

New Hampshire

STATE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BIANNUAL REPORT

MAY 1, 2013



S.V.A.C.

SVAC Biannual Report — May 2013

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with RSA 115 - A:8, this report is issued to the Speaker of the House, Senate President, Governor, Executive Council, Chairs of the Veteran committees and the various veteran's organizations active in the State of New Hampshire. This is the first of two required biannual reports for 2013.

HISTORY

RSA 115 - A:8 states that a veterans' advisory committee be formed comprised of legislative members, members of various veteran organizations, and shall elect a chairman, vice chairman, and secretary from the committee membership.

On July 17, 2002, Mr. Ken Leidner, past chairman of the committee's predecessor, called the organizational meeting to order at the LOB in Concord, NH. The primary purpose was to elect the officers of the new State Veterans Advisory Committee. The initial veteran organization members present were the American Legion (AMLEGION), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA), The Retired Officers Association (TROA) (now the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)), and the Reserve Officers Association (ROA). Elections were held in accordance with the governing RSA. The first officers elected were: Dr. Griffin Dalianis, Chairman, LCDR David Kenney, USNR, Vice - Chairman, and Mr. Ed Granger, TREA, Secretary. Since 2002 the committee has generally met on a monthly basis except for a two-month summer recess period. The committee adopted bylaws as of June 8, 2004 to govern management and operation. These bylaws were most recently updated in May of 2010.

During the 2007 Legislative session the Governor signed an amendment to RSA 115-A:2 increasing the voting membership of the SVAC from ten to fourteen veterans' organizations in the state of New Hampshire. In 2008 the authorized number of voting organizations was reached and there were two qualified applicant organizations awaiting an opening. The Committee requested the legislative members to submit a bill to increase the authorized voting membership for the second time since 2002. This was done under SB 15 introduced in the 2009 session that was adopted to permit an increase in the membership of the SVAC to a maximum of 20 organizations (plus the two legislative members from both the Senate and the House). Currently the voting membership comprises 15 organizations plus the four legislative members.

This report contains a summary of the meetings, committee composition, legislative initiatives, and successes the Veterans Advisory Committee accomplished during this reporting period.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The officers, legislative members and fifteen member organizations are shown below. These are the voting members of the committee; each has one vote.

Chairman - Peter Burdett – *Military Officers Association of America*

Chairman Emeritus - Dr. Griffin T. Dalianis – *Disabled American Veterans*

Vice Chairman – Bobby Broneske – *Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association*

Secretary – Lt. Col. Stephanie Riley – *National Guard Association of New Hampshire*

Legislative Members:

- Senator Sharon M. Carson
- Senator Sam Cataldo
- Representative Al Baldasaro
- Representative Robert L. Theberge

Voting Organization Members (as of the date of this report):

- 1 American Legion (AMLEGION) (*P – Francis "Sharkey" Madden, Jr., A – Bill Roy*)
- 2 Disabled American Veterans (DAV) (*P – Benjamin Saxon, A – Ron Reilly*)
- 3 Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) (*P – Greg Lynch, A – Paul Chevalier, A – Jim Golden, A – Gene Pawlik*)
- 4 Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) (*P – Alan Grant, A – Raymond Goulet, Jr.*)
- 5 Military Order of Purple Heart (MOPH) (*P – Kenith Chase*)
- 6 Reserve Officers Association (ROA) (*P - Dave Kenney, A – Mike Horne, A – BG John Pappas*)
- 7 Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) (*P – Peter Burdett, A – John Graham, A – Joseph DiChiaro, Jr.*)
- 8 The Air Force Association (AFA) (*P – Kevin Grady, A – Ed Josephson*)
- 9 The National Guard Association of New Hampshire (*P – James Moody, A – David Routhier, A – Stephanie Riley*)
- 10 Rolling Thunder (*P – Mark Willen, A – Marsha Bailey*)
- 11 Marine Corps League (MCL) (*P – Joe Shea*)
- 12 Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA) (*P - John Symington, A – Ray Hayes*)
- 13 New Hampshire Army Retiree Council (*P – Frank Musmanno, A – Bruce Barton*)
- 14 Women Veterans of America (*P – Susan Cuddy, A – Mary Morin*)
- 15 Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association (*P – Bobby Broneske, A – Michael Farinola, A – Peter Newell, Raymond Schwendeman*)

Many senior leaders of state agencies routinely provide advice to the Committee but do not have voting privileges.

