

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA
NEW HAMPSHIRE CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
11 April 2024

Call to Order: The BOD Zoom meeting was called to order by President Larry Miller at 1910 hours. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Miller and recited by those assembled.

Attending: Balcolm, Boyle, Burdett, Day (Roby & Sharon), Dunn, Frost, Goff, Luti, McLean, Miller (Larry & Pat), Rowan. A quorum of members was officially present.

President's Opening Remarks: Our MOAA accounts are blocked until 22 April due to maintenance and upgrades. The Communications awards will be given out on 18 April in DC. The LOE awards can be scheduled when we want. Michael suggested doing this at the August Clambake especially if we have reps from MOAA National attending. In addition, Larry has submitted an estimated number of 200 for the clambake event. There will be a Chapter survey sent to all the officers, past and present. He doesn't have details on the questions, but they want to know the value that we bring to MOAA. He expects this will probably come out in the summertime. However, they only want one consolidated response from the Chapter. Larry asked if we have submitted any individual awards to MOAA? The only other awards Michael was aware were legislative and surviving spouse awards. If we had any, they are due 23 May. Larry will look into this. There was a question about social media and what it cost for a Facebook presence. Jennifer said we have a Facebook account which is free. We also have Instagram and LinkedIn accounts that Jennifer set up. You only pay on Facebook if you want to "boost" a post that runs continuously. Larry asked if we could post membership and scholarship applications on FB, but Jennifer said those should be on our website. Michael questioned whether the Scholarship application should be on the website. Wayne said the form is online on our website. Larry said some chapters have a "Go Daddy" account costing \$100/3 years with links to other websites. Michael stated that our webpage server is from Go Daddy. Michael thought that we are paying more than that for our server. Larry sent a note to Frank Michaels about a quarterly state advocacy meeting. The is run by Lt. Col(s) Don Wolfinger and Kell Kalkoski. Larry is waiting for some response. There is a Near Real Time Report (NRTR) and that only the President and Membership chair have access to this. Michael knows about this and has access to it. "Carry the Load" and "Our Community Salutes" were also mentioned. Frank Michael mentioned that they were putting out a blast email regarding our August clambake. Michael hadn't seen one yet but thinks that the information Larry sent them will be used when they actually do send out the email. Michael didn't think we would get it since it's our chapter but hoped that we would get an "info" copy of the blast email. Peter didn't think it had been sent because we don't have our flyer or cost information yet. There is a private URL for MOAA: www.moaa.org/legisleaders. This is a private URL that includes info for the AIA, etc. Jim Lefebvre sent a report in which everyone should have seen.

Immediate Past President Remarks: Good afternoon, all - Due to a conflict of the MOAA meeting with a Conway Planning Board session that will begin at 1800 hours, I will not be at attendance at the 1900 session. The following are my comments for the Board's consideration. Please note that I have cc Frank Michael, MOAA National on this update, as the status of the Vermont chapter is an outstanding issue.

For the second year in a row, I covered the Norwich University (Northfield, Vermont) Joint Service Awards Ceremony for MOAA-NH. This year's event was held on April 9, 2024, and was attended by the corps of cadets. I was able to pitch membership in our Chapter to approximately 10 members of

the university cadre and other officers in attendance, using our new flyer and personal business cards provided by national MOAA from "Storming the Hill" way back in the day. SMA Michael R. Weimer was the guest speaker for the event. Brigadier General William F. McCullough, Commandant and Vice President of Student Affairs was quite interested in our program, especially given the apparent defunct status of the Vermont Chapter. Resolution of coverage for the MOAA members remains an area of my personal interest, given the duration of the issue. I will forward, via a separate e-mail, pictures that were taken of the presentation of awards to our three cadets, along with a short story for possible publication in the next Granite Slate newsletter.

Recruiting and Transition - Continued to approach several members of the northern tier who are identified as members of other veteran organizations, eligible for MOAA NH and national membership, but not yet taken the plunge. It is a time-consuming process, as the person I managed to get to join took six meetings over 4 months for success. I repeat my challenge to all BOD members to work with folks eligible for membership, and recruit one new member by August 1st, just before the world-famous clambake. We are, after all, all recruiters for the chapter. Additionally, I continue to work with the San Antonio chapter's transition program and team and hope to visit representatives of the chapter during one of our trips to Texas over the course of the next several months.

