



1st Lt. Alexander Bonnyman, Jr. Post 12135
P.O. Box 153
Loudon, TN 37774-0153

Meeting Minutes for February 21, 2024

The meeting was held at the Tellico Village Yacht Club.

Guest Speaker: None

Special Awards / Presentation: None

Opening Ceremonies: The Sergeant at Arms, Jimmy Johnson, closed the doors and the meeting was called to order at 1930 hours by Post CDR Creange with Chaplain Clyde Griffin giving the opening prayer. Post CDR Creange led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Draping Ceremony: The Post Charter was draped by the Sergeant at Arms, Jimmy Johnson in honor of our recently departed Post Member, Al Descourouez who passed away in December. Chaplain Griffin led the members in a Prayer for the Departed. The Post Charter will be draped for 30 days.

Roll Call of Officers: The Post Adjutant, Daniel Campbell moved that the Roll Call be waived as all officers were present or accounted for. Shawn Tallant seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **The Motion was approved unanimously.**

Office	Officer	Status
Commander	Richard Creange	P
Senior Vice Commander	Richard Vinnece	E
Junior Vice Commander	Shawn Tallant	P
Quartermaster	Jeff Corthell	P
Chaplin	Clyde Griffin	P
Judge Advocate (Appointed)	Coleman Lee	E
Surgeon (Appointed)	Bruce Blodget	P
1-Year Trustee	Ed Frandle	P
2-Year Trustee	Larry Schaefer	P
3-Year Trustee	Larry Dill	P

Service Officer (Appointed)	Dan Hall	E
Adjutant (Appointed)	Daniel Campbell	P
Sergeant at Arms (Appointed)	Jimmy Johnson	P

	Present	Excused	Absent	Total
Officers	10	3	0	13
Members	27	?		121
Total	37	3		148

Overall member attendance rate was 25%.

Attendees from District, Department and other guests

There were no guests at the Post meeting:

Membership Applications:

The following qualified Veterans were presented as new applicants or transferees to VFW Post 12135:

1. Edward D. Loewen, USA, Gulf War Era, Life Member, Transfer
2. Dan Powers, USAF, Life Member, Transfer
3. Nicole Powers, USAF, Life Member, Transfer
4. Robert Landenberg, USAF, Desert Storm, Life Member, Transfer
5. Laura Norwood, USA, Desert Storm/Gulf War Era, Life Member, Transfer
6. Jeff Goedert, USA, Gulf War Era, New Life Member
7. Gene Rockwell, USAF, Vietnam, New Life Member

Report of the Investigating Committee

Jr. Vice Commander/Membership Committee Chairman Tallant reported that an investigation/ad hoc meeting was convened, and the above-mentioned Veterans were found eligible to be members of the VFW and Post 12135.

Ballot On Applications

Jr. Vice Commander/Membership Committee Chairman Tallant made a motion to accept the veterans as new members of the VFW and Post 12135. Larry Dill seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously without discussion and the applicants were inducted into VFW Post 12135.

Commander's Report - Comments

- Commander Creange presented the Commander's Report
- Hope everyone had a great holiday and a new year. Unfortunately, we have not had a Post meeting for two months. I hope everyone who attended the holiday party at my house and those who were able to come to the Valentines Dance had a great time. It was great to get

together in a social setting and, as one of our foremost missions is to promote camaraderie, we need to have more social get togethers. I'd like to thank Marie Connolly and Humana for graciously organizing and funding a good portion of the event.

- We are coming out of the winter slowdown and ramping up for the Spring and Summer
- Looks like we have met all the requirements for All-State and All-American VFW Post this year. I'd like to thank everyone who dedicated their time and effort to put us in a position for these awards.
- Presented awards and gifts to our Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the Year winners today at Lenoir City High School.
- **Addressing the Chair** – When you speak at a post meeting you are addressing the chair and not an individual or the membership. I would ask that each person who addresses the chair either with a motion/second/or discussion item please stand and state your name.
- **Raising new issues** - Any item a member wishes to bring before the post will be addresses in the “Good of the Order” meeting agenda item.
- **Slate for 2024/2025** – Our Immediate Past Post Commander is leading the search committee. I am told there are a few positions that still need to be filled. Please contact Shawn Tallant if you are interested.

Adjutant's Report - Reading of the Minutes

Adjutant Campbell moved that the reading of the meetings be waived as the minutes were posted to the Post's website and that the minutes be approved as written. Peter Coslowski seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The Motion was approved unanimously.

Adjutant's Report – Correspondence

- A Thank You card addressed to Sr Vice Commander Richard Vinnece (with a \$100 donation) thanking the Post for all that they do and particularly the Veteran's Day Celebration and presentation of Vietnam Veteran Pins.
- A note addressed to the Commander (with a \$100 donation) from Jim Cornwall, a USMC Vietnam Veteran, stating he is very impressed with our Post.
- A Letter to Jr Vice Commander Shawn Tallant from Todd Johnson, Commanding Officer of the Smoky Mountain Anchor Division to say Thank You for our partnership and efforts to support his group.
- A Letter to Jr. Vice Commander Shawn Tallant from LCDR Stacy L. Kehoe, USNSCC, Regional Director recognizing the Post for their support of the Smoky Mountain Anchor Division.