Committee Advisors:

- BGen Carol Protzmann, USAF (ANG) - *Deputy Adjutant General*
- Peter Fortier - *NH Military Archivist - (Alt. Rep for BGen Protzmann)*
- Ken Leidner - *NH Veterans Association*
- Barry Conway – *Sage Emeritus*
- Michael Horne - *NH State Veterans Cemetery*
- Dr. William Busby, *Regional Manager Northeast Region, Vet Centers*
- Jo A. Moncher – *NH Dept of Health and Human Service, Bureau Chief, Community Based Military programs*
- Joseph DiChiaro, Jr. – *Appointed Chaplain*

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE/COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Since the last report of the committee dated November 1, 2012 the committee has held 6 meetings at the National Guard Aviation Facility in Concord. The SVAC has held 98 meetings since July 2002. Meeting announcements are made in accordance with the legislative calendar procedures and Email. The Committee regularly invites input from all groups, organizations, and individuals interested in veterans. During this period speakers and guests included the following:

Maj Gen William N. Reddel, III, Adjutant General
Col Paul Loiselle, Director of Air Staff, NHNG
CSM John Nanof, State Command SGT Major, NHNG
Ken Clark, former NH TAG
Henry Pratte, Veterans Museum of NH
Lisa Aldridge, NH Transition Assistance Advisor
Michael Rice, NHNG Enlisted Association/ESGR
Maj Eric Hogancamp, NHARNG
Col Kenneth Lull, NH ESGR
Vickie Lull, military spouse
Dan Marcek, Vetflix
Rep. Frank Emiro, Dir., National Vietnam Gulf War Vets Coalition
Robert Garand, Catholic War Veterans
Russell Bilodeau, Catholic War Veterans
Susan MacKenzie, acting Director, Manchester VA Medical Center
Judy DeCarteret, Manchester VAMC
Karen McCarthy, WVA

Pete Duffy, acting Legislative Director, NGAUS
Paul Moore, Moore Mart
Bradley G. Mayes, Dir., VA Regional Office, Boston
Bill Busby, Dir., Vet Center
John Coughlin
Jim Gross ESGR
LtCol Stephanie Riley, NHNG Occupational Health
David Quinn, ESGR
Ken Maynard
Howie Howe, HOTH
Judy Crockett, Manchester VA
Jessie Garcia, SSFV Harbor Homes
Cate Sementa, SSFV Harbor Homes
Carol Furlong, Harbor Homes
Kevin Fox, Harbor Homes
Catherine Crane, Gold Star Mother
Susan Peterson, Blue Star Mother
Karen Testerman, Blue Star Mother
Gary Carpenter, Veteran Business Organization
Gerard Boles, VVA

Representatives of the NH Congressional Delegation and Governor (for coordination purposes)

Sarah Holmes (Senator Shaheen)
Sherri Pierce (Senator Shaheen)
Steve Monier (Senator Ayotte)
Dave Tille (Congressman Guinta)
Leigh Ann Shriver (Congressman Bass)
Jackie Cilley, District Director for Rep Shea-Porter
Joshua Denton, caseworker for Rep Shea-Porter
Chuck Gilboy, Outreach Director for Rep. Shea-Porter
Sean Downey, District Director for Rep. McLane-Kuster
Michael Ollen, CSC for Rep McLane-Kuster
Amy Kennedy, Assistant to Governor Hassan

Committee legislative activities

The committee continues to be actively involved in providing guidance and testimony on legislation put forth on behalf of veterans. Committee members were involved in several public proclamations and bill signing ceremonies at the Governor's office.

A letter from the SVAC Chairman is provided to every legislator at the beginning of each legislative session to promote awareness of SVAC activities and to encourage early engagement with the SVAC on proposed legislation for the upcoming session.

A letter was also submitted to the USAF in full support of the KC-46A assignment to the NH Air NG at Pease.

A subcommittee, chaired by Ed Josephson, monitors legislative activities, drafts proposed testimony and coordinates and leads SVAC testimony and activities with Legislative Committees and members.

Bill recommendations are made after discussions and voting involving the full SVAC.

Positions on the various bills are determined by majority vote of the Committee. The Committee position on a bill does not prohibit a member organization from presenting a minority position to the General Court.

As of this writing, the SVAC formally voted to take positions on 23 bills and to follow one bill for the 2013 session as shown in the tables below:

Table 1

Bill	Title	Status (as of 28 April)
	BILLS IN THE 2013 SESSION SUPPORTED BY THE SVAC	
HB 137	special number plates for members of the national guard.	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 163	special number plates for disabled veterans.	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 176	allowing towns and cities to grant a part year veterans credit during the year of acquisition of property. (New Title)	ITL
HB 220	the New Hampshire medal of honor.	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 233	the care of the war memorial in Franconia Notch state park. (New Title)	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 234	occupational and professional boards and commissions procedures concerning military service and occupational	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 319	benefits for state employees serving in the armed forces	Retained in Committee
HB 498	permitting the use of firearms by military or veterans groups in the compact part of a town for military or veterans events, or	Retained in Committee
HB 509	requiring the department of administrative services to provide the New Hampshire Department of American Legion with office	Passed/Adopted
HB 518	establishing an individual's status as a veteran and specifying that training for active duty is service for purposes of the	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 519	requiring the division of higher education to develop a policy on academic credit for a student's military occupation, military	Passed/Adopted
HB 524	national guard facilities, the national guard scholarship fund, and the state active duty death benefit.	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 607	construction projects for the adjutant general's department.	Passed/Adopted
HB 615	the New Hampshire national guard recruitment and retention scholarship fund and making an appropriation therefor. (New	ITL
HB 624	waiving the residency requirement for in-state tuition rates for veterans attending the university system of New Hampshire.	House: Passed/Adopted
HCR 1	urging Congress to fund the development and implementation of a comprehensive health care delivery system to enhance the	House: Passed/Adopted
SB 90	establishing a committee to study developing a policy for veteran preference for government hiring.	Senate: Passed/Adopted

