



Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 1106

Chapter 1106 Membership Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: February 6, 2021

Scheduled Meeting Start Time: 9:00 AM

Meeting Location: ZOOM Video/Teleconference Host: Gary Weston

Meeting called to order by President Lee White at 9:07 AM

Meeting Topics

1. Welcome to the meeting by President Lee White
2. Invocation by Chaplain Garry Turks and Moment of Silence (for all our MIA and POW)
 - Prayers for those in need and those sick and shut-ins
 - Thank you and prayers for our guest speaker Mr. Kilmer
3. Pledge of Allegiance (all): lead by Lee White
4. Board Member Roll Call

Officers and Board Members Present Roll Call: Officers: Lee White (President), David Lyons (Vice President), Mike Huber (Treasurer), Milt Omoto (Secretary); Board Members: Glen Payne, Tom Werzyn, Patti Ehline, Reverend Garry Turks, Dan Green, Ron Smith, John Vargas; AVVA Liaison Representative: Litta Plant-Schaper (12).

Absences: Joe Plant

5. Membership Roll Call Members Present on Call:

David Yates, Bob Rotruck, Coy Richie, Carl Sanchez, Mark Nickell, Charles Smith, Wendell Wallace, Jack Hunter, Gary Steinhoff, Ted Hanfelder, Dan Wagle (audio), Robert Senatore, Richard Lewis, Litta Plant-Schaper, Leann Stelzer, Michelle Mallin, Bob Mallin, Alan Jaffe, Darryl Wright, Jim Williams, Suzanne Sigona, Mort Anderson, Rich Eisenberg, Mike Karsh, Jesse Maldonado, Gary Weston, David Woods, Cliff Lawson, Joe Dempsey, Joe Robinson, Walter Leuci, Mike Messenger, Jim Bishop, Chris Boyer, Alexis Winemiller

There were a total of 53 online connections at one point.



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6. Guests, Special Presentation: Mr. Michael Kilmer, Director, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System

Mr. Art Akkerman, VA Chief Social Worker
Mr. Justin Cobler RN, VA Caregiver Program

Mr. Kilmer discussed three areas of interest to veterans regarding the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System:

- a) New construction and expansion of services
- b) COVID and the availability of vaccine
- c) The VA Caregiver Program and Support (by Justin Cobler)

New Construction and Expansion of Services

- The old VA campus property will be sold; a veteran will be selected to press the button that implodes the building (!); the VA will keep 5 acres of the old campus land, with plans to use the property for veteran outpatient services (in 5 to 10 years);
- On the current Aurora campus, a new in-patient PTSD clinic will be opened at the North end; construction is currently underway; there will also be a clinic specifically to serve women veterans;
- At the new campus, there are plans to establish a training program on farming and agriculture; they will use this as a way to rehabilitate veterans; it will be called “Veteran Village Farm” and will be next to the PTSD clinic;
- In the South Colorado area, the VA is looking for property to build a clinic in Castle Rock; a new primary care facility is being developed in Colorado Springs, as well as a new hospital; Rocky Mountain Regional will still continue;
- The VA and DOD are partnering for training of active military health care personnel and shared services, similar to the model used in San Diego; currently in Colorado there is only one shared VA/DoD program; the VA has met with thirteen local military groups to discuss shared services agreements; this will enable active military personnel to train at the VA hospital; the VA/DoD joint venture will help veterans to maximize your Tricare and VA benefits;

COVID and the Availability of Vaccine

- The VA hospital is following CDC and VA guidelines for administering COVID vaccines; currently 75 and older and essential worker veterans; the State of Colorado’s guidelines is 70 and older; the VA will expand to 70 and older once they have sufficient vaccine supplies; there are over 11,000 veterans 75 and older that can qualify for the VA vaccine;
- Pfiser is being administered at the Aurora campus and at the Colorado Springs VA; Moderna is being administered in remote areas of Colorado;



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The VA Caregiver Program and Support (Justin Cobler)

- The purpose for this program is to provide support to care givers of veterans; there are two programs available:
 - General Care Program (PG)
 - Comprehensive Assistance for Family Care Giver
- The General Care Program provides education and training on being a care giver; there is a technical support line available; this program is available to anyone providing care of a veteran required for daily living;
- The Comprehensive Assistance Program is an enhanced program for care givers providing care to veterans with 70% and greater service connected disability; the veteran must have served on or after May 7, 1975; these care givers are also eligible to receive the COVID vaccine; this is a clinical program; there are tiers for financial compensation available;

