



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

Meeting Minutes for March 20, 2024

The meeting was held at the Tellico Village Yacht Club.

Guest Speaker: None

Special Awards / Presentation: Quilts of Valor were presented to Jeff Corthell and Wayne Schroeder. Golden Heart Awards were also presented to their respective spouses.

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 undraped by the Sergeant at Arms, Jimmy Johnson in honor of our recently departed Post Member, Al Descourouez who passed away in December. The Post Charter was 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. Peter Kraslowski 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	25		106	131
Total	35	3	106	144

Overall member attendance rate was 24%.

Attendees from District, Department and other guests

There was one guest at the Post meeting: Matt McCollum, a US Army veteran with 3x Operation Enduring Freedom Deployments.

Membership Applications:

The following qualified Veterans were presented as new applicants or transferees to VFW Post 12135: None

Report of the Investigating Committee

N/A

Ballot On Applications

N/A

Commander's Report - Comments

- Commander Creange presented the Commander's Report
- We are coming out of the winter slowdown and ramping up for the Spring and Summer events.
- The Post was recognized once again at the District Meeting. We were presented with the **Joe E. Murphy Memorial Early Membership Award**. We will also receive a check for \$250.00 for meeting yearly membership goals in February. We were also mentioned as the number one Post in Community Service hours.
- 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.
- **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** – We will hear about the slate for 2024/2025 a little later. Word from District is that we must have a full slate of officers to continue operating as a post. If we do not have a full slate, The department of Tennessee will investigate to determine if we can function and carry out the responsibilities of a VFW Post. It boils down to if the state has confidence in our ability to operate. 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: Dan Campbell

Adjutant Campbell moved that the reading of the meetings be waived as the minutes were posted to the Post’s website, an email with a link to them was sent to the membership and that the minutes be approved as written. Chet Winchell seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The Motion was approved unanimously.

Adjutant’s Report – Correspondence: Dan Campbell

None

Quartermaster’s Report: Jeff Corthell

Post Quartermaster, Jeff Corthell, provided the report for the period ending February 29, 2024. 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 Bob Provart who has been in and out of the hospital the past few months and for Jim Seidel as well.
- There were no other reports of families or members in distress.

Report Of All Committees

Post Officers Slate/Nomination Search: Shawn Tallant

VFW Post 12135 – discussion/update – 2024/25 VFW Post Officer candidate slate.

- Discussion: Annually, the VFW Post looks across the Post for volunteers to fill the leadership positions for the upcoming year. Past Post CDR, Shawn Tallant is leading the search committee and will be providing the Members with a status update on open positions.

- The final slate will be brought before the members at the April Post meeting with a motion to approve. In the interim, if you’d like more information on the positions or are willing to consider filling a position – please contact Shawn at tallantsrt@gmail.com 2024-2025 VFW Post Officer positions:

- Commander
- Senior Vice Commander
- Junior Vice Commander
- Quartermaster
- 1-Year Trustee
- 2-Year Trustee
- 3-Year Trustee
- Chaplin (Appointed)
- Judge Advocate (Appointed)
- Service Officer (Appointed)
- Surgeon (Appointed)
- Adjutant (Appointed)

The following Comrades have indicated they are willing to serve in these positions.

VFW Post Office Elected	Incumbent 2023-2024	2024-2025 Nomination	Will incumbent continue (Y/N)	Potential Recruit
Commander	Rick Creange	Rick Creange	Yes	
Senior Vice	Richard Vinnece		No	
Junior Vice	Shawn Tallant	Shawn Tallant	Yes	
Quartermaster	Jeff Corthell	Jeff Corthell	Yes	
1st year Trustee	Ed Frandle	Larry Dill	Yes	
2nd Year Trustee	Larry Schaefer	Ed Frandle	yes	
3rd Year Trustee	Larry Dill	Larry Schaefer	yes	
Appointed Officers (A)	2023-2024	2024-2025		
Service Officer (A)	Dan Hall		?	
Judge Advocate (A)	Coleman (Colie) Lee	Coleman (Colie) Lee	Yes ?	
Surgeon (A)	Bruce Blodgett	Bruce Blodgett	Yes	
Adjutant (A)	Dan Campbell	Dan Campbell	Yes	
Sgt at Arms (A)	Jimmy Johnson	Jimmy Johnson	Yes	
Chaplin (A)	Clyde Griffin	Clyde Griffin	Yes	