Personal Affairs - No contacts with individuals requiring assistance.

North Country Luncheon - If Gerard Boyle could give me a call, I would like to chat with him on the status of the June Luncheon.

VP Remarks: Peter mentioned that there is a veteran's Facebook events page and wondered if Jennifer can set up a link to it for us. We could possibly post our upcoming events to that page. Peter's only other remarks were: "Go Red Sox's".

Secretary's Report: Michael said he was hopeful that when we go to the AiA meeting in DC we'll get good news regarding the communications award. They may also have the LOE results. There were no comments on the March meeting minutes. A motion to approve the March minutes as published was made, seconded, and approved by all present.

Bookkeeper's Report: Roby sent out the treasury reports and we're solvent. We currently have 69 reservations for the April luncheon. Gerry asked for a breakdown of the meal requests so he can send that to the Common Man. A motion to accept Roby's report was made, seconded, and approved by all present.

Trustee of the Trust Fund: Drew was unable to be present for this meeting.

Surviving Spouse Liaison report: Attended Surviving Spouse Liaison zoom with National SSL. Speaking of Love Lives On ...if spouse remarries prior to 55yrs the benefits will continue. Attended a virtual meeting with National regarding Advocacy in Action in DC April 15-19, 2024. HB 1354 is in the Transportation Committee of NH Senate. Sent a letter to Senator Riccardi, the chairman of the committee encouraging her to support the bill. I am encouraging every member to PLAN AHEAD. The MOAA web site has all the information you will need. Sent note to Diane Hulseby thanking her for her service as a Board Member, signed by the President. Peter asked about the "Love Lives On". Pat stated that there is a proposal for a surviving spouse, 55 or younger, who remarries, would be able to keep her military SBP benefits. Peter mentioned that he had an SBP for Suzy, but since she has died,

that money will never go to anyone unless Peter remarries. Prior to her death, Peter was fully paid up and no longer making payments. If you are over 55 and have paid into that system for over 30 years, then payments cease.

DISCUSSION

Clambake Discussion: Bob Jaffin not present. Larry asked about emails suggesting an upcoming meeting, but Peter didn't think one has actually been scheduled. There is now another volunteer to be the clambake meister which will make a team of two. The clambake trailer survived the recent storms.

OLD BUSINESS:

Granite State Warrior's Award: Larry has the award but is still waiting for the engraving to be completed.

NEW BUSINESS:

By-Laws: Michael said this is essentially complete and has been sent to the directors. Michael will work out something for the November meeting to approve the updated bylaws. A vote of approval will be made at the May meeting. The formal signing of the Bylaws will be accomplished after approval by the membership at the annual meeting.

Chapter Operations Handbook 2015: Michael said these revisions just need approval by the BOD, not the entire membership.

Veteran Cemetery Project: Because of a recent illness, Larry hasn't been able to get up to the Veterans Cemetery.

NH HB 1283, End of Life Options: Bill Luti said the bill is now headed to the state Senate, Health & Human Services committee. It is expected that this bill will die in this committee and is unlikely to pass in the Senate. He expects that 12-13 of the Republican members will vote against it, and at least two Democrats who will also vote against this bill. This should happen in late April or early May. Bill is still recommending a strong showing of support to defeat this bill at the hearings in committee. You can sign in online to oppose the bill as well as testify in person. Another bill of concern was the one requiring an official declaration of war for the activation of the NH National Guard and prohibit the Governor from sending those forces into a combat situation when directed by the President and SECDEF. This bill has passed in the House. Yesterday there was a hearing in the Senate committee and both the TAG and Warren Perry testified as being adamantly opposed to this. Kevin Grady from the SVAC also was opposed to it. That committee has not yet held an executive session and no vote has been taken. It is also believed that this bill will die in the Senate as well. There are several other bills by this representative who is a former Marine and "Free Stater" which include a bill on NH enforcing the Selective Service Act which would require the state not cooperating with the federal government in helping to locate someone who has not registered for the Selective Service program when they turn 18. It was voted "Inexpedient to legislate" (ITL) in committee as well as on the House floor. The final bill was one that would require all military recruiting stations to have literature available so that potential recruits could see how awful the government is. Any Selective Service or recruiting facility would be required to post the number of casualties, including civilian, from 2001 to the present in

