



NATIONAL DUSTERS, QUADS & SEARCHLIGHTS ASSOCIATION, INC.
NDQSA Annual Business Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2024 Arlington, Virginia

President Dave McCray opened the 2024 annual membership meeting of the National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association, Inc. at 9:07 a.m. EST on Sunday, November 10, 2024, in the Hilton Arlington National Landing Hotel, Arlington, Virginia. The meeting began with The Pledge of Allegiance. The secretary conducted a membership roll call. Sixty-two (62) members were present for the meeting.

Secretary's Minutes: The 2023 annual membership meeting minutes were provided to attendees. These were approved by last year's minutes committee. There were no corrections to the 2023 minutes offered from the floor, so they stand as written and approved by the special committee. After soliciting for member volunteers, the minutes approval committee for 2024 will be Phil Hosey (chairman), Bruce Geiger, Ed Tidwell, John Mowatt, and Pat McLaughlin.

Treasurer's report: Allan Penwell gave the treasurer's report. On December 31, 2023, your organization remained in good financial health with year-end operating cash of \$75,500 (rounded). However, the last two years have followed a negative pattern with losses of (\$14,600) in 2022 and (\$9,400) last year. The losses were mostly due to the timing of newsletters and dues with one exception. The exception was in 2023 when \$10,500 was spent on attorney fees to explore legal action against the NDQSA historian who resigned in 2022. We alleged that he kept physical property that belonged to NDQSA and engaged a law firm to help recover the property. Eventually, the board terminated the action, and \$3,137 of our retainer fee was returned to our treasury this year. The year 2024 appears to be a more normal expense year, and we may finish with over \$80,000 in cash due to the exceptional generosity of members with dues and donations. This will allow for normal operations for several years going forward. The NDQSA Memorial Trust was established this year. The board had set aside \$5,200 toward this several years ago, and additional contributions have increased the fund to \$6,450. The money is invested and carried as an "other asset" on our balance sheet. More announcements on this are forthcoming.

Finance Committee: Paul Hanson introduced Bill Sturgeon who is a CPA. Bill conducts an independent review of our financial books in lieu of doing an annual audit. Bill reported that NDQSA has good internal controls. Nothing came to his attention to be concerned about. He stated that this organization has great internal controls, and he did not find any risks or weaknesses in them. The financial statements are sound and provide full information on accounting.

Historian: Joe Belardo is going back to the old newsletters and extracting the member stories. Then he will associate them by combat unit as well as location and time. He also talked about this year's guest speaker Zachary Wood, a historian who does personal military interviews. His contact number is (336) 618-6345. You and your family will have a copy of your interview to keep your legacy alive and honor your memory.

Good Works Committee: Bruce Geiger reported that NDQSA will make its charitable donation to the Vietnam Women's Memorial in honor of Diane Carlson Evans who had the idea and helped get it built. The donation will probably be \$3000 when we figure out the logistics of getting the donation to the right organization.

Future Reunions:

- Bruce Geiger reported the reunion committee has run into problems setting up the 2025 reunion. The Marriott Riverfront in Savanna where we had gone before was not willing to work with us on room prices or timing. He is going to shift attention to San Antonio, Texas and the Riverwalk hotels or Pensacola Beach in Pensacola, Florida. A third option might be Colorado Springs but again it depends on rates. Even going back to Mobile, Alabama might be possible. Time of the year is becoming more critical. The committee now tries to look for dates between April and early June or Veterans Day weekend when the weather is cooler. He will let us know as soon as possible, but he has nothing that works right now for location and dates.
- Dave McCray stated that the 2026 reunion selection will probably be one of these same options. With no objection, he directed the committee to work on 2026 options without the normal preferential voting by the membership.

Old Business: Dave McCray gave an update on projects at Fort Sill. The Memorial Brick project has been completed except for one brick that was missing. It has been ordered and he will install it along with some final red bricks when they are delivered. Jackie Carver was recognized for trailering his excavator all the way from Alabama to Fort Sill to prep the ground for the bricks and his efforts in overseeing their installation.

New Business:

- Dave McCray informed the membership that the association has established a Trust fund to protect and preserve our memorial at Fort Sill and other heritage property and assets.
- Vince Tedesco explained that the trust was established as insurance against catastrophic loss from the weather in Oklahoma. We need enough money in there to repair or replace the memorials to those killed in Vietnam and also preserve our legacy. The Trust is set up in a way to make sure this commitment will be carried out in perpetuity by investing the funds so they grow over time. When we are gone the Air Defense Artillery Association will take over as the trustee to ensure that the trust obligations are sustained. What the members can do is start making annual donations. NDQSA is tax exempt so donations may even help you with your income taxes. We need to build the trust to at least \$50,000, so that if something does happen the money will be there when needed.
- Vince further explained that he is on the board of the ADAA. He will make sure they pass a resolution affirming that they understand their duties as successor trustees and will take responsibility for managing the money in the trust. They will become the stewards to preserve the memory of the Vietnam fallen and the Duster, Quad and Searchlight legacy.
- Joe Belardo stated that the next newsletter will have more information about the trust and how to donate to it.
- Luke Clark thanked the members who are at Fort Sill every year to lay the wreath on the NDQSA Memorial on Veterans Day; especially noting the commitment of Dave McCray, Richard Russell, Jackie Carver, and Pat McLaughlin. He further explained that we are now deeply involved in the organizational activities of some of the active-duty ADA units, especially those whose lineage includes Vietnam service.
- Barry Willever informed the membership about VA 100% disabled criteria and procedures. There was also information shared about the PACT Act law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. When you pass away, your wife may be eligible for a Veterans' Survivors Pension. It is important that your medical records are up to date with your health conditions that are presumptively caused by exposure to Agent Orange and the death certificate must reflect what is in your records.
- Joe Belardo and Luke Clark will coordinate a newsletter article explaining these VA disability and survivors benefit issues, so all members have the information.

Nominating and Election Committee: Paul Hanson read the teller's report to the membership.

It is entered into the minutes as follows:

Number of votes cast 285

Necessary for election (Bylaws requires 10% of active membership) 42

Votes received: for president Joseph Belardo 284

for 1st vice president Rick Liebendorfer 284

for secretary Richard Burmood 285

for 2nd vice president Barry Willever 284

for treasurer Allan Penwell 284

There were two write-in votes

for president Patrick Johnson 1

for 2nd vice president Phillip Pettice 1

illegal votes

for 1st vice president Robie Welsman 1 (not an active member as required per NDQSA by-laws)

rejected ballot 1 (not filled out)

- President Dave McCray announced the results of the election. The executive officers, elected by the membership for the 2024-2026 period, are as follows: treasurer Allan Penwell, secretary Richard Burmood, 2nd vice president Barry Willever, 1st vice president Rick Liebendorfer, and your new president is Joseph Belardo.

Meeting Closure:

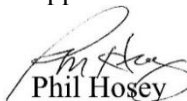
- Ed Tidwell moved to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Keith Fullerton and approved by the membership.
- The NDQSA 2024 annual business meeting ended at 11:04 a.m.

Minutes compiled by:



Richard Burmood
Secretary, NDQSA

Approved: December 9, 2024



Phil Hosey
Chairman, Minutes Approval Committee