

Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes 7 September 2019

The meeting was called to order at 07:50 by President Scott Huesing.

Board members present were Scott Huesing, President, Vice President-Elect Joseph “Pete” Gannon, Manuel Travassos, Secretary, David Capizzi, Treasurer, Director, Frank Valdez, and Steve Wilson, Immediate Past President.

Other interested parties in attendance were Pat Burns, Sergeant - At – Arms and Brooks Wilson, Web Sergeant and Past President.

President Scott Huesing began the Board meeting by stating that the Board meeting is in preparation for the Annual Business Meeting. With that in mind, Scott stated that the Business Meeting brief consisted of 3 items; 1) State of the budget and status of 501(c) reinstatement efforts, 2) Brief general membership with some good news concerning the growth that the Association is experiencing, and 3) The vision that we have for the Association moving forward. After that, the floor will be opened to questions from the general membership.

Scott then addressed the Board, in detail to get some proposed items fleshed out. The first item to discuss was further investment in promotion, marketing, and advertisement to solicit new members. One of the things where we have had success in the last 24 to 36 months has been an increase in membership. After we reduced the membership fee, we had a spike of over 100 new members. Additionally, after the members voted to eliminate dues all together, Manuel Travassos stated that, since 3 June 2019, membership has increased by 356 new members and the Association has a total of 927 members as of 7 September 2019 and 22 are non-veterans.

Scott continued by stating that what he meant by “further investment in promotion” is that one of the things that needs to happen is to tie-in with the Active Duty Battalion by getting permission from Command to put up a sign and advertise like Navy – Marine Relief does. Also, the Association could post, like other organizations, on the read boards. Scott also, proposed having a standup banner made with the Association logo and website address that is posted in the Command Dep, at the barracks, and/or the duty hut where every Marine, every day, is seeing the 2/4 Association and knows that we are there. Scott, further, proposed, that the Association invest in placards of some sort for about \$200.00 and have those posted. The key here is that the Association is targeting the 2/4 Marines that are posted from boot camp to the Active Duty Battalion and does their 4 years with the Battalion and then leaves the Marine Corps having only know the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines. Scott stated that number is about 300 Marines a year and, if we can catch 10% of those Marines every year, which would be 30 more new members each year. After discussion and input from Frank Valdez and Pete Gannon, it was agreed by the Board to spend about \$400.00 for placards, signage, and business cards.

There was a brief discussion about the Association liaison for the Active Duty Battalion. With Phil Skaggs health as it is, others, such as Ray Del Rio, Jim Williams, and Scott Huesing have been staying connected with the Battalion. Scott recommended that we look at getting the Battalion’s DRC, Mark Sperling to agree to be the Association Liaison. Manuel Travassos said that he will call him and ask him to join and ask him to become the 2/4 Association Liaison.

Frank Valdez asked how long would the Association to give new members 2/4 Association challenge coins. Scott said as long as MGen James Livingston will continue to buy them, we should continue the program. As we go forward, we should encourage others to donate to continue the program and, also, so that after each deployment, which is usually eighteen months, we can greet the 2/4 Marines as they return home and present them with 2/4 Association challenge coins which, as one looks at it, is a cheap investment in getting new members and we would give them a 2/4 business card asking them to join the Association. Eventually as we grow and the Association is funded by annual fund raising drives it should be feasible to fund the coins via the general fund. When one looks at the current funds in the Association general fund, there is about \$35,000.00. The cost for the coins would be about \$3,500.00 per deployment and Frank suggested that 6 months before the Marines come in from Deployment a “blast” be sent out to the members announcing that the Battalion is coming in from deployment and asking whomever can donate to provide a 2-4 Association coin to all returning 2/4 Marines personnel. Scott and Daniel Capizzi will reach out to BGen Weise to see if he will consider relinquishing the Brick Fund monies to the General Fund and, if additional bricks need to be purchased, the monies will come from the General Fund. If, at a later date, a lot of bricks need to be purchased, we will establish a new Brick Fund.

Brooks Wilson asked about a reoccurring donation via the landing page site. Scott said yes and that Kristen Day, the webmistress, has been working on that and has been doing a phenomenal job with the website. She and Daniel Capizzi have been tasked with looking into alternative platforms, other than PayPal, so that we don’t have to redirect in order to make a donation and be more user friendly. Scott stated that when we revamp the website, we need to make it so that, when the

website is viewed, it immediately says, "Join Now", and it can be clicked, now. The ultimate goal is to set up the General Fund in such a way that the Association can see a sustained donation rate via the Annual Fund Raising Drive, once it is set up. Since the Association has all these new members and their contact information, we can conduct an Annual Fund-raising Drive within our own membership to sustain and increase the General Fund. If we have 1000 members and each one contributes \$5.00 a month that will raise \$60,000.00 a year, the Association can use the monies in the General Fund to fund programs and resources to help do more. Scott went on to say that it could be used to, A) set up Scholarships for designated personnel and, B) Allocate and apportion funds annually for the following goals, 1) Designate 2/4 Veteran Honorees to attend the reunion cost-free, 2) Designate Gold Star Families to attend the reunion cost-free, 3) Welcome Home Package and coins for all returning Marines from Deployment, and 4) Subsidize the cost of the Reunions. Scott called for a vote of the Board to allocate and apportion funds for setting up Scholarships for designated personnel and annual funding for selected 2/4 Veteran Honorees to attend the reunion cost-free, selected Gold Star Families to attend the reunion cost-free, Welcome Home Package and coins for all returning Marines from Deployment, and subsidize the cost of the Reunions. The vote was unanimous.

