



589th Engineer Battalion Assn. (Vietnam)

Minutes of the September 8, 2018 meeting

The 589th Engineer Battalion Association (Vietnam) business meeting, which was held in conjunction with the 2018 Reunion at the Stone Castle in Branson, Missouri, was called to order on Sept 8, 2018 at 1200 hours by President Perry Blanchfield pursuant to a notice of meeting provided to all members. The President noted that a quorum was present for the conducting of business.

Invocation by Chaplain Tom McLain

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as printed and circulated. **Motion carried.**

President Blanchfield introduced the officers and noted that Dennie Pendergrass, Denis Cowand Poole, and Bob Spencer were absent due to medical and personal issues.

Minutes of 2017 Business Meeting

Secretary Sterling Hester was asked to read the minutes of the 2017 meeting, copies of which were distributed among the members. A motion was made by Nick Kallas to accept the minutes as printed with the correction to the first time attendees to include Gary Cowie Feb 68 to Feb 69. **Motion carried**

Report of the Audit Committee

Tim Cameron reported that in conversations with Treasurer Bob Spencer and the committee's detailed review of the finances, that our accounts were sound. A motion was made by Rich Comiso and seconded by Charles Begley to accept the Treasury Report. **Motion Carried.**

President's Comments/State of the Association

The current membership stands at 728, with 51 deceased since 2009. The estimated active members are presumed to be 300 or less based on email feedback. Reunion attendance is robust but is slightly declining. It was noted that 10 members have died since our last reunion. The President noted that the Honor Our Fallen program continues to be one of the most respected and honorable things we do. Our HOF program is tremendously respected by all who become familiar with it. The media, other military personnel, families, friends, and others are very thankful and proud of what we do to respect our Fallen Brothers each year by remembering them during the Memorial Day weekend. Our program is special because our Fallen Brothers are actually remembered in person at the gravesites by those who served in their same unit and in some cases, by their side in Vietnam.

First Time Attendees

The President welcomed the following First Time Attendees and presented them with shot glasses:

Dennis Kochheiser B CO Mar 68 – Apr 69

William Smith HHC Jan 70 – Nov 70

Paul Titmuss C CO Dec 67 – Mar 70

Unfinished Business from 2017

Discussed having local VSO Reps speak to the membership. Consensus was to keep up that effort.

Discussed the purchase of a brick at the Vietnam Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. and Ft. Belvoir. Appointed Tim Cameron to make the purchase not to exceed 1000 dollars. Motion was made by Rich Comiso and seconded by Nick Kallas for Tim Cameron to purchase the Bricks.

Motion carried

New Business

The President discussed the Stone Castle Free Room and Upgrade Comps, which are based on the number of rooms reserved. He noted that the hotel no longer awards free upgrades. It was decided that room comps should first go to those most in need, and any remaining rooms then be awarded by a drawing.

A motion was made by Sterling Hester to accept the Article XVI Honor Our Fallen Program as written. Copies were circulated among members. Nick Kallas moved to give the Board authority to modify the By-laws as appropriate to fulfil the funding for the new article and amend the By Laws to so reflect it. Motion seconded by Dave Cordingley. **Motion Carried.**

John Ryan made a motion that we allow members that are not present at the business meeting an opportunity to vote on the election of Directors, any Bylaw changes, and future Battalion reunion decisions by electronic means. After considerable discussion it was recommended that the new rule would only be extended to Lifetime Member Donors who have also attended at least one Reunion. An absentee ballot would be sent to all qualified Members in good standing within 7 days following the Battalion business meeting. Absentee votes would need to be returned within 30 days to be considered valid. Nick Kallas noted that these changes should also be reflected in our Bylaws. Seconded by Tim Cameron. **Motion Carried.**

Rich Comiso made a motion to hold our primary Battalion Reunion in Branson every third year fully supported by the Board and the 589th web site as in the past. The next reunion would be in 2021 at the Stone Castle. In addition, in the off years between the Battalion Reunion, starting in 2019 we hold less formal localized mini reunions in venues across the country that offer members that were unable to attend past reunions a chance to reunite with their brothers more easily. The organizers are free to set the terms such as where, when, and who is invited. A relaxed atmosphere would be encouraged. Official Business Meetings would not be held for these mini reunions. Motion seconded by Charles Begley. After considerable discussion a vote was held. Ayes 29. Opposed 9 **Motion Carried.**

Nick Kallas made a motion to make Shaun Gourley an Honorary Member. Seconded by Rich Comiso. **Motion Carried.**

Terry Story made a motion to take 10,000 dollars from the treasury and donate it to Bob Spencer for expenses incurred as a result of his family's tragic accident in June 2018. That motion was ruled out of order. There was a discussion on Bob's issues and ways to donate money directly to him.

The president discussed a 589th challenge coin with printed copies of the design circulated to all members present. It was suggested that a 2-inch version of the coin would be presented to all 589th Members while a 3-inch version would be presented to all of our Fallen Brother's NOK. The 3-inch version would also be presented to our HOF Volunteers as a thank you for their efforts in supporting our Memorial Day weekend ceremonies. Total cost is estimated to be approximately 4,500 dollars. Nick Kallas made a motion to purchase the coins with up to 5000 dollars being allocated for this purpose. **Motion Carried.**

The President thanked Board members, John and Elaine Ryan-PX sales/orders, Raffle/Auction. Rich Comiso- Publicity Committee, Sterling Hester- Memorabilia. Tom McLain- Chaplin/sympathy cards. HOF Volunteers and supporters.

Toast by the President

Closing Prayer by Chaplin Tom McLain

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted

Sterling Hester Secretary

