

DEPARTMENT RECONNECT COMMITTEE MEETING
June 25, 2015

The meeting of the Department Reconnect Committee was called to order at 12:20 PM on Thursday, June 25, 2015, in the Maple IVA room of the Sterling Inn & Conference Center in Sterling Heights, Michigan. Chairman Tanner offered an opening prayer and pledge of allegiance. The following people were present:

MEMBERS: Chairman Tanner, Sean Green, Ken Pierce, Jack Helminski, Wilson Comer. George Harvey, and Jim Maki were excused.

GUESTS: There were 3 guests present.

Minutes:

The minutes from the Feb 2015 committee meeting were read. It was moved by Jack Helminski and supported by Ken Pierce to accept the minutes as read. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Schultze award nominations have not been received. Committee will accept nominations from the floor to be awarded at Fall Conference. Great Lakes Ace has not yet responded to requests to meet with their board regarding support for the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program. We will continue to pursue a meeting. Reconnect brochures have been updated and other Reconnect PR items are in the works.

The ITPA donation didn't come through due to communication error. They have indicated that they still want to support the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program in the future.

New Business:

The Dearborn Police & Fire department have offered to host another Guns & Hoses softball game in September 2015 benefitting the Michigan Wounded and returning Warrior Program. Details to follow. Chairman Tanner was invited to attend and underwrite the 2015 Hidden Wounds of War Conference on Friday, May 15th 2015 at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids Michigan. The Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program was a key sponsor providing the food for the PTS Veterans and service members in attendance. Our donation also was responsible for securing an additional \$5,000 donation from the Hausenstein Center Foundation matching the initial \$5,000 raised in grass roots donations. This was hosted by the Michigan Combat PTSD Task Force and was a powerful, moving, and humbling event. This was the first time they had to wait list those beyond the 250 slots allocated. This event also showcased the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program to new families, groups and the West Michigan Veterans Coalition. Chairman Tanner was invited to give the keynote sponsor for the SAL Detachment of Michigan annual convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan on June 2015. They wanted to focus on local state programs assisting veterans and our military families. Post 459 in Grand Rapids has given hosting tips for troops nights benefitting the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program. Chairman Tanner was asked to be the guest bartender during the SAL Convention weekend and raised out \$1,600 bringing the total raised to \$3,100 after three events. Chairman Tanner was invited to present information on the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior at the Macomb mall Heroes Day event in Roseville, MI. The

Elmobility Room supported the 1-182 FA Family Day June 12th, 2015 at the Olympia Armory, they were overwhelmed by the support shown by the Michigan Legion Family. PDC Chatman spearheaded Legion Family Volunteers to assist in every aspect of their event ensuring an outstanding and successful event, and strengthening our relationship with our Michigan National Guard units. The Reconnect Committee will also be supporting the next National Guard Yellow Ribbon Workshop on August 9th, 2015 in Troy, Michigan. This will be a pre-deployment workshop for several units and they estimate 600-900 attendees. The Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program has supported and founded another successful group PTSD returning vets at Wilwin Lodge this month. Chairman Tanner will be meeting with the Michigan Bowling Association board on Saturday June 27th 2015 to discuss their adoption of voluntary donation for the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program during the registration process for their Annual State Tournament. The Flint – USBC Bowling Association will be holding their first annual Patriot Bowling Bash event on Oct 17th 2015 at noon in Flushing, MI Benefitting the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program. Details can be found on the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior Facebook page. Afghanistan veteran, Michael “Ollie” Olivero, is producing a documentary called “American Veteran – Occupant in the Room” capturing the stories, experiences, and struggles of the American Veteran especially as it relates to the efforts of reintegration, PTS and the 22 a day suicide rate. Ollie is donating a large portion of the proceeds from this documentary to the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program. To support this project, or to learn more, you can go to their Facebook page of the same name. Chairman Tanner was contacted by The American Legion riders. Their 3rd Annual Road Captains Poker Run on Saturday September 12th 2015 will benefit the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program. The flyer can be found on the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior Facebook page. Chairman Tanner encouraged the Reconnect committee members to actively pursue support in their respective zones and to monitor and assist to develop Reconnect related, or troop support services in their communities, as well as promoting support for the Patriot Fund and Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program. The total financial assistance provide by the Reconnect programs will be close to \$70,000 this year and would not be possible without the support of our Legion Family and our community partners.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before this committee, it was moved by Jack Helminski and supported by ken Pierce that the meeting be adjourned at 1:19 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by

Gary Tanner, Chairman