

**VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MINUTES
OCTOBER 6, 2005
NYS DIVISION OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS CENTRAL OFFICE
ALBANY, NEW YORK**

ATTENDEES:

George Basher DVA
Harvey McCagg DVA
Mary Quay (Recorder)DVA

Commission Members:

Honorable Roy J. McDonald
Joanne Martin (Representing Hon. Darryl Towns)
Charles Phillips
Harold Cronin
Karl W. Kristoff
Bob Reiter
Dorsey M. Whitehead

OPENING REMARKS

Director George Basher welcomed everyone to the Veterans Affairs Commission meeting. At this time Director Basher noted that Commission Member Adjutant General Thomas B. Maguire, Jr. has since resigned from the Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) and Charles Phillips will be updating the Commission with DMNA issues.

AGENDA ITEMS

NYS DIVISION OF MILITARY AND NAVAL AFFAIRS:

- Special Assistant-State Charles Phillips gave an overview of the missions DMNA soldiers have been on throughout the state. Approximately 700 soldiers were deployed to assist London after the bombing on July 8th.
- An orange alert level was issued on September 19th by homeland security.
- After hurricanes Katrina and Rita were through with their destruction, DMNA disposed 1,000 personnel, 16 helicopters, and 130 aviation personnel. Mr. Phillips stated that we are on stand-by to send more recruits if necessary. Their mission, to have a military presence and fly in food and water and to assist wherever needed.
- Currently DMNA has deployed 2,500 persons and the recruitment is down to 5,000 individuals. To date, there have been 21 casualties. Currently when a veteran has done their tour with DMNA, many are not signing up to continue a career with DMNA. Mr. Phillips stated that as recruits are leaving every veteran is being told of the benefits available to them. Commission Member Bob Reiter stated that the 69th Division had no idea what their benefits were. Phillips noted that on occasion some are overlooked and others are just not paying attention.
- As another incentive, Mr. Phillips noted that there is a bonus of \$15,000, tax free, if a recruit decides to reenlist with DMNA.
- Mr. Phillips mentioned General McGuire's retirement and that there is not new tag. He also mentioned that General McGuire is still Commander of the Air National Guard.

- Commission Member Dorsey Whitehead commended DMNA for a job well done.