

**United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base
Minutes of Business Meeting
14 November 2024**

Opening Ceremonies:

- The November 2024 Base Meeting was called to order by Vice Commander Tom Lawson with a quorum of three officers and a total of 48?? members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm. Base Commander Mike Ciesielko was not present this evening.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander Tom Lawson and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of November was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of November:
 - **USS ALBACORE (SS-218) November 7, 1944 - 11th War Patrol Lost with all hands - 85 souls**
 - **USS GROWLER (SS-215) November 8, 1944 - 12th War Patrol Lost with all hands - 86 souls**
 - **USS SCAMP (SS-277) November 16, 1944 - 8th War Patrol Lost with all hands - 83 souls**
 - **USS CORVINA (SS-226) November 16, 1943 - 1st War Patrol Lost with all hands - 82 souls**
 - **USS SCULPIN (SS-191) November 19, 1943 - 9th War Patrol Lost with 43 souls –
41 became POWs - 21 survived the war**
 - **5 Boats and 399 Men Lost**
- The Creed of USSVI was read by Vice Commander Tom Lawson.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Introductions of New Attendees:

- Three men were at the Charleston Base meeting this evening for the first time.
 - Ed Dubreuil – EM1 – Qualified on USS Pollack SSN603 – NOV 1984 – Also served aboard USS Lewis & Clark SSBN644 Gold
 - Jefery Burke – RMCS – Qualified on USS Mariano G Vallejo SSBN658G – SEP 1977 – Also served aboard USS Francis Scott Key SSBN657B, USS James Madison SSBN627G and USS Flying Fish SSN673
 - Steve Harrison – RM2 – Qualified on USS George Washington Carver SSBN656 – Also served aboard USS Dace SSN607, USS Kamehameha SSBN642, USS Sam Rayburn SSBN635, USS Narwhal SSN671, USS Daniel Webster SSBN626 and NCTS Cutler.

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- **Comptroller – Rick Wise:**
 - The 2025 Charleston Base Budget had been previously presented to the Base for review. Rick Wise made a motion with Lou Leal seconding. The motion passed by a show of hands.
- **BY-LAWS Change – Base Secretary:**
 - Secretary Gordon Long had emailed the proposed change to the entire Charleston Base membership for advance review prior to this Base Meeting. Gordon explained that the current Base By-Laws Article VI (Dues) lists actual dollar amounts and the purpose of this change is to alleviate requiring a vote for an amendment to the By-Laws every time there is a change in the Membership Dues for National or Base. This change will eliminate the dollar amounts and replace the current Article VI with the following text:
*******New ARTICLE VI – NATIONAL AND BASE MEMBERSHIP DUES*******
National Dues are set by USSVI National and will be promulgated on the Membership Application form. Base Dues are set by Charleston Base BOD and approved by the Base members at a designated meeting for such purpose.

- After reading the proposed change to the By-Laws, Gordon made a motion that the new text replace Article VI. The motion was seconded by Phil Nunnally and passed without objection.
- **Exchange Club Donation – Tom Holcombe:**
 - Tom Holcombe spoke about the fact that we had our float in a prime spot at the Coastal Carolina Fair for zero cost other than a request that we would consider a donation to the Exchange Club of Charleston Foundation [The Fair's Charity]. Tom made a motion with Glenn Little seconding for Charleston Base to donate \$1,000 in appreciation for the space.
 - In discussion, it was noted that we were able to meet and received contact info for more than ninety submarine qualified individuals in the local area that had no knowledge of our organization's existence.
 - The motion passed a voice vote resoundingly with no objections.
- **SER Seed Money – Nick Nichols:**
 - Nick presented the recommendation by the Board that Charleston Base should match the \$1500 Seed money for the SE Regional Conference, making a motion for action. Glenn Little seconded. The motion passed.
- **SER – Dave Harvey**
 - Dave outlined the expected costs for the SE Regional Conference:
 - Hotel - \$13,000
 - Bus Service - \$10,772
 - Cold Cuts - \$2,500
 - Buffet at FRA - \$3,000
 - Oyster Roast at After Battery - \$2,000
 - Dinner at FRA - \$3,000
 - Hospitality Room at Hotel - \$2,000
 - Door Prizes - \$3,000
 - Total Cost: \$39,272
 - Dave explained the budget and fund raising for the SER based on expected attendance:
 - There are eight fund raisers looking to get \$12,000 minimum to \$20,000 maximum.
 - Live Auction - \$2,500
 - Seed Money - \$3,500 Total
Amounts Provided by: \$1,500 (National) / \$1,500 (Charleston Base) / \$500 (After Battery)
 - The flyers for the fund raising events are being sent to all FRA and Charleston Base members. The events are open to the public.
 - Dave outlined the ambitious Plan of the Conference.
 - Applications have already been received.
 - It is going to take a lot of help to make this happen and we have a short time to do it.
 - Donations of items are being accepted for silent auction and live auction.
 - Dave asked for working committee volunteers. He listed the following coordinators and general duties:
 - Hotel/Conference Coordinator
 - Fund Raising Coordinator
 - Workshop Facilitator
 - Presentation/Promotion Facilitator (PAO)
 - Registration/Application Coordinator
 - Hospitality Room Coordinator
 - Live Auction Coordinator
 - 50/50 Team
 - After Battery Coordinator
 - Cold War Memorial
 - Banquet Coordinator

