

New Hampshire

STATE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BIANNUAL REPORT

NOVEMBER 1, 2013



S.V.A.C.

SVAC Biannual Report — November 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 veterans' organizations active in the State of New Hampshire. This is the second 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. One organization attends on a non-voting basis and has submitted a formal request to become a voting member.

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, A – Ken Maynard*)
- 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 – CDR Dave Kenney, A – Mike Horne, A – BG John Pappas*)
- 7 Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) (*P – Peter Burdett, A – Col. Kenneth J. Lull, A – H. Allen (Chad) Chadwick*)
- 8 The Air Force Association (AFA) (*P – Kevin Grady, A – Ed Josephson*)
- 9 The National Guard Association of New Hampshire (*P – LtCol Roy Hunter, A – Col. Paul Loiselle, A – LtCol Stephanie Riley*)
- 10 Rolling Thunder (*P – Mark Willen, A – Marsha Bailey, A – John and Diane Domenicis*)
- 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, A – CSM (Ret) Mike Rice*)
- 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, A – Raymond Schwendeman*)

Non-voting Organization (request for full membership submitted)

Catholic War Veterans (*P – Robert Garand, A – Russell Bilodeau*)

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 Genera*
- Amy Kennedy, *Policy Advisor for Gov. Hassan*
- Peter Fortier - *NH Military Archivist - (Alt. Rep for BGen Protzmann)*
- Ken Leidner - *NH Veterans Association*
- Peggy LaBrecque, *NH Veterans Home*
- 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 May 1, 2013 the committee has held 3 meetings at the National Guard Aviation Facility in Concord and one meeting at the New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton. The SVAC has held 102 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:

Gov. Maggie Hassan
Maj Gen William N. Reddel, III, Adjutant General
John Broderick, Jr., Dean of UNH School of Law
Erin Corcoran, ED of Warren B Rudman Center
Karin Borgstrom, UNH School of Law
Bill Zeliff, Fmr US Congressman Dist. 1, NH
Roger Knight, Red Sox Foundation Home Base Program
John Reed, Tricare/USFHP Healthcare Rep

Heather Aicholtz, 211 NH
Taylor Caswell, Soldier On
MG Harry Miller, Easter Seals NH
Howie Howe, HOTH
Karen McCarthy, Women Vets of America
Henry Pratte, Veterans Museum of NH
Col Paul Loiselle, Chief of Joint Staff NHNG
LTC Roy Hunter, President of NGANH
Judy Crockett, Manchester VAMC
Dan Marcek, VetFlix
Leigh Ann Shriver
MSgt William Bates, NHNGEA
MAJ Justin Strevig, Director of SMFS, NHNG
Mary Behnke, Women Vets Program Manager, NH VA
Leah Fox, Currier Museum of Arts
Patti Fowler, Military Order of the Purple Heart guest
Sharyn Kelly, Women Vets of America
Andy Lacasse, WRJ VAMC
Amy Bassett, US Small Business Admin
Lisa Aldridge, NHTAA
CSM Steve Houten, State CSM NHARNG
Judy Crockett, Manchester VAMC
Pete Duffy, NGAUS
Cate Sementa, Harbor Homes SSVF
Angela Roberts, Harbor Homes SSVF
MAJ Justin Strevig, Director of SMFS, NHNG
Doug Hewitt, American Red Cross
Roger Hooper, American Red Cross
John Reed, Tricare/USFHP Healthcare Rep
Patrick Goyetch, Philips Healthcare Govt Division
Chris Bright, Philips Healthcare Govt Division
Stella Lareau, Manchester VAMC
Becki Malandrino, Easter Seals Mil & Vet Svcs
Bob Baker, AMVETS