Quartermaster's Report: Jeff Corthell

Post Quartermaster, Jeff Corthell, provided the report for the period ending January 31 2024. He also presented the Proposed Administrative Expense Budget for FY 2024. A motion was presented to accept the Budget. It was seconded by Peter Coslowski and was approved by the Membership with no discussion. The VFW Post remains in a strong financial position. Members in good standing wishing additional information are encouraged to contact the Post Quartermaster.

Service Officers Report

- NTR

Report on Comrades or Families of Comrades in Distress

- Let's keep our prayers going strong for Collie Lee and Barnet Alpert.
- There were no other reports of families or members in distress.

Report Of All Committees

Relief Committee – Tony Newton, Chairman

- See PPPR for Emergency Funding actions this past month.
- [Motion](#): That the Post Membership concur with the EXCOM's emergency action decision supporting 6 Veterans over the past two months. \$1000.00 for hotel; \$310.77 Past due water bill; \$804.00 for rent and \$77.16 & \$29.63 for past due water bills; \$700 to replace lost money; \$496.40 for hotel and food while waiting for other support; and \$760 for past due rent. Total expended by the post \$4,177.96. More information for each event can be provided if required.
- Motion was seconded by Larry Dill and carried without further discussion.

Post Community Service Effort & Report

- The January 2024 report was completed and uploaded to VFW HQ

Membership Committee -- Shawn Tallant, Acting Committee Chairman

- The detailed report is available via the committee's monthly PPPR status report.
- Recruiting is going strong. Inducted 7 new members since the new program year not including tonight.
- Retention is at 100%

Core Projects – Mike Thornton, Chairman

- All our winners for the Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, and Teacher of the year have been notified. The post authorized \$1000.00 for the program. The VOD winners will receive \$200/1st place, \$100/runner-up. The Patriots Pen winners will receive \$100/1st place, \$50/runner-up. The Teacher of the year will receive \$300 Also, our teacher of the year won the district award and will receive \$200.00 from the district and \$75 from the District Auxiliary. Total prize money awarded by the post \$750.00. The chairman ordered several items for presentation to the winners in each category. (ex. Crystal Apple award, backpacks, water bottle, and medals) The total for these items was \$256.35. Total expended for the program is \$1006.35. Presentation at Lenoir City HS for the VoD and ToY was today and the chairman is working with Lenoir City Middle School to arrange a time for the post to present the Patriots Pen awards.

Publicity – Post Promotion – Mike Timmer, Chairman

- Great job as usual for the Valentines Day Dance signs and programs. Looking forward to our Spring Events

Buddy Poppy – Wayne Schroeder, Chairman

- See PPPR
- The Buddy Poppy event for Memorial Day is May 24th and 25th. 32 time slots need to be filled.

Fundraising – Rich Vinnece

- Next Chick-fil-A events are scheduled for 22 March (11:00-2:00), 21 June and 20 September - Al Porell

Adopt A Military Unit -- Jim Halligan, Project Leader

- See PPPR

Scout BSA Program – Otto Stutz Project Leader

- Boy Scout support is on track for this year. Getting ready for the next court of honor. Discussion on new charter relationship will be in New Business.

Sea Cadet Program

- See PPPR
- The Sea Cadet Unit supports a monthly 2-day training weekend for their Sea Cadets and works independently to raise funds to support. They are currently able to provide all training and logistics requirements going into 2024 but are short about \$2160 (\$180/month) to pay for a rental van to support their training weekend. They are looking to see if the VFW Post can support any part of that financial deficit?

Golf Committee

- There is a change in how tournament fees are collected. The golf course will invoice the Post one lump sum for greens fees vice people paying at the golf course. A contract is required to secure the tournament guaranteeing 80 golfers. Should the golf tournament not have at least 80 participants, the post will be responsible for funding the difference. This is a standard contract the golf course has with all tournaments that are played on Tellico Village courses. In the past our tournament was treated differently and allowed golfers to sign up and pay at the pro shop. Our tournament will now have to follow the requirement as all other tournaments. The Tellico Village VFW Charity Golf tournament has sold out in less than an hour for the past two years. The golf committee does not see an issue with this new arrangement. ACTION: Info only currently.

Report of Projects

Valentines Day Dance

- Great Success!

Ongoing /Unfinished Business

Post Calendar Completed Events

- Christmas Party
- Valentines Dance

Post Calendar On-Going Events

External

- 22 March – Chik-fil-A Fundraiser
- 8-20 April Clothing Drive
- Long Range Information --- 1 May (Loyalty Day), 3 May (Day of Service), 18 May (Armed Forces Day), 27 May (Memorial Day/Buddy Poppy).