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the October Base meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes have also been published on the Base Website for download. The Minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

- The Treasurer's Report for October was published and promulgated on the website. There were no revisions. The report was approved as presented.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- Highlighted boat of the month:
 - ALBACORE was lost on Nov 7, 1944 with the loss of 85 men when she was sunk off northern Hokkaido. Winner of two Presidential Unit Citations, Albacore was on her eleventh war patrol and struck a mine while running submerged near a Japanese patrol craft that had detected her.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **Karen McKanna's father**, Henry Gruber, 95, passed away on Oct. 27th in Illinois. The service will be Saturday Nov 2nd. Keep Rodney and Karen in your prayers as they travel back home.
- **A.B. Campbell** was at Summerville Medical ER last night while I volunteered. He has several health issues. He has lost 4 toes on one foot due to neuropathy, has several vertebrae collapsing and not long ago he was welding and set his jeans on fire. He didn't feel it because of the neuropathy and discovered it when he smelled the material, and his leg, burning. Spent lots of time in the wound care center.
- **Ken Curtis** is in the VA hospital admitted because of excess fluid buildup in his body. He is on 3B North, bed 8. Ken came home today and is recovering at home. Cards can be sent to his home address - 133 Summit Ave., Goose Creek, SC 29445. Bob's text said Ken would love some company if any of you can get down to see him. You can call him on his cell: 843.906.1880
- **Fred Woodley** says he is sorry he has not been very active but is still here! Still battling Prostrate enlargement and just got over another UTI and combined sinus infections taking meds for 10 Days and in bed for two days. He goes back to Urologist in March for EroCuff test then surgical evaluation. I will try to make the base meeting. Feel free to let other know. Happy Veterans Day!
- **Jim Keller** is living in NY for medical treatment. He is 87 and deteriorating rapidly. Diagnosis: chronic emphysema (COPD), severe skeletal deterioration with Osteo Porosis, Arthritis, and Scoliosis in 2 places in the spine. Doesn't expect to get back to SC again.
- **Jerry Stout** will be having surgery on Dec 16. Will be having a left neck dissection to remove several cancer inflamed lymph nodes. The cancer near the right kidney is shrinking. I will continue on Immune therapy treatment.
- **Bob Browning** continues to heal well from the serious hand surgery he had in August.
- **Chris LaForce** has had some medical procedures happening. He has A-Fib which MUSC has tried to resolve so that he can have some needed oral surgery.
- **Don Meadows** is diagnosed with Parkinson's and skin cancer. Has been having heart pains and has started having seizures due to muscular stranding. He would like your prayers.
- **Ronnie Vandiver** went into the VA on Oct 21st with his continuing GI problems he's had for several years. Good to see him here at the Base Meeting tonight.
- **Beetle Bailey** is recovering from a ruptured hi right quad.
- **Rick Wise** is learning to use his new arm with a programable hand.
- **Tom Cyrek** was back in VA for a few days but is now in his daughter's home in West Ashley. He is unable to stand or walk. and settled in. Due to his meds the best time to call him is early, 1000-1200. His cell is: 843.906.1880
- **Marvin Miller** is at White Oak Manor. 9285 Medical Plaza Dr. **NEW Room 117. He has a phone but cannot hear until he receives new hearing aids.** This is behind Trident.
- **Bill & Becky Roberts** are living in the Villages, him in Cottage 606 with Becky in the Greenhouse Memory Care Unit. His mailing address is: William Roberts, 201 W. 9th North Street, Unit 99, Summerville SC 29483-6715.
- **Al & Connie Dempster** are in The Bridge of Charleston Assisted Living. Mailing address is: Alan Dempster – Room 222, 2590 Elms Plantation Blvd., North Charleston, SC 29406. Apartment phone – (843) 793-1187.
- Complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- If you change your number or drop your home line, please contact either Larry, Nick or the COB so that we can make the necessary changes locally and with National.
- Until told differently, continue to use the website of <https://ussubvets.org>

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- Nothing to report.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- Not present
- Nick Nichols provided Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #3 in USSVI membership. Groton 1164 - 2) Hampton Roads 286 - 3) Charleston 252 - 4) Bremerton 247

National Awards – Base Commander Mike Ciesielko

- Not present

Scholarship – TOM LAWSON III

- Challenge Coins are available.
- Kraken Rum Auction – Tom Holcombe \$30
- Dolphins to be raffled at the January Base Meeting.

Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison

- Not Present

Recreation – Greg Landry for Johnny Brown

- Greg is collecting money for the SubVet Christmas party to be held at the FRA on 6 DEC.
- Dinner will include prime rib.
- Cost is \$10. Proceeds will be used to purchase gift cards and door prizes.

NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza

- NNPTC will be sponsoring the Submarine Birthday Ball on April 5, 2025. The location will be at Trident Tech on Rivers Ave.
- The website for ticket purchases is expected to be live in January.
- NNPTC CMC MMNCM(SW/AW) Cindy Huratiak will be retiring on May 5. She has invited Charleston Base and FRA members to the ceremony, but needs names for access. RSVP via Anthony if you want to attend the ceremony.

Nuclear Power School Awards – Phil Nunnally

- The next graduation ceremony will be held on December 6. Be there early at the NEX.

Newsletter – Phil Nunnally

- Nothing to report.

Little David – Phil Nunnally

- Nothing to report.

SC License Plates – Ed Stank

- We finally got enough votes to proceed with the license plates.
- We got commitment from Golden Corner Base for \$600.
- Charleston Base members have donated \$950 for the license plates.
- Ed will provide a proposal for the plates at the January Meeting.

Hunley/Housatic – Tom Holcombe

- Still waiting on input from the other organizations for the 2025 ceremony.

Special Events – Tom Holcombe

- We had a good turnout for the Tolling of the Boats at Coastal Coffee Roasters. Tom thanked everyone that participated in the event.
- Patriots Point December 7 tolling wreath.
- Goose Creek Christmas Parade – December 14
- Mount Pleasant Christmas Parade – December 15

PAO – Rafael Guzman

- Rafael outlined goals for advertising Charleston Base.
- We have/are working on some new videos. The first video is things that we did in the past. The second will be what we are currently doing.
- Social media and streaming video advertisements are the currently effective methods.
- The videos will be about 1 to 2 minutes long and will eventually be on HULU, Netflix and YouTube.

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall

- Woody reported have only two calendars left.

COB – Greg Landry

- The fair was a great success. Met a bunch of people. Many submariners.
- We need to do it again next year.
- Be sure to see Dave Harvey about helping with the Convention. We need all the help that we can get.

VA – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to report.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to report.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

- Not present.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

After Battery – RAY SPARKS

- The Goose Creek Christmas Parade is on the same day as the oyster roast at The After Battery.
- After Battery is open every Wednesday.
- The Hog Roast will be held from 30 MAR to 5 APR 2025 for long term planning.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Not Present

Report from Fair – Bob _____

- Spoke of meeting Stacy Power's granddaughter at the Coastal Carolina Fair Float display
- A man in a wheelchair stopped by the float display whose Dad was a Medal of Honor recipient.

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – Roger Gibson
- Depth Charge Drawing – Bill Green??

Closing Ceremony

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Vice Commander Tom Lawson announced adjournment of the meeting with a sound of three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 2018.