Whitney Blethen, Beacon Hospice
Sheri Avena, Beacon Hospice
Ernie Sulloway, DAV
Rep. Frank Emiro
CSM John Nanof, State CSM NGARNG
Ken Lull, NH ESGR
LtCol Todd Swass, NGANH
Ian Clark, NHNGEA
Mark Sullivan, Veterans Count, Seacoast Chapter
Rick Courtemanche, Veterans Count, Seacoast Chapter
CSM Steve Houten, State CSM NGARNG
Daisy Wojewoda, Easter Seals
Cynthia Sweeney, Daughters of American Revolution
Mark Wainright- Hire Patriots program
Bill Hopkins- NH Peace Action

Representatives of the NH Congressional Delegation (for coordination purposes)

Sarah Holmes (Senator Shaheen)
Steve Monier (Senator Ayotte)
Joshua Denton, caseworker for Rep Shea-Porter
Michael Ollen, CSC for Rep McLane-Kuster

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.

The SVAC actively supported the selection of the NH Air National Guard as the first ANG unit to receive the KC-46A tanker. This effort made a small contribution to a successful campaign by many government and non-government organizations and individuals resulting in the selection of Pease ANGB first ANG base to receive this next generation tanker.

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.

During this period the SVAC took formal positions on 23 bills and followed one other bill for the 2013 session as shown in the tables below:

TABLE 1		
Bill	Title	Status * 2013 Session Wrap-up
BILLS IN THE 2013 SESSION SUPPORTED BY THE SVAC RELATIVE TO		
HB 137	special number plates for members of the national guard.	Chaptered Law: 0170
HB 163	special number plates for disabled veterans.	Chaptered Law: 0102
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.	Chaptered Law: 0245
HB 233	the care of the war memorial in Franconia Notch state park. (New Title)	Conference Committee
HB 234	occupational and professional boards and commissions procedures concerning military service and occupational	Rereferred to Committee
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 veteran's events, or	Retained in Committee
HB 509	requiring the department of administrative services to provide the New Hampshire Department of American Legion with office	Chaptered Law: 0049
HB 518	establishing an individual's status as a veteran and specifying that training for active duty is service for purposes of the	Chaptered Law: 0254
HB 519	requiring the division of higher education to develop a policy on academic credit for a student's military occupation, military	Chaptered Law: 0053
HB 524	national guard facilities, the national guard scholarship fund, and the state active duty death benefit.	Chaptered Law: 0255
HB 607	construction projects for the adjutant general's department.	Chaptered Law: 0086
HB 615	the New Hampshire national guard recruitment and retention scholarship fund and making an appropriation therefore.	ITL

HB 624	waiving the residency requirement for in-state tuition rates for veterans attending the university system of New Hampshire. (New Title)	House: Passed/Adopted w/ amendment
HCR 1	urging Congress to fund the development and implementation of a comprehensive health care delivery system to enhance the level of specialty care for New Hampshire veterans.	House: Passed/Adopted w/ amendment
SB 90	establishing a committee to study developing a policy for veteran preference for government hiring.	Chaptered Law: 0229

*** ITL — Inexpedient to Legislate**

TABLE 2		
Bill	Title	Status 2013 Session Wrap-up
BILLS IN THE 2013 SESSION OPPOSED BY THE SVAC RELATIVE TO		
HB 399	establishing the New Hampshire Liberty Act.	ITL
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	Retained in Committee
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.	Chaptered Law: 0178
SB 88	the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol to recognize and honor fallen members of the armed forces.	Retained in Committee

*** ITL — Inexpedient to Legislate**

TABLE 3		
Bill	Title	Status 2013 Session Wrap-up
BILLS IN THE 2013 SESSION FOLLOWED BY THE SVAC RELATIVE TO		
HB 244	establishing the Purple Heart toll pass for qualifying veterans.	ITL

*** ITL — Inexpedient to Legislate**

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 voting member organizations and one non-voting organization seeking full membership. 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 service members within the context of "Fort NH".

The Committee chairman, CDR Peter Burdett, USN (ret) was appointed on 1 August by the Secretary of the Army as his New Hampshire Civilian Aide.

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

Peter Burdett, Chairman

November 5, 2013

Date