

WreathForTheFallen.org

General Membership Meeting

December 18, 2018

1. Call to Order

Carrie Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. This general membership meeting was held at the Fort Ripley Steak House in the back room area. Members present were: John Thomas, Bob Schule, Carl & Diann Bates, Ron Robbins, Carrie Johnson, Richard McConnell, Jayme Storlie, Jerry Ratcliff, Mikel Barthel and Jim Parent. An agenda and a sign in sheet were passed around to everyone present.

2. Treasurer's Report

Ron Robbins gave his treasurer's report as of 11-30-18. As of 11-30-18 the bank balance was \$159,606.14. No payments for the wreaths had been made at this time. Total contributions in 2018 were approximately \$96,000.00 although contributions still were coming in. Final figures will be available after the year end. Jamye Storlie made a motion to accept the treasures' report as read and Richard McConnell seconded the motion. Motion was accepted and Ron submitted his report to Carrie Johnson.

3. Recap of 2018 Wreath Ceremony

Discussion included comments regarding the Wreath Ceremony that was held on Saturday December 15th. Biggest complaint was the bathroom situation. To continue having so many guests show up at the ceremony we need to look into getting some mini biffs delivered to the cemetery the day of the ceremony. Comment was made that the State Of Minnesota may allocate some funds to cover these extra expenses. We will continue to look into companies in the area that can provide this service. Many other comments – mostly good – were mentioned in the conversation. John requested that all section leaders turn in a report as to how things went in each section – how many wreaths were delivered, enough section leaders per section – enough volunteers. We are very fortunate that many of the section leaders have helped for many years and

everything seemed to go OK. Not all section leaders sent John a report so next year we will emphasize that a little more.

Hospitality vehicle is a concern and supplies in the refreshment area. Staging crew thought things went well. We had discussion about the delivery and count of the wreaths. Very difficult to have an accurate count since each section has a different count and each 'Gaylord' (pallets of wreaths from Mickman) can have a different count. We have to fine tune this count next year. Mikel Barthel said he would check with Wreaths Across America and how the staging and delivery is handled at Fort Snelling Cemetery in Minneapolis.

Blair Francis submitted his very complete parking area report. Some of his parking issues were the lack of signage covering the highway area for the event, better parking control on Hwy 115 and more detailed parking instructions inside the cemetery. He also mentioned that exits should be on the north and south gates.

Bob Schule, Jerry Ratcliff and Blair Francis all submitted their 'section leader' reports – Jayme made a motion to accept – Ron Robbins seconded those reports – the reports accepted as submitted.

To keep the meeting moving along we tabled additional ceremony comments to our next meeting. Ron Robbins made a motion to table these reports and any additional reports received from the section leaders until the next meeting. Jayme Storlie seconded the motion – everyone in favor – no one opposed so motion passed.

4. Preston & Duluth Ceremony's

John Thomas provided a short recap on the Preston and Duluth Ceremony's. We did not have a presence at either ceremony which they prepared themselves. We feel that they should send us a Committee Report after the ceremony to keep us abreast of how their ceremony went, total contributions they received and total wreaths placed. John stays in touch with each cemetery as to the progress and burials on a regular basis.

5. Updated Computer Equipment

John Thomas and Bob Schule presented a request to update and purchase new computer equipment as we have outgrown our current equipment. All MN State Veterans Cemetery's will continue to grow along with membership information and increase in wreath placements. Cost to upgrade and purchase necessary equipment would be approximately \$10,000.00 - \$12,000.00. We have not

updated our computers since our inception of the organization. John and Bob will get pricing and list of necessary expenditures for the next meeting. It was also mentioned that John Thomas could use more help in the office processing all the contributions and updating the data information he maintains.

6. Bylaws

John Thomas requested to amend the current **ARTICLE V – Finances and Indemnification** – of our By Laws. He provided an updated version and passed it to everyone present. Jayme Storlie seconded the motion and request was open for discussion. The original bylaws are posted on our web site for everyone to review. The new updated paragraph would read as follows:

“Any officer is authorized to make general operating purchases in an amount up to but not to exceed \$500.00 for any one purchase. Purchases in excess of \$500.00 need 2/3 approval of the WreathForTheFallen.org corporate officers. The exception is the Wreaths Procurement officer or committee shall not need general membership approval for the purchase of the actual honor wreaths used in the December honor wreath placement ceremony. No wreath purchase orders shall be made without the Treasurers confirmation that a sufficient amount of money is on deposit. The amount of honor wreath purchases shall be “set aside” to be available for payment when due.”

Motion was made to accept the amended Article V of the Bylaws as presented. Motion unanimously approved by all present. It was also agreed that the *‘Wreath Procurement and Distribution Policy’* would become part of our Bylaws. This document has been part of our Legal Documents on our web site but now should be included in the bylaws as well.

7. Next Meeting

No date was set for the next meeting but tentatively in the spring. All officers and members need to let John know if there are issues that need to be discussed at future meetings.

8. Adjournment

Carl Bates our chaplain gave a closing prayer

Jayme Storlie made a motion to adjourn the meeting – Richard McConnell seconded the motion – meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.