

New Hampshire

STATE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BIANNUAL REPORT

NOVEMBER 1, 2014



S.V.A.C.

SVAC Biannual Report — NOVEMBER 2014

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with RSA 115-A:8, State Veterans Advisory Committee, 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 2014.

HISTORY

RSA 115-A:8 states that a veterans' advisory committee be formed composed of two Senators appointed by the President of the Senate, two Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House and members of various veteran organizations. The members 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 Legislative Office Building (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. Edward 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 2014.

During the 2007 Legislative session the Governor signed an amendment to RSA 115-A:8 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 to a maximum of 20 organizations (plus the two legislative members from both the Senate and from the House). Currently the voting membership comprises 17 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 seventeen member organizations are shown below. Each legislative member and organization has one vote.

Chairman – Bobby Broneske – *Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association*

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

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

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

Legislative Members:

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

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

- 1 American Legion (AMLEGION) (*P – Bob Blais, A – Bill Roy*)
- 2 Disabled American Veterans (DAV) (*P – Gerry Bosse, A – Ron Reilly*)
- 3 Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) (*P – Mark McCabe, 1st A – Lewis Chipola, 2nd A – Paul Chevalier*)
- 4 Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) (*P – Alan Grant, A – Raymond Goulet, Jr.*)
- 5 Military Order of Purple Heart (MOPH) (*P – Kenith Chase, A – Patti Fowler*)
- 6 Reserve Officers Association (ROA) (*P – CDR Dave Kenney, 1st A – Mike Horne, 2nd A – BG John Pappas*)
- 7 Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) (*P – Peter Burdett, 1st A – Col. Kenneth J. Lull, 2nd 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, 1st A – Col. Paul Loiselle, 2nd A – LtCol Stephanie Riley*)
- 10 Rolling Thunder (*P – Diane Domenicis, A – John Domenicis*)
- 11 Marine Corps League (MCL) (*P – Gary A. Gahan, A – Joe Shea*)
- 12 Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA) (*P – CMSgt John Symington, A – Ray Hayes*)
- 13 New Hampshire Army Retiree Council (*P – Frank Musmanno, A – CSM (Ret) Mike Rice*)
- 14 Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association (*P – Michael Farinola, 1st A – Robert Pickard, 2nd A – Bobby Broneske*)
- 15 Catholic War Veterans (*P – Russell Bilodeau, A – Denise DeBois*)
- 16 Korea War Veterans Association (*P – Conrad Perreault, 1st A – Robert Desmond,*

2nd A – Richard Moushegain)

17 NHNG Enlisted Association (P – William Bates)

Committee Advisors:

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

- BGen Carol Protzmann, USAF (ANG), *Deputy Adjutant General*
- Peter Fortier, *NH Military Archivist, Alt. Rep for BGen Protzmann*
- Peggy LaBrecque, *Commandant, NH Veterans Home*
- Barry Conway, *Sage Emeritus*
- Michael Horne, *Director, 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*
- Mary Morin, *Director, Office of Veterans Services*
- Ken Leidner, *NH Veterans Association*
- Joseph DiChiaro, Jr. – *Appointed Chaplain*

Governor's Representative: Kerry McHugh, *Policy Advisor for Gov Hassan*

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE/COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Since the last report of the committee dated May 1, 2014 the committee has had 4 meetings at the National Guard Aviation Facility in Concord. The SVAC has held 107 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. Many guests attend all or most meetings. Typical attendance at a meeting is 50 plus. During this period speakers and guests included the following:

REGULAR ATTENDEES DURING THE PERIOD OF THIS REPORT:

Maj Gen William Reddel, The Adjutant General	MSG Ian Clark, NHNGEA
CSM Steve Houten, State Command SGT Major NHARNG	Marc Sullivan, Chair, Veterans Count - Seacoast Chapter
Howie Howe, NH Help on the Homefront (HOTH)/	Angela Roberts, Harbor Homes SSVF coordinator
Dave Quinn, State Chairman, ESGR	MAJ Justin Strevig, NHNG-Director, Service Member & Family Service
Dan Marcek, VetFlix	MG Harry Miller, Easter Seals NH- NH Military & Veterans Service
LeighAnn Shriver	Jim Golden (Past VFW State Commander)
MSgt Bill Bates, President NHNGEA	

Daniel Bricker, VA Medical Center
Conrad A Perreault, NH Korean War
Veterans Associates
Larry Ward, VVA 992
LCDR Erik Lavoie, Commanding Officer,
NOSC

Ishanna Smith, Harbor Homes SSVF
Jim Goss, Executive Director, ESGR
Deborah Amdur, Director WRJ VAMC
Rep Skip Rollins
Ana McKenna, NH Care Coordination
Program, Proforce-Inc.

