Minutes

The UUP Veterans Committee

Hilton Hotel, Saratoga Springs, NY

January 28, 2018

Members in attendance: William Borgstede and Justin Culkowski: Co-Chairs of the Committee, Ray Gleason-Liaison to the UUP Executive Committee, Cristian Balan, Thomas Hogle, Michael Knee, Stu L’Hommedieu, Clifford DaVIs, Kevin Moriarty, Roosevelt Wardlaw, and guest- Bob Kasprak

The meeting was called to order at 2:37p.m. by Justin C.

Minutes of the May 2017 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Stu L. to accept and seconded by Kevin M. The minutes were approved. The attendance sheet was passed around and updates received. Later, each member of the committee introduced themselves.

The Strategic Plan of the Committee, as formulated last year, was reviewed. The seven goals in the Strategic Plan and their status:

1. The Webpage was discussed and it was generally agreed it is meeting its objective. However, it may not be as easily accessible as desired. Ray G. suggested the Chair contact UUP President Kowal to get a “button” on the UUP webpage to make access easier. Justin C. countered that he would like Ray G. to bring this up at the next Executive Committee Meeting. After discussion it was agreed Justin C. will contact President Kowal and ask for this and Ray G. will likewise bring it up at the UUP Executive meeting.
2. Support for veterans returning from active duty does not appear to be a significant problem at present with the downturn in Guard and Reserve activations.
3. Justin C. noted he had twice contacted President Kowal in the past year to ask Chapter Presidents if they knew of any difficulties concerning veterans. Likewise, John Marino via the LRS staff was contacted twice last year to ascertain any problems. No problems were noted.
4. Regalia cords will be made available for Commencement wear. Tom Hogle of Morrisville will mail his supply to any needing them. Justin C. will ask President Kowal to notify Chapter Presidents that these are available via Tom H.
5. Pictures of veterans in uniform will be solicited via the Chapter Presidents as in #4 above and forwarded to Mike K. for posting on the webpage.
6. Benefits for veterans was discussed and it is difficult to offer them with any regularity as even Home Depot has rules that vary by location. However, Tom H. noted a card for “Vet Rewards” that may help veterans. He and Mike K. will investigate.
7. Since there were no serious problems faced by veterans, the UUP President was not contacted about any need for legislation to address issues.

Bill B. and Justin C. noted that President Kowal did not speak for very long at the Meeting on Saturday Night but Secretary-Treasurer, Jeri O’Bryan-Losee informed the Committee Chairs that a strategic plan and goals are part of the charge for each committee. Thus, the strategic plan above is important for the proper functioning of the Veterans Committee.

Mike Knee indicated he would investigate how to make the website better via “search engine optimization.”

Crisian B. noted that as a faculty member, when called to active duty during the middle of a semester, it created big problems for colleges and “friction” between Reservists and supervisors. However, as he noted, it is a matter of planning to avert this friction but it does occur at times. A long discussion ensued about the laws for time away from a job and provisions for Reservists. Stu L. is well versed on the laws.

Finally, there was an appeal by Justin C. for staffing of the Veterans table in the vendor area. The Charity supported this time is Fisher House at the VA hospital in Albany. It was hoped we could raise $250 to $300 from the delegates.

The Committee plans to meet again in May at the DA and share updates to the action items noted above.

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Culkowski

Co-Chair