

## Maryland Council of Chapters Meeting Minutes

**MEETING DATA:** 1235-1445 hours on Saturday, 5 Dec 15, at O'Loughlin's Restaurant; 1258 Bay Dale Drive; Arnold, MD 21012 [**Note:** As discussed at this meeting, minutes will now be prepared in abbreviated, non-narrative form--and will include only important information for members and the record. The Meeting Agenda, handed out in hard copy by the President, contains additional information not reproduced here.]

**Attendance:** Council and Annapolis Chapter President Andrew Fallon, Council 1st VP Harvey Kaplan, Council 2d VP Bryon Hartzog, Council Treasurer Greg Dalke, Council Webmaster Jim Shiffrin, Council Immediate Past President John Whitman (could not remain for complete meeting), Council TOPS Liaison Jim Dittbrenner, Council Legislative Liaison Jack Fringer, Montgomery County Chapter President Dave Peterson, Fort Meade Chapter President Andrew Veronis, Southern Maryland Chapter Representative Jack Fringer, General Smallwood Chapter President Mike Rhoden, Prince George's County Chapter President Duane DeVance, Susquehanna Chapter President Annie Brock, Upper Eastern Shore Chapter President Jim Adkins, Upper Potomac Chapter President Douglas Reichard, Star Spangled Banner Chapter President Tom Seybold, David Fox (from the Fort Meade Chapter), and Barbara Fringer (from the Southern Maryland Chapter). All Chapters were represented at the meeting. David Peterson will be assuming the position of Council Secretary effective 15 December 2015. Our former Secretary, Jim Pede, already has relocated with his spouse to Texas.

The Council reviewed the **5th Annual Congressional Luncheon**, which was held on Thursday, 17 Sep 15. National HQ paid the Council \$1,280 to subsidize our costs and cover its own attendees. We explored several changes we might make next year, such as investigating further for the optimum date and possibly using the facilities in the Capitol Visitors Center. The cost of one guest will be refunded by the Council to the Susquehanna Chapter due to a double payment. We essentially "broke even" on the event this year.

Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAR (Ret.) will take over as new National President of MOAA effective 4 January 2016.

**The Levels of Excellence (LOE)** applications for CY 2015 will be due earlier than in past years: 1 March 2016. There are some changes in the scoring sheets for both Chapters and Councils; updated documents now are available on the MOAA website.

**Legislative Affairs.** Copies of the October 2015 Military Officer were distributed. That issues contains 7 pages on the "State Report Card." Harvey Kaplan provided an overview of its contents. Jack Fringer, Council Legislative Chair, discussed several initiatives for CY 2016: There are 11 delegations to Annapolis from across Maryland; we should "storm" Annapolis as Chapters to update our delegations (from Counties or groups of Counties). Hopefully, we can accomplish that during the first four weeks of the new Legislative Session, which commences in early January. Jack also briefed the Council on bills we expect to be submitted next session. The Governor's Office (and the Office of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs) have not yet advised us how they will handle tax relief on military retired pay this session. The Governor's Budget for the new year is not yet finalized. Jack will prepare Fact Sheets on the key issues

(e.g., Tax Relief, Veterans Treatment Courts, Expansion of In-State Tuition for Military Dependents). The Council discussed briefly a number of the issues. Jack Fringer will confer with President Andy Fallon, and they will finalize the list of planned legislative activities; the final list on Maryland initiatives will be furnished electronically to Chapter Presidents.

Jim Dittbrenner distributed the **TOPS Report** in hard copy to attendees. The Veterans Service Office Program and a pilot program in Montgomery County also were discussed briefly.

Calendar of Events for CY 2016 (adjusted from the Meeting Agenda). These are the dates of events coming in new year, but changes may still be necessary:

Council Meeting - Saturday, 5 March 2016 (O'Loughlin's; Arnold, MD, 1130 hours) - Already confirmed with restaurant.

Storming the Hill (MOAA National and State Representatives) - 4-7 April 2016

Council Meeting - Saturday, 4 June 2016 (O'Loughlin's; Arnold, MD, 1130 hours)[**Note:** This is a date change!]

5th Annual Maryland Congressional Luncheon (Sep or Oct date to be determined in consultation with Government Affairs at MOAA HQ)

Council Meeting - Sheraton Arlington Hotel, on 1st day of MOAA National Annual Meeting (October, TBD)

Council Meeting - Saturday, 3 December 2016 [**Note:** This is a date change!]

**The Chapters reviewed their recent and upcoming activities.** We are making a continuing effort to avoid conflicts in dates among National MOAA functions, Council events, and Chapter functions. Beyond holiday parties, early 2016 programs of special Council interest are a 7 January luncheon (Fort Meade Chapter) on "Cybersecurity," a 2 Feb program (Star Spangled Chapter) on "The Iran Nuclear Deal--What Now?" a 17 February luncheon speaker (Montgomery County Chapter) on "Maryland Transportation Issues," and a 21 Jan program (Susquehanna Chapter) presented by a Tuskegee Airman.

No further progress has been made regarding an **11th chapter in Western Maryland**. President Andy Fallon will write to the two points of contact we have in that geographic area. Doug Reichard has not been able to reach them recently.

Annie Brock moved that the Council sign up as a **Charter Member of the MOAA Heritage Society**, which requires a donation by us of \$125 for five consecutive years. This will support MOAA's ongoing Military Family Initiative. Jim Shiffrin seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Treasurer Greg Dalke was asked by the President to get our \$125 check to Mike Turner at MOAA HQ before the end of the month (i.e., the deadline for Charter Memberships). Chapters were encouraged to use Mike Turner as their point of contact for inquiries and to sign up themselves. Individual contributions from members also are welcome. The e-mail address is [miket@moaa.org](mailto:miket@moaa.org). Dave Peterson advised that the Montgomery County Chapter already has established its Charter Membership in the Society.

Respectfully submitted:

Harvey T. Kaplan  
1st Vice President