Additional notes from Justin:

- Primary and Secondary Caregivers enrolled in the VA Caregiver Program who are also 75 and above **please note**, eligible caregivers **MUST** be enrolled in VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers; each of these eligible caregivers have a collateral chart in the VA's Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS);
 - Frontline Essential Workers (must present Work ID)
 - Frontline Health Care Workers (must present Work ID)
 - Per referral from provider in ECHCS* directly to scheduler:
 - Homeless Veterans (any age)
 - Hemodialysis patients
 - Solid Organ Transplants or on transplant list
 - Chemotherapy patients (receiving chemotherapy infusions)

**Eastern Colorado Health Care System*

- Frontline Essential Workers" are defined as:
 - First responders (e.g., firefighters and police officers)
 - Corrections officers
 - Food and agricultural workers
 - U.S. Postal Service workers
 - Manufacturing workers
 - Grocery store workers, public transit workers
 - Those who work in the education sector (teachers and support staff members)
 - Childcare workers

For a veteran who is also the care giver to a non-veteran (e.g., spouse), you can apply for a grant; talk to your social worker;



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Contact Information:

Website: www.caregiver.va.gov/support/support_benefits.asp
VA Caregiver Program Phone: (720) 723-3013
Email: ECHCSCaregiverSupport@va.gov
Art Akkermann VA: artur.akkerman@va.gov
Justin Cobler VA: Justin.Cobler@va.gov

Mr. Kilmer said that the VA is working to improve electronic communication between patient and VA staff; there will be a centralized service to provide more consistency; their incoming telephone volume has significantly increased as a result of the pandemic;

7. Special Award Presentations (John Vargas)

- Mike Karsh was presented with an award for his leadership as Chairman of the Scholarship Committee (award given to him by wife Karen)
- Glen Payne was presented with an award for his support of the Chapter as past Secretary, Social Committee, and email “blaster” to all members (award given to him by wife Elissa)
- Mr. Kilmer was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for his support to veterans and leadership at the VA ECHCS.

8. Chapter Meeting Minutes Approval

Minutes of the January 2021 Chapter Membership meeting were emailed to each member.

Motion 1. Motion to approve the VVA Chapter 1106 Minutes dated January 2, 2021 as transcribed made by Dave Lyons and Second by John Vargas; the minutes were approved.

9. President’s Report: Lee White

- The May 29th Poppy Drive is on hold as we work with various King Sooper to get on their calendars for approval to setup a table in front of their store
- The “Buddy Call” list has been recreated and updated thanks to Jack Hunter
- Bill Pine who lives in Castle Rock has two La-Z Boy reclining chairs in good condition available to anyone; they are cloth, not leather
- The Chapter Board has agreed to award four scholarships this year; if more donations are received designating the scholarship program, more scholarships can be awarded; the priority is to use available funds for Chapter activities first
- Rick Crandall is out at radio station KEZW (AM 1430) as the station switches from big bands to a sports-betting station format

10. Vice President’s Report: Dave Lyons

- Dave thanked members for continuing to do “Buddy Check” calls, our monthly calls to Chapter members to see how each member and family are doing



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11. Secretary's Report: Milt Omoto

Milt reported on the VVA National Special Meeting held virtually on January 16, 2021; the key discussion topic was whether to conduct the National Convention in Greensborough, NC in August

- After considerable discussion, it was agreed to conduct a virtual Convention rather than a live event due to safety reasons
- This will save National considerable money by not having to rent convention space and related expense;
- It will also make the process for elections and amendment voting more democratic; there are potentially 1812 delegates possible for a virtual convention; compared to 667 delegates that attended the 2019 Spokane Convention
- A working group is formed to plan and manage the logistics of the Convention; more information will be provided as they become available;

Milt is planning to submit a proposed change to the VVA National Constitution as follows: Revise Article III, Section I from "25 to 15 members in good standing can start a Chapter"; amendments to the VVA National Constitution can be submitted for consideration every Convention year, and will be discussed and voted on at the Convention;

