



**Vietnam Veterans of America
Wisconsin State Council**
Unapproved Minutes
VVA WSC Second Quarter Minutes
June 22, 2024
Waupaca, WI

Executive Director Richard Lindbeck called the Second Quarter Meeting of the WSC to order at 10:02 am (President Demske had an excused absence for health reasons). The pledge of allegiance was recited, followed by a moment of silence for those we have lost and our POWs and MIAs.

The Executive Director ordered the roll to be taken. Secretary Mullarkey called the roll: VVA Chapters present 0005, 0206, 0224, 0236, 0324, 0351, 0425, 0437, 0448, 0479, 0635, 0729, 0731, 0767, 1130, and At-Large (67%). AVVA was represented from VVA Chapters: 0005, 0206, 0351, 0635, 0767, and At-Large. The Secretary called a quorum.

Greg Foye (At-Large) moved to accept the Agenda which Vern Larson (0635) seconded, and passed without objection.

John Margowski (0425) requested a correction to the March meeting minutes. The correction is the 2nd paragraph under *New Business* regarding changing the number of yearly meetings: "The motion will be discussed again at the June (06/2024) meeting with the final vote on the motion to be taken at the September (09/2024) meeting". Correction passed without objection.

Elections Committee Chair John Margowski and Committee member Richard Lindbeck advised the delegates that there were no candidates for President or Vice President, only for Secretary and Treasurer. According to VVA National rules, a State Council without a President and Vice President must be dissolved. The meeting was recessed for 15 minutes for delegates to discuss how to proceed and determine if candidates could be found for the open positions. Before John and Richard left the room for the discussions, they advised the President's position requires attendance at 3 meetings in Washington, DC (with expenses paid by VVA National and the Wisconsin State Council). John and Richard also advised that they would help whoever was elected as president since they both held positions in the past. Candidates for the open positions came forward during the recess. The meeting reconvened.

The nominations for WSC officers were passed to the Elections Committee.

President	Tom Banner (0767)
Vice President	Frank Mueller (0448)
Secretary	Jim Mullarkey (0425)
Treasurer	Pat Craney (0425)

Greg Bloch (0635) moved to approve the nominations for each of the WSC positions nominated, which were accepted without objection.

Following the election of the WSC Officers the VVA Chapters assembled by Region to elect their Region Director. The Region Directors elected were:

Region 1	Tom Banner (0767)
Region 2	Mike Johnson (0236)
Region 3	Dan Sciuti (0437)
Region 4	Greg Foye (At-Large)
At Large	Greg Foye (At-Large)

All Executive Officers and Region Directors were sworn in. President Banner appointed Richard Lindbeck as Executive Director. A motion was made to thank all former Executive Officers and Region Directors for their service to the Wisconsin State Council.

President's Report - Richard Lindbeck, Executive Director

Richard thanked Mike Demske for his many years of service and expressed the unanimous sentiment of the group that Mike's presence will be missed. We wish Mike improved health and look to the future Mike attends a meeting he attends a State Council meeting.

Richard moved that all past Region Directors, Officers, and Board members be thanked for their service. The motion was passed unanimously.

The newly elected President, Thomas Banner shared his email (tgbanner@yahoo.com) and his cell number (262-498-3712) with the group. To prefers to be contacted by text.

Vice President's Report - Dan Sciuti

No Report

Secretary's Report- Jim Mullarkey

Jim discussed the new report format from VVA National which is all computerized. VVA Chapter Secretaries and Treasurers must review these carefully this year.

To better understand The Election and Financial Reports for 2024 showing all WSC VVA Chapters Jim used Chapter 92 as an example. Under the "Chapter" column it shows

"92-1", the "-1" is the number of Quarterly State Council meetings the Chapter has attended in the calendar. Under the "Election" column, it shows 23-25-3N, the "23-25" indicates the election period is two years, the "3" means page 3 was submitted to the WSC which shows the VVA Chapter's BODs and its elected Delegates and Alternates. The "N" means National has received the Election Report.

Under the "Financial" column, the "23-24" means the VVA Chapter has turned in its Financial Report for fiscal year 2023. If there is an "N" following "23-24" it means VVA National received the report.