various military operations the US has conducted, and the dollar value of equipment left behind in Iraq. He describes himself as anti-war. This bill was also voted "ITL" on the House floor. The disturbing thing is that these bills show the typical mindset of many legislatures with mostly Democrats voting for them and a small group of Republicans who have split from the Republican caucus. Two of the Republicans who have supported these bills do so because of the very high employment rate in NH, and when Guardsmen are deployed, they leave a significant "hole" for their employer. This is SOP for Guardsmen, and there are laws already enacted to protect these people from adverse personnel actions while they are deployed. The "Soldiers & Sailors" act still exists, and good employers are members of ESGR. This issue affects the entire country and not just NH called "Protect the Guard" movement. All of these bills across the country ignore federal supremacy.

Outings: No discussion.

Memorial Charity Fund: Pat Miller mentioned that we discussed giving a donation to a deceased member's charity in the name of NH MOAA and that she had done this for Gerry Wall. She asked if we are going to continue doing this and where will the funds come from? Michael suggested that we wait until Roby was present to discuss this. He had previously suggested taking the funds from existing budget lines, and Larry doesn't agree. We had 19 deaths last year, and at \$25/death, that would be less than \$500/year. Peter felt that we could support this amount. Larry made a proposal to support this function as a separate line item in the budget. Peter turned this into a motion which was seconded by Pat Miller. Michael wanted to know how much money we were talking about to go along with the motion. The motion was approved by all present.

MOAA AiA, 15-18 April, DC: No comments.

Copyright Infringement: Larry went into a long discussion about the copyright issue in MOAA in every meeting with Frank Michael. You can trust any of the material on MOAA National's website. There is no way of us knowing what material is copyrighted for them or us. If we wish to use a picture from National, a request must be forwarded to them first. A DOD Guidance document was sent out in email on 1 April regarding the use of service logos, which are copyrighted by the military services. They can't be used in conjunction with any other logos without first obtaining permission. Various legal teams are using bots to scan the internet searching for violations. We need written guidance from Frank Michael. There was a long discussion about how to handle photos at the luncheons, scholarship winners, etc. It was proposed that we publish a notice at the sign-in table informing guests their attendance at luncheons would be considered as approval for taking their picture, and we should add another box on the luncheon flyers to check off if they declined approval for picture taking. Also, the President should include this issue during luncheon welcome comments. Bill Luti said some organizations purchase a subscription to something like Getty Images to protect themselves. Larry explained that we can use the logos of the individual services, but they can't be displayed along with any other organization such as MOAA. They have to be totally independent. Michael has already removed the service logos on our website that were associated with the service hymns. Therefore, based on the above, our challenge coins might be illegal. We will need further clarification. The letters that Pat sends out to surviving spouses will also have an issue. We cannot use articles off the MOAA website either.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Government Relations (National/State/SVAC/MLT/Vets Count): Peter said the SVAC meeting was well attended. Senator Hassen spoke about the PACT Act, mental health concerns, buddy calls like Jim has been doing, Gold Star families and their ability to find jobs just as if their sponsors were still alive, and also discussed the idea of having a “grace” period after a sponsor dies before the government begins the process of discontinuing retired pay/social security to avoid having surviving spouses having to pay back money to the government. This is also being discussed in surviving spouse circles. There were other speakers from the Disabled Veterans United Foundation, the greater Nashua Mental Health, the administrator for programs from the Division of Rehabilitative Services. The President of the Disabled Veterans United Foundation had done six combat tours and discussed the PACT Act also. The VBA Director mentioned stated that the Manchester office is currently undergoing renovation, 1.13 million claims have been processed, \$16 million in grants in NH, and the claims processing is currently at 153 days. The VA Medical Center has processed 21,552 toxic screenings related to the PACT Act or other toxic exposures. The NH Veterans Home is replacing all of the veterans room lamps with LED bulbs to lower electric costs. There are 128 veterans, including 11 women, in the home. Bill needed clarification on the toxic screening issue. Peter explained he had it done to establish a baseline for the future due to some exposure he had during Desert Storm. These are all set up with the individual’s PCP. Finally, it was mentioned that Representative Kuster will not seek re-election. Peter did meet the President of the NH Council of the Navy League of the US. He is enlisted and was interested in joining the NH Chapter of MOAA. Peter suggested he complete the application with all of his details, and we might be able to make him an “honorary member”. Michael said we would need to look at the criteria.

