with no corrections.

3. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: Alan Cunningham said the 70th Anniversary trip was a great success, and he has a few action items related to it. He noted that Doris Davis purchased and shipped large steins, and other gifts for our supporters over there, and Doug Dillard gave out challenge coins. Alan moved that they both be reimbursed for the purchase and shipping of these items, which made a very good impression of the organization. Gary Higgins wanted to thank to Doris for doing this, and the motion was carried for reimbursement without objection.

Alan then discussed the plans in place for the 27 January commemoration in DC and how it was absolutely amazing that we were able to pull this together in such a short period of time. General Andries of the Belgian Embassy confirmed they were ready to receive us at the Belgian Ambassador's house. He asked for a motion for reimbursement of the framed certificate, steins and coins to be presented to the new Ambassadorship. The motion was carried without objection.

Moving on to the 2015 reunion in Williamsburg, VA, Alan said the Fort Magruder Hotel and Conference Center was giving us everything we asked for, and they are doing some renovation work, so by the time we get there in August it would be much better hotel. Our room rate of \$119 per night includes a buffet breakfast. The hospitality room will be free and we can stock it with our own liquor and food. He said that because it's Virginia, we'll need to get a certificate from the alcoholic beverage commission authorizing us to have the liquor in the room. All 8 wheelchair rooms in the hotel will be reserved for us.

It was noted that some people who had signed up for the January 27 event were not members of VBOB, as the email notice had been sent to everyone in our database, some of whom are just QM or Certificate customers. Efforts were being made by Alan and Doris to make sure that someone from each family group attending would sign up as a member. Tracey Diehl noted, and Alan concurred, that we see these events as another avenue to recruit new members who have previously showed an interest in the Battle of the Bulge.

Alan reported that he'd asked Doug Dillard to chair the Executive Council Nominating committee for 2016. Our bylaws call for 5 members on the committee. The nominations will be posted as soon as possible, and the election will happen on August 15 at the reunion. The other committee is a bylaws committee, to review and see if we need to change the bylaws and also reorganize. We need to know how many vets v.s. non-vets, because as we are losing members the ratio changes and we need to prepare if reorganization becomes required. Alan noted we have 78% veterans right now, both BOB and other vets. When we reach 75% vets, we'll no longer meet 501c requirements, and may need to reorganize as a 501C3 or C4. Alan has asked Ruth Hamilton to head the Bylaws committee and would pick its members. Alan noted he will be on it was well, and would like to ask Mary Anne Bowen, as she wrote the existing Bylaws.

Alan said he'd like to raise the visibility of National to the local chapters, and felt we needed more face-time with them. He said we would reimburse the cost of travel for any Executive Council member to travel to local chapters. Doris Davis wanted to note that KC chapter President Mark Collins is a really energetic president and is accomplishing great things. She will attend the Seattle Chapter's annual event, and mentioned her good relationship with the St Louis chapter. The KC chapter will have a commemoration event on Jan 25 in Abilene at the Eisenhower Museum, where a VBOB bench will be dedicated.

Next, Alan discussed how the Executive Council should have VBOB name tags for wearing to events, so our position within the National organization is clearly displayed. Alan will coordinate getting the name tags, and believes it will cost about \$10 each—about \$200 total for current council. Motion was made and carried to make these name tags. VBOB Business cards were brought up and Tracey Diehl offered to make laser printed cards at little expense, from a template she already has. Alan said he'd investigate the cost of actual printing of business cards. Council Members should send an email to Tracey with exact contact information they want displayed on their card. Motion carried to make business cards as well.

Other financial items Alan discussed included a motion to change our self-imposed requirement to have 2 signatures on checks. Since everyone on Council is so scattered geographically, we should go back to a single signature. Alan also wants to look into changing our accountant—someone more responsive, located closer to the treasurer or president. Motions for both financial items were carried without objection.

4. MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Barbara Mooneyhan/VP Membership reported on the membership numbers. From January 1-December 31, 2014 we have signed up 191 new members in total: 42 4 yr-Associates; 120 New (yearly); 29 Lifetime. 590 members were made inactive, and we received 1328 member dues: 1162 yearly dues, 166 4-yr Associate dues. With 191 new members, but 590 lost members, this is a NET LOSS of 399 members in 2014.

Barbara reported that we cleared \$2000 profit from the 2014 Annual Reunion in Columbia. She also asked that South Florida Chapter President George Fischer be recognized for raising money for a VBOB monument dedicated on Dec 14, 2014. Gary Higgins said he will be in FL and would go to a chapter meeting and recognize them.

5. CHAPTER DONATIONS: Alan noted chapters often ask for fundraising assistance for VBOB monuments, and we should support these as it relates clearly to our mission. He suggested we have a standing amount to donate to chapters for any VBOB monument, so that we can respond in a more timely matter than we have in the past. Motion to set a standard amount of \$500 to any chapter building a monument with VBOB logo was approved without objection. Barbara Mooneyhan proposed an amendment that we

give the \$500 retroactively to the So Fl chapter. Alan motioned we do the same for other chapters who had asked (in the past year only), but for which we didn't respond in a timely manner. Motion passed without objection.

6: CHAPTER NEWS: Sherry Klopp/VP Chapters sent a letter, for the February "Bulge Bugle", to Chapter Presidents, introducing herself and encouraging them to send her chapter news, info about their chapter meetings, etc, and to ask them to push their members to send in more stories. In April she'll be in FL and try to visit the 3 FL Chapter Presidents.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT: Profit and loss, balance sheet were sent in advance by Sally. Alan noted we have \$168,000 at this time, enough to operate. But regarding membership, we have 1085 annual dues paying members, and 1967 lifetime members, who are not paying anymore. We need to decide how much money we need to set aside to cover the cost of sending the "Bulge Bugle" to lifetime members. Duane and Alan will discuss (offline) the specifics of accounting, paying invoices etc.

8: CLOSING COMMENTS: President Alan Cunningham stated that he is very happy with the Executive Council—everybody is pitching in, and it's an extremely enthusiastic, energetic council. During the trip to Belgium, he saw that they know what we did over there, but people in the U.S. don't know what we did. So it's really important we try to get the word out, to make sure that people in the U.S. are aware of the Battle of the Bulge and what the veterans did for the people in Europe and ultimately for us. Alan asked for any final comments and a few people raised their hands.

Gary Higgins offered to help the organization with anything Florida-related for the next 3 months while he's there. David Bailey relayed that he participated in a wreath-laying at the National World War II Memorial on December 12th to honor the Bulge 70th anniversary and attended the dedication of the American Veterans Disabled for Life monument in October, representing VBOB. He mentioned that Bob Rhodes took great photos of the event, which are on our website. Madeline Bryant commended Doris Davis for her diligent work, which was a major factor in making the 70th Anniversary trip a memorable event, and she deserves our thanks.

President Alan Cunningham then adjourned the meeting at 11:08 eastern time with thanks to all.

Respectfully submitted,
Tracey Diehl, Recording Secretary
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