

Kells – Grennie American Legion Post 316  
Minutes for meeting held on December 18, 2017  
At New Dorp Moravian Church

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm by Commander Carmine Vacirca. Commander called upon Sgt-at-Arms Gus Larosa for the presentation of the Flags and a hand salute was given by the membership. Opening prayers were read by Vice Commander William Baumwoll. The Pledge of allegiance was recited by all. Sgt-at-Arms placed the POW/MIA chair back. Commander asked for the reading of the Legion preamble.

Commander asked for the roll call all were present except for VC Allen Palazzo who was excused and Chaplain Joe Occhipinti was absent.

Commander asked for the reading of the minutes from the November meeting, adjutant read the minutes a motion was made by Leo Milham to accept the minutes and seconded by John Vivolo and passed.

### **Committee Reports**

**Membership:** Lester said he looked up the total number of members paid in is at 117.

**Post Treasury:** Carmine stated as of the start of tonight's meeting the available funds in the Post account any member that was not at the meeting and would like to get more information Please contact Carmine.

**Corporation Report:** Leo explained to the members in attendance that there are four basic checking accounts, Operating Fund, Money Market Account, Post Account and Membership Account. He said when the membership account reaches an amount over \$500 it is transferred to the Post Treasury. Last month the membership account had a little more than is usually carries so Allen did transfer \$500. Membership account needs only minimum funds for stamps and sending out letters reminding members to pay their dues, etc.

Leo read the balances of each all the accounts.

Leo said we did accumulate interest in the last year but the interest rates are low, so he suggested we leave all our assets with Northfield Bank because that have been good to us, and said even though we could possibly get a half a point higher elsewhere it is better just to stay with them. He explained how the funds were spent in the past year on sending eight students to Boys and Girls State, rent, a Christmas and Valentine's Day Party, food after meetings, and our monthly charities that we decided to do for community relations such as sponsoring a Little league Baseball Team, Graveside Flags, gifts to nursing homes and cleanup crews. When we first began meeting at the Church we discussed and voted on a monthly budget that would consist of charities, rental of the hall for meetings food after the meetings and cleanup after the meetings. A figure of up to \$1000 a month was suggested and voted on by the members. Leo also said that in 2018 when we place the flags at Moravian cemetery for Memorial Day we might have to do it a few or two before in order to use the church hall after

the flags are given out. Leo also said he was approached by the Kiwanis Club and they might have so boys and girls to help put out the flags.

Leo said the Kiwanis club always helps Veterans, and also feed Veterans on Thursdays at the VA Medical Center and they would like to sponsor a boat ride in the summer of 2018 to take veterans from the hospital for a day, and told that our Post might be interested in getting involved, Leo told them to send a letter to the Post or send a representative to our meeting and explain what they might need from us.

Leo also mentioned that we will sponsor the challenged baseball team again this year and might also do a challenged football team.

We also talked about applying for grants from our local politicians and use the funding for Boys and Girls State.

Joe Toronto asked Leo how many Veterans the Kiwanis Club would want to take on the suggested boat ride and Leo said about 40, also depending on how many volunteers would be willing to help. Joe suggested that maybe the Kiwanis club should contact the Aviation Anchor Club who takes out handicapped people on a Staten Island Ferry Boat, but that has to be approached at least a year before.

**Service Officer:** Joe Toronto said a report from the consumer protection issued a warning about certain companies offering home loans to veterans are potential scams. If someone called you and tried to scam you, please the VA Hotline 877-827-3702 or contact the consumer finance protection at 855-411-2372. Joe also said that VA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin expressed a problem with the Veterans pro Choice program that if Congress does not come up with new funds it will be depleted.

Leo added that the VA has a pre-burial Program that can be done on-line. Fill out the form and you can mail it out with a copy of your DD214. You cannot get premium Qualified but can get premium certified and guaranteed space. It takes up to about six months from the time you mail it out. Lester said the website is <https://www.cem.va.gov/pre-need/>

New Business: John asked the Commander about this month's charity giving and suggested to donate to the Staten Island Children's Speaks Chapter for children with autism and made a motion and was seconded by Leo and carried by the membership. A donation of \$200 will be made. John also suggested we might want to think about having a drawing in January for paying one members dues for the coming year, Leo suggested we do it in June because the new dues year begins in July. John made a motion and it was seconded by Bob Mahoney and carried by the membership.

Carey Spearman spoke about the POW's that were left behind and how we remember them but he said we should also think about the children that were born as of a result of veterans that were serving in Vietnam during the war. Cary talked about a program that was called operation Baby Lift and how over 500 babies were able to get out of Vietnam. He said there is an organization that does a presentation and would like to come down and possibly speak at a meeting. Carmine said let him know and we can set up a future date.

Carmine said he spoke to head of New Dorp H.S. Air Force ROTC and they can come down and speak at a meeting, they also offered their Honor Guard if we should find the need.

VC Bill Baumwoll said there are copies of the latest newsletter for those that do not receive emails.

Calendar: Bob Mahoney reported the County Executive meeting will be at the Merrell Post on January 6, 2018 at 10 am

The 2<sup>nd</sup> District Oratorical Contest will be held on January 7, 2018 at the Holy Rosary Church in South Beach at 10 am.

January 26, 2018 County meeting at Gold Star Post at 10 am

The February and March County meeting will also be in the mornings TBA

Carmine said the Holiday Party will be held at the Z 2 Restaurant located at 2925 Veterans Road West on Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup> from 6 – 9 pm. It will be a sit down four course dinners.

Only active members who have been to at least five meetings in the past year are invited.

Carey donated a plaque from the Vietnam War and John made a motion that we have it display during meetings and carried.

Bob Mahoney asked for authorization to go to the American Legion Mid-Winter Conference.

Door Prize Drawing was held

With no further business to be discussed the Commander asked for closing prayers.

Taps were played, and the Flags were saluted and retired for the evening at 8:50 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Adjutant, Lester Modelowitz