

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

20 February 2020

Call to Order

A meeting of the Board of Directors of The Southwest Virginia Chapter, Military Officers Association was held on 20 February 2020 at 1000 hours Eastern Standard Time at the Hidden Valley Country Club, Salem Virginia.

Directors and Chapter Officers Present

President Lee Ensley, 1st Vice President Matthew Haag, 2nd Vice President and Membership Chair Robert Brown, Secretary Steve Jamison, Treasurer Scott Van Cleef, Legislative Affairs Representative and Awards Chair Robert Habermann, Chaplain David Gilleran, Sergeant At Arms Michael Kasnick, Past President David Gilleran, Community Services Volunteer Representative Dan Karnes, Director Roger Burnett, Director Larry Johnson, Director John Miller, Director Tom Dalzell.

Directors and Chapter Officers Absent

VCOG Representative and Personal Affairs Officer Jim Flynn, Smith Mountain Lake Satellite Representative Rick Cocrane, Surviving Spouse Representative Mary Lou Summers, Director Michael Leigh.

Call to Order

President Lee Ensley called the meeting to order at 1000 hours. A quorum of directors was present, and the meeting was convened.

Opening Prayer

Chaplain David Gilleran led the Board of Directors in prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

1st Vice President Matthew Haag led The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag recited by all present.

Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Minutes:

- Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of 12 December 2019 were approved as submitted.

President's Report

- President Lee Ensley welcomed all present.

Secretary's Report:

- Secretary Steve Jamison reported on guests attending the lunch meeting. Spoke about how reservations fluctuate from meeting to meeting and just before meeting dates but with the buffet lunch the Club is more flexible in supporting the chapter.
- Notified members that a tax notice was sent to all who contributed to the chapter fund raiser.
- Addressed the issue on accountability and record keeping of funds collected by the chapter.
- Notified the Board that the chapter received a General Liability Premium Quote from Mercer Consumer, plan administrator for, Mercer Health & Benefits Administration LLC for a Voluntary Club/Chapter Insurance Liability Plan. A check for the premium was delivered by the Treasurer to the Secretary and the signed/date quote and full premium will be sent to Mercer Consumer. Coverage is effective the date received by Mercer Consumer.

Treasurer's Report: to

- Prime checking account balance - \$9,494.33. Included \$1,584 deposited for the new Archer Awards.
- The Profit and Loss statement, Budget vs. Actual 1 January through 19 February 2020 was presented.
- Leadership and savings fund balance - \$7,432.26, of which \$3,050 is in savings, \$3,750 from the VFW gift and \$632.26 in the Leadership Awards fund.
- The annual independent audit of the Chapter Financial Records for 2019 was completed by COL Bob Brown. Without exception all income and expenditure records were found to be complete and accurate and backed by supporting documentation.

Chaplains Report

- Surviving Spouse Representative Mary Lou Summers send a sympathy card to Col David Lofgren whose wife Joanne passed away on 26 January 2020.
- A discussion ensued to ensure notification and information on illness or death of a member or spouse is passed to the Chaplain and/or Chapter officers so that appropriate assistance if required can be proffered.

1st Vice President's Report:

- No report.

2nd Vice President's Report:

- The audit of financial records for 2019 was presented to the Board and approved as submitted. Appreciation was given to the Chapter Treasurer and Secretary for their complete and timely cooperation during the audit.

Membership Chair Report:

- Using the MOAA 2019 prospect list mailed out 30 invitations to prospective members living in our area who are also MOAA Life members. One response to date.

- Requested assistance and suggestions for future mailings. Recently received updated chapter recruiting guidance from MOAA National and will be reviewing that for ideas.

