

Minutes

The UUP Veterans Committee

Albany Convention Center

February 4, 2019

Members in attendance: Justin Culkowski, Co-Chair of the Committee; Ray Gleason-Liaison to the UUP Executive Committee; Kevin Moriarty, Stu L'Hommedieu, Mike Knee, Cliff DaVis, and guest-Bob Kasprak

The meeting was called to order at 8:50 a.m. by Justin C.

Minutes of the October 2018 meeting were reviewed. Kevin M. moved and Cliff D. seconded a motion to approve the minutes. They were approved.

1. Justin C. indicated he and Bill Borgstede attended the Committee Chair's meeting the night before. The topic of the meeting was leadership and the need to have members of committees take leadership positions. In that regard, Justin C. asked for someone on the veteran's committee to chair the fund raising raffle at the next DA. No one volunteered. Justin C. is going to ask Bill B. to chair it and/or get new members who will.
2. A discussion of the budget followed which shows an annual allocation of \$7,000 and about \$2300 spent because we held a meeting at the October DA, leaving about \$4,300 before this meeting. Justin C. will ask Tina George about the expenditure for meetings and if it is based upon committee membership, he will drop many listed who never attend the meetings nor even respond to requests. Ray G. noted that post-Janus, with no agency fee payers, the restrictions on spending may be considerably less. He suggested any ideas for expenditures be shared with the Executive Committee and seek approval before committing funds. Ray indicated a national veteran's event where UUP could get some publicity would be a smart expenditure.
3. Justin C. indicated he was not informed of any veteran/military member problems within SUNY but Cliff D. indicated he heard about someone at Cobleskill who had lost his/her job or was reassigned after a military tour. He believes the reassignment was ultimately satisfactory but he will share any more information at the May meeting if it becomes available.
4. The membership list was passed among members and signatures and updates urged. Again, the list contains 20 names but the attendance is never more than nine so Justin C. was encouraged by members attending to drop the inactive.
5. Included in the packet given to each member was a copy of a letter from Fred Kowal to Fisher House and copies of checks written to Fisher House in Albany. We are just shy of donating \$1,000 to Fisher House and ideas were enlisted to help us. One idea was to sell key chains made by volunteers at a VA hospital. For a \$5 donation, \$1 would go back to the VA and \$4 would go to Fisher House. R. Kasprak met the President of SUNY Maritime who is involved with this effort. She will be invited to join the committee by Justin C. and will, it is hoped, bring some key chains to the Spring DA.

6. The topic of projects to activate the membership was raised. Ray G. again suggested some national event where UUP could be recognized for positive publicity. Kevin M. noted the local American Legion near him could be asked for ideas and he will endeavor to do so. Another idea was to seek contact with Gold Star families for ideas.
7. A review of the strategic plan concluded we are doing what we have set out to do but any improvements are welcome. Mike K. had improved the website via “search engine optimization” and will welcome pictures of UUP members in uniform for the website. Kevin M. noted he may have some pictures to share and he will forward them to Mike K.
8. Justin C. shared his article in the UUP Active Retiree defending spending for national defense. Copies of it were included in the packet given at the meeting.
9. Bob Kasprak explained that the wreath for the Veterans Day Parade in New York City was ordered, but a picture of the wreath was not forwarded to Justin C. as he had directed. It was generally agreed that without publicity for this expenditure, it was not worth doing. After a long discussion it was decided that Kevin M. would go to the parade November 11, 2019 and get a picture of the wreath and UUP would be approached to pay for his transportation and miscellaneous expenses. Bob K. would attempt to get Kevin a guest VIP pass so he could attend the ceremony where the wreaths are located near 23rd street in Manhattan.
10. Justin C. explained we have a short window to take donations for Fisher House at this DA but always welcomes members to help out at the desk. Stu L. volunteered to staff the desk during most of the meeting. Thanks to Bob K., Justin C., Mike K. and the Benefits department for donating items that will be prizes at the raffle.
11. Tom Hogle, who had to teach on Monday and could not attend the meeting, agreed to mail honor cords to those requesting them. Justin C. will attempt to get the message out about contacting Tom so our veterans can be honored.
12. During the meeting, Darryl McGrath of the UUP public relations department, took a picture of the members in their UUP shirts. It is hoped this and other pictures will appear in the “Voice” to advertise the committee’s activities and note the availability of honor cords.
13. Kevin M. moved, and Cliff D. seconded a motion to adjourn at 10:20. The meeting adjourned at that time so members could get to the reconvened DA to vote on amendments to the Constitution of UUP.

The Committee plans to meet at the May DA.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Culkowski

Co-Chair