

USSVI – Charleston Base Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

May 2, 2019

Meeting called to order at 1756 by Acting Base Commander Mike Ciesielko. Attending were Board of Directors members Larry Knutson, Tom Lawson, Joe Lunn, Gordon Williams. Carl Chinn, Nick Nichols, Harry Nettles, Ken Hutchison, Bill Freligh, Rick Wise and Gordon Long.

Acting Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko:

- Mike welcomed members to the meeting.

Membership – Larry Knutson:

- Charleston Base currently has 279 members.
- Larry talked about the “Free One-Year Membership” incentive that National USSVI has implemented for younger members. So far, he has seen no increase resulting from this as yet. Nick Nichols presented the offer to someone at the Submarine Birthday Ball – highlighting “FREE” and four issues of “American Submariner” but there was no interest.

VA – Tom Lawson

- Tom asked for assistance with taking a submarine veteran (not a USSVI member) to the VA Hospital. He takes men who cannot drive to the hospital several days per week, but needs some help this time.

COB – Joe Lunn:

- Joe reminded everyone about the Memorial Day ceremony in Summerville.

Treasurer – Gordon Williams:

- After the Base election, the new Base Commander and Treasurer have to update signatures on the investment account.

Special Events – Rick Wise for Rick Sparger:

- Ken Hutchison suggested that for the various ceremonies, of which Charleston Base is involved, such as Amberjack or Memorial Day, to maintain a list of senior officers that we can ask to give the address to the group attending the event. Nick suggested that we not limit our selection to officers, but to include senior enlisted men as well.
- For the Memorial Day Ceremony this year, the Base Secretary will bring the sound system.

Scholarship – Carl Chinn:

- The “Charleston Basket” raffle will be at the May Base meeting. The items include a hotel stay, restaurant gift cards, a carriage tour for two, and a few other items.
- Carl reported that he has received seven scholarship applications.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

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

- **Diane McBride**, daughter of Beetle & Carol Bailey, passed away on Friday, April 26th. Her funeral was today at 1400. I was not able to attend due to a doctor’s appointment. I placed a note of condolence from Charleston Base on the Funeral Home website.

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- **Leon Manning**, uncle of Rick Collins, passed away on Thursday, April 25th in GA. His funeral is tomorrow in TN. Rick is planning on attending. Leon was 96 years young and a WWII veteran of the US Army Air Corps. I placed a note of condolence from Charleston Base on the Funeral Home website.
- **Sharon Sessler** broke her wrist on April 17th, had surgery on April 25th, and is home recovering.
- **Bob Snyder** was diagnosed with prostate cancer 2 years ago and given 2 years to live. His cancer has spread to several organs and bones. He was in the VA hospital this past week with an infection but is now home on IV antibiotics. He would enjoy receiving calls to talk. 843.412.2530.
- **Ken Curtis** is still fighting. He is still working on Monday mornings at the VA clinic at NWS doing his DAV function. To date, the doctors can't find where he's losing blood. He is currently in his fourth round of iron infusions.
- **Roy Robertson** is in NHC Rehabilitation Center in West Ashley (2230 Ashley Crossing Dr, Charleston, SC 29414). He's been there for 4 months now. Very hard to understand his speech.
- **Jim Williams**, 60 years old, non-USSVI/CB member, is still in the VA after 2.5 months. He broke his hip when he fell in his workshop and has undergone 5 surgeries. These all failed due to an infection in his bones. Nothing can be done. He is now in the VA hospital in the CLC area and will be there until end of life. He has a wife who has in remission cancer and a 42 year old mentally disabled son. If you are at the VA downtown for any reason try to stop by and talk to him for a few minutes.
- **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 January 8th and is recovering well. He will be going in at a later date for blood work to check if all the cancer was removed.
- Nick noted that he has held the position of Base Chaplain for twelve years. The Base should consider looking for someone else to fill this position. Mike Ciesielko suggested that Nick should address this at the next Base meeting.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- At the 2019 Submarine Birthday Ball, there were 18 shipmates/spouses representing Charleston Base and 4 representing other bases. Nick gave the CNO - Admiral John M. Richardson one of our base coins.
- The plaque listing the Base Commander and COB has been replaced. It was nearly out of space and did not even have USSVI Charleston Base as a title. Nick also placed one of the Base coins on the new plaque.
- Nick requested replacement of four Base challenge coins held as Chaplain. This is a normal administrative matter, with no vote required. The Treasurer will make the adjustments in the funds as necessary.
- Nick will be sending out all future monthly base notices combined into one email due to ISP restrictions on quantity of outgoing email.

Hunley/Housatonic – Harry Nettles

- Nothing to report.

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Election Coordinator – Ken Hutchison

- At this time, there is only one candidate for each office. Mike Ciesielko as Base Commander and Gordon Williams as Treasurer. Ken will have ballots available with space available to write any nominations from the floor. If there are none, then there shall be a request for acclamation.

Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison

- Nothing to report.

Holland Club – Bill Freligh

- Bill will provide Holland Club coins to widows as long as they are available.

Public Affairs – Rick Wise

- Charleston Base challenge coins are to be given to widows. The Base coin will mean more to the family than the Holland Club coin.
- Rick will go to the Little David and do a pressure wash, but we will need a serious working party this fall for needed maintenance. There are currently ten boards which must be replaced and likely more by fall.

Comptroller – Rick Wise

- Nothing to Report

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- Nothing to Report

By-Law Review – Carl Chinn:

- Carl Chinn and Nick Nichols reviewed the current Charleston Base By-Laws. Most of the changes are administrative and do not change the meaning or intent. These shall be provided to the Base Secretary for incorporation into the By-Laws after a Base review.
- The Standing Rule regarding donations to the Victory House was eliminated at the March 2019 Charleston Base meeting and can be removed immediately.
- There are two Standing Rules that are exactly the same – the latter entry should be removed.
- While every member of the Base is invited to attend the Board meeting and offer input to the Board, the Base By-Laws outlines which offices are to be voting members of the Board. There was much discussion regarding committee chairs which should be added or deleted as voting members. Nick Nichols made a motion that the Historian and Veteran's Affairs positions be removed as voting members of the Board and put in place, the Special Events and Recreation committee chairs as voting members of the Board. Carl Chinn seconded the motion which passed unanimously by the Board. Since this is a change the Charleston Base By-Laws, it must be presented to the Base for review.
- The By-Laws shall be discussed again at the next Board meeting in June.
- The full Base membership shall have the opportunity to decide all final changes at the June Base meeting.

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Vice Commander – Mike Ciesielko:

- Mike attended the Amberjack Ceremony, the Hog Roast and the Submarine Birthday Ball; all on the same day in April. He expects May to be a good month.
- Mike advised the Board that he has chosen Tom Lawson to relieve him as Vice Commander, should he be elected as Base Commander at the Base meeting next week.

Meeting was adjourned at 1902.