

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 1997 MEETING

The North Dakota Veterans Coordinating Council met Friday, January 17, 1997, at the Seven Seas Motel in Mandan. The meeting was called to order at 1:07 pm by Council President Kasy Schmaltz. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence held for POW/MIAs. President Schmaltz asked Elmer Ekern to act as secretary in the absence of Bob Evans. Roll call found all voting organizations present.

Motion by Ray Stelmachuck to dispense with the minutes, second by Richard Belling, carried. There was no Treasurer's report but a review of the Measure #4 Campaign Committee income and expenses showed a \$748.48 deficit. This was brought to zero balance by use of Council funds. Earl Redlin explained his bill was not only for phone calls and gave a breakdown. Kasy Schmaltz and Arnold Maier stated the same. Motion by Rudy Jenson to accept the financial statement report, second by Glen Maurer, carried. Several stated they received petitions after the deadline. Thanks were extended to Earl Redlin.

ACOVA Chairman John Mullen gave a legislative report. He passed out an Attorney General's opinion that the Administrative Committee has the authority to administer all Trust Fund money generated from December 5, 1996. HB1117 allows movement of the Veterans Home Improvement fund into general fund operations of the Home. HB1118 states the Commissioner "may" call for hearings where there is a dispute on veterans preference. Commandant Ken Anderson explained use of Building Funds, stated the cooling system came in under budget and caused legislative heartburn. The Senate Appropriations Committee hearing was scheduled for January 20 at 2:30 pm. Commissioner Ray Harkema told of changes in his budget, travel pay for ACOVA Sub-committee, elimination of any items previously funded by P WTF interest income.

Arnie Maier spoke on HB1346, the veterans license plate bill, and concern that the \$5.00 going to the Militia Fund could be tapped at any time. Rick Ryan talked to General Bjerke who gave his OK to the bill, as did Kiser and Magnusson from DOT if they could design the plate (material, etc.). It was understood the Guard would keep their plate. The bill committee decided funding would be \$5 to DOT, \$5 to the Cemetery and \$5 to the Militia Fund. Motion by Jerry Salvesson to amend HB1346, item 4, that the share of money from veterans license plate sales going to the Militia Fund accumulate to the principal and that only interest money could be spent on Cemetery maintenance and use, second by Rudy Jenson, carried.

Rep. Jim Coats spoke on his Four Chaplains bill that would have the Governor, by proclamation, designate a Sunday in February each year as Four Chaplains Sunday. He listed the members of the Senate and House Government and Veterans Affairs Committees.

Rick Ryan questioned who would oversee the General's spending of the Cemetery fund. Would it be the Cemetery Advisory Committee? Would it be the Administrative Committee? Ryan and Jerry Balzer would get out a publicity letter on the veterans support of a license plate with income to maintain the Veterans Cemetery.

Unprotected P WTF income was discussed. By interpretation of the Attorney General's opinion it was guessed that \$4,596.16 could be taken plus possible \$100,000 appropriated to National Guard tuition assistance that has not been spent. HB1204 would pay for out-of-state tuition for state Guard members retroactive to July 1, 1993.

Jerry Balzer stated that at the National Guard budget hearing the General said he would get \$150,000 for Cemetery maintenance from special funds so as not to burden the general fund. Motion by Rick Ryan that the Council take a position for the ACOVA not to support the \$150,000 full funding operation of the Cemetery at this time to see what support would come from the sale of license plates, second by Rudy Jenson, carried. Bob Hanson stated someone from the Appropriations Committee should ask the General where the \$150,000 was coming from - what special funds does he have in mind.

Old Business - Ekern gave the second reading on the resolution to lower membership requirements for voting organizations on the Council from 750 to 250. Motion by Jerry Salveson to accept the lower rate of 250 members, second by Glen Maurer, carried. Ekern stated he was going to be an ex-officio Council member from AMVETS as approved at the previous meeting and that Joe Novak would be the third voting member for AMVETS. Motion by Joe Novak that VVA be seated with voting rights immediately, second by Glen Maurer, carried.

New Business - Arnold Maier has been selected by the Legislative Committee of the Council as its chairman. Motion by Glen Maurer that Bob Hanson be the Legislative Liaison between the Legislative Committee and the Council, second by Richard Belling, carried.

Time and Place - Motion by Joe Novak that a meeting be called in late March, time and place to be decided when appropriate, second by Tom Rainsberry, carried.

Motion by Glen Maurer to adjourn, second by Ray Stelmachuk, carried. President Schmaltz adjourned the meeting at 4:01 pm.

Submitted by  
Elmer M. Ekern  
Acting Secretary