

USSVI – Charleston Base Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2019

Meeting called to order at 1800 by Acting Base Commander Mike Ciesielko. Attending were Board of Directors members Larry Knutson, Gordon Williams, Joe Lunn, Rick Sparger, Carl Chinn, Nick Nichols, Harry Nettles, Butch Bryar, Ken Hutchison, Ed Stank, Bill Kennedy, Rick Wise, Gordon Long, and Tom Lawson.

Acting Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko:

- Mike welcomed members to the meeting asked all members to keep reports short and to keep the extra chatter out of the meeting. [Secretary comment: It also makes it easier to review the audio when assembling the Minutes.]

Membership – Larry Knutson:

- Larry sent out a March roster via email to the Board. Several members stated that they did not receive it. We currently have 274 members.
- Ed stated that he did some research regarding fees involving members paying dues using PayPal. While National USSVI receives full dues payment, Charleston Base is absorbing the charge from PayPal of 2.9 percent plus 30 cents per transaction. This totals \$1.46 on each renewal. There was some discussion involving the value of the PayPal service versus the cost involved but it was generally accepted that it was simply the cost of doing business.
- Larry said that National USSVI is expected to take over the collection of their own dues payments. This has been talked about for a while but no date is currently set. When this occurs, it means that Charleston Base will no longer absorb the percentage associated with National dues.

Treasurer – Gordon Williams:

- The expenses during the month of February exceeded the funds received. Gordon stated the balance in the account and how much was designated for the scholarship fund.
- Rick queried the Treasurer about the cost of the Oyster Roast. Gordon said that the oysters cost \$1,300 and a receipt just given to him was \$114. We took in \$1,100 from gate fees and Depth Charge. Complete numbers will be in the next Treasurer's report, but these are the current estimates.

COB – Joe Lunn:

- Spoke about the Oyster Roast and the Chili Cook-off. Also, at the event, someone damaged Tom Clark's car and left without saying anything. COB has pictures.

Special Events – Rick Sparger:

- Nothing to Report

Scholarship – Carl Chinn:

- The raffle for a set of 76 Navy DVDs will be at the Base meeting next week.
- The "Bubbleheads" book will be auctioned next week.
- Two checks totaling \$150 were received in memory of Jack Harden designated for the Scholarship Fund.
- The deadline for scholarship applications is April 19. So far, there have been none received.

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Clamagore – Butch Bryar

- After hearing of some disturbing news on Monday, Tom Lufkin wrote a letter to the editor of the Post and Courier which was published on Wednesday. This was a visit to the Finance Committee in Columbia before Thanksgiving last year, where Mac Burdette had made a presentation and requested \$2.5million so that he can get the Clamagore sent to Florida. The premise was that the submarine was in danger of sinking where it is. We know this is a lie. If this is allowed to occur, SC taxpayers will be spending money to subsidize tourism in Florida. Butch has spoken with attorneys who said that we need to write letters and make phone calls to the Governor and each Representative's office NOW! Butch requested that we get the word out to all of the other bases regarding this situation.
- Butch is working with NUCOR Steel about prices for sheet metal, I-beams and bars of various sizes. Since the Clamagore will never again be going to sea, some of the rejected material is usable for repairs instead of it being remelted.
- Butch is also working with Detyens Shipyard concerning getting an estimate for drydock space.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

Remember at the meetings, I will not be reading all of the info that has been put out via email, only anything that is new. This should shorten the time for the Base meeting.

There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.

- **CDR Tom Conrey** departed on Eternal Patrol on Saturday, 2 March. His service will be held on Saturday, 9 March. The email has been sent out. Charleston Base will not be participating in the funeral services and will not be making presentations.
- **RMC(SS) 'Jack' Harden** departed on Eternal Patrol on Tuesday, 19 February. His service was held on Friday, 22 February. As usual, there was a large number of Charleston Base members in attendance. There were several Charleston Base members present who were using walkers, canes and even oxygen. If these guys can make it to honor our shipmates, then more of our members should be able to there as well.
 - Ken Hutchison: We need younger Base members to attend the funerals of Base members. Of the six pallbearers, four were over 70 years old. Jack's ceremony required carrying the casket up a flight of steps.
 - Nick Nichols: We ask every Base member that can be in attendance at funerals to do so, but no one is required to perform pallbearer duties, especially if the member does not think he is physically able. Do not feel bad if you are unable to be a pallbearer, but please still come to our shipmates' funerals.
- **Ken Curtis** was admitted to the VA on Monday, 25 February. He is now home after 11 days. Ken has had three blood transfusions and will be on antibiotics for the next couple of weeks to help with the blood infection, as well as IVs which will be administered by Barbara at home. Barbara is also worn out.
- **Jerry Stout** had surgery for his cancer and went home on Tuesday, 26 February. The latest news from pathology is not good. Cancer has attached to nearby lymph node in groin. Next step is PET scan to determine any further migration. This will be followed by more surgery, radiation, chemo and/or immune therapy. Jerry said that mentally, he is good.

