

**United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base
Minutes of Business Meeting
9 January 2025**

Opening Ceremonies:

- The January 2025 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of three officers and a total of 49 members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm. Base Secretary Gordon Long was not present this evening.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Base Commander Mike Ciesielko and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of January was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of January:
 - **USS SCORPION (SS-278) January 5, 1944 – 4th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 77 souls**
 - **USS ARGONAUT (SS-166) January 10, 1943 – 3rd War Patrol Lost with all hands – 102 souls**
 - **USS SWORDFISH (SS-193) January 12, 1945 – 13th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 89 souls**
 - **USS S-36 (SS-141) January 20, 1942 – 2nd War Patrol No loss of life**
 - **USS S-26 (SS-131) January 24, 1942 – 2nd War Patrol Lost with 46 souls–3 men rescued**

The following Charleston Base members have departed on Eternal Patrol last year.
This list was read and the bell tolled at the party but for the benefit of those members
who were not there, I am reading the names and date of Eternal Patrol during this meeting.

We will not toll the bell since that was done at the party.

**HMCS(SS) ROBERT F. HOPKINS, APRIL 5, 2024
MMCS(SS) DONALD R. LONDERGAN, APRIL 20, 2024
IC2(SS), STEVEN R. CURTIS, JUNE 27, 2024
EMCS(SS) THOMAS J. LINDBERG, JULY 11, 2024
TMCM(SS), THOMAS S. BEACH, AUGUST 1, 2024
STSCS(SS) DONALD V. NORTHROP JR., AUGUST 14, 2024
RMCM(SS) WILLIAM A. NEFF, AUGUST 22, 2024
EMC(SS) THOMAS L. CYREK, NOVEMBER 19, 2024**

- 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.
 - Tim Butterman – FTGC – Qualified on USS Pomfret SS391 – JUL 1964 – Also served aboard two other diesel boats and two SSBNs.
 - Bob Sollo – FTG1 – Qualified on USS Daniel Webster SSBN626 – 1978

Old Business:

- **SE Regional Conference – Dave Harvey:**
 - At the November Charleston Base Meeting, the Base membership approved \$1500 to match the seed money provided by National.
 - We need to support this effort.
 - There are two more fund raisers.
 - Registration forms are available.

New Business:

- **Dorchester Seniors (Summerville) – BC Mike Ciesielko:**

- Cheryl Coleman contacted BC about interviews with submarine veterans. Ed Stank is working on this but needs transportation.

Secretary – Base Commander for Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the November Base Meeting and December Christmas Party/Base Meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes were published on the Base Website for download. The Minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

- The Treasurer's Report for December was published and promulgated on the website. There were corrections made to the November report and resent to the membership. There were no further revisions. Both reports were approved as presented/corrected.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- Highlighted boat of the month:
 - USS S-26 SS-131 sunk on January 24 1942 with the loss of 46 officers and men in the Gulf of Panama, on her 2nd war patrol. She was rammed by the USS PC-460 and sunk within seconds. The CO, XO and one lookout on the bridge, were the only survivors

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

- **Tawnya Jennings, Bill's wife**, passed away on December 5th. Her service was on Dec 9th. We got the word too late to let everyone know. His son, Michael, is now Bill's caregiver.
- **Nancy Alkire, Richard's widow**, had a stroke in mid-Dec. They also found cancer while she was there. She passed away on Jan 1.
- **EMC(SS) Tom Cyrek, 79**, departed on EP at his daughter's home in Mt. Pleasant on Nov 18th. He joined the Navy in 1963 and retired in 1983. Life member of USSVI/CB as of 2011, HC member. Qualified on TANG SS-563 in 1966. Served on VOVADOR, LING, PICKEREL and TIRU. Also served on CANOPUS and 2 surface ships. His memorial service was held on Dec 27 with 19 SUBVETS and 8 SV family members (including two widows). Gloria was overwhelmed at the group of CB members who attended.
- **Jerry Stout** had surgery on Dec 27 to clean out the infection. He was discharged on Jan 2, home with a PIC line and wound vac for healing due to the aggressive infection. He will be on IV antibiotics for the next three weeks. Please thank all my shipmates for their cards, calls and prayers. No visitors, however a phone call would be nice. 843-568-5923
- **John Lookabill** went to Trident on Dec 23 and had a kidney stone busted on Dec 24 late. Spent Christmas in the hospital. Was home on Dec 27. Still very weak. Phone calls are OK.
- **Pat Davis** ended up in Roper St Francis ICU on Dec 20. Very low blood pressure. 2 days in ICU and 5 on a regular floor. Went home on the 27th with home health. Has a followup on the 17th to determine if he will return to work or go to short-term disability.
- **Mike Emerson** had reversal surgery on his shoulder on Dec 10 and his wife was in MUSC. They never found out what was wrong but she is being transferred to rehab this morning in Mt Pleasant.
- **Bob MacPherson** had eye surgery on Jan 6th. Surgery went well. He will stay home for the next two weeks. He hopes to join us next month.
- **Dave Harvey** will be having neck surgery the end of February.
- **Ken Curtis** has been diagnosed with Stage 3 kidney disease. This is one step from needing dialysis. Home.
- **James Graham** was in Trident over Thanksgiving with respiratory issues. Had a heart cath on Nov 27 but no issues were found. He is still very weak.
- **Marvin Miller** is at White Oak Manor. 9285 Medical Plaza Dr. Room 117. He is answering his cell 843.873.0564. 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 – Nick Nichols for Larry Knutson