Relief Committee – Tony Newton, Chairman

- See PPR for Emergency Funding actions this past month.
- Relief Committee received a call from Good Samaritan thru Ed Frandel regarding an honorably discharged veteran that is behind in his rent \$500 for February 2024. Veteran is self-employed doing property management repairs for various real estate agents. He got behind by purchasing \$480 of various materials to repair a deck only to have the

homeowner decline to have the work done. As he had pre-cut much of the lumber, it was not returnable. He bought the lumber with his rent money thereby only being able to pay 1/2 of his February rent. He is a single father with an unyielding grandmother/homeowner. Spoke with her, and she says she needs the money for medical prescriptions. He says he will be able to pay March rent of \$1000 on March 12. He understands this is a one-time assistance.

- **Motion:** That the Post Membership concur with the EXCOM's emergency action decision to support this veteran in the amount of \$500 for rent payment

Motion was seconded by Ian Smith and carried unanimously without further discussion.

- The relief committee received a request from an honorably discharged 100% disabled Iraq war veteran asking for help with his \$458.76 March utility bill and a \$53.48 prescription for his wife who had an accident in the home. He is a member of VFW post 5150, who have provided him assistance 4 recent times with groceries. 5150 is also working with Habit for Humanity to get help fixing the hole in the floor in his bathroom that his wife fell through breaking her leg. He has also asked for help from American Legion Post 256 and Good Samaritan. He was referred to us by CVSO Ron Hudson. Steve Buelow, Commander of AL Post 256 and a member of our post proposes that AL 256 pays half of the utility bill and we pay the other half. Both Bulow and I have met and spoken with the vet. Given that he is a member of another VFW post, Commander, Rick Creange has spoken with the commander of 5150. He can address this further.

- **Motion:** That the Post Membership concur with the EXCOM's emergency action decision to pay \$218.58 (1/2 of the Utility bill) and \$53.48 for the Vet's wife's prescription.

Motion was seconded by Larry Dill and carried unanimously.

- Post received a call from an Army veteran living at Helen Ross McNabb who is asking for \$391 rental assistance. Veteran's sister suddenly passed, and veteran used his money to assist with her burial arrangements. McNabb apartment manager, whom we have worked with in the past, suggested he contact us. She said this is his first incident of being late. Veteran starts social security next month and, couple with his VA disability check, is sure he has future month's rent covered.

- **Motion:** That the Post pay \$783 to Helen Ross McNabb to cover March's rent.

Motion was seconded by Bruce Blodgett and carried unanimously.

Post Community Service Effort & Report: Shawn Tallant

- The February 2024 report was completed and uploaded to VFW HQ.
- Future Community Service Reports will be collated and processed by Jay Carroll. Please send all reports to him beginning with the March reports.

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 17 new members since July 1st.
- Retention is at 100%

Core Projects: Project leader, Rick Creange

- The 2023-2024 Competition year is complete.
- The new Competition year is beginning, the 2024-2025 themes have been released.
- We will probably wait for the new school year to begin for submissions but will start advertising in June.
- We need someone to step up and run this important committee. The Commander will personally help and provide back-up.

Publicity – Post Promotion – Mike Timmer, Chairman

- NTR

Buddy Poppy – Wayne Schroeder, Chairman

- See PPPR
- The Buddy Poppy event for Memorial Day is May 24th and 25th. 11 time slots still need to be filled.

Fundraising –

- 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.

Sea Cadet Program

- Provide Military Subject Matter Experts (SME's) in the US military to the Sea Cadets during their monthly training weekend. Though the emphasis will be on USN & USCG SME's, all military service/expertise can be offered.
- Support the Sea Cadet Unit in identifying "Community Service" opportunities where the Sea Cadets can be visible actively supporting veterans and their community.
- Provide periodic "as needed" financial support to the Sea Cadet Unit to offset training opportunities, provide uniforms, etc.
- Post CDR & JVC have received invitations and will attend the 14 April Sea Cadets Annual Awards Ceremony and Banquet. Chet Winchell will also attend.

Civil Air Patrol Program

- The newest Tennessee Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol meets at the Sequoya High School until they get a new facility of their own.

Golf Committee

- We are off and running for the 2024 tournament on August 3rd.

