

United Veterans Coalition of Colorado
General Meeting
Tuesday, January 14, 2020
VFW Post 9644
9:00am

MINUTES

Call to Order – President Dennis Orr at 9:00am.

Invocation, Moment of Silence – Rev. Susan Smith, Pastor, USA (Ret)

Pledge of Allegiance – 1st Vice President Dick Young

Welcome and Introductions – Dennis recognized and thanked Michelle Mallin and the Chick-Fil-A staff for providing a delicious breakfast for the group.

Roll Call – Dick Wilson

All primary organization representatives were present except for: Jim Craig, Doug Osborne and Paula Sarlls. Jim Craig and Paula Sarlls were excused.

New Members – These Associate member organizations were unanimously voted in as members:

- Forgotten Heroes Campaign
- Colo. Springs Vet Center
- Audie Murphy Traveling Museum
- Innovage
- Transforming Glory Warrior Care

Secretary Report – Karen Hone All general meeting minutes are on the web, www.uvcoc.org

Treasurer's Report – Paul Gremse He reported the checking account balance is \$17,769.99. Ed Aitken moved (and Tony Jones seconded) to accept the Treasurer's report.

Budget Committee – Glen Kataoka noted that all banquet revenue comes in the next 3 months. UVC is starting to pay Dan Jablan \$1,000 per month for the rest of the session.

State Legislative Committee – Shelly Kalkowski and Robby Robinson reported that the general assembly is underway, and about 200 bills have already been introduced. About 5 of them directly affect veterans. Their committee will take a position (support, oppose or monitor) on any of these bills.

Bylaw Committee – Les Kennedy noted that a suggested bylaw change has been posted on the web page for 30 days. It places the Membership Chair on the Executive Committee. Tony Jones moved (and Paul Gremse seconded) to approve the bylaw change. Motion passed unanimously.

Donation – Tony Jones and Tom Yagley, of Post #1, Leyden, Chiles, Wickersham presented Dennis Orr with a check for \$200.

Banquet – Karen reviewed the sponsors to date:

KPMG – Platinum (\$3500)

Silver (\$1750 – American G.I. Forum, Innovage, Rocky Mountain Navy, Frank McCurdy)

There is a special room rate (\$119) available. Karen can provide more information to anyone who's interested.

Co. Board of Veterans Affairs – Sheila reported that they have sent letters to all county commissioners outlining how they could benefit from funds received to support a veterans service officer in their counties. They will continue to cooperate with and train commissioners. Dennis asked her to post a copy of the commissioner letter on the web page. The woman veteran license plate is now available for \$50.

U.S. EPA Region 8 – Amanda Hong made a brief presentation on detecting, fixing and therefore saving a life if you test for radon in your home or office. She distributed coupons for a free radon test. January is national radon action month.

Qualified Listeners – Greg Goettsch, Executive Director, described the activities and resources of this Veteran & Family Resource Hub. They help vets and their families find more peace in their life. They field about 150 calls and emails a month. They train veterans and family members to listen to stories/feelings. without judging. They have a resource directory and have vetted any agency listed.

Buckley – Mike Balow spoke on how to get access to Buckley to just visit or to use the commissary.

Dept. of Military & Veterans Affairs – Rich Tremaine reported they are getting ready for their state conference. He said they are moving towards becoming more of a certifying agency; their mission is to ensure that every county has a professional veterans service officer.

VSO's, Associates and Affiliates Announcements

VFW – Steve Kjonaas, Legislative Director for the State, suggested that UVC members contact their representative and senator to comment on the “retired pay restoration act”. He said members could use the link from VFW Department of Colo. Facebook page.

Air Force Association – Stephen Gourley announced that the movie, “Last Full Measure” will be out on January 24 at AMC theatres. It's about the Medal of Honor Recipient William Pitsenbarger for action in April 1966.

Wreaths Across America – Steve Best reported that this year was the most successful ever. In 2015 they placed 333, and this year they placed just short of 22,000. They had about 5,000 attendees. He would like feedback, and he's also recruiting volunteers for next year.

American G.I. Forum – Russell Lopez introduced Albert Gonzales, the newly elected state commander. They are working on a Korean War Medals Ceremony, and have about 25 applications.

Senator Cory Gardner – Stephen Emmer – Reported that the Senate passed Gardner's VA Accountability legislation. The NDAA incorporated the repeal of the widows' tax.

VCLC – Rose Campbell thanked all the volunteers that helped spending time and bringing gifts for the veterans.

State Veterans CLC Commission – Karen Kowalski reported that she, Robby Robinson, Dick Young, and Bill Hanna all met with the Lt. Governor to discuss: 1) finances; 2) a survey of vets needs over the next decade and 3) appointment of a committee to look at CLC business structures.

VA Benefits – Renaye Murphy – the April 12 UVC meeting will be at the VA Regional Office (VARO) to show off their remodeled space. They have start adjudicating Blue Water Navy claims on January 1, and they have over 14,000 pending, with 378 complete cases representing retroactive benefits of \$13 million. They are using a digital tool to analyze if ships were within the 12-mile radius. They can go as far back as 1985.

VISN 19 – Jill Atwood reported on several things: No. Colorado is targeting 2022 to have dual operations in Cheyenne and Northern Colorado. A superclinic is operating in Grand Junction. The director is really promoting telehealth systems.

Vets Experience Office – David Francavilla reported on several national initiatives: promoting 988 for use as a suicide crisis line, and the VA partnering with Walmart on creating telehealth networks.

ECHCS – Kristie Barker said their annual report is published, and here are some facts:

- Trained 1,410 residents/students
- Received \$21 million for research
- Volunteer hours topped 137,000
- Handled over 1 million outpatient visits
- Provided 4877 surgeries

Appreciation Day at the State Legislature – as of today, there are no concrete plans to hold this (tentatively scheduled earlier for Feb. 7)

Avalanche Evening – Dennis Orr announced that there would be a fundraiser for going to an Avalanche game on March 17.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40am.

Karen A. Hone
Secretary