



December 14, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR RETIREES

Minutes of the December 2020 Bi-monthly membership meeting of the Misawa Military Retirees' Association (MMRA)

1. The meeting was held on Tuesday, December 1st at 1700 In the Mayor Suzuki Room of the Consolidated Open Mess, presiding officers: President-Paul Sayles, Vice President-Toby Fanelli, Treasurer-Dave Barton, and Secretary-Joseph Roginski, and 11 general members.
2. Joe Roginski read the minutes of the October 2020 meeting, which were accepted and approved.
3. Paul Sayles introduced MSgt Casilla, Flight Chief, TRICARE Operations Patient Affairs (TOPA), and Mrs Kennedy, the new TRICARE representative for the Med Group, who gave a briefing on the new TRICARE Select Overseas and answered questions. A member asked if retirees under 65 must go into Select, and the answer was yes. Another asked if the retiree had to go into Medicare Part B but the spouse being under 65 would be in Select, and the answer was the younger spouse would be in Select. MSgt Casilla added that under the new program, a dependent aged 26 or younger would be under TRICARE Young (increased age eligibility than before). He also noted that when registering during the open season, you would be able to set up your allotment in MyPay during all December, but to make sure that the payment was set up to avoid lapse in coverage. Several questions were asked about the Corona virus vaccine and they responded that there is no specific information about who gets it and when. Because of shipping conditions, Stateside will get the vaccine that has to be frozen until use, and overseas will get the one that can be stored at normal refrigeration temperatures. These are from two separate manufacturers. As of yet, there is no information on when the vaccine will arrive, who gets it and when, but they believe first responders and health care workers will have the highest priority.

MSgt Casilla added that the hospital use survey that is sent out by the company called "Joe's" is the primary method of feedback for the military medical system, and that only about 10% of the surveys are being answered, and for the most part, the responders are retirees and their families. He thanked us for the support and urged all of us when we get the survey to respond.

4. OLD Business:
 - a. COVID-19

All of the conditions and restrictions described in the previous minutes have changed. Currently there are several areas within this prefecture that are now restricted as well as again, Hokkaido. The conditions, restrictions and procedures are so volatile that putting them in the minutes is meaningless. The best way to keep up with the situation, what and where the current restrictions are inside and outside the prefecture, and elsewhere in Japan, procedures for new arrivals, etc. is to go to the site for the Misawa Air Base COVID Cell. You can do that by going to the official Misawa Air Base website (www.misawa.af.mil) where there is a link to the latest Covid information in the form of a .pdf file. The RAO staff will send out the latest COVID Cell updates (CADs) when we receive them. (Note:

Secretary will send out the COVID Cell site and contact information from the RAO). This item will continue to be carried as OPEN until the crisis has been declared ended.

- b. Ray Eberhardt had inquired as to why the club had so drastically raised their prices. Joe Roginski said he would check into it and get back. However, Joe Roginski (alias "Sleepy Joe, Republican version!") forgot and Dave Barton said he would look into it. (Open)

5. New Business:

- a. Joe Roginski announced that he intends to eventually retire from the RAO, as he is getting old and has been serving in the RAO for 11 years. From this month he has reduced his hours to one day a week, Monday, and eventually, upon selection and training of a suitable replacement, he intends to retire from the RAO. Bill Tuttle and Mark Ringquist announced they are interested in a position in the office. While anyone who has basic communicative abilities and can use a computer for e-mail, forms and correspondence, Joe's position is slightly unique in that he communicates orally and in writing with Japanese persons, as well as submitting an article in Japanese for the quarterly newsletter. Joe also noted that he will still continue to participate in the MMRA. If any retiree who is, or knows a retiree who is interested, please contact myself or Dave Barton at the RAO. Probably, there will be two positions required. (Open)

Secretary's note: In all other services, the director of the RAO is a paid position, whereas the Air Force funds the office but not the staff. All Air Force RAO staff are volunteers. The only benefit volunteers in the Misawa RAO get are APO privileges.

6. Financial Report - Dave Barton submitted the financial report for the period October-December 2020: Beginning balance \$8,756.08, donation to Widows' Fund \$83.99, dividends \$00.73, total income: \$84.72. October meeting expense \$123.75. Standings: Widows' fund \$4,345.61, General Fund \$4,371.48, Ending balance \$8,717.09. The report was approved and accepted by the membership present.
7. The meeting was closed at 1800. The next bi-monthly meeting will be at 1700 on 2 February 2021 in the Club Tohoku Gray Room.

(signed)

JOSEPH ROGINSKI
Secretary, MMRA