Internal

- Jan 2024 – Identify Next Year Officer/Committee Search Committee and start identifying interest.
- March 2024 – Next Year Slate of Officers presented to Members.
- March 2024 – Identify Annual donations to Veterans Organizations
- March 2024 – Scout of the Year Submission.

New Business

Post Calendar update/Extension

Motion: That the post approve the calendar extension into September 2024 identifying the Boat Rides for Vets in July, Post Golf Tournament on 3 August, and Veterans Suicide Awareness Campaign in the month of September.

Motion was seconded by Chet Winchell and was approved by the Members.

Boy Scout Troop Charter Organization Request

A Recent change within the United Methodist Church, given its' internal struggles, will no longer allow the UMC to act in the role of Charter Organization for BSA Troops, Packs, etc. Troop 354 Committee Chairman Joel Patten asked if we, VFW Post 12135, would consider acting in the Charter Organization role for their two Troops (354 and 355GT) and one Pack (354). The UMC will continue to allow the troops to use their facilities for meetings and storage of equipment. The Louisville and Loudon Posts are currently acting as Charter Organizations for other UMC related Scouting Units. The Short term action is to fund next year's charters at \$100.00 for each

unit for a total of \$300.00. The Issue is that the funds must be paid by January 1st, before we can get formal approval from the membership for expenditure of the funds. The Excom agreed to take on this obligation and the requisite paperwork has been filed with the Boy Scouts of America. Otto Stutz funded this action, at risk, until we can get formal approval from membership.

Motion: That Post 12135 take on the role of Charter organization for two BSA Troops (354 and 355GT) and one BSA Pack (354) and authorize the yearly expenditure of \$300.00 (\$100.00 per unit). This expenditure should be added to the admin budget of the post as a reoccurring obligation. This obligation will be retroactively authorized to December 2023.

Motion was seconded by Peter Coslowski and was approved by the Membership

Christmas Gifts for Ben Atchley Veterans - Last year the post provided Christmas gifts for six veterans costing between \$100-125.00. This year we have had no communication from District with direction on how to provide support this year. Tony Newton call Ben Atchley and they requested gift cards. Because of the short notice and our next Post Meeting not occurring until January 2024, I authorized six \$100.00 gift cards be purchased, at risk, as Christmas gifts for these veterans. Should the membership not approve the expenditure of these funds at the January meeting, I will ask for personal donations to cover the cost.

Motion: That the post support the short notice decision by the commander and to retroactively authorize the funds to provide six Christmas gifts in the form of gift cards for a total of \$600.00 to the Ben Atchley Veterans home to support their Christmas gift program.

Motion was seconded by Chet Winchell and was approved by the Membership.

Youth Outreach/Civil Air Patrol Program: To continue expanding our partnership with local youth in our community and to directly support the VFW Congressional Charter to foster true patriotism and extend our institutions of American freedom, we request to establish a VFW Post 12135 Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Support Program.

Rationale: An approved Post 12135 CAP Support Program will open a Community Outreach outlet that will further connect our Post to the local youth of Loudon & Monroe County, but will also directly align with the VFW Congressional Charter, Sec 230102 "Purposes" (5) (6);

- To foster true patriotism.
- To maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom.

Motion: For VFW Post 12135 to establish a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Support Program. This VFW Post program will be run similarly and in parallel with our other Youth Outreach Programs with the BSA (Boy & Girl Scout Troops) and the Sea Cadets.

Motion was seconded by Larry Dill and was approved by the Members.

Budget Item to support youth programs: In order to be more efficient and consistent with the Post's support to our youth programs, a budget item earmarked for support to these programs would provide consistency in the form of a post obligation.

Motion: To be more responsive to the needs of our youth programs, propose to include in the annual budget an amount NTE (\$500) for each youth program our Post supports (BSA, Sea Cadets, Civil Air Patrol).

Motion was seconded by Larry Schaefer and was approved by the Members.

Post By-Laws Update Discussion – Commander Creange opened a discussion into the Post review and update of current by-laws. He asked for suggestions and volunteers to assist in the process. Action was left open.

Relief Committee Organization – Commander Creange opened a discussion into renaming the Committee to Veteran’s Assistance Committee.

Commander’s Happy Hour – Commander Creange opened a discussion into establishing a Commander’s Happy Hour to be held periodically to increase the opportunities for camaraderie within the post. The post is in favor and Commander Creange will work on the logistics of doing this.

Good Of The Order

- **Breakfast with Veterans** is the second Saturday of each month, 0830-1000 at Little Italy. No agenda – just comradery with other Veterans and telling stories over eggs!! The next Breakfast with Vets is on [Saturday March 9, 2024](#).
- **Korean War Vet Lunch/Medal Presentation** – Cracker Barrel Lenoir City at 1330.

Closing Ceremony

- The Chaplain, Clyde Griffin, gave the closing prayer, then Post Commander Creange led post members in a salute of the American Flag.
- Our next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at the Tellico Village Yacht Club
- The meeting was adjourned at 2100 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel J. Campbell, Adjutant

REMINDER: THE NEW MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS NUMBER IS

988

FOR ANYONE IN NEED OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES