

Wednesday, June 6, 2012

Call to order at 9:30 a.m.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Greetings: Recognition of visitors and guests. Bob Erickson, newly-installed state commander of the DAV; Mark Brown, commander of the MOPH; as well as the new AmVets commander were recognized.

Announcements: Jerry Kyser announced that on Saturday, June 9 the Military Appreciation Fund will hold their annual walk/run beginning with registration at 8 a.m. at the Boy Scout area next to the Whipple Building. At 9:55 there will be a missing-man formation flyover of four T-6s. This organization has given over \$10 million to returning servicemembers from the current conflicts. Also, the first annual Vietnam Era Veterans golf tournament will be held in Hastings on June 22, "Tee It Up For the Troops."

Ralph Donais announced that on June 18 "Teeing up for Women" will be held at The Wilds in Prior Lake. Also, the week of July 2 to 8 is Military Family Week at the zoo. There will be free admission. The St. Cloud area will have a drop-in legal clinic on June 12 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Building 8 on the VA campus. There is also a legal clinic in Montevideo held on the third Friday of each month from noon to 2 p.m.

#### 1. Federal Agencies

VA Regional Office - Director Antione Waller: The St. Paul RO is ranked No. 1 or at least in the top five in many of the goals that are set by Secretary Shinseki, such as reducing the claims backlog to less than 125 days and improving quality to 98 percent, as well as efforts to eliminate homelessness among veterans nationwide by 2015. Regarding the VOW to Hire Heroes Act which the President signed into law, the VA is required to work closely with the Department of Labor. They are looking to extend educational assistance benefits to 12 months. Veterans must be between 35 and 60 years old to be eligible for this program. This begins on July 1. There will be a limit of 45,000 participants enrolled in the first part of the program which runs through September 30. An additional 54,000 participants will then be enrolled from October 2012 to March 2014. "Transformation" was mentioned by Mr. Waller. Part of this effort is to change to a paperless environment by 2015. This process is nationwide through all the ROs. Eight ROs have now gone through a total transformation and St. Paul will begin transforming to that process in 2013. A veteran can now go on line to, for instance, add a dependent, through eBenefits. A veteran will eventually be able to get the status of their claim, request forms, request benefits, etc. The VA is also streamlining the method of communicating their Rating Decisions to veterans. This has been ongoing for the last 10 months. They are on track with renovations at the Whipple Building. An audience member asked how a veteran can register with the VA to obtain health care. The answer was they may call 1-800-827-1000 or go on line at the VA website. A question was asked about the status of the homestead property tax exemption letters going out. After brief discussion, Bob Erickson and others commented they received letters yesterday.

VISN 23 - Director Janet Murphy: It's been a fairly quiet month so not a lot to report. Probably the main thing is the accelerated hiring and recruitment of the 94 new mental health positions in the network, 35 of which will be in Minnesota. They are in desperate need of referrals for these nurse, social worker, psychologist, psychiatrist positions, and they would like to hire veterans if possible. They have authorization from Central Office to go to the top of the pay tier in order to recruit psychiatrists. The third VA Gulf War Health Survey since 1995 is going to take place. The VA began contacting participants for this study at the end of May. The VA and DoD's PTSD Coach "App" marked its first anniversary with receipt of an award for innovation and advancement of telemedicine. It is available free on iPhones and Android devices. It's been downloaded in over 60 countries.

MNDVA Deputy Commissioner Mike Gallucci commented that in his experience, he has worked hard to get the word "disorder" taken out of "PTSD." He said it is not a disorder but a real problem. "Disorder"

gives it an unnecessary stigma. He suggested it be pushed from the ground up to remove this word. Ms. Murphy responded that she is not sure if it's a formal designation under the coding, which would be her guess, but she will pass the word up the chain.

Ms. Murphy indicated there is a small-business conference in Detroit on June 26. The main focus will be to bring in small businesses that are interested in learning about the VA contracting process, how to get on the GSA schedule, and there will be all-day trainings on that issue. There is a new help desk for myhealthEvet if a veteran experiences problems getting through the process. There were some computer glitches which have now hopefully been fixed with myhealthEvet. Finally, there is a new pilot project that will eventually have, in the VA Medical Centers and some of the larger CBOCs, a Vtel set up where veterans can Vtel into the Regional Office to work through their paperwork, etc. There will be a fax and a computer for document transmission, along with the camera and phone for the Vtel in the room.

Minneapolis VA HCS - Legislative Liaison Mike Rosecrans: The Maplewood CBOC is on target for occupation of the new building in November. The Veterans Resource Outreach Center in downtown Minneapolis is anticipated to open in September. The Twin Ports renovation is underway. That's a 12- to 18-month project that is being done in phases with no interruption of services. The director search continues, while a name has been submitted to Central Office for the associate director position. Mark Brown asked about the parking garage status. The answer was that this fall that project should get underway.

St. Cloud VA HCS - Associate Director Cheryl Thieschafer: The St. Cloud VA published their first veterans' newsletter last month. It is also available on their website (<http://www.stcloud.va.gov/about/newsroom.asp>). You can register to get their updates through the GovDelivery system. Go to <http://www.stcloud.va.gov> and look on the right side of the page. By typing in your email address you are automatically signed up to receive email updates from their web page. Memorial Day was a great day in St. Cloud with one of the biggest crowds in recent years. St. Cloud Veterans Transportation Service went live last week. They are currently focusing on veterans with physical limitations who reside within 50 miles of St. Cloud. They are actively recruiting volunteer drivers and driver assistants. Drivers need to have a Class C or D license. Please call St. Cloud if you know of folks interested in these positions. They are still working on the wind turbine issues. They have made progress in putting pressure on the contractor to get it fixed but it is still not accepted. Regarding the homeless (BURR) initiative, CommonBond will move forward with a mix of two 2-bedroom units, four 1-bedroom units, and 29 studio units. Multiple occupants will be able to utilize some of the rooms. A construction update was given. Next month's UVLC meeting will be held a week later, on July 11, at the St. Cloud campus, Building 96, which is on the west side. Good signage will direct you to the site once you get on campus. Parking will be reserved. There was brief discussion about the wind turbine and the fact it has not, nor should be accepted and that, in fact, it should be taken down and replaced. Ms. Janet Murphy mentioned the successful audiology van in St. Cloud was funded by Rural Health funding.

Ft. Snelling Cemetery - Brad Butler: Mr. Donn Christy was introduced. He is the new assistant director. He was the interment foreman at Ft. Snelling for many years. There is a memorial wall under construction. Estimated completion date has been pushed back to October 2012. Shelter 4 is up for bid to be demo'd and reconstructed to match the other shelters that were done in the last building process. That will probably happen in 2013 or '14. The ammunition issue for the rifle squad has been resolved. Last month there were 408 interments of which 9 were female veterans. There were 97 WWII, 49 Korean, 65 Vietnam, 3 Persian Gulf, 21 Peacetime veterans, and 173 dependents interred last month at Ft. Snelling. The Rifle Squad performed 195 honor services last month. The Memorial Day program was a rousing success. A "catastrophic electrical failure" at the facility that houses their computer system occurred over Memorial Day Weekend. The power company had to replace transformers. It took about 4.5 hours to get back on line. Nick Kakos asked about the logic of curtailing the Rifle Squad's ammunition. The answer is that it was a DoD decision involving the amount of rifles the Squad had. Jerry Kyser mentioned that on the 14th a Navy monument is being placed at Ft. Snelling. No time has been set yet. It will be on Mallon (sp) Drive where all the memorials are by the flag pole.

Vets Employment & Training Service (VETS) - Assistant Director David Seay: Not a lot to report this month. Mr. Seay is happy to report there has not been a spike in USERRA investigation claims due to the Red Bulls' return. There have been several technical assistance inquiries which were resolved and, thus, avoided an actual investigation. Right now the case load is about normal. Mr. Seay has three going right now. The solicitation for grant applications for competitive grants has gone out. The latest one would be the Veterans Work Force Investment Program. Hopefully, by the time of the next UVLC meeting they can report on more grantees that are going to have opportunities to serve veterans.

Vet Center - Carl Sporer: Not present. Ralph Donais mentioned Mr. Sporer had triple bypass surgery about ten days ago. He's back home and doing well. It will be a couple of months before he's allowed to return to work.