Program Directors Report

- 20 February 2020 – Mr. Gary Crawford who will present a program “Come Retribution”, the captivating story of a clandestine code-named operation of the Confederate Secret Service to first pursue victory in the civil war, and then seek vengeance in defeat. Board of Directors meeting.
- 19 March 2020 – Ms. Amy White, Virginia Western Community College. STEM Program and veterans. Board of Directors meeting.
- 16 April 2020 – (Tentative) CMDR Youssef Aboul-Enein. Middle East issues. Dinner meeting Shenandoah Club
- 21 May 2020 – Dr. Diana Christopoulos, PhD will discuss her newly published memoir about her father James L Christopoulos (1917-2010) titled “Combat Engineer, A World War II Memoir”, recollections of WWII, in both Europe and the Pacific as a combat engineer. Board of Directors meeting.
- Possible programs for fall meetings include: (1) Mr. Martin Leam, Central and Southwest Virginia Honor Flight (Bedford, VA) for the dinner meeting date; (2) Lon Kelly Savage and Ginny Savage Ayers co-authors “Never Justice, Never Peace” the story of Mother Jones and the Miner Rebellion at Paint and Cabin Creeks, Kanawha County, West Virginia. Request assistance is securing program speakers.

Surviving Spouse Representative Report:

- Mary Lou Summers provided a written report:
 - Six members of the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA participated in the 7th Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery on December 14, 2019. The officers placed wreaths at the wall of honor representing each branch of service including a POW/MIA wreath. We look forward to having them join us again on December 12, 2020.
 - As Liaison to the Surviving Spouses I have done the following activities since January 2020:
 - Sent a get well card to Chaplain Talmadge from our group.
 - Sent excerpts from the National MOAA magazine to surviving spouses on survivors’ benefits—S 1047 and the Widow’s Tax.
 - Sent Valentines to my surviving spouses
 - Sent a sympathy card to COL Lofgren and his family on the loss of his wife from our group.
 - Talked with Mary Green about the possibility of a Bench dedication service at the cemetery when Pat’s bench is done. I explained to her how most dedication services are conducted and told her I would get back to her when I have more information
 - Check with Rockwood Manor B & B on the possibility of a luncheon after the bench dedication. They can accommodate 30-35 guests for lunch.
 - Checked on room rental at Al’s on First in Pulaski. Found out the room rental is \$250 so dropped that.

- Contacted the surviving spouses with information about today's guest speaker, his topic and lunch.

Legislative Liaison Report:

- The following issues will dominate MOAA's 2020 legislative year:
 - **Important defense bill provisions** Lawmakers are preparing to finalize their work on the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. The bill contains a number of measures tied to MOAA's legislative priorities, including putting a stop to a proposed cut in up to 18,000 medical billets, ending a financial penalty on military survivors known as the widow's tax, and more.
 - **Military Medicine** The readiness and effectiveness of America's armed forces demand a full complement of well-trained medical professionals. But the Defense Department's fiscal 2020 budget would eliminate roughly 20 percent of military medical positions, along with other reorganization measures. This shortsighted "reform" effort could have drastic, even deadly, consequences—on the battlefield and throughout American health care.
 - **Safe Housing For Military Families** When military families face health threats in their homes, it can be harder for service members to focus on their mission. Congress is considering legislation to address health threats in base housing—by remediating environmental hazards, establishing strong tenants' rights procedures, and restoring proper oversight of construction and maintenance contractors.
 - **Helping Veteran Caregivers** *The Transparency and Effective Accountability Measures (TEAM) for Veteran Caregivers Act* improves the veterans caregiver program by ensuring all caregivers are included in the veterans' medical records, establishing a minimum standard of information in downgrade notification letters, and extending benefits for at least 90 days after a termination letter is sent for cases where a veteran is deemed "no longer clinically eligible" for the program.
 - **Commissaries and Exchanges** MOAA believes that the Defense Department is moving too fast to merge commissaries and exchanges. MOAA will ask Congress to pump the brakes and mandate additional review on how this will impact service members, families, and the MWR funds.
 - **Military families** With conferees at an impasse over provisions in the annual defense authorization bill, Sen. Jim Inhofe introduced a "skinny NDAA" to extend essential national security authorities. While a skinny NDAA ensures the men and women in harm's way continue to receive necessary support, it fails to address crucial improvements to military housing, survivor benefits, spouse employment resources, and essential oversight of the military's health care and defense resale systems.
 - **The 2020 Federal Budget** Congress has failed again to deliver a federal budget for the new fiscal year, and instead have passed a second Continuing Resolution (CR). MOAA believes that CRs create uncertainty for uniformed service members and their families, and prevent important new programs and improvements from being implemented.
 - **TRICARE Fees** MOAA understands that increasing TRICARE fees and out-of-pocket costs is on the list of budget options for lawmakers to consider. This action would ignore the price military retirees and their families have paid up front with their service and sacrifice.