Personal Affairs: No report.

Membership: Since March, there were one new member (Chuck Frost’s wife), one deceased member, and 16 dropped members for a total of 533.

Recruiting: Tom Goff has returned to NH. Jim has been doing most of the work lately. He suggested moving the clambake to Corpus Christi, during spring break, to attract new members. Larry looked into the 10/20-year pins and found them hard to find and expensive. He suggested doing certificates instead. Jim and Roby had discussed the name of a possible treasurer. Larry will check with Jim.

Programs: Gerry Boyle said we have 69 attendees registered for the next luncheon. The final count needs to go to the Common Man by 16 April. He has received the meal breakdown from Roby. The phone call to Jim has already been taken care of.

Web page: In March we had 722 hits up from 643 in February.

Travel Program: There was no report on travel from Tony.

Scholarship Loan Program: Wayne said everything was going well. There is almost \$15K in the account. One of our students is going to be in the Carol King play at the Palace Theater being 19 April, and Wayne received a complimentary ticket to the opening night. He will try to obtain some photos. She has been a four-year scholarship recipient, and Wayne will be seated with her parents, Theresa and Ben Bahoque, and the student’s name is Catiana. Wayne mentioned he retires (really) on 19 April as a contractor at Hanscom AFB. His phone and email address remain the same, and he will be on vacation the last two weeks of this month.

2024 Granite State Warrior Award: Larry said that he is looking for nominations for the two awards for this year in the “Military Capabilities” and “Services” area. He wants to promote this through the newsletter for nominations.

Nominations – Directors: Sharon stated that Diane Hulseley has resigned as a director due to serious medical issues. Bill Luti has agreed to assume her director position for the last six months until the November elections. The BOD’s need to appoint him to fill the remainder of her term until November’s election. Peter made a motion to accept the nomination of Bill Luti to fill the remainder of Diane’s term. This was seconded by Wayne and approved by all present. Bill was notified of his selection.

LIAISONS

ESGR: There will be a large training meeting beginning in the morning until the afternoon on 26 Apr at the Cross Training Center and Peter will attend.

Transition Assistance: Jim had nothing to report.

Martin’s Point Liaison: Larry received a notification from Martins Point of three meetings to be held this month. One will be in Manchester (4/19), one in Portland (4/22) and one in Bangor (4/29). These are informational meetings. If anyone is interested, Larry can forward the information. Peter mentioned that Brenda Pennells works for Martins Point and is a good source of information.

Manchester VAMC: Bernie Satterfield sent a report as follows. A ribbon cutting and open house was held for the VA Manchester Veteran Wellness Center at Brady Sullivan Tower on the 2d floor in Manchester on Friday April 5th. The renovated 14,000-square-foot clinic focuses on "whole health" and health care for veterans’ programs.

The event was open to the public and feature speakers Kevin Forrest, VA Manchester Medical Center director; Arthur Sullivan, Brady Sullivan Properties; U.S. Sen. Maggie Hassan and U.S. Rep. Chris Pappas.

There are a variety of activities such as yoga, Music Meet Up, tai chi and a gym/fitness with a view and spin cycle classes. Many of the events are virtual.

Open this link to see April’s Whole Health schedule:

<https://www.va.gov/files/2024-04/Veteran%20Whole%20Health%20Calendar%20APR%202024.pdf>

Surviving Spouse Liaison: Pat Miller attended Surviving Spouse Liaison zoom with National SSL. “Speaking of Love Lives On” ...if spouse remarries prior to 55yrs the benefits will continue.

Attended a virtual meeting with National regarding Advocacy in Action in DC April 15-19, 2024. HB 1354 is in the Transportation Committee of NH Senate. Sent a letter to Senator Riccardi, the chairman of the committee encouraging her to support the bill.

I am encouraging every member to PLAN AHEAD. The MOAA web site has all the information you will need.

Sent note to Diane Hulseley thanking her for her service as a Board Member, signed by the President.

Next Board Meeting: The next BOD meeting will be returning to Rodgers for a BOD luncheon on 9 May 24. Peter will not be able to attend as he will be in California.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 2030 hours which was seconded and accepted by all present.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. McLean
CDR, USN (Ret.)
Secretary
New Hampshire Chapter