Report of Projects

Spring Clothing Drive

- On track for 8-20 April

MCVRF

- Work in Progress

Loyalty Day May 1st

- Work in Progress

Day of Service May 3rd

- Work in Progress

Armed Forces Day Picnic

- See New Business

Other Reports

Ongoing /Unfinished Business

Post Calendar On-Going Events

External

- 22 March – Chik-fil-A Fundraiser
- 8-20 April Clothing Drive
- 1 May (Loyalty Day)
- 3 May (Day of Service)
- 18 May (Armed Forces Day)
- 24-25 May (Memorial Day/Buddy Poppy).

Internal

- March 2024 – Next Year Slate of Officers presented to Members.
- March 2024 – Identify Annual donations to Veterans Organizations
- April 2024 – Vote on Officer Slate
- April 2024 – Vote on Annual Donations
- June 2024 – Installation of Officers

Long Range Planning

- June 14 – Flag Day Ceremony and Flag Retirement
- July 13 – Boat rides for Vets
- Aug 3 – Tellico Village VFW Annual Golf Tournament

New Business/Discussion Items

VFW Post Annual Armed Forces Day Picnic and Membership Drive

Discussion: VFW Post's 4th Annual Armed Forces Day Picnic and Membership Drive is scheduled for Saturday May 18th, 4-7pm and will be run by the Membership Committee. As we did in in past years, the MCC recommends the VFW Post pay for the May Armed Forces Day Picnic as a give/back and retention tool for Post Members and families. Effectively, the money the Post will utilize equates to the \$\$\$ received back from National/Dept for each member's membership. As part of the membership drive all potential new members will be our paid guests. Additionally, we will again invite members of our Adopted Unit, the 253rd MP Unit. Anticipated cost ~\$1500 (last year cost was ~\$1400)

MOTION: That the membership approve the expenditure of \$1500 for the VFW Post's 4th Annual Armed Forces Day Picnic and Membership Drive.

Motion was seconded by James Johnson and was approved by the Members unanimously.

Post By-Laws Update

Relief Committee operations - The VFW National by-laws state that all expenditure of funds shall be directed by the membership. In order to address situations that arise and must be addressed before the next Post meeting, Post 12135 gives the EXCOM (the 7 elected officers) the power to approve emergency actions in support of veterans without Post membership approval first. This general approval is done as a motion before the membership and voted on at the start of the new business year (July). An emergency action is defined for this purpose as one where the situation needs to be resolved (i.e., bill/rent due and paid) before the next monthly meeting of the Post. Post membership is then made aware of the EXCOM's actions in the name of the Post at the next Post meeting and membership is asked via a motion to concur with the EXCOM's actions.

We are looking to formalize this process in our by-laws. There are several issues associated with this proposal that need to be addressed by the Post membership before a final policy can be formulated and added to the by-laws.

(1) This authority is being proposed as an addition to the Post by-laws to formalize the authority.

Discussion Item: Does the post membership want this authority authorized in the by-laws or continue to approve this authority each year as a motion before the membership in July.

Consensus of Comments: Yes

(2) Currently the EXCOM does not have a maximum amount that can be awarded to a veteran.

Discussion Item: Does the membership want to limit the amount the EXCOM is authorized to expend per event without Post membership approval?

Consensus of Comments: Yes

(3) There is no limit to the aggregate (amount of all expenditures to veterans) amount that the EXCOM can approve before the next meeting.

Discussion Item: Does the post want to put an aggregate limit on emergency action expenditures?

Consensus of Comments: This may tie the hands of the EXCOM from helping Veterans, review further.

(4) Discussion Item: Should the Post change the way it handles and expends relief funds for veterans.

Consensus of Comments: Review Further

Post Annual Donations to Local Organizations Serving Veterans

Our annual donations to organizations and the amounts will be discussed at this meeting before a vote to expend these funds is taken at the April meeting. If you have worthy local veterans support organizations that you would like to see the Post donate to, please propose the organization and provide a description of what the organization does for veterans during this discussion item. The list will be formalized for a vote in April.

Discussion: Various Agencies were discussed to be added/researched to include Infinite Warrior, Loudon City Honor Guard and Birdseed for The Ben Ashley Home. Agencies such as The Smoky Mountain Service Dogs and STARR were questioned as to need of funds. Suggestion was made to send out an open invitation to the Community requesting information on their organization/need for assistance/what is provided to veterans.

Consensus of Comments: Tabled until next EXCOM Meeting for further evaluation.

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 April 13, 2024](#).

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, April 17, 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