12. Board Member Reports

- a) Joe Plant (reported by Lee). The Chapter has assisted 43 veterans this fiscal year, so far, with rent, utilities, food, and assistance in getting off the street;
- b) Tom Werzyn. Tom reported that the 501(c)(3) parallel non-profit organization is nearing official establishment; the organization is registered with the State and is now awaiting formal approval from the IRS;
- c) Patti Ehline. At the last VA Director's meeting they discussed eye care benefits; Patti will email out this information to Chapter members
- d) Ron Smith. Nothing to report;
- e) Dan Green. Nothing to report;
- f) John Vargas. Nothing further to report;
- g) Glen Payne. No Social Committee update;

13. Treasurer's Report: Mike Huber

- Mike reported on the financial state of the Chapter;
- An amount is set aside for 2021 scholarships.

Motion 2. That the January Treasurer's Report be approved. Motion by Dave Lyons and Second by Tom Werzyn; the motion was approved.

Board Member Reports (continued)

- h) Chaplain Garry Turks. Garry has made visits to 5-6 shut-ins recently; please contact Garry or any Board member about members who are sick or shut-ins;



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14. Committee Reports

- a) Voices for Veterans, Patti Ehline. Chaplain Garry will give the invocation at the next meeting; any veteran interested can participate; Voices for Veterans focuses on mental health issues; contact Patti if you would like to get involved;
- b) Membership, David Lyons. David received the latest MAC report from VVA National; the organization has a total of 87,717 regular members and 10,010 AVVA members; 53 members were lost; membership is up 2.2%;
- c) Grants and Fundraising, Milt Omoto. At the Special VVA Meeting, it was reported that the VVA Household Goods program is ramping back up; no buyers were lost during the slowdown; in Colorado, the program is continuing; we are fortunate to be one of only thirteen States that have this program; you can schedule a pickup by calling or going on line; the program supports the Colorado State Council and Colorado's three VVA Chapters; please continue to support the program by donating your unwanted cloths, appliances, and other household items to the VVA; encourage your friends and neighbors to also do so; The King Soopers Rewards program is now active for the Chapter; if you shop at King Soopers, and have a rewards card, be sure to register your card by linking it to our Chapter; information was sent out by Glen with instructions on how to do it; let Milt know if you need it again or need assistance; you will know your are properly registered when you see "Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1106" at the bottom of your receipt;
- d) Web Master and Newsletter, Bob Rotruck; Bob asked for more pictures of yourself in uniform when you were in the service; email them to Bob at: bobrotruck73@gmail.com
- e) Scholarship Committee, Mike Karsh. Nothing further to report;
- f) Chapter Events, Ron Smith. No Chapter events are currently scheduled;
- g) Social Committee, Glen Payne. No events planned
- h) Color Guard, Dan Green. No current Color Guard activity.

15. Roundtable

- a) Suzanne Sigona reported on the Wall that Heals. She joined a group from the City of Brighton to view the planned site; the Wall that Heals will be on display Labor Day weekend (September 2 to 5, 2021); we encourage volunteers from the Chapter to help; more information can be found at Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund website: <https://www.vvmf.org/The-Wall-That-Heals/> ;
- b) Chris Boyer stated that they will work to get the Honor Bell there;

16. Membership in Sickness or in Need of Support

- a) Prayers for Joe Plant who is ill;
- b) Please continue to pray for Dave and Dee Lyons;
- c) Donna Chaney lives in Canon City and is doing OK
- d) One of our members lost three family members; Chaplain Garry has been in contact with him;
- e) Please let Chaplain Garry Turks know of members who are ill or in need of support.



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17. Schedule

- a) The next Chapter Board Meeting is scheduled for February 27th at 9:00AM;
- b) The next Chapter Member Meeting is Saturday March 6th;
- c) The next Colorado State Council Meeting is March 13th.

The Next Chapter 1106 Membership Meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2021 – online via ZOOM

The membership meeting was adjourned by declaration with no objections by President Lee White at 10:33 AM

This Chapter Membership Meeting minutes is submitted by Milt Omoto, Chapter Secretary.

Published: 02072021

Circulation Notice: These minutes may contain sensitive and/or personal information; therefore, please use discretion when sharing this information with non-VVA members. Note that this is the web version of the meeting minutes.