TABLE 2

Bill	Title	Status (as of 28 April)
	BILLS IN THE 2013 SESSION OPPOSED BY THE SVAC	
HB 399	establishing the New Hampshire Liberty Act.	House: Passed/Adopted
HB 446	the amount of the optional property tax credits for service-connected total disability. (New Title)	ITL
SB 15	naming a portion of route 101 after the 101st Airborne Division Screaming Eagles	Senate: Passed/Adopted
SB 36	The property tax exemption for veterans who are totally and permanently disabled from service connection	Referred to Committee
SB 47	A surviving spouse's right to retain a Purple Heart plate.	Senate: Passed/Adopted
SB 88	the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol to recognize and honor fallen members of the armed forces.	Senate: Passed/Adopted

TABLE 3

Bill	Title	Status (as of 28 April)
	BILLS IN THE 2013 SESSION FOLLOWED BY THE SVAC	
HB 244	establishing the Purple Heart toll pass for qualifying veterans.	ITL

The committee remains an active participant in testimony and public advocacy for issues impacting veterans. We believe such legislation reflects the esteem in which New Hampshire holds her veterans.

The committee again extends appreciation to all the legislative members who sponsored, co-sponsored and supported the various veteran-related bills put forward. We recognize that in these times of fiscal restraint it is not always easy to support legislation that may increase State expenditures, no matter how worthy the purpose. We thank them for their dedication and hard work in support of New Hampshire veterans.

This committee works closely with respective committee members to ensure initiatives on behalf of veterans are focused and relevant. It serves as a catalyst for communications in support of veterans' interests within the State of New Hampshire.

COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

As previously noted, communications from this committee remains a vital function. We interpret this function broadly. We primarily utilize email for agendas, meeting minutes, and other pertinent information to ensure timely delivery to committee members for

review. In addition, press releases and news items of interest are also delivered to the email distribution list.

We continue to publish committee related information in the Concord Monitor, Nashua Telegraph, The New Hampshire Union Leader, Keene Sentinel, Portsmouth Herald, and other state news periodicals. We have reached out to various newspaper resources in the northern part of the state including Lebanon and Conway to publish veteran related information for their area.

Members of the Committee often participate in the public discourse on veterans' issues, either as the representatives of their veterans' organization or as individuals. Committee member organizations further the reach of Committee communications through publication of relevant items in their own newsletters, other media and websites.

Of course, effective communications are a two-way street. The Committee routinely invites speakers and visitors representing a number of organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, to present information likely to help the SVAC in developing sound advice on issues of importance to veterans. This included inviting legislators and their constituents to present their views to either encourage the SVAC to take a particular position or to change a position once made. For example, during the period covered by this report the SVAC devoted a considerable portion of two meetings hearing the views of both legislators and a constituent as they sought a change in the position the SVAC had taken on a particular bill.

The SVAC encourages more legislators to more frequently take the opportunity to participate and exchange views with the members of the SVAC in developing positions on matters important to the veterans of New Hampshire.

CONCLUSION

This committee comprises 15 member organizations. Organizations aspiring to membership are required to show a sincere commitment by attending and participating at meetings in a non-voting role before their letter request for admittance is considered. The committee encourages any NH Veteran Service Organization (VSO) to attend our meetings.

A significant number of advisors, guests and representatives of our Congressional Delegation participate in the meetings in recognition of the mutual value of shared communications and collaboration on veteran issues.

The committee provides a unique means of quickly disseminating information on events and matters of interest to veterans. Matters brought to the attention of the SVAC can be distributed more quickly than ever before via the email and newsletter capabilities of member organizations to reach the approximately 130,000 members of the New Hampshire veteran community.

We continue to work with members of the NH House and Senate to develop our support and testimony agenda for upcoming legislative actions on behalf of veterans. This committee can and will help to support new legislation for veterans. Legislators are

encouraged to review bill language with the committee prior to or during the filing period and then follow-up prior to hearings to insure the SVAC understanding of the intent of the bill.

We have maintained a positive reputation among the legislators with whom we have contact. We will continue to maintain an active dialogue with the legislative members and the respective committees. This committee is focused on our mission of providing a common voice for New Hampshire's veterans and their families and providing a coordination forum for announcing scheduled events to benefit veterans.

An example of the coordination and collaboration functions of the committee were highlighted by continuing to assist with the funding of the Deployment Cycle Support – Care Coordination Program (DCS-CCP), a Military-Civilian, Public-Private Partnership to directly support our NH National Guard and reservists within the context of "Fort NH". Additionally the committee generated support for attending the Welcome Home Ceremony for our NH Viet Nam era veterans (42,168 in NH). Over 2000 attended this outstanding program at the NG Aviation Facility.

If this report generates any questions or ideas, the committee would be pleased to address them. Contact me by calling: 800-778-4251 or email at: peter_burdett@ml.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete Burdett

9 May 2012

Peter Burdett, Chairman

Date