- **Concurrent receipt for disabled military retirees** MOAA supports H.R. 333, *The Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act* which provides full concurrent receipt for disabled military retirees, including Chapter 61 retirees.
- **The Widow's Tax** MOAA notes that current federal law requires survivors of deceased military members to forfeit part or all of their purchased Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity when they are awarded the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). The loss of any portion of the SBP annuity is known as the widow's tax. For approximately 66,000 military survivors, the widow's tax makes SBP the only insurance that they will have to pay into but are legally prohibited from collecting.
- **Gold Star spouses** Under current law, Gold Star spouses receiving benefits from the Department of Defense are protected from interruptions in payments during a government shutdown. But because Coast Guard paychecks come from the Department of Homeland Security, these survivors are still at risk.
- **TRICARE Benefits for National Guard and Reserve Members** MOAA supports H.R. 613 and S.164 which would remove the restrictions preventing National Guard and Reserve members from participating in the TRICARE Reserve Select program. TMOAA believes that these service members deserve to have access to the same quality, affordable health care options as fellow military members.
- **Survivors' benefits** S. 1047 would align Dependency and Indemnity Compensation payments with other federal survivor benefits.
- **Work Opportunity Tax Credit to Include Military Spouses** According to Department of Defense data, 24% of the military spouse labor force remains unemployed. That's over six times higher than the national unemployment rate. To retain the best and brightest in an all-volunteer force, MOAA maintains that Congress must remove as many barriers to family financial stability as possible.
- **Native American Veterans Memorial** The Smithsonian recently approved the design for a National Native American Veterans Memorial to be constructed on the grounds of the National Museum of the American Indian. The design includes the logos of the five armed services, omitting both the U.S. Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, whose members are veterans under federal law. MOAA believes that ALL veterans should be included in this important memorial.

VCOC Representative Report:

- VCOC meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2020, American Legion, 1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond, Virginia. JLC Storming 16 January.
- Dues survey was sent out. Chapter dues were reinstated at \$.80 per regular member and \$.40 per auxiliary member.
- 2nd Quarter VCOC meeting 2 April at 1000 at American Legion HQ, 1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.
- 3rd Quarter VCOC meeting 2 July at American Legion HQ, 1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.
- 4th Quarter VCOC meeting 8 October at Patriots Colony, 6000 Patriots Colony Drive, Williamsburg, Virginia.
- Chapters submit by March 1st, for the National Legislative Award to the President, Legislative Chair and Secretary with justification.

- Chapters submit by April 1st, for the State Legislative Awards (Senate/Delegate) to the President, Legislative Chair and Secretary with justification.

Public Affairs Report

- Communiqué Newsletter – 1st Quarter (JAN-FEB-MAR) in the works to be published in March 2020.
- Chapter Website & Face book – Not active. Need a volunteer to handle these sites.
- Public Affairs/Media – Need a volunteer to fill this position.

Sergeant At Arms Report

- No report.

Past President's Report:

- No report.

Director Reports

- Smith Mountain Lake Satellite representative Rick Cocrane sent a report on the recent and upcoming programs at SML:
 - Tuesday 11 February 2020. A lunch meeting with a program on “German Prisoners of War Held in Virginia” by John Long, Director of Education D-Day Memorial.
 - Tuesday 10 March 2020. A lunch meeting with a program on the “Military Order of the Purple Heart” by Clifton R “Buck” Krantz.
 - Friday 17 April 2020. A dinner meeting with a program “A Perspective on the Civil War” by Linda Breckinridge.

