

Minutes of the June 20, 2018 Membership meeting of CVO

1. Attendance: see sign-in sheet

4. Motion from Mr. Thompson to accept minutes as presented. Seconded by Anthony Travis. Passed unanimously.

5. Dr. Parry presented financial report. Donations to both CVO and "Poor People's Campaign" explained in detail.

Motion to accept Financial report by Mr. Travis. Second by Commander Johnson. Motion passed unanimously.

Question by Francine O'Conner regarding the amount CVO donated to PPC. Answer: \$250.

6a. No report from Executive Committee.

Commander Thompson discussed corporate and local organizations (Lockhart institute, St. Sabina) on the South, West Sides that are requesting veterans to help combat violence that plagues the area. "Coalition to stop the violence."

Filling vacancies of committees discussed. Dr. Parry suggested that he be Membership Committee because he already deals with membership as Treasurer.

6c. Fundraising: Dr. Parry "peer to peer" model. Each board member should establish a goal along with blurb that they will email to their contacts. Donation button available on CVO website. Asked for members of the Executive Committee to check site and ensure they're satisfied with picture and bios on CVO site. If other members would like to do the fundraiser, please send Dr. Parry email.

6d. Veterans Affairs Committee: see attached report. There was a full discussion of each point of the report.

Anti-privatization of the VA: comments by Chair Willie Mack on how they privatize slowly by privatizing aspects one at a time.

The meeting donation was \$51.

6e. There was a report on the action of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival by Bruce Parry, Anthony Travis, and Willie Mack.

7. Old Business

a. Discussion of SB 2372. Points were clarified by Francine O'Connor. Letters are to be sent to Sens. Durbin and Duckworth asking why they voted the way they did (or abstained) on the bill.

Motion: A Travis; 2nd R Hopkins: CVO, with the help of F O'Connor, send a letter to the two Illinois Senators asking why they voted the way they did or why they abstained from voting on SB 2372. Passed unanimously.

Francine will write the letter and forward it to Bruce Parry and Willie Mack.

b. Francine O'Connor acknowledged the passing of veterans John Monacan and Bill Kreji. Commander Frank Thompson was also at the memorial service.

c. Proposal by Russ Hopkins: CVO contact the major organizations to ask them their position on Dental Care and HR 4556. The following people will forward addresses to Larry Nazimek to carry this out: Bruce (VFW); Frank & Christopher (Am Legion); Russ (National Military Families Association)

Motion: R Hopkins, 2nd A Travis: CVO will seek out contact with the major veterans organizations and military family organizations and ask them their position on the current Dental Care bill, HR 4556. Christopher, Russ,

Willie, and Larry will take action on this. Amendment: We will also ask them to support this bill. Motion as amended passed unanimously.

8. New Business

b. The Chair asked for three volunteers to refocus CVO priorities on 3 priorities from September through June (Willie Mack). The three volunteers are Anthony Travis, Russ Hopkins and Tom Johnson.

a. Should we cancel the August meeting? Discussion was held for and against. The decision was postponed to the July meeting.

c. Motion: A Travis; 2nd C LaFayette: Every member will donate between \$50 and \$100 to support the CVO fundraiser. Amendment: For those who can, give what they can voluntarily, in conjunction with fundraiser. Motion as amended passed unanimously.

Tax divide: Anthony Travis. \$2.2 billion transferred by Assessor by using property taxes to shift taxes from rich to poor. This affects Black, Brown and poor communities. The county is losing tax revenue due to property tax racket. This is a national phenomenon. The new Assessor coming in (Fritz Kaeji) has focused on this crisis. There was a discussion of this point. Referred to the Economics Committee.

Motion to adjourn: by A Travis, 2nd by L Nazimek

Announcements were held before the motion was considered.

10. Announcements: Christopher LaFayette: There is an office in Hyde Park. We can get interns at the office, some of which will work with CVO. The John Marshall Law School will write grants.

The next meeting of Veterans for Unification (VU) will be on August 4 (flyer attached).

11. Meeting Adjourned: 9:10 PM Next CVO meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of Jesse Brown VA Medical Center (820 S Damen in Chicago).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce E. Parry".

Bruce E. Parry
Treasurer

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT, JUNE, 2018

by Larry E. Nazimek

1. Regarding H. R. 4556, Cong. Jan Schakowsky signed on as the 11th cosponsor. Cong. Robin Kelly's support, if we can get it, may make a significant difference, since she is in favor of dental care and got many cosponsors for her bill.

We have asked our Senators to write letters to the IL Cong. Delegation, urging their support, but they have not done so. Sen. Duckworth's staffer, Dan McManus, said that he will meet with their legislative person from DC at the end of the week and will ask about her support.

