



## **ASSOCIATES OF VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC.**

8719 Colesville Road; Suite 100 • Silver Spring, MD 20910-3919  
Telephone (301) 585-4000 • Fax Main (301) 585-0519

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
April 18, 2024  
8777 Georgia Avenue, Cedar Room  
Silver Spring, MD.

### **Call to Order:**

President Sharon Hobbs (TN) called the regular meeting of the AVVA Board of Directors to order at 9:00 AM (EDT) on Thursday, April 18, 2024. Secretary Nina Schloffel (CA) was in place.

### **Opening Exercises:**

President Sharon Hobbs recognized National Chaplain Bobbie Morris (PA), to deliver the invocation, and call for a Moment of Silence. Vice President Kathy Andras (TX), led the assembly in the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

President Hobbs welcomed the Board, Deputies, Committee Chairs, the National Parliamentarian, and guests..

### **Board of Directors Roll Call:**

Secretary Schloffel called the roll

President: Sharon Hobbs (TN)  
Vice President: Kathy Andras (TX)  
Secretary: Nina Schloffel (CA)  
Treasurer: Kaye Gardner (MD)  
Region 1: Vacant  
Region 2: Bobbie Morris (PA)  
Region 3: Wynella Bethards (KY)

Region 4: Mary Anne Newman (FL)  
Region 5: Tony Gigli (IN)  
Region 6: Barbara Coan (MO)  
Region 7: Terri Rangel (TX)  
Region 8: Jennifer Ellis (OR)  
Region 9: Kelly Frederickson (CA)\*

\*Excused

Quorum established.

### **Other Attendees:**

Barbara Miller, PRP (MD)  
Elaine Simmons (WV)  
Lori Calanita Paton (NY)  
Gail Courville (LA)  
Nancy Montgomery (VA)  
Susan Price (TN)  
Joanne Blum (FL)  
Margaret Wojciechowicz (NJ)  
Roseann Nemea (NJ)

National Parliamentarian (virtual attendee)  
Past National President  
Region 2 Deputy  
Region 7 Deputy  
Chair, National Elections Committee  
Chair, National Finance Committee  
Chair, National Disciplinary Committee  
Spousal & Survivor Benefits, Eastern Regions  
State Rep, New Jersey



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**Agenda:**

President Hobbs proposed amending the agenda by adding subsection 'J. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Logo' to Section VII General Orders.

**Motion (#1)** Treasurer Kaye Gardner (MD) moved, and it was seconded, to accept the agenda as amended.

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***

**Approve January Minutes:**

**Motion (#2)** Region 8, Jennifer Ellis (OR) moved, and it was seconded, to adopt the January 24, 2024 minutes as presented.

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***

**Officer and Board Report Updates:**

President Hobbs commended the Board for submitting their reports on time. She noted that reports are posted to the website so that our members can know what you, as a member of the National Board, have done, what events or locations you've visited, and what you might be planning to do. No updates were offered.

**Committee and Program Report Updates:**

There were no updates to previously submitted Committee and Program reports.

**Consent Calendar:**

There was no Consent Calendar.

**Out-of-Committee Proposals:**

Secretary Schloffel introduced a motion on behalf of the Paper Safe Committee to change Policy and Procedure Section 11, Committee Policies, Paper Safe, XVIII.C.1 to add new subsections a-c:

1. The committee chair, or their designee, will package and mail Paper Safes to members and others as requested.
  - a. Maximum of 250 Paper Safes per order.
  - b. Shipping costs will be requested when ordering the maximum number of Paper Safes.
  - c. Repeat maximum orders (shipped to same address or organizational entity) are limited to one every six (6) months.



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**Motion (#3)** The Paper Safe Committee moved, no second required, to change Policy and Procedure Section 11, Committee Policies, Paper Safe, XVIII.C.1 to add subsections a-c as presented.

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***

**Policy and Procedure Proposals:**

There were no additional Policy and Procedure proposals.

**Electronic Motions:**

The following electronic motion was made between the January 2024 National Board Meeting and the April 2024 National Board Meeting:

***IEM307*** The Executive Board moves to donate \$1,000 from the Benevolent Fund to help cover living and bereavement expenses related to the fire that destroyed the home of Region 8 Deputy Director, Ruth Feliciano.