SPEAKERS AND GUESTS DURING THE PERIOD OF THIS REPORT:

Rep. Frank Emiro, Dir., National Vietnam
Gulf War Veterans Coalition
Karen McCarthy, Veterans Advocate, Women
Veterans of America
Edwin F. Brown, DAV
SFC (ret) Jon Worrall, NHARNG, Wounded
Warriors @ 45 North- Founder
Ken Clark, former TAG-NH
Brig Gen Bob Dastin
Tyler Brace, Military Legislative Asst
Pete Duffy, Legislative Director NGAUS
Cate Sementa, Harbor Homes SSVF
Jesse Garcia, Harbor Homes SSVF
Carol Furlong, Harbor Homes, Inc
Jackie Cilley, District Director, Rep. Shea-
Porter
Chuck Gilboy, Outreach Director, Rep. Shea-
Porter
Cynthia Sweeney, NH Daughters of the
American Revolution
Domenic DiNatale, Volunteer NH
Karen Dandurant Journalist, Lifewise
volunteer For Public Relations and Media
David McCloskey, State Rep, Hills District 16
Paul Lloyd, Veterans of Foreign Wars Past
Commander
Mary Behnke, BSN, RNWomen Veterans
Program Manager
Manchester VAMC
Leslie Pasternack, ACT ONE
Sarah Ward, Americorps Vista, CADCA
Vetcorps Prevention Coordinator
Sharyn Kelly, Woman Veterans of America

Bob Baker, AMVETS Commander Post 2
James Adams, State Veterans Council
Marilinda Garcia- State Rep. Salem
Roger Knight, Director of Veteran
Outreach, Red Sox Foundation & MGH Home
Base Program
Lewis Chipola, VFW Dept of NH JR Vice CDR
Mark T. McCabe, VFW Dept of NH, SR Vice
CDR
Trooper Seth Gahr, NH State Police Peer
Support Coordinator
Pastor David Canter, Vet-to-Vet
Bryan Clements, NH Army National Guard
LTC Richard Oberman, NHARNG
Will Gagne, Manchester VAMC Staff Asst
Richard Downe, Coalition of Families of
Korean and Cold War POW/ MIAs
Jim Rubens, GOP Candidate for US Senate
Kaitlyn Meisel, Vet to Vet
Scott Brown
Walter P Havenstein
Matt Moroney
Richard Brothers, Jim Rubens for Senate
Janet Dineen, Co-Chair NH Vet to Vet
Jessica Price, NH Vet to Vet
Doug Schobel, Delta Dental
Andy LaCasse, VAMC WRJ
Richard Moushegian, Sr Vice Commander,
NH Korean War Veterans Assn.
Daisy Wojewada, Easter Seals
Julie Weymouth, Homeland Heroes
Foundation

Kimberly McMahon, Homeland Heroes
Foundation
Stella Lareau, Manchester VAMC PAO
Taylor Caswell, Soldier On

Whitney Blethen, Beacon Hospice
Krysta Barraford
Dan Ward, Veterans Inc.

Representatives of the NH Congressional Delegation attend all meetings for information and coordination purposes. Attendees during the reporting period included the following:

Sarah Holmes (Senator Shaheen)
Peter Clark (Senator Shaheen)
Steve Monier (Senator Ayotte)
Joshua Denton (Representative Shea-Porter)
Olga Clough (Representative Shea-Porter)
Matt Miller (Representative McLane-Kuster)
Hannan Bassett (Representative 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.

The SVAC Chairman provides a letter to every legislator early in each legislative session to promote awareness of SVAC activities and to encourage early engagement with the SVAC on proposed legislation.