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- **Moon Mullins** was called by Rick Sparger on Monday, 25 February. He is doing very well as we speak. With the operation he had in the front of his skull, he was having to return to MUSC weekly but now it has been extended to every six months.
- **J.J. Fortier** had a complete hip replacement on Tuesday, 26 February at Trident. He went home on Wednesday, 28 February. He has some pain and stiffness but otherwise is doing well. Said he plans on making it to the Hog Roast.
- **Rodney McKanna** has been declared clinically blind. He had a problem with a detached retina in one of his eyes several months back. His other retina detached last week. He now has a gas bubble in that eye to help with healing but until the gas dissolves he cannot see email or text. If you want to contact him it is phone calls only. He promises to answer his phone.
- **Gordon Smith's** cancer has returned. Nothing can be done at this point.
- **Art Hance** has been diagnosed with stage 2 aggressive prostate cancer. He had surgery on 8 January and is recovering well. He will be going in at a later date for blood work to check if all the cancer was removed.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- Steve Brock from Denizens of the Deep base will be at the Base meeting next week for a book signing. His book is: "Bubblehead: The Med Run" which will sell for \$15.00 and he is donating \$7.50 for each one sold back to the Scholarship Fund.
- The 2019 Submarine Birthday Ball will be held on Saturday April 13 - 1830-2230. The guest speaker is Admiral John M. Richardson, CNO. The event will be at the Charleston Marriott, 170 Lockwood Blvd., Charleston SC 29403. SUBVET tickets are \$35.00 each. WWII Vets and their guests are free. I'm hoping someone from the committee will be at the Base meeting.
- Navy Week in Charleston is March 11-16. Check the website for more info on planned events.
- Don't forget about Daylight Savings Time this weekend. SPRING FORWARD...

Social Media – Nick Nichols for Lewis Leal:

- Lewis Leal (Social Media Coordinator) has Twitter and Instagram accounts set up. The primary difference between the two is that every Instagram post is a photo. You can take any .JPG or .PNG file and put it on Instagram with a caption. Twitter posts are text based but you can include URLs [web links] or even pictures. It is more flexible than Instagram. These accounts do not cost the Base any money. If you are on Instagram, you can search for "USSVICB".
- The phone APP is still in progress.

Hunley/Housatonic Memorial – Harry Nettles:

- Discussed the memorial event and activities, including the fact that he had to give a speech where a comical familial discussion arose during the occasion. Those present at the memorial reported enjoying the speech.

Election Coordinator – Ken Hutchison

- Ballots for the upcoming offices – Base Commander and Base Treasurer – will be available at the Base meeting in May. Currently, Mike Ciesielko is the sole candidate for the office of

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Base Commander. Candidates for Base Treasurer, at this time, are Gordon Williams and Ed Stank. Candidates for both offices are still being accepted. Requests for nominations will be made at both the March and April Base meetings. Ballots will be provided to each member in good standing at the May Base meeting.

FRA – Ken Hutchison:

- Nothing to Report

Store Keeper – Ken Hutchison:

- Nothing to Report

Recreation – Ed Stank

- Has contacted Charleston River Dogs about attending a baseball game on May 10. He has received a contract from them to complete. The price will be \$16.35 per person. This includes \$8.00 for the ticket and \$7.00 for a meal voucher plus applicable taxes. Ed gave them an estimate of 50 people. Those attending need to arrive at 1800. Ed will get a count at the Base meeting.
- Two keys are on the way for the shed. We need a working party to go out there and clean up before it gets hot. Organizing the working party falls under COB Joe Lunn's domain, however, Rick Sparger, Rick Wise, Ken Hutchison and Ed Stank are the authorized key holders.
- There was a suggestion made to have the 2019 Base Christmas party at the FRA instead of the Air Force Base where it was held last year. There was some discussion about the benefits of each location. Ed will present the question to the members at the Base meeting next week for a decision.
- The Charleston Base Cookbooks are still in development. Recipes are still being accepted. The sale of the books will benefit Kaps-for-Kids.

KAPS-For-Kids – Bill Kennedy:

- The next visit will be March 12 in Florence at McLeod Hospital. He has a Certificate of Appreciation for the hospital staff to recognize their work.
- Last month's visit was cancelled, but some may not have been notified. In the future, once Bill schedules a visit, it will not be cancelled.
- Bill has pictures from various hospital visits. Nick asked Bill to send the pictures to the Base Webmaster email address.
- There was a recent bill to the Base for the Certificate of Appreciation, but the only ongoing Kaps-for-Kids expense to the Base is hats and other headgear. All other items such as coloring books and crayons are donated by the members. The cost of fuel and meals when making the trip for each hospital visit are also paid by each member himself.
- The money for the rocking horse was donated by the WWII veterans.

Public Affairs – Rick Wise

- Rick has been attempting to get the invitation letter out to Eli King (The 10-year old boy who wrote the newspaper about the Clamagore). The information that The Post & Courier had published was not useful. Rick sent a letter to the newspaper along with another stamped

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envelope, requesting them to forward the information to the King family. He has not heard back from anyone.

- Rick asked if Mike Ciesielko was able to contact someone to be the guest speaker at the Amberjack Memorial. Mike will contact Rusty Pickett to see if he can assist in this effort.
- The Minutes from the February Charleston Base meeting were not provided to Rick in time to get into the February Base Newsletter but will get published in the March Newsletter along with the Minutes from the March Base meeting.

Comptroller – Rick Wise

- Nothing to Report

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- As Rick already mentioned, the Minutes from the Base meeting are late but shall be completed in a few days.

VA – Tom Lawson:

- Nothing to Report

Vice Commander – Mike Ciesielko:

- Mike Ciesielko read each nomination form for this year's Distinguished Submariner Award including the reason for the recommendation. In alphabetical order, the list of names presented were Rick Carlson, Charlie Hudson, Bill Kennedy and Terry Trump. Bill was dismissed and private voting was conducted. To obtain a majority vote, a runoff between the top two men was required. While only Mike Ciesielko knows the actual tally, he made the resulting decision known to the Board. The DSA recipient's name will be made public at the April Base meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 1902.