***March 15, 2024 - MOTION ADOPTED WITHOUT OBJECTION***

**Motion (#4)** Treasurer Kaye Gardner (MD) moved, and it was seconded, to accept into the permanent record, electronic motions made between the January 2024 National Board Meeting and the April 2024 National Board Meeting .

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***

**General Orders:**

***A. Budget Approval:***

Finance Committee Chair Susan Price presented the proposed general budget for FY2025. Individual budget proposals were previously sent to the Board, and to committee and program chairs. There were no questions.

**Motion (#5)** The Finance Committee moved, no second required, to adopt the FY2025 Budget as presented.

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***

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**Business Paused at 9:25 AM (EDT) for Meeting Planner Report**

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Meeting Planner Wes Guidry provided updates on this August's Leadership and Education Conference. The conference is at the Silver Legacy Hotel/Casino in Reno, Nevada. Conference activities begin August 20, 2024 and end with the VVA Awards Banquet on August 24, 2024. Registration fee for the conference is \$75.00. Hotel information, conference registration forms, and the most current agenda, are available on the VVA website.



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Hotel rooms are \$49.00 (plus taxes and occupancy fees) per night Monday thru Thursday. Friday thru Saturday, rooms are \$129.00 (plus taxes and occupancy fees) per night. A resort fee of \$20.00 per day is also applicable. Remember, hotel reservations for the Board are made through the e-room reservations link on the VVA website. Once Wes receives your request, you will receive a confirmation by email. Review the confirmation to ensure your that reservation dates and other requirements are correct. Then, save your confirmation. Room reservations should be made as early as possible.

Wes also suggested making airline reservations right away. Air travel continues to get more costly. Sharon agreed and will get the AVVA master list to accounting so the Board can begin booking airline reservations through *Let's Travel*.

The hotel provides a free shuttle to and from the airport. The shuttle is regularly scheduled for airport pickups every half hour (on the hour, and at the half hour). Look for a shuttle that displays 'The Row' as its destination. While there is no need to call for an airport pickup, reservations for a shuttle to the airport are recommended.

Wes noted that the Silver Legacy is part of a three hotel/casino complex that also includes the El Dorado and Circus, Circus ('The Row'). While there are lots of restaurants onsite, they are pricey.

The AVVA Luncheon is on Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The luncheon entrée is pork loin. Iced Tea, salad, and dessert are included. Tickets are \$50.00. Other events include the 'Welcome Home' party on Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, the VVA Officers Luncheon on Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, the 'Preview Luncheon' on Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the VVA Awards Banquet on Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup>. Costs, and registration, for each event are on the conference registration form.

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Business Resumed at 9:45 AM (EDT)

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### ***B. Flag Booklet Update:***

President Hobbs announced that the United Mine Workers of America agreed to fund printing 10,000 copies of the booklet, **UNITED STATES "Liberty and Justice for ALL" FLAG ETIQUETTE**. Of these 10,000 flag booklets, 7,000 will be split between AVVA and the Veterans Against Drugs program, with the remaining 3,000 going to the United Mine Workers of America. AVVA thanks VVA's Veterans Against Drugs Chairperson, Dave Simmons, for negotiating this partnership with United Mine Workers of America.



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### ***C. Mailchimp Update:***

Secretary Schloffel related that AVVA Mailchimp campaigns now reach an audience of 4,700. Prior to the recent Mailchimp upgrade, less than 350 AVVA subscribers received Mailchimp emails.

Last October, each Regional Director received a file, by Region, of members without email addresses. Region 6 Director, Barbara Coan, mounted an extensive mail campaign to reconcile the missing email addresses in her region. The email addresses Barbara obtained have been input into AVVA membership rosters and our Mailchimp audience files.

Immediate plans are to add a donation QR code to the Mailchimp format. This QR code will be added to all future AVVA

### ***D. Sales Tax Exemption Update:***

AVVA National is in the process of becoming tax exempt in both Washington, DC and Maryland. Costs include a one-time legal fee of \$250.00, and yearly fees of \$60.00 each for Washington, DC and Maryland. Maryland also requires a pre-qualifier fee of \$500.00.