## 2. Federal Congressional Representatives and Senators

Senator Amy Klobuchar - General (Ret) Tim Cossalter: The key issue Senator Klobuchar worked on, along with Congressman Kline, was getting PDMRA resolved. That passed both the House and the Senate and the President signed that. Senator Klobuchar continues to work on a number of issues, but getting both Houses to approve anything right now is a challenge. They are looking for some feedback regarding the Veterans Corps that President Obama mentioned last week when he was in Minnesota. This would provide veterans job opportunities to work in the national parks as they come back from Iraq and Afghanistan. If you have feedback on this issue, please contact Mr. Cossalter. Jerry Kyser commented that with Beyond the Yellow Ribbon's efforts, as well as that of independent contractors employing veterans and the BBB and Chamber of Commerce, etc. efforts, maybe another government entity is not needed. Instead, have them put their efforts and money toward these entities that are already working to employ returning veterans. Julie Eszlinger-Jensen asked to be brought up to speed on what's happening with legislation regarding women veterans' health care. The answer was that there are signers on that legislation, but it's now trying to get through committee and on the floor that's a challenge.

Senator Al Franken - Nate Arch: Not present

7th District Representative Collin Peterson - Al Loehr: The Military Construction/VA funding bill passed in the House last week by a vote of 407 to 12. This Bill, HR 5854, provides \$146.4 billion for FY 2013, which is a 10 percent increase above last year's levels. VA funding included \$54.5 in Advanced Appropriations for medical care, a boost for medical services and increases for jobs and disability programs for veterans. House members voted to withhold funding on the DoD-VA integrated medical record project until both departments implement recommendations made by the GAO earlier this year. It also provides: \$6.2 billion for mental health services, \$5.8 billion for homeless veterans programs, \$35 million for continued research on the effects of PTSD and TBI, \$174 million for expansion of Arlington National Cemetery, \$1.1 billion for major and minor construction projects, and \$1.7 billion for family and military personnel housing. They are optimistic about the bill going forward and hope there are no hangups on the Senate side. Two weeks ago Congressman Peterson was in St. Cloud as a number of constituents from the district receive treatment at that facility.

1st District Representative Tim Walz - John Pierce: Three points were hit on: 1, the Congressman's TSA bill passed the House recently and hopefully will pass in the Senate and be signed by the President. That Bill is HR 3670, which would require the TSA to comply with USERRA laws. 2, the President's visit to Honeywell in Golden Valley where he talked about his Executive Order to force DoD to start to recognize military training for civilian certifications and education. The Congressman thinks that's a great first step, but let's pass something permanent since that Order is only as good as Obama's administration is around. The Congressman is pushing HR 4155, Veterans Skills to Jobs Act, on which he is an original sponsor. 3, last month they held their Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA) subcommittee hearing down in Preston with the new state-run cemetery. That's the No. 1 new construction cemetery in the nation. With Rep Runyon, who is the head of that subcommittee, they listened to officials and agencies talk about the process of getting that cemetery going. It's a model of how government should work at the state, federal, and local levels.

2nd District Representative John Kline - Chaz Johnson: They are very excited about the PDMRA bill being passed and signed into law. They will continue to monitor that to ensure it's implemented in a timely fashion. Rep Kline supported the MilCon bill that Mr. Loehr mentioned earlier. The recent job fair in Eagan was a success with just over 1,000 people and 92 employers in attendance. Mr. Johnson has been called to do some other duties on behalf of Congressman Kline, so he will not be attending the UVLC meetings as regularly as he has been. Lynda Boudreau will be stepping in. Ms. Boudreau gave a brief bio. She's been with the Congressman about 1.5 years. Prior to that she served as a state legislator. Her last date of service in the legislature was 2004.

3rd District Representative Eric Paulson - John Paul Yates: This will be Mr. Yates' last meeting before the election as he will be helping on Rep Paulson's reelection campaign. The Congressman is hosting a reception for Academy nominees next week to congratulate them. Rep Paulson signed on to a bill coauthored by Rep Walz, the Vets Hire at Home Act, which would require states to alter procedures for returning veterans who apply for EMT, RN, or CNA jobs, requiring states to take into account the military training they've had in those areas with hiring. Lastly, the Congressman is the lead author on a bill in the House to repeal the medical device tax that was passed with the Health Care Reform Bill two years ago. They have 240 cosponsors, so enough to pass the bill that will be voted on this week. It's the most significant bill that Congressman Paulson has gotten passed since he's been in office.

