Minutes

The UUP Veterans Committee

Desmond Americana Hotel, Albany, NY

May 4, 2018

Members in attendance: William Borgstede\* and Justin Culkowski: Co-Chairs of the Committee; Ray Gleason-Liaison to the UUP Executive Committee; Michael Knee, Stu L’Hommedieu, Clifford DaVIs, Kevin Moriarty, Davis Scholl, Michael Carbone, and guests- Bob Kasprak and Helen Borruso

The meeting was called to order at 11:20 a.m. by Justin C.

Minutes of the January 2018 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Stu L. to accept and seconded by Cliff D. The minutes were approved. (\*The attendance sheet was not available as Bill B. volunteered to staff the Veterans Table and he had the official attendance sheet. Instead a pad was passed around and updates received.) Members of the committee introduced themselves.

1. Justin C. indicated he attended the Chairs Committee Meeting the night before which was chaired by UUP Sec-Treas. Jeri O’Bryan-Losee. The key topic was developing a Strategic Plan. An excellent presentation was made by Jeri and representatives of NYSUT. It appears the current Veterans Committee Strategic Plan complies with the UUP standards.
2. Justin C. indicated he was in contact with Tina George to see how our budget stood as of the meeting date. The yearly budget is $7,000 and just under $1,000 has been spent so far with a few months to go. This DA meeting will cost something but we have money to spend if worthy projects are proposed. Much discussion followed with a suggestion for UUP hats with the four services printed on them for veterans on the SUNY campuses. This will be looked into by Justin. Further, Bob Kasprak indicated good publicity for UUP could be gained it we purchased a wreath to be used at the New York Veterans Day parade. Justin C. opined he would only be willing to do this if we did, indeed, get publicity for UUP. Bob K. indicated he had sent photos in the past to UUP showing the wreath etc. but the pictures were never used. Coincidentally, Darryl McGrath. from the Communications Office stopped by to take pictures. She indicated emailed pictures would be best and that if sent to her or others at UUP, every consideration would be made to publish them. This wreath idea ( up to $250) will have to be formally approved with our new budget in the next fiscal year. Members were urged to consider ideas that will mobilize UUP fee payers and members.
3. The Webpage was discussed and Justin C. praised Mike K. for “working his magic” to get the Veterans Page more visible. By simply googling “ UUP Veterans Committee” the webpage now shows up. Before it was cumbersome to locate it. Mike will explore even more ways to improve visibility via “search engine optimization.”
4. President Kowal and John Marino helped the committee by requesting from Chapter Presidents and Labor Relations Specialists, respectively, if any problems for veterans working in SUNY were discovered. No problems were identified, and Justin C. wants to acknowledge and thank Fred and John for their assistance with this, our primary mission, as a committee.
5. In his absence, Justin C. reported that Tom Hogle, who was attending his Viet Nam veterans’ reunion, had sent honor cords to five campuses that requested them. In addition, 100 cords were ordered and are now in Tom’s possession. Tom is to be thanked for taking on this role as it was formerly handled via the UUP President’s Office and it should be handled by the Committee. Ray G. and David S. will see if more veterans’ ribbons are needed for future DA’s and find out how to purchase them if this is the case.
6. Justin C. indicated he will probably ask UUP to drop some names from our Committee as there are some who are on the list but who never attend a meeting or respond to emails.

Kevin M. indicated he was Chapter President at Stony Brook and he would like to try to get a veteran representative at each SUNY campus. This is a tall order but he will attempt to do so. The potential veteran hats discussed above might help with this. The presence of UUP veterans might be a “motivator” as they represent a small but important segment of UUP and many are not recognized as such.

Staffing at the Veterans Table was needed to pass out veteran ribbons and to collect donations for Fisher House. Four members will visit the Albany Fisher House following the meeting and find out, firsthand, how this charity works. It was recently given a “perfect score” by Charity Navigator for its efficient use of funds. Bill B., Cliff D., Mike K. and Justin C. will visit Fisher House.

When asked it there was any other business, Dave S. indicated he and many others were very upset with the conduct of the Executive Committee last fall in Buffalo when they did not show proper respect for the national anthem. Justin C. was not at the fall DA and this was the first he heard of it but he would put this in the minutes as a record of our collective disagreement with the Exec. Committee’s actions.

The Committee plans to meet again in October at the DA and share updates. Ray G. suggested committee members get some photos at the Military Naval Park in Buffalo and use these to help with publicity.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Culkowski

Co-Chair