Then Scott gave an update on the 501 (c) reinstatement status. He said there have been discussions with the Association's attorneys, Brown & Streza, about whether it would be advantageous to reinstate the 501 (c) (19) designation or apply for a new designation of 501 (c) (3) and if it would make our marketability better. Until we get it re-established, we are not advertising as a non-profit. It gives legitimacy to the Association if we show that we are giving back and are contributing to our communities, our Marines, our Gold Star families, providing scholarships, etc. Scott further stated that once our 501 status is re-established, the Association's address will be changed to that of our attorneys, Brown & Streza, for continuity, perpetuity for the Association, and eliminate single points of failure that have occurred in the past. We, as a Board, accept complete blame for this latest failure and we, as a Board, will work unceasingly to rectify this loss of our 501 status. David Capizzi is tied in with our CPA firm, Murphy, Murphy, & Murphy, who will file all of our taxes, receive all donations, and insure that this situation doesn't occur, again. Brooks Wilson asked if our Attorneys and CPA's names, addresses, and contact information should be included on the Association website and what they do for the Association. The Board all agreed that they should be.

Scott then stated some things that go with the new membership he would like to see happen this coming year. Add a column to Roster listing special skills so that we can leverage those talents and capabilities. Also, create a demographic snapshot of our membership, such as age, location, region where people live in the country, which will help us plan appropriate activities and locations of our reunions.

David Capizzi said that at a later date as our money grows, the Association should look into investing and diversifying so that some of the Association funds can grow which would be perfect for growing the Scholarship Fund and we would have the General Fund to draw from when we want.

Scott asked if the website had a Chronology of 2/4 Association activities and reunion locations which would be a good piece of information that we could point to and say look at all the cool places we have been to during our reunions over the last 32 years of reunions. Manuel stated that he has compiled most of this information and has it available for posting on the website.

Pat Burns asked why the Reunion wasn't advertised in the "Leatherneck" this year. That was how he found out about the Association. Scott said that we are going to discuss advertising, marketing, and promoting the Reunion. We need to place ads about the upcoming reunion in Leatherneck, AmVets, The Gazette, DAV, and Semper Fi magazines, Marine Corps League, etc. Scott said we need to blast that out to all military print media because it's free and we can reach the most people. Scott tasked Pete Gannon with making sure that all the reunion information is given to all of the appropriate outlets six months in advance to advertise the Reunion. Pete said that he is already tied in with contacts to all those places. Brooks Wilson said that all the information for planning, advertising, and executing a reunion are in the Operating Policies on the website listed under "Administration" and on Hosting a Reunion under "Reunions" on the website.

The next order of business was establishing the Nominating Committee and who is going to be responsible for vetting the nominees. After a short discussion, of what the Nominating Committee needs to do when seeking candidates for the upcoming elections so that we avoid what happened in this previous election, it was decided that each candidate should be fully informed as to the complete duties and level of commitment for the particular position for which the candidate is nominated. Also, each candidate should provide a resume' stating what the candidate's skill set is and why the candidate is qualified to hold the office that the candidate is seeking. Steve Wilson, the IPP is responsible for forming the Nominating Committee and he stated that the Vice President should be the one to follow up with each candidate and make sure that they are aware of the duties and responsibilities of the office for which they have been nominated. Brooks Wilson asked if that should be the IPP's responsibility and Steve said his responsibility was forming the committee and the Vice President should follow up with the candidates. It was also suggested that an additional members be added to the Nominating Committee as needed as the membership level rises.

Scott then asked each Board member to think of and identify who their go-to-guy would be if they were unable to complete their term of office. This would also help in identifying possible candidates for future elections.

The last order of business was the recap of the 2019 Reunion, talk about the 2020 Reunion location, activities, and, as a Board, to push support to whomever is going to host the 2020 Reunion. Scott stated that Daniel Priest, in spite of having a new baby, getting a promotion, and having to move to a new city and not have boots on the ground, did a great job with the reunion. He had things well planned and enough free time was allowed so that we could visit and explore a lot of the swell sites in San Antonio and we weren't rushed. David Capizzi asked what the basis of the reunion was. Was it to generate revenue or break even, or do we subsidize from the Association funds? Frank said it is not a revenue maker, we try to just break even and not draw from Association funds or make money off of the members. Brooks asked if David had a separate category for Reunion revenue and cost. David said that after he tabulated the last costs that he would break it out that way. Scott then said, once we build the activity schedule, entertainment, guest speaker, have a cool draw, etc., we can figure in the cost via reverse engineering. The offers for the 2020 reunion are Pleasanton, CA and Wisconsin Dells, WI. The Board chose Brooks Wilson's offer to host the 2020 Reunion in Pleasanton, CA from 2 September 2020 thru 6 September 2020. Brooks asked that the Board approve the Annual Banquet be held on Friday night instead of the usual Saturday night banquet because it will make the reunion flow better because the planned activity of the Scottish Games is Saturday. Scott's only reservation with it being on Friday instead of Saturday is that the young guys have jobs that they couldn't miss and we could get someone other than Brooks take care of all the banquet requirements. Brooks said that the banquet would need to be in the reunion hotel because that is where all of the Highland Games, bands, and Marine Band.

Scott asked for adjournment of the Board Meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 08:58.

Secretary: Manuel G. Travassos Date: 9/13/2019
Manuel G. Travassos

President : Scott A. Huesing Date: 5 Nov 2019
Scott A. Huesing