4th District Representative Betty McCollum - Connie Haddeland: Not present.

5th District Representative Keith Ellison - Mike Siebenaler: Rep Ellison attended Memorial Day services and a luncheon at American Legion Post 282 in St. Louis Park. He will tour MACV on Wednesday. He is looking forward to that as he has not been to MACV since he's been in office. Rep Paulson is a sponsor of the National Parks legislation mentioned previously. There is a national preserve close by here that some may not be aware of by the Mississippi River just south of 494. He attended the tour of Honeywell and speech by President Obama last week where he was promoting the hiring of veterans.

6th District Representative Michele Bachmann - Nicole Severson: They have been working on the National Defense Authorization Act. They are excited that a measure that Rep Bachmann submitted as a standalone bill last year, HR 1287, which is a bill that would prevent an increase in health care fees for military families, will be in this year again. Rep Bachmann met with Colonel Young of the Air Wing and there was discussion about some of the issues they are facing with potential cuts. The Minnesota chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America stopped in to their D.C. offices and visited with Rep Bachmann. The Agent Orange issue is on their radar. Rep Bachmann attended Memorial Day events at the St. Croix Disabled Veterans Camp, as well as in St. Cloud, and Sartell. Rep Bachmann met with the Academy soon-to-be cadets. Eleven this year from the ones they interviewed are actually going. Five are going to the Army, three to the Air Force, and one to the Navy.

8th District Representative Chip Cravaack - Perry Nouis: There will be a job fair in Brainerd on August 7 from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Crow Wing County Community Services Building. The Brainerd unemployment rate in March was 14.2 percent. It's now down to 10.2 percent, so they no longer hold the title of the city with the highest unemployment rate in the state. They are now No. 2 behind Bemidji. More info will be forthcoming on this event, which will have a special feature for veterans. The effort to restore PDMRA was a total joint effort by the entire Congressional delegation and they are very glad it got turned around. If you would like to get the word out, or be a part of their job fair, please contact Mr. Nouis at [Perry.nouis@mail.house.gov](mailto:Perry.nouis@mail.house.gov).

Pat Turgeon - Secretary of State's Office: Their office has been working with Mn/DOT about veterans' hiring. They have been asked to do an e-mail to their business list and see if they can identify some of those veteran-owned businesses in Minnesota. They hope to have that project completed within the next couple of weeks. They have been doing a massive rebuild of their business services site on their website. 85 to 90 percent of the business filing is now available online. They have a few more things to bring online and part of that will be a veterans search piece. There will be a Defenders of Democracy Day on July 2 at the Minnesota Historical Society. This is a day for military veterans and their families to

see the Constitution and the Bill of Rights that are on exhibit there. To be a part of that they have to RSVP at 1-877-926-8300. The absentee ballot period for the primary will begin no later than June 29. As part of that, there are two online applications. Due to redistricting, a lot of boundaries and polling places have changed. The Poll Finder is now updated online. There is also an AV (absentee voter) lookup for military and overseas voters. This is part of the federal Move Act. AV voters can now go online and track where their ballot is so they can make sure they filled it out properly, that it's counted, etc. They are still doing their "Vote in Honor of a Veteran" program. A handout was available regarding this. Contact their office so they can get those out to you. Flag Day is June 14 and their flag etiquette brochure is available. Ms. Turgeon mentioned the state "Safe at Home" Address Confidentiality Program for people who fear for their safety. A handout was available. Most of these people have experienced domestic assault. It also may be law enforcement personnel who fear for their safety. Also, overseas servicemembers may want their families' addresses confidential because of the military work they do. Please contact their office, or Ms. Turgeon directly, for more information. There was also a "Guide to Voting" for 2012 handout. You may go to [www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org), which is a one-stop shopping website for voter information.

