



December 6, 2019

## MEMORANDUM FOR RETIREES

Minutes of the December 2019 Bi-monthly membership meeting of the Misawa Military Retirees' Association (MMRA)

1. The meeting was held on Tuesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1700 In the Gray Room of the Tohoku Enlisted Club, with presiding officers: Vice President-Toby Fanelli, Secretary-Joseph Roginski, and Treasurer-Dave Barton, and 14 general members.
2. Joe Roginski read the minutes of the October 2019 meeting which were accepted and approved by the membership.
3. Old Business:
  - a. Joe Roginski reported on the status of disposal of Chief "T"'s estate. Joe reported that all the funds have been distributed to the beneficiaries of the estate and no further action is required. (Closed)
4. New Business:
  - a. Joe Roginski referred to the discussion about what persons who are under the SOFA must do when they get referred to a clinic or hospital in town. He met with the Patient Referral staff who said that persons with SOFA status who are going to a first appointment off-base should have their ID card and passport in case they are asked for them. Non-SOFA persons should present their alien registration card. (Closed)
  - b. Recently a retiree needed help because he was referred to a hospital in town for tests. The off-base hospitals require up-front payment for foreigners who do not have Japanese national health insurance. The retiree made an arrangement with Patient Referrals and his issue is assumed to be resolved. This brings to light a very serious matter. For a person working here who is eligible for TRICARE but who has no other insurance, such as the Japanese health insurance, or commercial insurance coverage, he or she MUST have a source of up-front funds to cover a medical situation on the local economy. Ms. Taneichi, of Patient Referrals, said there is a commercial bonding service for persons without medical insurance that may be a source of assistance. A person who does not have appropriate medical insurance and funds to cover an emergency, is living here irresponsibly and should strongly question the viability of living in Japan. A member added that retirees are not eligible for Medevac and that a typical Medevac service could cost as much as \$75K billable to a retiree who needed to be medically evacuated. (Secretary's note: The MMRA constitution does allow for a small grant or loan for certain emergencies.) (Closed)
  - c. Joe Roginski and Dave Barton announced that the now annual event of the Christmas party at the Uruwashi-So home for the aged is scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> of December in the afternoon and Joe asked for volunteers for this year's party. Dave announced that he would send out an e-mail requesting volunteers. NOTE: Yesterday, the 5<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Nakamura, who is the manager of the home, called Joe Roginski to tell him the event has been canceled due to the flu epidemic and that all visits to the home and its sponsoring hospital have been halted, even for relatives. So, hopefully, next year we can again participate. (Closed)

- d. A member announced that the Japanese government has announced stiffer penalties for cell-phone use while driving, including heftier fines, loss of license, and imprisonment. For the sake of safety for all concerned, keep it on manner mode, drive mode, or hands-free. (Closed)
  - e. The American Embassy announced that the Japan Post will no longer offer international money orders as of 1 January 2020. This may cause problems for those retirees who do not have access to the base post office or are physically distant from the credit union when it comes time to renew your passport. If the person cannot provide a money order for payment, he or she will have to be physically present at the embassy to renew. Our office can assist retirees in obtaining a postal money order, and if you are a credit union member, you may be able to request a cashier's check be sent to you to enclose with your renewal application. Feel free to contact the RAO for assistance. (Closed).
  - f. We welcomed a new member, MSgt (Ret), USAF, Terrell Morris. Welcome MSgt Morris! We appreciate your participation and experience. (Closed)
5. Dave Barton read the financial report for the period October through December. He reported beginning balance \$8,088.08, dues income of \$200, dividends of 0.68, for total income of \$200.68, and the expense of October club bill \$137.00. Dave reported the current standing balances of Widow's Fund \$4,156.62, and General Fund \$3,995.14, ending balance of \$8,151.76. The financial report was accepted and approved by the membership present.
  6. There being no further business, it was moved and approved to close the meeting, which closed at 1735. The next bi-monthly meeting will be at 1700 on 4 February 2020 in the Club Tohoku Gray Room.

Joseph Roginski  
Secretary, MMRA