MINUTES

UUP VETERANS COMMITTEE- January 31, 2016

In attendance: William Borgstede, Justin Culkowski, Clifford DaVis, Ray Gleason, Edward Hines, Michael Knee, Stuart L’Hommedieu, Kevin Moriarty, Norman Payne, Kathleen Southerton, Roosevelt Wardlaw.

Also attending: Carol Jewell-guest; Charles Spector-former member of the Committee

The meeting was held at the Winter DA at the downtown Hilton Hotel in Albany. The meeting was called to order by Bill Borgstede at 12:45 p.m. Minutes of the last meeting were distributed and time was allowed for the members to read the minutes. The minutes were voted upon and approved with no changes.

The agenda called for recognition of Gina Doty, who recently resigned as co-chair of the committee. The Committee wanted to thank her for her years of service. Gina was not present but these minutes give testament to the appreciation by the members for her work on behalf of veterans within UUP.

J. Culkowski noted he had run into Rob Trimarchi, the legislative liaison for UUP, and he invited him to the meeting. Rob attended and informed the committee he was no longer in that post but was now involved heavily in membership development. Rob did note, however, that the Governor had once again vetoed the bill to give all TRS/ERS veterans the right to buy into the retirement system for years absent State service due to military service.

A current copy of the Veterans Affairs Committee membership was distributed. Each person present was asked to sign-in and check for accuracy. One discrepancy was noted as Charles Spector of Oswego was not on the list. He indicated he was on leave during the elections and perhaps was not listed. ACTION: Charles will have to go through channels to be reinstated on the Committee as he is officially not on the Committee at present.

J. Culkowski distributed a draft of the Resolution to give ORP retirees the same right to buy back time towards retirement which is now available to TRS/ERS employees who served during certain times of military duty. The Resolution was voted upon and unanimously approved. ACTION: Bill Borgstede will forward the Resolution to UUP Secretary Eileen Landy for consideration by the Executive Board. ACTION: J. Culkowski will forward a copy of the Resolution to Eileen in electronic format as well.

Ray Gleason noted he is the liaison to the Committee for the Executive Committee. A review is going on to see which Committees are currently needed. He suggested the co-chairs send him a short report of activities so he could present this at the Executive Committee. J. Culkowski asked why he could not use the minutes for this. Ray responded that he wanted something from the co-chairs that was an edited version of the minutes so it came from the committee and not from him. ACTION: Co-chairs will send Ray a short report of activities to be shared at the Executive Committee.

Kathleen Southerton/Bill Borgstede had asked for a speaker from the TRS/ERS to be present at this DA to field questions. This was done and they will be available the next day at 10 a.m. Questions from the membership present were enlisted and will be asked at that session.

Some literature was distributed noting the poor financial handling of donations by the Wounded Warrior project. Since the Committee has solicited funds for them a discussion followed about ending support or finding new veterans groups to fund. J. Culkowski proposed dropping Wounded Warriors until things improve. K. Southerton and others suggested we solicit for Fisher House and Disabled American Veterans. Discussion followed with the result being we will solicit for Fisher House at this DA and perhaps DAV at the next one in Saratoga. Bill Borgstede will staff the table the next morning and Kathy Southerton will get some literature off of the Internet for Fisher House, ( which is like McDonald House but for the families of veterans who are hospitalized.)

J. Culkowski asked if we need to have more officers for the Veterans Committee. Ray Gleason shared there are usually co-chairs only. After this, the Committee voted to elect Justin Culkowski to be the new co-chair replacing Gina Doty. Bill Borgstede will talk to UUP President Fred Kowal about appointing Justin as this is the proper procedure in such matters. ACTION: Bill Borgstede to discuss new co-chair with President Kowal.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Co-Chairs: Bill Borgstede and Justin Culkowski (pending co-chair.)