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 full 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 17 bills for the 2013 session as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Bill	Title	Status 2014 Session Wrap-up
	BILLS IN THE 2014 SESSION <u>SUPPORTED</u> BY THE SVAC	
HB 1136	establishing a committee to study the laws relating to the New Hampshire Veterans Home.	Chaptered Law: 0088
HB 1171	eligibility for the veterans' property tax credit.	ITL
HB 1359	establishing a committee to study the feasibility of placing medal decals on special number plates for veterans. (NEW TITLE)	Conference Committee Report Not Signed Off
HB 1389	naming a bridge in Derry after Lance Corporal Michael E. Geary.	Chaptered Law: 0016
HB 1451	establishing a canine veterans day.	Chaptered Law: 0127
HB 1488	adopting the interstate compact on educational support for military children.	Chaptered Law: 0308
HCR 12	urging Congress to fund the development and implementation of a comprehensive health care system for NH veterans.	ITL
HR 20	urging Congress to support a state-wide veteran's medical identification card.	House Passed/Adopted
HR 22	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's veterans.	ITL
SB 296	preferences for veterans and disabled veterans in public employment.	Laid on Table
SB 298	establishing a permanent commission on post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.	Chaptered Law: 0135
	BILLS IN THE 2014 SESSION <u>OPPOSED</u> BY THE SVAC	
HB 1279	compliance with 2012 National Defense Authorization Act.	ITL
HB 1321	reporting of Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery scores.	Chaptered Law: 0220
HB 1390	Gold Star and Blue Star Mothers Service Flags and the Silver Star Service Flag.	ITL
HR 23	the smoking policy at the New Hampshire veterans' home.	ITL
SB 47	recognizing the honor and remember flag as a symbol of the service and sacrifice of the armed forces.	ITL
SB 212	the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol to recognize and honor fallen members of the armed forces.	Laid on Table

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

Bilateral communications is a vital function of this committee. We interpret this function broadly. Meetings are posted on the legislative calendar. We utilize email for agendas, meeting minutes, and other pertinent information to ensure timely delivery to committee members and other interested parties. 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 television, radio and 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 now comprises 17 member organizations. The Organizations aspiring to membership are required to show a sincere commitment by attending and participating at meetings in a non-voting role before their full voting membership is considered. The Korean War Veterans Association and the NHNG Enlisted Association successfully completed their non-voting demonstration of commitment and became full voting members during the 2014 period. Unfortunately, the Woman Veterans of America disbanded in NH and is no longer a member of the SVAC.

In May the SVAC bylaws were modified by the membership to add a one-time exception clause pursuant to term limits. In October this clause was further clarified by the membership due to existing confusion in the wording / intent.

In June the SVAC conducted elections in accordance with the bylaws. Vice Chairman Bobby Broneske was elected Chairman, former Chairman Peter Burdett was elected Vice Chairman for the remainder of the term, Secretary Stephanie Riley was reelected as Secretary.

The committee encourages any NH Veteran Service Organization (VSO) to attend our meetings and to seek membership.

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 attendance rate of our Congressional Delegation was again 100% during the period of this report.

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 can help avoid unintended consequences and clarify technical jargon.

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.

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 117,000 members of the New Hampshire veteran community.

If this report generates any questions or ideas, the committee would be pleased to address them. Contact me by calling: 603-537-9758 or email at: NHsvac.chair@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby Broneske", followed by a large, stylized circular flourish.

Bobby Broneske, Chairman

Nov 1, 2014

ADDENDUM



State Veterans' Advisory Committee New Hampshire

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Current Voting Organizations

1. American Legion
2. Disabled American Veterans
3. Veterans of Foreign Wars
4. Vietnam Veterans of America
5. Military Order of Purple Heart
6. Reserve Officers Association
7. Military Officers Association of America
8. Air Force Association of New Hampshire
9. National Guard Assoc of New Hampshire
10. Rolling Thunder
11. Marine Corps League
12. Air Force Sergeants Association
13. US Army Retiree Council
14. Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association
15. Catholic War Veterans
16. Korea War Veterans Association
17. NHNG Enlisted Association

Non-Voting Organizations

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