Committee Chairperson's Report

- Awards Chair:
 - Letters being prepared outlining the new awards and requesting nominations for the MOAA JROTC and ROTC Medal Awards and Leadership Awards.
 - New High School JROTC Program at Auburn High School in Riner, VA.

Old Business

- An update and status of the MOAA SWVC new award, the MAJ James Milton Archer, Jr., USA Award was presented. A \$1,584 check was given by the Archer family to fund the new award. Procedures have been developed for nominating and awarding the Archer award similar to the JROTC Awards. Letters have been promulgated to the JROTC and CAP units on the new award.
- The purchase of the granite Memorial Bench at the Veterans Cemetery at Dublin in honor of LTC Pat Green is on track. A check has been delivered and an agreement signed to purchase the bench. A dedication ceremony will be scheduled in the future.
- The purchase of the MOAA Club and Chapter Liability Insurance Plan brokered by Mercer Health and Benefits Insurance Administration LLC for the SWVC

Officers, Board Members and chapter members in on track. Check and signed agreement sent.

- Update on COL Roger Talmadge and Status of the MFSC was discussed. Roger was in attendance at the Board meeting and he is feeling better. MFSC still assisting families. Board status still in flux. John Miller presented a \$1,500 check from the Stonewall Jackson Chapter of AUSA to the MFSC to fund their food pantry activities.
- The Status on the presentation/delivery of the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke grant of \$4,000 to the MFSC was raised. Bob Habermann indicated that the check was presented at a recent Kiwanis Club meeting.
- The following issues raised during the Strategic Planning meeting on 18 July 2019 still need to be addressed:
 - Establishment of measurable goals/objectives – See Strategic Initiatives in the “Strategic Planning Meeting SWVC – Preliminary Document of Record.”
 - Vision – The following Vision Statement was approved by vote of the Board Members present. **“To Be An Influential Military Organization in Southwest Virginia”**. Action completed.
 - Mission Statement - The following Mission Statement was approved by vote of the Board Members present. **“As the community face of the Military Officers Association of America, the Southwest Virginia Chapter’s mission is to advocate for a strong national defense, be an influential provider and supporter of programs, benefits and services for our military community, and a source of social fellowship for our members.”** Action completed.
 - Advocacy – Strong Speaker Program; Improved contact with legislative representatives; Disseminate legislative issues. Ongoing.
 - Membership – Develop a process to increase and keep membership. Ongoing.
 - Engagement - Greater partnership with other organizations/Roanoke Valley Veterans Council; Greater community awareness of MOAA service.
 - Finances - Developing fundraiser process/targets – plan, sponsorships; Develop plan for the VFW funds held in Leadership account. Revise/discontinue 50/50 drawing.
 - Organizational Capacity/Internal Engagement - Increase engagement of current and new members; Review leadership structure; **Establish a Newsletter Publisher; Establish a Marketing/Advertising person, Establish a Webmaster/Social Media person**; Develop a succession plan to backup core leadership positions.
 - Revise Chapter By-Laws to reflect results of strategic planning decisions. Ongoing.

New Business:

- **Military Night** - AUSA Stonewall Jackson Chapter and the Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs hockey game 21 March 2020 Berglund Center Roanoke, VA. Chapter members **FREE**. Guests \$15. Contact Col Miller for tickets.
- **Wreath Laying Ceremony to honor Vietnam Veterans** - Saturday 28 March 2020 at 1200 hour Lee Plaza, Roanoke, VA.
- COL Marvin J. Harris Communications Award submission due 1 February 2020.
- Chapter Level of Excellence Award submission due 1 May 2020.
- Congressional Affairs Luncheon scheduled 1100 to 1400, Thursday, 30 April 2020, Eisenhower Room, Capitol Hill Club, D.C. \$30 payable to Virginia

Council of Chapters. Send to the VCOC Treasurer at: LTC Jim Stephan USAF
(Ret) 1707 Beach Rd Hampton, VA 23664. Reservations due 22 April 2020.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board of Directors, the meeting was adjourned at 1145 hours. The next Board of Directors meeting will be at 1000 hours on Thursday 19 March 2020 at Hidden Valley Country Club.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Jamison