- Nick Nichols provided Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #3 in USSVI membership. Groton 1174 - 2) Hampton Roads 286 - 3) Charleston 253 - 4) Bremerton 247

National Awards – Base Commander Mike Ciesielko for Bob Browning

- We need to meet and write award submittals for much worthy Charleston Base
- We are also due for Distinguished Submariner Award.

Scholarship – TOM LAWSON III

- Dolphins to be raffled at the March Base Meeting.

Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison

- Upcoming Two Bell Ceremony – please come out and support.
- Steve Nelms reported on a recent SubVet funeral that was only attended by a very few.

Election Coordinator – Ken Hutchison

- In May, we will be have elections for Base Commander and Treasurer. Any candidates, please advise.

Recreation – Johnny Brown

- No current plans until probably March because all efforts are being put to the SER Conference.
- Ken Hutchison recognized Johnny for his efforts.

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. It is a large venue and there will be 500 tickets available.
- The website for ticket purchases is now live, so get your tickets.
- Anthony showed a flyer about the Sub Ball that will be distributed to everyone.
- Vest uniform is preferred for this event.

Comptroller – Rick Wise

- Nothing to report.

Nuclear Power School Awards – Anthony Mazza for Phil Nunnally

- The next graduation ceremony will be held on February 14.

Newsletter – Phil Nunnally

- No present.

Little David – Phil Nunnally

- Not present.

Float Coordinator – Dave Harvey

- The Christmas Parade in Mount Pleasant was a good time.

SC License Plates – Ed Stank

- With contributions from Base Members and \$3500 from the Investment Fund, we have \$4800. The remainder of the \$6800 will come from other bases and other sources.
- Design of the plate is not yet final.
- May hold a raffle for first plate.

Hunley/Housatic – Tom Holcombe

- Tom has heard from the other organizations for the 2025 ceremony. They are requesting our men to attend the event on February 17.

Special Events – Tom Holcombe

- The turnout for the parades in Goose Creek and Mount Pleasant was good and the events were a lot of fun.
- Tom spoke about the United States Submarine Veterans Charitable Fund (USSVCF). He listed the various funds within the charity and the very good work that is being done. Nick Nichols joined Tom briefly to emphasize the good work of USSVCF and cited a specific example. USSVCF is requesting that each Base have one volunteer to be a coordinator for them. USSVCF is asking each SubVet to consider donating \$10 per year toward the funds which Tom mentioned. USSVCF would like to see 20 percent of the SubVets donating at least \$5 per month to this worthy cause.

PAO – Rafael Guzman

- Rafael has produced a video about Charleston Base. It can be viewed by clicking the SUBVET VIDEO link on the Charleston Base website home page. [SECRETARY'S NOTE: If you have not seen it, go to the Base website www.ussvicb.org now and click the link. It is very well done.]
- Rafael has some ideas about other videos to do and is asking for input from the membership.
- He has placed the Base video at the end of other videos to get more exposure.

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall

- Woody, again, announced that a patch was found in the parking lot. If it is not claimed, he will put it back into the store and sell it to someone else.
- Woody has one USSVI 60th anniversary patch and challenge coin set left.

COB – Greg Landry

- COB read a note from George Gallagher challenging each Charleston Base member to match his donation to the SER Conference.

VA – Tom Lawson

- The VA is reporting that some of the facilities (those located on military bases) are being subjected to stricter security measures. There will be 100 percent ID check at all entry points.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to report.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

- Nothing to report.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

After Battery – RAY SPARKS

- The oyster roast to support the SER Conference will be held at The After Battery on Saturday.
- After Battery is open every Wednesday. Dinner is at 5 pm.
- The Hog Roast will be held from 30 MAR to 5 APR 2025.

General Note – Ken Hutchison

- COB needs a haircut.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Nothing reported.

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – Rick Wise
- Depth Charge Drawing – Ed Stank

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 2007.