Under "Article III Members" of the Wisconsin State Council Bylaws, "twenty- five members" (25) is changed to "fifteen members" (15).

A delegate asked why Chapter 220 (Madison) wasn't listed on the Reports. The VVA Chapter dissolved two years ago.

A delegate asked how Wisconsin Regional boundaries were decided, refer to the map on the website (vvawi.org >VVA, WSC, AVVA >VVA, WSC & Chapters) When the State Council was formed, Highway 51 (now US 51-1 39) and Highway 29 were the dividing lines.

A request was made to VVA Chapter 0479, Central Wisconsin located in the Wausau Marathon County area to vvawi.org [It is already apart of the website.]

Jim discussed several items on the vvawi.org website.

- The "contact us" or "chat" features will go directly to Jim.
- Jim does NOT receive a **copy** of the deceased member's information that is sent to National. If Jim doesn't receive that information from the Chapter, he searches for information on the member to put in the "In Memoriam" section. Please send Jim obituaries, personal recollections, etc. for Jim to include on the website.
- Jim discussed the "headings" on the top of the website's first page ("Home," "VVA, WSC, AVVA" and "WSC Information"), including the types of information found under each of them.
- Information about the latest scholarship winners is added to the website **after** the scholarships have been given out.

A delegate asked if anything is added to the website when a Medal of Honor recipient passes or remains are returned and funerals are held for them. Jim will add that information in the In Memoriam including a logo if he is made aware. Please include the Medal of Honor information with the notification.

Treasurer's Report – Pat Furno

Pat Craney, WSC Treasurer, had an excused absence. Pat Furno asked if anyone had questions about the Quarterly Report provided to the delegates. There were none.

VVA Region 6 Director – John Margowski

John spoke about the National Board meeting on 4/19/24. He provides a summary after each meeting for posting to vvawi.org. John encouraged everyone to visit the website regularly to remain informed.

The Puerto Rico claim backlog is being addressed and will be resolved.

VVA veteran's benefits have been approved, but 90% of caregiver requests are still denied.

John encouraged all Region 6 members to attend the Leadership Conference scheduled for August 20-24 in Reno, Nevada since it may be the last one.

VVA membership is 91,285 (AVVA is 10,858). Annual Financial report forms and Election Reports for National have been revised. However, page 3 of the Election Report (i.e., the page with the VVA Chapter's BOD and elected delegates and alternates) is now gone. The information on page 3 is important to the WSC. This page should be completed and submitted to the WSC Secretary – page 3 is available on the WSC website.

Wisconsin is a leader in removing deceased members from their rosters.

John answered several questions from delegates.

1. The last year for rebates maybe 2025; it will be reviewed yearly for potential future funding.
2. Don't use the attorneys who advertise on TV for Camp LeJeune Toxic Exposure claims; file through the VA (including your CVSO and/or a veterans organization Service Officer) instead.
3. Toxic Exposure at Fort McClellan was also discussed.

Staffing issues at VA facilities were discussed. Vern Larson (0635) advised that admissions are on hold due to inadequate staffing. Vern believes the VA needs to address training, mentoring, etc. to retain and recruit staff.

VVA National At Large Director – Richard Lindbeck

Richard attended a Vietnam Veterans Day ceremony in Necedah. Approximately 25-30 Vietnam veterans were at the ceremony. None in attendance heard of VVA. In addition to sharing information about VVA, Richard gave each a start-up kit.

Richard reported that Mike Demske, John Margowski, and himself attended the National Board meeting. Scott DeArman, Chair of the Elections Committee, met with Richard about updating National's forms for National Conventions. Someone asked why National isn't using the QR code for registration; the QR code is being worked on.

In 2022, the years of service for eligibility to join VVA were changed to **1955-1975**.

Richard attended the Michigan State Council meeting in Marquette on 5/31 - 6/1. The meeting was small but included a very moving speech by a Michigan Medal of Honor

recipient and a very moving flag disposal ceremony. *The current total of Vietnam Medal of Honor recipients is 78, the largest of any conflict.*

Richard shared that only three (3) veterans are currently serving in the U. S. House of Representatives.

AVVA Report – Pat Furno

Pat shared that she ran unopposed for the State Representative position and was re-elected by acclamation.

