



Minutes of September 10, 2016 Council Meeting

Location: O'Loughlin's Restaurant
1258 Bay Dale Drive
Arnold, Maryland

Attendees: All elected officers were present. All chapters were represented, with the exception of General Smallwood and Upper Eastern Shore. The only Council appointee not present was the Legislative Liaison.

The meeting was called to order at 1200 by Council President Andy Fallon. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the meeting then proceeded, following the agenda, attached to these Minutes and made a part hereof.

The Minutes of the June 3, 2016 meeting were approved unanimously.

Andy Fallon provided a general brief of organizational developments. He noted that MOAA National has "mothballed" the VSO programs as too expensive. He discussed what is known regarding the NDAA, noting particularly that MOAA's efforts with regard to commissary savings had paid off. Commissary savings were determined to be 30%. The letter submitted by the Military Coalition to the House and Senate can be found at: http://themilitarycoalition.org/uploads/4/7/6/9/47692523/tmc_letter_to_ndaa_conferees_assns.pdf.

Also noted was the appointment of Col. Dan Merry, USAF(Ret) as the new MOAA Vice President for Government Relations, replacing Col. Steve Strobridge, USAF(Ret), who is retiring. Andy noted that several of our chapters were 2015 Level of Excellence award winners, and all were congratulated. Andy briefly discussed the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument being constructed in Annapolis and supported by the Governor.

Harvey Kaplan provided a brief on the Maryland State Report Card.

The agenda then turned to Committee and Staff Reports. With the absence of Lt. Col. Jack Fringer, USA(Ret), his Maryland Legislative Report was deferred.

The President of the Susquehanna Chapter introduced the subject of generating a survey to gather quantifiable data in support of what is needed to

attract veterans to greater employment prospects in the state. She is advocating a business perspective approach. More on this will follow in subsequent Council meetings.

On the Federal side of concerns, Andy noted that relations between the Pentagon and Congress are really bad. He discussed the likelihood of a Continuing Resolution and the likelihood that things won't settle down until after the election.

The report of the Commission on Care for the VA was released in July. The report can be found at:

https://commissiononcare.sites.usa.gov/files/2016/07/Commission-on-Care_Final-Report_063016_FOR-WEB.pdf

It was noted that a new DOD Universal Health Care Record is being tested in the Northwest, and that new TRICARE contracts have been awarded and protested.

Treasurer Dalke provided his report, with the spreadsheet attached to these Minutes and made a part hereof.

Harvey Kaplan briefed on MRVTF, noting that Annie Brock's efforts should be supported by the MRVTF.

TOPS Liaison Dittbrenner provided his report, which is attached to these Minutes and made a part hereof. He discussed an "ask me anything" approach in working as a precursor to the transition program he is providing. His current focus is on transitioning Guard and Reserve members who are transitioning back after an active duty tour.

Spouses and Surviving Spouses Liaison Naomi Kaplan commented briefly on information that she has previously provided to the chapter presidents. She asked again to be provided any additional information that may be of use/interest to spouses that might come to the attention of chapters.

The 2016/2017 meeting calendar was discussed. There will be no Council meeting during the MOAA Annual Meeting event this year due to time constraints. A motion was made by Annie Brock, seconded by Tom Seybold, to have an electronic Council meeting no later than 12/5. The motion passed unanimously. The winter meeting will be deferred to January 21st, at O'Loughlin's

The Council unanimously adopted a motion by Jim Campbell, seconded by Dave Peterson, for a 2017 meeting schedule as follows: 21 January (for

installation of officers), 4 March, 10 June, and 9 September. The venue for the January 21st meeting will again be O'Loughlin's. Venues for subsequent meetings will be addressed later.

Old Business

The Congressional Luncheon, scheduled for 15 September, was discussed. Council members to introduce the various members of the Delegation were designated.

Progress on a possible Queen City Chapter is slow. Only 4 responses were received out of 198 letters sent.

New Business

A discussion took place on how the Council might honor the retiring Senator Barbara Mikulski. Jim Shiffrin moved, and Harvey Kaplan seconded, that the Council take the 2016 contribution to the MOAA Scholarship Fund, and make it "in honor of Senator Barbara Mikulski." The motion was adopted unanimously.

Andy asked chapter presidents to take a look at council/chapter management software. Two possible versions were suggested as worthy of a look.

The annual National Guard Unit Award was discussed. Correspondence has gone out and Andy will be meeting with representatives at the end of the month. Jim Shiffrin will handle the details.

Chapter presidents made brief remarks on the activities of the chapters. Of significance, Bryon Hartzog will be the new president of the Ft. Meade Chapter. Greg Dalke spoke about the travails of the Southern Maryland Chapter, and suggested that they may attempt cooperative meetings with a nearby chapter. Tom Seybotd noted that the MOAA National President will be the guest speaker for the Star Spangled Banner Chapter in November.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1450.

Respectfully submitted,

Captain David H. Peterson, NOAA (Ret)
Secretary