### ***E. Election Update:***

Elections Chair Nancy Montgomery reported that Chapter elections are ongoing until the end of April. Nancy must receive an Election Results form before the incoming Chapter Rep or Chapter officers are officially recognized. Remind chapters that even if an officer or rep is elected by acclamation all elections forms are required.

State elections will be thru June.

### ***F. Strategic Plan Revision:***

President Hobbs provided an update on the Strategic Plan. At a recent meeting with Strategic Planning Chair Nancy Rekowski, the committee found that a number of critical issues had been completed and identified others that might be added. This Saturday, Vice President Andras and Secretary Schloffel will lead the Board in an overview/work session on the Strategic Plan. Attendance is mandatory.

### ***G. Digitized Documents Update:***

Treasurer Kaye Gardner reported that she continues to research companies that digitize printed documents. No progress has been made.



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### **H. Credit Card Update:**

Vice President Kathy Andras advised that for a hardware cost of \$299.00 we can purchase a hand-held, fully integrated credit card processing system. A hub plug station is also available for \$49.00.

This hand-held unit uses a paper tape to provide customers with receipts while related sales data is automatically fed into our checking account. Replacement tapes can be purchased at a cost of \$29.00 for 20 tapes.

In addition to supporting effective revenue and inventory tracking, the new system can provide customers with hard copy receipts and doesn't need the internet in order to operate. Vice President Andras recommends replacing the *Square* with this hand-held credit card processing system.

**Motion (#6)** Treasurer Kaye Gardner (MD) moved, and it was seconded, to purchase the hand-held credit card processor for \$299.00 and any necessary supplies or supplemental equipment.

**Adopted by Unanimous Consent**

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Break 10:11 AM (EDT) to 10:30 AM (EDT)

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### **I. Life Membership Award:**

In recognition of his contributions to the organization, graphics designer Bernie Rekowski was previously awarded the AVVA Commendation Medal. In the years following this award, Bernie continues to provide his services without any thought of compensation from AVVA. President Hobbs suggested that presenting Bernie with an AVVA life membership would show him that AVVA recognizes, and still values, his ongoing support.

**Motion (#7)** Region 2 Director Bobbie Morris ( PA) moved, and it was seconded, to provide an AVVA life membership to Bernie Rekowski at no cost to him.

**Adopted by Unanimous Consent**

### **J. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Logo:**

President Hobbs noted that during the 2024 Leadership and Education Conference, AVVA will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. If the Board supports having a unique 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo, Bernie Rekowski is prepared to create one.



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**Motion (#8)** Treasurer Kaye Gardner (MD) moved, and it was seconded, to create a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo for AVVA.

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***

### **2024 Leadership:**

- **Awards**– Tony Gigli, Kathy Andras
  - Tony Gigli – reported only one nomination (Member of the Year) has been received. Nina will send AVVA Flash Notice (Mailchimp) to a reminder to submit nominations by May 31<sup>st</sup>. President Hobbs reminded the BOD that while there can only be one *Member of the Year, Fellowship* can have multiple awardees. Regional Directors were encouraged to share this information with their respective states.
- **AVVA Office** – Nina Schloffel (schedule, site setup)
  - Shifts for manning the office have been determined. Office will be staffed Tuesday thru Friday from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Two Board members are required for each with 1½ hour shift. Nina will provide the BOD with the proposed office schedule by early June.
- **Product Sales** – Penny Meinhardt, Barbara Coan (schedule, booth setup)
  - Barbara has created a work schedule and will distribute it ahead of the Conference. Penny Meinhardt and her crew will be onsite at noon on Monday for setup.
- **Project Friendship** – Jennifer Ellis, Kelly Frederickson
  - This Friday, at the VVA Board Meeting, President Hobbs will announce *Horsemanship for Heroes* as this year's Project Friendship charity.
  - Friday morning, Jennifer Ellis will coordinate distribution of Project Friendship flyers. Each VVA Board member and State President should have a PF flyer prior to VVA Opening Ceremonies at 9:00 AM.
  - President Hobbs advised Regional Directors that next week they will be emailed a copy of the Project Friendship flyer. Each RD is expected to forward the flyer to their states and, if appropriate, their chapters. It's important to also forward the PF flyer to their respective VVA counterparts and their VVA State Councils.
  - This year's Project Friendship goal is \$15,000.
- **Membership Table** – Terri Rangel (schedule, setup, application process)
  - Setup will be on minimal, but Terri will need help manning the Membership table during the Conference. Terri will provide the BOD with the proposed work schedule by early June.
  - Memberships can be purchased by check, cash or credit card.
  - Credit card purchases will be processed by entering credit card information in the appropriate blocks on the membership application. The *Square* will not be used to process credit card charges for AVVA memberships.
  - If cash is used, staple cash to appropriate membership application(s).