### 3. State Agencies and MN Veterans Assistance Organizations

MN Dept of Veterans Affairs - Deputy Commissioner Mike Gallucci: The Bonding Bill did not go the way they would have liked it. Building 19 is moving forward. They take possession right around July 4. They start moving staff in on the 9th and residents start moving in on July 16. Ribbon cutting is set for August 15. Phase 2, (17 North), has been funded and ground will be broken in early November. Renovations on Building 16 will begin this summer. That will be utilized for "younger" veterans as more of a transitional opportunity. So where are we going now that we have 17 South standing soon with no funding? They met with Senator Senjem last week. There seems to have been some confusion about \$17.5 million. They have agreed to disagree on that point. On August 15 they will lose the commitment of \$17.5 million of federal matching funds and go back on the list for priority in the next session. They explained to Senator Senjem that the pool of money is changing as well. The pool they were able to tap into for the first two phases averaged \$285 million. This next fiscal year it will be down to between \$80 million and \$88 million, so the competition for this money will be tough. The Senator assured them the legislature does not do predesign and design without the intent to build, but he stopped short of saying he could commit to the funding. In reality, 17 South is 2 to 2.5 years before they could dig. They need to build 17 North, which they estimate to be a 2 to 2.5 year project. So the third and final phase is a considerable distance away. If they don't get budgeted for it, either in a Bonding or, as the Senator suggested a standalone supplemental, then it could be as far as four years before 17 South could be dug. They are going to move forward with the predesign and design, as well as the Building of 17 North and the completion of that phase, and as the next session comes up exploring what common ground they can get with the legislature and Governor's office. They feel there was a commitment to these three phases in 2009 and they need to be completed. As far as Hastings, they are excited about that facility and its future. They are looking at providing opportunities for veterans' families, as well as transitional homes for women veterans. They are looking at programs that will have an immediate impact on veterans there, not just the long-term. Mark Brown mentioned there will be a carnival next Tuesday from 3 to 8 p.m. in conjunction with the 125th anniversary of the Minneapolis Veterans Home. They are estimating 400 to 600 people there and could use volunteers to help in this effort.

MN Veterans 2012 Legislative Info - Mike McElhiney: Regarding the Funding Bill, the MNDVA was not the only group to lose funding dollars. The LRC lost a lot more federal funding, as an example. The belt was just tightened. This year they were able to say they had a \$17.5 million commitment from the federal government. They were asking for \$25,420,000 from the state. Next year, in the appropriations year, they will ask for a supplemental bonding package of likely \$50 million with no commitment from the fed. April 15 is the deadline for the commitment letter. Session will not likely be over April 15 so they will go to the legislature and say, If you give us \$50 million we might be able to get 65 percent of this reimbursed. The project wasn't set to start for a couple of years so they have some wiggle room. The Dept of Admin asked for everything upfront, predesign, design, demolition, possible land purchase, construction, etc. A lot of times the way the bonding goes is they will incrementally disburse the funds. Mr. McElhiney highlighted points from his "2012 Session Review" handout. Relative to Building 17 South, they received \$3,050,000 for the predesign, design, and demo. They received \$1.36 million for a new

Central Pharmacy. \$3 million in asset preservation. Then there was a slight language change due to money being left over from some previous projects. The vote for the bonding bill is listed in the handout so you can see who voted for what when. It takes 60 percent to pass a bonding bill. Supplemental appropriations: Overall, MNDVA achieved \$400,000. \$200,000 of that will go to grants for CVSOs, \$100 for Honor Guards, \$100,00 to MACV. Mr. McElhiney went on to briefly describe each section under "New Veterans Session Law" in the "2012 Session Review" handout. These categories are: Veterans Education, CVSOs, MACV, Honor Guards, Veterans Service Organizations, Competitive Open Exam Point Increases for Veterans, Private Sector Veterans Preference, Veterans Preference Reform Measure Added to Minn. Stat. 197.46, State Government Noncompetitive Appointment Authorization for Disabled Veterans, Veteran-Owned Small Business Modifications, Bid Preference for Veteran-Owned Small Business in the Counties. There is also a section in the handout called "New Military Session Law." Under this category are: USERRA, Military Convalescence Leave, Reserve Component Employee Rights, State Military Awards for Personnel Serving in Other States, May Pay Differential Changes for Military Employees of School Districts. The handout also includes a list of departing legislators, which changes daily. Finally, there is information in the back regarding the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011.

