



Administrative Committee On Veterans Affairs

1004 CRESCENT LANE
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA 58501

CHAIRMAN
BERNARD A. WAGNER
BANDERA, NORTH DAKOTA

Minutes - July 27, 1973
American Legion Building
Jamestown, North Dakota

SECRETARY
EARNEST N. SCHMIT
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wagner at 10:15 a.m.

Roll Call: Present: Wagner Schmit, Novak, Sloan, Welander, Ulness, Morris, Gullickson, Habiger, Crawford - Ex-Officio: Rice Klecker, Melhouse, Gronvold
ABSENT: Rosendahl (excused) Groth (hospitalized)

Reading of the minutes of June 22d meeting. Ammended to include the word "few" in paragraph describing sums being accumulated by a "few" members of the Soldiers Home in Savings accounts. Approved.

10:20 a.m. - Committee extended a vocal vote of "thanks" to Jim Morris for making the arrangements with The American Legion for the meeting facilities.

10:25 a.m. - Discussed reappointments of Committee members. Letters from Governor Link read reappointing Wagner and Schmit as Chairman and Secretary.

10:30 a.m. -Chairman Wagner introduced Mr. Edward J. Klecker, Director of Institutions and new Ex-Officio Member, who was attending his first meeting in his new capacity. He expressed his pleasure in being a part of the Committee and added that he hoped to add input to the meetings in the future.

10:35 a.m. - Adjutant General LaClair A. Melhouse gave a report on the status of the Vietnam Bonus: 22092 applications received, 20034 paid for a total of \$9,881,615 with a \$493.24 average payment. Still receiving an average of 30 applications per day and have approximately 12000 eligibles who have not applied. Administrative staff reduced from 18 to 5 persons. E.J.Quine, former Director of Bonus, is currently evaluating and closing out unpaid claims. 3 years from January 28, 1973 is deadline for filing. Very difficult because of limited staff to search for and pay the 12000 not filed.

- National Guard strength: Authorized 2476 - are currently 131 short, have enlisted 32 since 1 July. Air National Guard - authorized 1020 and are full at present time.

- Selective Service System: State operation has been reorganized, 31 employees have been separated, and another RIF is eminent. Budgetary problems have caused this, plus the 'no draft' environment at present time. Welander voiced concern over the 12000 eligibles who have not applied for the Bonus, and encouraged every effort to be made to reach the families of the service men.

- Following his report, General Melhouse excused himself to attend another meeting.

SUB COMMITTEE FOR
VETERANS AFFAIRS
JAMES G. ROSENDAHL, CHM.
JOE NOVAK, VICE-CHM.
EARNEST N. SCHMIT
ORVILLE L. GULLICKSON
RUSSELL S. CRAWFORD
DONALD F. SLOAN

EX-OFFICIO
M/G LACLAIR A. MELHOUSE
ADJUTANT GENERAL
ALAN L. RICE
VA CENTER DIRECTOR
WALTER R. FIEDLER
DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONS

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR
SOLDIERS HOME
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10:45 a.m. - Mr. Alan L. Rice reported on current VA programs and problems:
 - (1) Regional Office (2) Hospital Program (3) Nursing Care
 (4) Out-Patient Program Reported that they have had the heaviest patient load in six years (195 daily average) with 84% occupancy. Mr. Rice also reported on the 'VA Van Project' which has turned out to be successful beyond their greatest expectations. Van is stopping in 18 towns and has experienced in excess of 70 veterans visits per day thus far.

10:55 a.m. - Mr. Martin Gronvold reported on the Governor's plan for an orderly personnel program for which he has funding, feels that Veteran's Organizations should become involved in the initial organization. They are conducting a search for key personnel to set up the program. Expect to upgrade the mandatory listings of all jobs in state beginning at the national level. Also hope to upgrade the Severely Handicapped Program in State employment. Many problems now involved, mainly paperwork and funding.

11:00 a.m. - Appointment of sub-committees for coming year: Novak expressed his concern about members becoming complacent with duties since most initial problems have been solved, suggested sub-committees be realigned in order to broaden scope of members. Each member was asked to express his wish as to appointment via the secret ballot, the result being no change in appointments for the next year.

11:30 a.m. - Recessed into sub-committee meetings to reconvene at 12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m. - Report of Sub-Committee on Veterans Affairs by Novak:
 - Discussed minor errors in booklet 'Veterans Laws in N.D.' - no corrections to be made at this time.
 - Advised that new office space is being negotiated for at 1017-4th Ave. N., 1800 sq. ft. at \$425.00 per month, which provides everything except janitorial service and lights. Ground floor space w/parking provided. Will occupy August 15, hopefully. Will negotiate a 2-year lease.
 - Commissioner Zander reported on another Re-employment Right case at Lefor, N.D. - Mr. Hellman, which the Committee will support.
 - A report of the status of Veterans Aid Loans was received.
 - Report on impact of distribution of pamphlet 'Preference in Public Employment in N.D.' - almost nil - Zander has since put out publicity.
 - Future meetings with Board of Education and Pierce County Commissioners discussed.
 - Re-elected same officers for the coming year in the sub-committee: Rosendahl, Chairman and Novak, Vice-Chairman with Zander designated secretary. Report accepted, motion Novak, second, Habiger.

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STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

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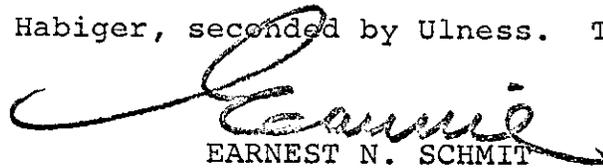
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- 12:40 p.m. - Report of Sub-Committee on Soldiers Home by Welander:
- Announced that member Steve Groth was in St. Lukes, Fargo.
 - Commandant Code had appeared twice before the Emergency Commission for additional funding and encountered no problem.
 - Mr. Welder, assistant commandant has been hired, he will also serve as bookkeeper for the Home.
 - Members of the Home have reacted very favorably to the assessment of the Maintenance Fund, with some wanting to pay in advance, foreseeing some problems with this, the commandant is checking with the auditor on the advisability of allowing advance payments.
 - Encountering problems with new members income limitation of \$265 per month. Committee is going to abide with the 'need' factor, and will so notify those involved.
 - Welander was reelected as Chairman of the Sub-Committee, and Morris as Vice Chairman.
 - Morris is continuing to work on the reprint of the Soldiers Home booklet.
 - Discussion on problems facing the Home in view of rising prices of food, scarcity of fuel, etc.
 - Report accepted, moved Welander, second Gullickson.
- 12:55 p.m. - Old Business - suggested news release on Bonus application lag, was suggested we discuss this with the Veterans Coordinating Council before taking any action so as to avoid duplication of effort.
- 1:00 p.m. - New Business - Klecker made the observation that both he and a brother had received state bonuses as a result of their service in the Armed Forces.
- Next meeting would be a joint one with the Council if possible to arrange, announcement will be made at a later date.
 - Motion made to adjourn, Habiger, seconded by Ulness. Time of adjournment - 1:05 p.m.


EARNEST N. SCHMIT
Secretary

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