The 2024 Reno Leadership and Education Conference theme is “The Aging Veteran”.

The 2025 National Convention will be held in New Orleans and maybe the last one. Pat encouraged as many AVVA members as possible to attend the Convention.

Pat reminded everyone to ask politicians running for office to address their stance on veterans’ issues. VVA President McManus has a list of suggested questions at vva.org.

Scholarship Report:

No formal report. [Please note this year’s winners are on the scholarship page of the website (vvawi.org/scholarship)

Awards Committee – Vern Larson

Vern Larson, Patrick Craney, and Greg Bloch are the Award Committee members.

Guidelines for the awards, as suggested by the Committee, were distributed and discussed. Guidelines include:

1. All award nominees must be members of VVA.
2. The *Distinguished Service Award* can consist of multiple people.
3. The *VVA Member of the Year Award*, if given, is based on names submitted for the Distinguished Service Award. This is a special award that requires letters of support.

Submission and award presentation dates were discussed. The Committee will review the suggestions and bring information back to the delegates at our next meeting.

Since the motion came out of the Committee, a second to approve the guidelines is not needed; the motion passed unanimously.

Veterans Affairs Committee/Council on Veterans Programs – Vern Larson

Vern reported on the status of Act 102 which removed the ability of the Board of Veterans Affairs to be included in decisions regarding the Camp Randall Veterans Memorial Park. Vern had a handout on the stakeholder meetings for the proposed changes.

The Replacement Project was included in the budget in July 2023. The Project formally began in February 2024; in March 2024, Act 102 was approved and a design/build project listening session was held. The project is expected to take about 3 years to complete; six (6) stakeholder listening sessions were held around the state from March through mid-May.

UW-Madison proposed a plan to honor veterans in the Camp Randall Practice Facility Design by creating a Camp Randall Veterans Memorial Plaza, naming wall and architectural touches, and incorporating a Civil War motif (it was an Army base and POW camp during the Civil War). Service flags and symbols may be on the building and tribute will be paid to the Grand Army of the Republic. A partnership with the Veterans Museum is being explored and a commitment to collaborating with veterans on the design.

There will be one-time funding (\$300,000 - \$400,000) and annual funding (\$55,000 per year) to honor student veterans and support student officer education; the funds will come from the University budget.

There will also be recognition of military service in athletics and beyond with a one-time funding of \$3,000 and \$60,000 per year for 5 years (for a total of \$300,000); the \$60,000 will support the UW-Missing-in-Action Recovery and Identification Project.

Old Business:

The motion by John Margowski (0425) to change the by-laws to reduce the number of annual meetings from 4 to 2 (3 in election years) was discussed. The motion was passed and will take effect beginning in calendar 2025.

New Business:

Tom Banner shared he visited Vietnam in April of this year and will bring slides to our next meeting to contrast the difference(s) between North and South Vietnam (Saigon, Mekong Delta).

Jim Mullarkey distributed a handout for MyVote Wisconsin (a non-partisan group) that provides information on the voting process in the upcoming election(s). Their website is: myvote.wi.gov and includes information on National and State races, and how to register for voting. Please share the information with your chapters.

Upcoming Events:

August 20-24, 2023

VVA Leadership and Education Conference, Silver Legacy, Reno, Nevada

AVVA Leadership and Education Conference, Silver Legacy, Reno, Nevada

September 21, 2024*

Wisconsin State Council Quarterly meeting; Par 4 Comfort Suites, Waupaca, WI

December 6-7, 2024*

Wisconsin State Council Holiday Party (12/06/2024, location TBD) and Quarterly Meeting (12/07/2024) Par 4 Comfort Suites, Waupaca, WI

*Rooms are available at Par 4 Comfort Suites at a special rate on 09/20/2024, 09/21/2024, and 12/06/2024, and 12/07/2024 dates. Call (715) 942-0500.

Motion by Greg Foye (Region 4 Director & At Large) to adjourn which was seconded by Greg Bloch and approved without objection.

The Meeting adjourned at 12:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Mullarkey

James E. Mullarkey
VVA WSC Secretary

Joy L. Foye

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AVVA At Large/VVA WSC Associate Secretary