MN Military Affairs - Lt. Col Sandy Best: A major focus is the 30-, 60-, and 90-day reintegration events for the 3,000 military members that have been deployed and have returned home, the majority of whom are the Red Bulls. Their focus on hiring MN veterans remains intact. Reminder, you can view [www.positivelyminnesota.com](http://www.positivelyminnesota.com) which lists all of the upcoming job fairs and the work that is being done in this regard. Also, on the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon site, there is a section on there that talks about jobs, job fairs, etc. Lt. Col Best expressed thanks for the entire MN delegation for the work that was done on passing PDMRA, and in record time. This has an impact on 49,000 soldiers across the U.S. Just prior to this UVLC meeting there was a breakfast event at the 133rd Air Lift Wing. Congressional staff was invited to hear about the work they are doing on cyber response. The National Association of Black Military Women now has a Minneapolis Chapter. Founder Florean Orange and Angela Hamilton, the new president of that Minnesota Chapter, were introduced. August 28 is Military Day at the State Fair. On June 14, the Army's birthday, an event sponsored by the Association of the United States Army with be held at the Minnesota Historical Society. Go to their website for more details.

Annette Kuyper, Directory of Military Outreach: Ms. Kuyper talked about the preparations they have been making for the Yellow Ribbon reintegration training for the brigade combat team that just came home. They are bringing HR professionals to these training events to help with interview, mock interviews, and resume review. Last Saturday was their first one and they are getting great volunteers from Minnesota companies. These events will be continued throughout August in Rochester and Mankato, Duluth, and another metro one. On May 17 they proclaimed the largest Yellow Ribbon Community, St. Paul. Last Friday, Faribault was proclaimed. On July 27 they will be going to the Mankato area proclaiming Yellow Ribbon Networks in Le Seuer, Nicollet County and Blue Earth County. On August 22 the Northwest area of the state will be recognized on the lake in Detroit Lakes at the pavilion at 3 p.m. They (Crookston, Thief River Falls, Fergus Falls) are doing great work up there. Ms. Kuyper talked about receiving a call from a veteran in Maine recently who had seen the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon website. He had a peer who had served with him in Vietnam who was in a nursing home in Austin, MN and not doing well and had no family or friends in the area. Ms. Kuyper made one phone call to the Austin Yellow Ribbon and by 5 p.m. five Vietnam vets from the Yellow Ribbon Network were visiting this vet. This Sunday at the Dakota County Fairgrounds from noon to 3 p.m. the Yellow Ribbon Networks of Dakota County are hosting a military family picnic for any veteran and military family.

MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) Jimmy Collier: August 1 and 2 is the metro stand down being held at the Boy Scout Base Camp. The next legal clinic is June 12 in St. Cloud at the VAMC, Building 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Last Saturday over 15 riders were involved in the Legion Riders event and over \$6,000 was raised for MACV. On Memorial Day, Iraqi vet Matthew Griswold sang at First Avenue with proceeds going to MACV. They applied for a new grant. Over the last six or seven years that grant has helped over 3,500 homeless veterans. Congressman Ellison will be at Building 47 next week and some homeless vets in the program will be talking to him. Annette Kuyper asked if there is a need for volunteers with the Stand Down. The answer was yes, they can always use volunteer help. You can contact headquarters at 651-292-8756.

Military Action Group (MAG) - Jerry Kyser: Mr. Kyser mentioned it warms his heart to see the various entities working together to help returning veterans. The goal in his organization is "Never again will returning veterans be treated the way we (Vietnam vets) were." The MAG met last Monday. Mr. Kyser complimented Mn/DOT on their recent efforts regarding veteran-owned businesses. By the end of the year, it's anticipated there will be 100 veteran-owned businesses in Minnesota that can apply for contracts with Minnesota agencies and get things rolling. Mn/DOT itself is looking to hire veterans in their mechanical programs and other programs they have. Vietnam vets that are in place now are retiring and they need to be replaced with these young men and women returning home. They are going to have a strategy session hopefully with the CTF, MAG, and UVLC so they can plan together the support for next year. Mr. Kyser mentioned it was mostly he and Ralph Donais who were at committee meetings at the capitol trying to get things through. The DAV and some others were better at showing up than others. Next year it's hoped more support will be evident at the meetings. The 237th anniversary of the U.S. Army is Thursday. 101 year old Lou Vorpil (sp), who went on an Honor Flight, will be there cutting the cake with a 17 year old girl who just joined the U.S. Army. Mr. Vorpil still drives his 1967 Mustang, 350 hp. Mr. Nick Kakos mentioned Mn/DOT has 150 training positions open and they want to try to fill them with veterans. Mr. Kyser responded by saying yes, and that Mn/DOT is 180 degrees different than it was 3.5 years ago regarding veterans. Ralph Donais mentioned that the 150 Mn/DOT jobs for people with mechanical abilities is not just in the metro but throughout Minnesota. You can go to the Mn/DOT site to find that.

