



Maryland Council
Military Officers Association of America
Meeting Minutes
1 February 2014

Members Present:

John Whitman, President
Norm Taylor, Immediate Past President
Andrew Fallon, 1st Vice President MDCOC, President, Annapolis Chapter
Harvey Kaplan, 2nd Vice President MDCOC
Greg Dalke, Treasurer
James Pede, Secretary
Jack Fringer, Legislative Chair
Dave Peterson, MDCOC Director, President, Montgomery County Chapter
Jim Dittbrenner, TOPS
Bryan Herzog, FGGM TOPS
Eleanor Layman, Auxiliary Rep, Ft Meade Chapter
Jim Shiffrin, Webmaster, President Ft Meade Chapter
Jeff Brock, President, Susquehanna Chapter
Bill Benson, President, Upper Potomac Chapter
Mike Rhoden, President, General Smallwood Chapter
Reggie Sealey, Prince Georges Chapter
Mike DeHaemer, President, Baltimore Chapter
Annie Brock, Newsletter Editor/Hartford County Veterans Commission
Jim Shellem, Past President Upper Eastern Shore Chapter

Members Absent:

Warren Prince, Southern MD Chapter-represented by Jack Fringer
Chuck Block, UES, represented by Jim Shellem

The Maryland Council of Chapters met 1 February 2014 in the Guy C. Parlett Post 7 of the American Legion in Annapolis, Maryland. Following the opening prayer and pledge of allegiance, the previous MDCOC meeting minutes were presented by Maj Pede. Several open items were covered and the minutes were accepted by motion, seconded, and vote.

Maj Whitman opened the meeting with a discussion of the Veterans Service Officer program and the need for volunteers. He asked everyone to support the effort.

Laura Stotz from MOAA Director of Member Services Center, and Trina Fitzgerald, MOAA Government Relations Liaison were introduced to the MDCOC. They briefed the council on the new membership model introduced in 2013 and fielded many questions from the council members on a wide range of topics. They reported that the total MOAA membership now stands at 383,000 members. They said the basic approach to the new membership program was to introduce MOAA membership benefits to the under 35 population of eligible members. Additional topics of discussion included insurance, publications, and VA claims assistance.

CDR Greg Dalke provided the Treasurer's Report (Atch 1) reminding all that we changed banks to Navy Federal Credit Union. The Council balance is \$8,269, down from \$11,777 in October of 2013. The cash position is negative due to the late reimbursement check from MOAA HQ in support of the legislative lunch. Our certificates at BB&T mature at the end of May.

LTC Fringer asked about chapter refunds for no shows at the legislative lunch. He made a motion for reimbursement of the lunch price difference. The motion was seconded by Maj Shiffrin and the vote unanimous. CDR Dalke will work with each chapter to make refunds as required.

COL Fallon proposed we hold the 2014 legislative lunch on 11 September on the House side. The council generally agreed. COL Fallon said the planning committee has yet to be established and hoped to have it in place by next meeting. LTC Fringer reported that a letter to MOAA HQ was sent to block ADM Ryan's calendar for the event. He said he would provide a copy of the letter to COL Fallon.

Legislative Affairs: LTC Fringer asked all presidents to attend the 5 February session to "fill the balcony" and to remain after to witness the Fallen Heroes Ceremony. Senate bills to be heard include the military retirement pay exemption and the 'over 65' initiative whereby only seniors receive the benefit. On the House side, the MVTF has asked for a 100% reduction to income for all retirees. A large supporting turn out is hoped for.

Auxiliary Affairs: Eleanor Layman provided everyone with a Tricare flyer she feels is very well written which explains options. She is also following up with MOAA HQ regarding the 'taps' section of the Officer magazine.

TOPS: Jim Dittbrenner provided the TOPS report (Atch 2) and introduced fellow TOPS representatives: Annie Brock of Susquehanna Chapter, Monique T. Smith, the new TOPS representative in the Star Spangled Banner (Baltimore Chapter), and Bryon Herzog of the Ft Meade Chapter. He expressed his thanks for receiving positive comments from the Ft Meade Chapter in response to recent job postings.

Maryland Veterans Commission: CAPT Peterson represented the council at the January meeting. The focus of the meeting was on veteran homelessness issues as it is a growing problem. He also reported that the task force for the Maryland veterans' treatment courts had completed their report (dated 1 December 2013) and provided it to the Governor. He promised to provide copies for distribution a later meeting. CAPT Peterson also discussed the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, a 501(c)3 charitable organization to benefit veterans. He suggested that chapters make donations to the fund as appropriate.

Outstanding Unit Award: Maj Whitman reported that the trip he and Captain Benson took to Edgewood/Aberdeen MD to present the annual MOAA Outstanding NG Unit Award was well received. The award went to Company C, 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment.

Levels of Excellence Award: Maj Whitman promised to provide the first draft to the council very soon. He announced that the Maryland Council earned a 5 Star award banner again for 2013.

The meeting was adjourned at 1320. The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday May 3rd, 2014 at 11:45 AM at the Crownsville American Legion Post 7.

JAMES PEDE, Maj, USAF Ret
MD Council Secretary