

DEPARTMENT RECONNECT COMMITTEE
Thursday, June 26, 2014

The meeting of the Reconnect Committee was called to order by Gary Tanner, Chairman in the Superior C1 room on Thursday, June 26, 2014 at 1:18 p.m. of the Holiday Inn, Livonia, MI.

The following members were present: Gary Tanner, Chairman; Ken Pierce Sr, Earl Lash, Jim Maki, and Jack Helminski.

There were 4 guests present

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and Chairman Tanner offered an opening prayer.

Minutes:

It was moved by Ken Pierce and supported by Jack Helminski that the minutes of the Department Reconnect Committee Winter meeting be approved. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Chairman Tanner discussed the Patriot Fund and how vitally important it has been. On average, 10-15 requests a week are received for temporary emergency financial assistance. Many are not able to get assistance from any other agency. As of now, the Patriot Fund has all but been depleted. The Reconnect Committee has gained a solid reputation as the place to go when a Veteran needs help. We need to promote this fund to our Department so our members and community partners understand the purpose of the Patriot Fund and the successful positive impact it is making in our Veterans lives and that it is funded by donations only.

Our committee continued to support all confirmed yellow ribbon workshops for the Michigan National Guard. The Sesame Street Elmobility room continues to support our military families and has been requested to support the SE Michigan Female Veteran stand down this fall. ACO Hardware is in the final process of re branding to become Great Lakes ACE. They were not able to support the Michigan Wounded and Returning Warrior program because of this, but have contacted me and stated that they will come back next year and continue to work with us. Commander Moore stopped in to express his thanks to the committee for their hard work and support for our military, Veterans and their families.

New Business:

Chairman Tanner was invited and attended the National conference of the Independent Telecommunications Pioneers Association in Grand Rapids, MI. on Saturday, May 17 2014. The ITPA selects a local charity to support each year and selected the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warriors Program as their Michigan charity to receive a \$2,500 donation. Following my keynote address two additional private donations came in from their membership totaling \$450 bringing their total contribution to \$2,950. They also said they may continue this support in the future.

The committee has encountered some problems when referring combat Veterans in need to the Michigan County Veterans Trust Fund agents. Chairman Tanner will look into way this is happening and why our Veterans are having difficulty accessing these funds.

The committee has only received one nomination for the James Schutze Department Reconnect award. This award nomination was submitted here at convention, and as such will be presented at Fall conference. Chairman Tanner asked the committee to promote this Department award throughout this year for next year's consideration. Share what your Post is doing to support our military service members, our Veterans and communities. Jack Helminski submitted his SAL Reconnect report and Ken Pierce discussed a local Veteran in needs TFA request. Chairman Tanner discussed an Afghanistan Veteran seeking assistance for him and his family for disabilities related to his combat duty and medical retirement. Chairman Tanner contacted H2H Chairman Eddie Brown and they will be splitting the associated costs to provide a safe and comfortable home environment for his disabled veteran.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before this committee, it was moved by Earl Lash and supported by Jim Maki to adjourn at 2:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Tanner, Reconnect Committee Chairman