

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA
New Hampshire Chapter Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
8 December 2022

Call to Order: President Jim Lefebvre called the meeting to order at 1830 hours. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jim Lefebvre and recited by those assembled followed by the invocation delivered by Gary Terhune. This was a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Attending: Balcolm, Breuder, Burdett, Coulter, D'Amante, R. Day, S. Day, Erickson, Hulsey, Jaffin, LeFebvre, McLean, Miller, Terhune, Way, J. Wright. A quorum of members was present.

President's Opening Remarks: President LeFebvre stated he was glad that everyone was able to attend this Zoom meeting, especially as several board members have been sick recently. The first order of business was the swearing-in of Diane Hulsey who had not been able to attend the November Annual meeting. Diane recited the oath of office and was formally installed as a member of the BOD. Jim mentioned that he was pleased that several BOD members contacted him to let him know that they were either sick or going to be absent from the call. He asked that everyone please remember those members in your thoughts and prayers for speedy recoveries. The Granite State Warrior nominee and issues with the Granite Slate production will be discussed later. We'll also be discussing the T-Bones luncheon meeting for January.

Immediate Past President Remarks: Bob Jaffin could not be contacted at this time.

Vice President Remarks: Larry had no comments.

Secretary's Report: Michael said that we did have a quorum and there was one comment on the last September's meeting minutes correcting Pete Burdett's spelling of his last name to remove the last letter "e". A motion was made and seconded to accept the September meeting minutes as amended above. The motion was approved by all present.

Finance Report: Everyone had received November's treasury report. There were no surprises, and the big change was the costs for the November Annual meeting where we were in the "green", but not by much. This continues the trend we've been seeing for the last several years. Michael McLean again reminded us that using the LOE criteria, we are supposed to have someone filling the Treasurer position, otherwise we lose points. For purposes of the LOE reporting, Roby will be named as Treasurer. A motion to approve the Finance report was made, seconded, and approved by all present.

Trustee of the Trust Fund: Drew mentioned that we discussed some options at the November annual meeting regarding the investments and planned to wait until after the mid-term elections to see what, if any, impact they might have on our investments. The stock market appears to continue to be gradually climbing again and is currently 5100 points above its annual minimum and our investments now appear to have regained all the loses since last August. There is still a concern of a possible recession in 2023. A lot will depend on what the Federal Reserve does with the continuing interest rate increases. Pete expects that the raising of the interest rates will probably end in February or March and then bonds will start doing better than stocks. Stocks may be expected to do better in the second half of next year.

OLD BUSINESS

Granite Slate Update: Drew stated that he probably didn't understand how much he was biting off when he accepted the editor's position as there have been several technical issues, one of which is that no other publishing software applications can open the Microsoft Publisher files. Drew has two publishing applications on his laptop, one of which seems to be a reasonable alternative, Swift Publisher 5. He also has an application, PDF Expert, that can manipulate most of the elements of standard pdf files. To keep things simple, he thought he could use the December 2021 newsletter as a template to prepare this year's edition. However, he kept running into issues with certain elements of last year's newsletter, like black borders, that he was unable to modify or remove. Also, he was trying to expand the edition to six pages as previously recommended by Cynthia LeFebvre when she was the editor. He thanked those who have submitted items for the publication, and he believes he will finally have the issues ironed out by early January. He is also beginning to move major elements of the newsletters into a Swift Publisher 5 template that may be used for later editions. Drew was asked if he needed Microsoft Publisher. He already has a suite of Microsoft applications as part of being a faculty member at SNHU, but Publisher was not part of that suite. He believes this issue will dog anyone else who assumes this job in the future and would like to pursue working with what he has now rather than try to learn another new application and avoid additional expenses for the Chapter. Sharon mentioned that doing a six-page newsletter was very expensive and maybe we should leave it at four pages. However, Cynthia mentioned that at four pages, much of the newsletter is boiler plate with not a lot of new information. The big problem is that Drew has not used any publishing software previously and there is a steep learning curve.