#### Announcements:

Ralph Donais mentioned that on July 11 there will be a jobs fair at the Earl Browne Center from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. From 10 to 11 a.m. there is special training for veterans on how to present yourself to the people who will be there that day looking to hire veterans. That is put on by DEED. Mr. Donais also mentioned he does not understand why, on a lot of the legislation, they tied post-9/11 to everything. There are folks from Desert Storm, just prior to that, that were cut out of a lot of these bills. That's something that needs to be worked on next year.

An audience member mentioned she got a message yesterday about an open house at the Women's Clinic at the Minneapolis VA. It will be Wednesday, June 13, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Jean Lee mentioned wanting to try to get construction-related training as part of the bill allowing military training for EMTs, etc., to transfer into civilian jobs without further licensing requirements. Contact Ms. Lee if you know anybody with those skills.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Business Meeting commenced at 12 p.m.

#### Old Business

Treasurer's Report: Balance as of May 2, 2012: \$5,524.67. There were no deposits. Expenses of \$154.75, which included \$29.75 for parking, \$10 for printing, and \$115 for transcription. Balance as of June 1, 2012: \$5,369.92. The Jewish War Veterans have now paid so there are only three organizations left to pay dues: MN Guard Museum, Tiger Base, LLC, and Women Marines.

#### New Business:

Ralph Donais mentioned we need to start looking at what did not get passed and what we would like added. That needs to start now because the representatives who were at the MAG meeting said they want a list in August so they can start working on it. It seems early because we don't know who is going to get elected or not. 40 percent of the current legislators will not be returning next session. Jerry Kyser mentioned that Reps Dettmer and Anderson, who's running for Senator, as well as Daley and others will

probably retain their seats, so there is a group in the House and Senate that support us. The UVLC also wants to work with the Commanders Task Force.

Ralph Donais mentioned CVSOS Todd Kubinski would have been here today but he had another event to attend. Normally, however, someone will be at the UVLC meetings representing the CVSOS. Ralph also mentioned we need to come up with an on-call list of who can attend the committee meetings at the capitol. If you go to the Minnesota Legislature website, there is a place you can click and they will automatically send you an up-to-the-minute agenda for their meetings.

Bob Erickson mentioned taking the names of some American Legion, VFW, DAV, etc. people that come to the UVLC meetings and e-mailing them weekly, say Sunday evening, when committee meetings are coming up at the capitol so they can bring their support.

Nick Kakos mentioned that every bill that did not get passed this last session should automatically be included as a starting point for next session.

Jerry Kyser mentioned that support for any new license plates, other than for female veterans, should be discontinued as after one year there is such little interest among the public in buying them.

Ralph Donais read a list of things that didn't make it this past session: Bill to expand MN GI Bill to larger numbers of veterans and their families, new Veterans Homes in communities throughout the state, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, special license plate, increase to tax credit for military service, resolution to ask the President to recognize the Khmer Freedom Fighters, resolution for the Hmong Gorilla Fighters. Vetoed by the Governor: Age limit raise for serving in government internships, tax credit for employers that hire unemployed veterans, omnibus tax bill.

Jean Lee mentioned HUD Rule 1008 where it says only 501(c)(3)s had waivers as far as certain licensing. Her organization was trying to exempt veterans groups that are 501(c)(19)s and could not get that in so she would like to see that revisited next session. Her organization was also trying to push for any project that involves the MNDVA would be 100 percent worked on by veterans. Ralph Donais mentioned the unions pushed back hard on the Mn/DOT issue.

Ralph mentioned a lady with the affirmative action office from Mn/DOT has a business card that has Braille on the back of it. He's not seen that before and thinks it's a great, unique way to reach out to that population. This lady wants veterans to come and work for Mn/DOT in a big way. Jerry Kyser said there is no age limit on the veterans they are looking to hire either.

Motion to adjourn by Jerry Nalipinski. Second by Don Rask. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

The next meeting is July 11, 2012 at the St. Cloud VAMC, Building 96 at 9:30 a.m.