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- Verify that every application is complete and legible (especially chapter number).
- All membership purchases will be tracked on a list:
  - Name
  - Chapter number
  - Membership category (e.g. life, annual, dual)
  - Payment method.
- Seminar – Sharon Hobbs
  - One AVVA Seminar – Spousal and Survivor Benefits.
    - Two Parts –
      - AVVA Spousal and Survivor Program: components, goals.
      - Available VA services and benefits.
    - Presenters –
      - Jennifer Ellis, Beverly Pounds.
      - Veterans Service Officer.
- Luncheon – Wynella Bethards, Nancy Montgomery, Mary Anne Newman
  - Luncheon on Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>
    - Speaker – Sharon Hobbs
      - Will obtain speaker
      - Upon obtaining speaker, will send Mailchimp announcement with details
    - Annual Business meeting to follow
  - Luncheon gift recommendations:
    - Nylon car sunshield
    - “Tech” accessories bag

**Motion (#9)** Region 3 Director Wynella Bethards moved, and it was seconded, to accept the nylon car sunshield as the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon Gift.

***Failed by Unanimous Vote***

**Motion (#10)** Region 2 Director Bobbie Morris moved, and it was seconded, accept the “Tech” accessories bag as the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon Gift.

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***

- Convention Bag Gift (AVVA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) – Joanne Blum, Bobbie Morris
  - 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary gift – recommendation:
    - Coasters

**Motion (#11)** Region 2 Director Bobbie Morris moved, and it was seconded, accept coasters as the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gift for the Conference bags

***Adopted by Unanimous Consent***





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- Round Table – Kathy Andras
  - To be scheduled at Conference
  - Purpose: To identify problems in your specific Regions (and, if present, your States and Chapters), to learn what you are doing in your Regions, and to determine your perception of how the Officers are helping, and/or should be doing to help you, do the best job you can.

### **Good of the Order:**

Region 8 Director Jennifer Ellis, read a letter from Region 8 Deputy Director Ruth Feliciano. thanked the Board for the love and support Ruth received as she dealt with the losses of her grandson and her home.

Prayers were requested for Jack Biddle (husband of Region 4 Deputy Director, Kim Biddle) and Barry Rice (Tennessee State Council President and the husband of Anne Rice). Both have significant health issues.

### **Announcements:**

#### **Leadership and Education Conference – Reno, Nevada, August 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>**

- Register as soon as possible
  - Do NOT pay for registration, instead note AVVA in the block for amount paid.
- Officers travel day – Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup>
- Board travel day – Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>
- Board dinner Monday evening, followed by Board Meeting.
- AVVA Awards – Remind members that Awards deadline is May 31<sup>st</sup>. Get them to submit candidates for Member of the Year, Fellowship.
- Prior to Leadership there will be an online meeting to get us prepared to answer questions from our membership on what's happening in AVVA. The meeting is not mandatory. If you have an assignment and are unable to attend, send a report to Nina.
- Assignments –
  - Office schedule – Nina
  - Product Sales schedule – Penny and Barbara
  - Membership schedule – Terri
  - Big Check for Project Friendship - Kaye

#### **Convention Events Funded by AVVA**

- Officers Luncheon (Wednesday, 8/21)
- AVVA Luncheon (Thursday, 8/22)
- Awards Banquet (Saturday, 8/24)



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**Adjournment:**

Having no further business, President Hobbs adjourned the meeting at 1:17 PM (Eastern), to meet at the call of the President for the next three days, should the need arise.

Submitted by,

Nina D. Schloffel  
National Secretary  
Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America