

Second Battalion Fourth Marines Association, Inc.
Annual Business Meeting Minutes 7 September 2019
San Antonio, TX

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a. m. by President Scott Huesing.

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

President's opening remarks.

President Scott Huesing said, "I just wanted to say thank you to everyone who came here this morning, who came to the reunion because that, for me, is one of the most important things, and that is showing up. Giving of yourselves, giving of your time, staying connected is what, I think, makes this Association better than any that I have been involved with in my short 24 years in the Marine Corps. You are why I call 2/4 home. Not necessarily because of all of the shared adversity, battles, and fighting and all of that that brings me here and the privilege that I have to serve as the President for the Association. But it is for you people and I never want to miss an opportunity to thank you for that because it is very important for me and I think I speak for the entire Board who have given of themselves and their time and resources to make all of this happen. To Dan Priest, I would like to thank you as well for putting this reunion on. It's not an easy task. It's a thankless task at times but I want to say thank you because I know that it is a lot of work and Danny had a lot of curve balls thrown his way with the new baby, job, move, everything. He thought he was going to be boots on the ground here but now he lives in Ft. Worth so he still made it happen. I think that's a testament to his heart that he has for the Association and what he has to share with the members in the Association. As a public service announcement, I always say this, we this all for free. Becky does it all for free and everyone here. I know people have needs and wants but I always like that to be shared. For those people that have issues with some of the way things are conducted, we do it all for free. A lot of us who are still in certain stages of our lives, we have jobs and families and young kids so we manage that but we do it all willingly and we do it because we love being part of the Bastard Nation and that's what we do. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to our Treasurer, Dave Capizzi.

Officer and Staff Reports.

Treasurer David Capizzi stated the Association's finances were \$55,000, consisting of \$35,000 in the general fund and \$20,000 in the BGen William Weise Brick Fund. Plans are to ask BGen Weise would allow these funds that are no longer needed for the purchasing of bricks for all fallen 2/4 Marines. At the present time we have a pretty good healthy balance.

Secretary Manuel Travassos reported that the Association membership was, now, at 927 Life members with the addition of 356 new Life members since membership became free on 1 June 2019. The majority of the new members are from the newer era of Marines who served or are serving in the GWOT.

Scott Huesing then stated the points that he and the Board have agreed upon in order to implement the vision that we have for the Association going forward and why we have to sustain this Association. It is for several different reasons. One of the reasons is that the Marine Corps, at any time and in times of peace, could disband 2/4 which it has done and could probably do again. It is important that we maintain the Association for continuity. Not for a social club for having reunions but make it place that is home for every single Marine and service member who served in and with 2/4. Also, part of the vision is to find ways to sustain and maintain the Association in the event that 2/4 goes away. That way they know that the 2/4 Association lives in perpetuity. One of the ways that we are doing that is to take the Mast Head and the physical address from Dave Jones and transfer it to the Association law firm that's handling all of our 501 reinstatement. Brown & Streza in California will manage oversight and insure that the 2/4 Association lives in perpetuity. Additionally, we have engaged the CPA firm of Murphy, Murphy, & Murphy in California to maintain our finances, file our taxes, and any other financial items. That way no single person is responsible and we can prevent single points of failure, as has occurred, recently.

Scott briefed the membership that, because of recent failings, the Association's 501 (c) (19) status with the IRS has lapsed and we are no longer posting that status on the website. The Board has taken steps to rectify this and set in place the mechanisms by which this should not be an issue in the future. Furthermore, all the paperwork from Dave Jones, from Dave Capizzi, from Manuel Travassos and from Scott Huesing has been submitted to the attorneys handling our 501 reinstatement. Additionally, they have recommended that we start new with a 501 (c) (3) status which will, as a giving organization who gives back, which we do and plan to continue to do, make it easier for the Association to get it back up and have a tax ID with the Internal Revenue Service. Therefore, people can donate and

claim it as a tax deduction to a 501 (c) (3). It will make it more appealing for people to view the Association as a public face that we are a 501 (c) (3); that we are not just a boys club but that we are a family club. Also, the Association is a club for everyone and an Association that is dedicated to not just having a reunion every year.

Scott continued to outline the vision for the Association by stating that one of the goals, once our IRS 501 status is reinstated, is to hold an annual fund drive for the Association. He said that was important because we would not have had the new members if we had not voted to make membership free. Furthermore, we cannot do what plan to do nor what we do now without donations. We can't run this company, as a non-profit, without resources to provide a product to our customers. It is a company and we have to view it as such. Our company is us, this Association, and our customers are the members, our active duty Marines and sailors that we provide leadership awards to and those programs and services, our veteran community, and our Gold Star families. It is through your donations that we are going to provide services. Currently, we provide the awards for the active duty Battalion. However, the vision is to do more and Scott said that, once the Association's 501 status is reestablished, there will be a call to action. A request will be sent to all members to donate, either a sum once a month or a once a year donation. If each member gave \$5.00 a month, which would be \$60 a year times the current membership of 1000 members which would result in an addition of \$60,000.00 in the General Fund. Scott continued that the money we generate will be used to fund four programs and added to the Associations Annual Budget. The first program is already being funded and it is the Awards program for the Active Duty Marines, which is between \$800.00 and \$1,200.00, annually. The second program of the vision is to stay engaged and connected with the Active Duty Battalion by presenting every 2/4 Marine returning from Deployment after 18 months with a handshake and a Welcome Home packet that contains an Association challenge coin and an Association business card with the website where to join the Association. To sustain our membership, our target is the Marine who does his four years with 2/4 and gets out. 2/4 is the only outfit that he has ever known and 300 2/4 Marines attrit every year. If through the Welcome Home coins we can get 10% of those Marines, that is 30 new members. The coins would cost about \$3,500.00 which is only a fraction of our revenue a year. The third program of the vision is to nominate 5 2/4 veterans who come to us or we find that for any reason can't afford the reunion or in a dark place from any era of war or peace and pay for their transportation, room, and dinner at reunion. The fourth program is to do the same for our Gold Star family members. Scott said that we have to honor and recognize all of those people that are not, normally, going to reach out to us and we need to make it easy for them to say yes. He further stated that is what we should be doing as an organization, giving back through the revenue we generate through our fund raising campaign. These four things are what we need money allocated for in our budget every year. Even with those programs, there is probably money left over and our vision, also, includes establishing a scholarship program for deserving 2/4 families. The particulars and criteria will have to be fully planned out before we undertake this goal but is doable and, as an organization, we need to be giving back. We should be helping those that can't help themselves and all of us can do more and be better at this and that is our vision.