Granite State Warrior's Award: Gary mentioned that finding a venue for the luncheon has been an exercise in futility. Only the Grill 28 at Pease is at our budgetary goal, but the room has no windows, is limited to about 60 people at most, and is normally used as a golfing simulator and is probably not appropriate for what we want. The price would run approximately \$38/person. Every other location he has checked runs about \$45/person and room rental fees run between \$300 (Holy Grail) up to \$500. Most meals would run \$38 without including taxes and gratuity. The annual meeting at the Nashua Country Club only ran \$31, but that is probably an unrealistic expectation for future events, and Michael mentioned that we had kind of a special deal with them for that luncheon. Our goal is to keep the total meal cost between \$35-\$40/person. Gary still has a call into Ashworth-by-the-Sea but has not received a response. The Manchester Country Club in Bedford has a room rental fee of \$750. Michael asked about the Abenaki Club, but they start their pricing at \$55/person. Gary is still checking out the Oaks in Somersworth, but Michael said they also had a \$300 room charge. The Galley Hatch in Hampton doesn't serve plated lunches, only buffet, which would be difficult for some of our members. Michael asked about the Old Salt in Hampton, but their rooms weren't large enough for our luncheons. Their maximum seating would be about 40 people. Sharon mentioned the possibility of skipping January and moved this luncheon to the springtime and went to the Common Man in Plymouth in April. Jim asked if the PAO at either PNSY or Pease have any other suggestions. There is no longer an Officer's Club at PNSY, only an "all ranks" club now. Pease only has the Grill 28 available. Drew mentioned that UNH had their "Dining Out" in April at the "Red Barn" in South Berwick, ME and it seemed to be a nice venue but had no information on pricing. Gary then mentioned that there might be an opportunity on the UNH campus because of their hotel management/culinary program. Gary said that he would check out that option. Peter mentioned that there is also a culinary program at SNHU. Bob Jaffin mentioned that they have an excellent facility (The Hospitality Center or Webster Hall ???), but it might be very expensive

as well. Jim asked if anyone was an alumnus of Dartmouth College. No one responded but Bob Jaffin said it was an excellent suggestion but would again probably be very expensive. Jim asked if anyone had checked out/been to the Puritan restaurant in Manchester? Drew mentioned that NH Right to Life used to have their annual banquets at the Executive Court Facility, but they were now asking at least a \$500 room fee. "The Yard" is just across the parking lot from the Executive Court and Drew's son had an engagement party there many years ago but hasn't been back there since. Larry Mille said he had been to "The Yard" about a year ago and that there was no room charge. Gary said that in the next couple of days he'll check on UNH. Because of the timeline to get the luncheon flyer out, a luncheon at the end of January is not looking possible. Ray D'Amante suggested moving the luncheon into at least February. Roby also commented that the Chapter has the means to subsidize these luncheons but would require the BOD to decide how much to subsidize versus what we can afford to pay. Gary mentioned that we would probably have to do this if we really want to keep the cost per person to \$40 or less. Rick Erickson asked Gary to check the "Powder Major Farm" in Madbury which should have the space to meet our needs, but the luncheon would have to be catered. Rick will send Gary a POC information. Larry Miller also suggested the Flag Hill winery in Dover. The owner, a former submariner, has re-located to Florida. The other issue is the winery is located out in the woods which might be difficult to reach in bad weather. The Puritan Backroom has a larger conference center across the parking lot from the main restaurant. The President suggested that Gary gather a list of 4-6 places with comparisons for meal costs etc. so the board could get a better idea of what it might cost to subsidize the luncheons in the future. Michael will check with the Nashua Country Club to see what their pricing might be in the March/April timeframe (there is no room charge there). Gary will try to gather this information in the next week.

2023 Events Discussion Update: This discussion is postponed due to the absence of Gerry Boyle.

NEW BUSINESS: None currently.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Government Relations: Peter said the last meeting of the SVAC was on 6 December. They now have a secretary for the SVAC and a very small treasury. There were two guest speakers: Easter Seals Veterans Count to talk about the facility at the Franklin campus funding by \$23M of Federal/State funding through the Executive Committee. There will be a survey going out to all the VSO's to get their inputs as to what they think what should be located at this facility which is located on 15 acres and includes waterfront along the river and fields and opportunities for recreation. There is a great opportunity to collaborate with several groups to deliver services to veterans for things like transitional housing or various levels of care. This also includes the possibility of having the VA move the Tilton CBOC over to this campus. Ginger Munson, who many of us know, is picking up the task force military liaison for the project. She was present and contributed to the discussion. The second speaker was Major Ray Willson, who is the US Army Regional Director for Soldier-for-Life. He reviewed all the Soldier-for-Life items that are currently ongoing. Their emphasis now is employment, particularly under-employment, and spouse employment. There is also an education component that helps transitioning soldiers become more employable at a higher level and health and wellness initiatives. This goes along with the precept of being a protector of soldiers for their entire life spans. This was some discussion on something called skill bridge. If interested in this, contact Peter. The President

