

Minutes Delaware Federation Zoom Meeting 12/22/25

President Ken Sosne called the meeting to order @ 10am and led the Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees: Region 2 VP Paul Schwartz, Mike Fritz, Warren Fuller, Mike Halpert, Patty Hartman, Nancy Story, Larry Trombello, and Vinnie Warr

Secretary's report- Mark e mailed to board members prior meeting

Membership and Chapter Reports

- **Ken:** Reported membership has increased from 860 to 879-880 members, with some in the pipeline
- **Mark (Wilmington):** Reported their November meeting included representatives from Blue Cross Blue Shield and Aetna discussing healthcare changes; next meeting January 27 at Woodlawn Library
- **Ken:** Noted Newark chapter is having issues with Pat Schwingriber stepping down; Celeste and Dan trying to maintain operations
- **Vinnie (Dover):** Reported 77 members with challenges getting attendance; meetings at Grain Turtle in Dover; collected \$150 for Alzheimer's; next meeting January 8
- **Mike Halpert (Western Sussex)** Meets third Monday at Pizza King in Seaford; had holiday party with about 20 attendees; regular meetings draw 10-15 people
- **Larry (Coastal Sussex):** Detailed meetings from September through December; noted 62 members attended November health benefits meeting; chapter raised \$1,040 for Alzheimer's; elected new officers including Mike Fritz as president; chapter moving meeting location from 1776 Steakhouse to Palm Beach Bar and Grill; reduced annual dues from \$8 to \$6; reported 238 chapter members and 194 national members in their area

Treasurer's Report- Mike Halpert Balance exceeds \$15,000. 10% payments from National are higher than last year, often \$300-400 per month and will likely exceed the \$4,000 minimum without requesting additional funds

Alzheimer's Fundraising-Ken: Reported Chapter 1690 raised about \$1,250-1,300. Vinnie sent a check for several hundred dollars and the State raised just under \$2,000.

Federation's Zoom account and potential changes- Mike Halpert noted that the Zoom account is currently registered to **Vinnie** and asked if it could be transferred to the federation. **Vinnie** said she doesn't know how to transfer account, but will look for renewal information. The cost of the account is approximately \$160.

Mike and Vinnie will work to either transfer the account or consider purchasing a new license when the current one expires.

Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) Membership- Ken proposed joining DANA for approximately \$110-150 and explained benefits including access to leadership development resources, board development, volunteer recruitment, and legislative connections. **Mark** supported the idea, noting the cost is

reasonable. **Larry** asked about what involvement would be required. **Ken** clarified that minimal commitment required, mostly access to resources and networking.

Conclusion- Motion approved to join DANA for one year to evaluate benefits.

Federation President's Travel Expenses-Ken: Requested authorization for mileage reimbursement and potential overnight stays when traveling to chapters. **Mark:** Supported reimbursing expenses since the President is serving the entire state. **Mike Halpert** Asked about the appropriate mileage rate to use

Paul: Noted National NARFE uses the federal GSA rate (approximately 65 cents per mile)

Conclusion- Motion approved to allow up to \$500 for the Federation President's travel expenses for calendar year 2026. Treasurer will determine appropriate mileage rate.

Legislative Updates-Ken: Mentioned bills in pipeline including civil service protection and FAIR COLA Act as well as upcoming meeting with Senator Coons' staff on December 23. **Paul:** Discussed political advocacy guidelines, explaining that NARFE can address issues affecting federal employees without being partisan

Press and Outreach Efforts-Ken: Discussed plans for systematic press releases every 4 weeks and mentioned successful meetings with legislators including Congresswoman McBride and Representative Heldavowski.

Noted potential Meta advertising and Delaware/Maryland/DC Press Association membership (\$350)

Vinnie: Expressed concern about newspaper reach in Dover area. **Ken:** Felt that even with limited print circulation, online presence helps spread information

- **Conclusion-**Ken will organize a call in January with **Nancy, Patty, and Lexi** to coordinate press outreach. Federation will continue to build relationships with legislators.

Delaware State Fair and Promotional Materials-Ken: Has submitted an application for NARFE to have a table at the Delaware State Fair (July 23-August 1). **Mike:** dDiscussed cost of magnets (10 cents each) and pens (10-25 cents each) to give out at the Fair. **Paul:** Noted National NARFE has promotional items available for purchase

- **Conclusion**
 - Topic to be discussed further at next Federation meeting
 - Members encouraged to think about promotional needs
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Action items

- **Mike**
 - Work with Vinnie to explore options for transferring Zoom account ownership or purchasing a new license
 - Determine appropriate mileage rate for travel reimbursement
- **Ken**
 - Join Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA)
 - Organize call in January with Nancy, Patty, and Lexi regarding press outreach

- Send out 2026 meeting dates to all board members
- Meet with Senator Coons' staff (December 23)
- Send information about meeting with Coons' staff to Nancy and Patty
- **Vinnie**
 - Forward Zoom renewal email to Mike
 - Explore options for placing NARFE materials at Dover Air Force Base organizations
- **Mark**
 - Continue efforts to connect with VA in Wilmington
 - Look for a Facebook page for VA employees to post NARFE information
- **Nancy and Patty**
 - Prepare simple blurbs for newspaper submissions
 - Attend meeting with Senator Coons' staff if available
- **All Board Members**
 - Subscribe to Delaware community on FedHub
 - Consider promotional material needs for Delaware State Fair
 - Continue to promote direct dues withholding and multi-year discounts
 - Give old NARFE magazines to postal carriers

Meeting Dates for 2026

March 9 (Zoom) @10am

June 4 (Dover in-person) Meeting will start at 9:15am @Dover Library since we are joining the Chapter and a legislator is joining us at 11am. Lunch to follow at The Greene Turtle, 391 N. Dupont Hwy.

September 28 (Zoom) @10am

December 14 (Zoom) @10am

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am