Scott went on to say that during the Board meeting we are going to make a concerted effort, we've hired Kristen Day, who runs A Visual Business and has done a phenomenal job revamping our website and the mobile app to make it easier for the younger generation to join the Association. The Board agreed to allocate a small amount of money for signage and placards in the Active Duty Battalion to advertise who we are. We have to do better at letting the younger Marines know we exist and we have made it easy as humanly possible for them to join. Once we get them in, we own them, we have their contact information and we can stay connected and connection is the key to maintaining the Association and sustaining it. However, we have to stay involved. We can post pictures from our phones to the 2/4 Facebook page. Additional things we talked about in the Board meeting was that I have tasked Manuel Travassos with the role of identifying those members on our Roster who have special skills, for example a lawyer, physician, writer, musician, CPA, an AV expert. As a leader one wants that information to be able to make decisions that enhance the Association. Let's advertise that in our Association and ask people, "What are you good at". The Board, also, talked about establishing a demographic snapshot for who we are as an organization. By the age, the geographical locations, the gender breakdown of our Association. These all help us make decisions on reunion locations, what the activities are, and who we are not targeting properly on social media or via phone calls and who our new members are. Becky Valdez will be sending emails for that information. It is purely voluntary, but know that it will help us to improve and continue to grow and become better as an organization. Additionally, Scott shared with the membership that he asked each Board member to identify that secondary person to take their place in the event that is was necessary so that there is not a single point of failure. Always have a backup plan.

After a brief recap of what was presented to the membership, Scott thanked the Board for giving of their time and new members, such as Pete Gannon, for stepping up and helping where needed and all others who have given of their time and talents to the Association. He then let the membership that after consideration of several locations for the next reunion, the Board had approved Pleasanton, CA as the location for the reunion which will be hosted by Brooks Wilson. Scott then opened the meeting up to questions and comments from the general membership.

Becky Valdez recognized Kristen for her contribution to the website and to announce through Kristen's efforts that the Newsletter will no longer be sent, individually, to the membership via email but will be available on the website. However, a "blast email" will be sent out announcing that the newest newsletter is available on the website.

The question was asked why the reunions were being held on the west coast more than the east coast. It's harder for the older members to travel and they will stop coming to the reunions. Scott stated that we try to plan reunions so that everyone gets an opportunity to attend and it depends on who volunteers to host a reunion. He went on to say that it was in San Antonio this year because it was more centrally located to make it easier and more convenient for more members to attend. The only other alternative was to hire a reunion planning company to find suitable locations to please the most people. Pat Burns said that the reason Brooks location was chosen was because a reunion had not been held there in 10 years, he had the infrastructure in place to have a successful reunion, and it had only been 3 years since the reunion was held in Wisconsin Dells.

Mike wanted to thank the Board for the decision of reaching out to the Gold Star families and he would be willing to help out with that. He, also, said that he would like to see at the reunion each member, old and new, stand and introduce themselves so that we get an idea of who they are and when they served with 2/4.

Larry Hammond let the members know that it has been newly identified that those with moderate to severe long term PTSD have adrenal gland disorders. There are articles on the internet about it. The VA has done studies and it may not be depression but low adrenalin that is causing problems.

The question was asked who is the touch point for demographics survey. Scott said that info will be gathered through a survey will go out to each member.

A question was asked who manages to 2/4 Facebook page? Scott responded that it was him, Sean Schickel, and Becky Valdez.

Ken Cronenworth stated that what was near and dear to his heart were the vets that fall through the cracks such homeless, mental, and struggling vets. What can we do about it? After a lively discussion, Scott said to present an actionable plan. Daniel Priest said ok to talk about it but come a strategy and a plan to take action. Ken Cronenworth said that he would do that and that the Board would be hearing from him.

John Hembrough was concerned that the American flag was not posted. Scott said that will be taken care of. He, also, his expectations was not met because he didn't get the shirts that he paid for.

Ron Cronenworth says the coins are a great advertising medium and they are a big deal.

Larry Hammond said that he has been president of a number of humanitarian organizations and he commended Scott for the interchange because it was terrific and for addressing Ken's question and asking for a plan that is actionable that we can work with.

Pat Burns gave instructions about acquiring medals and ribbons that were authorized after leaving the Marine Corps. He suggested asking the VA counselor for the appropriate forms.

Scott Huesing asked for motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Phil Skaggs and seconded by Ernie Goodwin. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 10:45.

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

