

Minutes

The UUP Veterans Committee

The Desmond Hotel, Albany, NY

April 21, 2023

Members in attendance: Justin Culkowski: Co-Chair of the Committee; Bill Borgstede, Co-Chair; Stu L'Hommedieu; Brittany Profit-Rheinwald; Lisa Marie Anselmi (Liason to the Committee); Barbara Warkentine; David Scholl; Tom Hogle; Tom Ballis; Ray Gleason; Mike Knee;

Guests: Charles Spector; Chris Black (UUP Director of Legislative and Political Affairs); Darryl McGrath, (UUP Managing Editor)

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by B. Borgstede.

The minutes of the October 14, 2022 meeting were read and S. L'Hommedieu noted discrepancies in the start and end times of that meeting. These will be corrected. Following that, the minutes were approved.

J. Culkowski welcomed the committee and thanked members for taking the time to attend. Members introduced themselves. Chris Black introduced himself and asked the membership what areas need potential legislative attention from their standpoint. He said there was a great deal of legislation being written and he would share relevant legislation with the Committee. J. Culkowski noted we had tried to get some veteran credit for those not in the State Retirement system but to no avail. He also stated some years ago there were problems with UUP members called to active duty and their job security. These situations were worked out. Tom Hogle stated a new law, PACT, had been enacted and it promised medical help for those who were in Viet Nam and/or the Middle East. He thought an article should be published by UUP about this new law and Daryl McGrath indicated she is the one to contact about an article. Tom will follow up with Darryl about this new law.

The budget of the Committee remains \$5,500. Only \$545 was spent so far this year. Since we are having a meeting at this DA, funds will come from our budget to cover members in attendance but additional funds will remain.

Therefore, J. Culkowski indicated we had some money to spend on projects. A suggestion was made to acquire new Veteran shirts so a sign up list was passed around. J. Culkowski will share this with Jeri O'Bryan Losee following the DA. Stu L'Hommedieu re-introduced the challenge coin idea. After discussion, it was decided it was not a popular idea for the Committee but maybe for UUP as a whole. Stu will discuss with Jeri O'Bryan Losee. Another idea that will be explored by Brittany Profit-Rheinwald is a quality lanyard with veteran markings to be used multiple times.

Barbara Warkentine and B. Borgstede are in charge of the raffle and there are five prizes so far. Help is needed at the desk. (Note: The raffle raised a respectable \$283 for Fisher House.)

UUP President Fred Kowal and the head of the Labor Relations Specialists (LRS) had been contacted and reported no problems concerning veterans and SUNY employment.

T. Hogle, who is in charge of distributing honor cords, shared some news on requests for cords and it seems there is widespread use of the cords but since they are re-used, there is limited demand for these at this time. However, SUNY Delhi had ordered some and Tom will take care of this.

The need to improve the Veterans Website was discussed. J. Culkowski entertained ideas. B. Profit-Rheinwald suggested that with the list of members, a link with an EXCEL spreadsheet could show email and phone numbers for the membership. Mike Knee thinks this is very possible and will be explored. New members will be coming on board with the elections so we will wait until the new members are in place to do this. R. Gleason suggested links for donations to help veterans could also be on the website.

The sticker project was discussed. Should we continue it or not? Mixed reviews were received. One suggestion was to print "Proud family member of a Veteran" but nothing received a strong endorsement. This will be discussed again and J. Culkowski welcomes feedback in the meantime.

K. Moriarty was not present but had reported the NY City Veterans Day Parade and our UUP wreath was well worth the effort. More members are urged to attend next November.

Lisa Marie Anselmi, in her Liaison role, noted there will be a resolution at the DA concerning support of charities. Members are urged to watch for this resolution.

The meeting ended at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Culkowski

Co-Chair