2. Unless we get action on the part of the national veterans organizations regarding H. R. 4556, it will die in committee for lack of cosponsors and interest.

5 of the 11 cosponsors are from NE IL. If the national groups worked as hard as us, there would be many more.

3. I discussed the bill with Andrew Goczowski, staffer for Cong. Jan Schakowsky, where I got valuable advice, due to his previous assignment in her Washington, D. C. office. We were wrong in thinking that if H. R. 4556 did not pass under this Congress, that there was no hope, because Cong. Carol Shea-Porter, who had introduced the bill, is retiring. If it does not pass this term, we will need another congressman to re-introduce it, so we should be giving serious consideration as to who this might be. It helps to have the bills get into the hopper on the opening day of congress, so that they will get low numbers and will be under consideration for the entire 2 years (if not passed sooner). On that first day, there is a rush among congressmen to get their bills toward the front of the line.

4. Jim Balcer and Joe Bazil have been working on getting a bill in the ILGA for vet dental care since last fall. Several months ago, Mark Weiman and I were invited to a meeting with them and a staffer of Rep. Mike Madigan where the matter was discussed. Since then, numerous emails and discussions have taken place, but until now we were not at liberty to discuss any of this.

If passed, this legislation would provide for free limited dental care (probably little more than exams, cleanings, and fillings) to low income vets. While we would, of course, want complete dental care for all vets, as I told them repeatedly, if it helps at least one vet, then it is a good thing, worthy of our support.

Instead of having this go under the existing bills to provide vets with dental care, which we previously supported, it is going as an amendment (rider) to bills that are not related. It originally went as a proposed amendment for women's healthcare, but that got stuck in committee. It is now going as an amendment to a medicaid bill.

5. Aspen Dental's June 9 Day of Service helped many veterans, doing more than mere exams, cleanings, and fillings. I wrote a letter of appreciation to their Skokie Office, where I was treated, with a copy to Aspen's HQ. They had me in the center of a photo with their staff.

6. The VA now realizes that their process for requesting their new vet ID cards is something that many vets are having problems with, and that many vets do not use computers. They will, at some undetermined time in the future, make it possible for vets to go to VAROs and VAMCs to get them.

7. Please get candidates to submit statements to our webmaster (webmaster@coalitionofvets.org) concerning their positions on veterans issues.

8. On June 18, Mark Weiman and I attended the Town Hall Meeting at JBVAMC. Dan McManus (Duckworth) and Tamara Jordan (Durbin) were also there.

Dir. Mac Magill stated that privatization of the VA will not take place. Neither JBVAMC or any of its clinics will close. 30% of the care for vets goes outside. He said that we are fortunate to be in the Illinois Medical District, and he meets with them as “partners,” because no facility can be the best at everything. These partnerships are not to replace, but to enhance, filling in gaps. The Mission Act will mean that JBVAMC will compete for our business, and he hopes/expects that vets will want to continue getting their care with the VA.

JBVAMC received a 4 star rating from the JCAHO. We had been #80 among the various VAMCs, and now we are #35. His goal is for us to keep improving on this. Among the 8 VISN 12 hospitals, we are #1. I reported that in the morning’s WMAQ news, that it was reported that the nursing home facilities at Hines and JBVAMC got 2 stars out of 5, while North Chicago got 3. The VISN 12 chief researched this on the spot, and the report was the result of a USA Today report on old data. He will contact WMAQ on this.

We still do not know when the hospital will get WiFi. The process is complicated.

I suggested that the hospital ask the City Clerk’s Office to bring their mobile processing unit for the new City ID card to JBVAMC, and he said that it was a great idea, and they will look into it.

Veterans for Unification

Our mission is to educate the Veteran community and support quality care and benefits for all Veterans in the VA Healthcare System.

Next meeting:

Saturday, August 4, 2018
10 - 11:30 AM

Speaker:

Deborah Zajac
Decedent Affairs, Hines VA Hospital

Oak Park Public Library

Second Floor Meeting Room 834 Lake Street Oak Park, IL
Phone 708-383-8200

1 blk west of Oak Park Ave and about 3 blks east of Harlem
Street & indoor parking/WC accessible/Public transportation: contact RTA

Veterans for Unification:for more information 847-827-0835

Veterans for Unification is a not for profit 501c (3) organization:
All donations are tax deductible

Dues are only \$20 a year for a great organization: please join us today.
This organization welcomes all veterans and those who support veterans.

Send your check or money order to:

Veterans for Unification, 805 Lake St. #198, Oak Park IL 60301
<http://VeteransForUnification.org>