asked if the education part to this program included going on for a higher degree or skill sets such as master plumber or similar? Peter didn't know exactly, but the skill bridge was an effort to take the skill sets the soldier already had and help translate that into language that an employer might understand for hiring. Amy Cook, who was part of the military veterans' services in the TAG's office, is leaving her position as the director and facilitator for the military leadership team and is taking a job with Nanny NH, a non-profit organization. Anyone interested in this position should reach out to Amy or the TAG's office. The NH Veterans Home is having their Covid restrictions removed for now and are in great shape with 131 bed capacity with current occupancy at 126, of which 9 are women. Regarding our political delegations, there are still LSR's with no language in them and will be dealt with later. Jim asked if there were patients at the Tilton home being restricted due to a lack of staffing? Pete said that there are more than the current 136 operating beds and there has been some improvement in nursing staff but less coverage for ancillary services like meal preparation, laundry, etc.

Personal Affairs/Recruiting: Jim is a strong advocate of the buddy-check system used by the American Legion. He is currently using it in his outreach to people who are sick or having problems inside the organization and he will encourage members to contact Jim if you have any questions regarding this program or those who might need assistance.

Membership: Michael reported that since the September meeting, we had two new members, two deceased members (plus two with spouses), and one dropped member for a current total of 562 current members. He will be sending out the annual dues letters in the middle of January.

Recruiting: Tom Goff is the new recruiter for the organization but is out sick tonight. He and Jim, who had some experience in this during his active-duty time, will be working together on this. Jim would like to see some additional funding devoted to this because to get people you must spend some money. We will come back to this in the January meeting. Michael had one additional item about recruiting. He sent out 18 recruiting letters in October and December, but there were no responses. Roby mentioned that the liability insurance that we held through the Mercer group is good for the next year. Our premium was reduced to \$498.90 due to a decline in our membership.

Programs: Gerry Boyle was out sick. No report.

Next In-Person BOD: Jennifer sent most of the details in an email shortly after the agenda for this meeting was distributed. It is scheduled for a luncheon on 12 Jan 23 at T-Bones in Concord. The menu was previously distributed which included a two-course or three-course option. The \$500 room charge was waived based on the expectation that we would order enough meals to cover that room fee. We are about ½ way to that goal with the current reservations and she needs eight more directors to join the luncheon to cover that charge. Please email Jennifer with your menu selection so she can send the selections to the restaurant in advance for them to make sure everything will be ready to go at that time. Jim asked if they mentioned that it was not just food but also alcohol would be counted against that \$500 fee? Jennifer didn't remember if that was mentioned during the T-Bones briefing, but coffee, soft drinks, etc. were free with the meal. Jennifer will check to see if any alcohol charges can count against the room charge. Sharon asked about the deadline date for the meal selection and in the email, it was listed as 5 Jan 23. If anyone is ordering meat that needs to be cooked a certain way, please let Jennifer know as well. Drew has a teaching conflict on that date/time. Michael will forward the

audiotape of the meeting so he can prepare the minutes. Jennifer said that they had a great meal when they went there last month and will provide some good variety for our BOD meetings. In addition, it also avoids nighttime travel in January.

Website: There has been some increased activity on the webpage. There were 10 hits in September, 15 hits in October, and 40 hits in November. He did not report the popular pages. Michael is still looking for relief as webmaster after 23 years. There are no obvious replacements/volunteers currently.

Travel Program: There was no report tonight.

Scholarship Loan Program: Wayne had to join the meeting using his cell phone. We had 11 students and we paid out \$11,000 last week. We have still not needed to touch the Vanguard scholarship investments. As of today, we have about \$19,000 in the checking account, \$3,000 paid out, \$11,000 already paid out, and \$8,000 more probably this week. That will still leave the Citizens Bank account with \$10,987.12. These are now grants rather than loans. We had previously discussed writing off up to 25% towards the outstanding balances of \$135,000 based on how well the investments had done in prior years. Based on the reduction in income for our investments this past year, the committee is now recommending a reduction in the write-off of only 10%. There are still about 30 students paying back their previous loans and sending us about \$1,000/month. Gerry asked if the BOD were willing to reduce the loan forgiveness to 10% rather than the previous goal of 25%? We still have enough funds to cover the eight students for next year. Larry mentioned that if we do this, the letter to these students should indicate that this would be a one-time event and may not be the same for any subsequent years, if at all. Larry wanted to make sure that the students weren't led to believe that this forgiveness would be an annual occurrence. A motion to approve a one-time 10% loan forgiveness to the existing participants was made, seconded, and approved by all present.

Granite State Warriors Award: Ray D'Amante sent out a detailed package about a potential nominee, "Swimming with a Mission, Inc.", for this award (*see attachment*). Ray thanked Peter for bringing up this organization and said what they do is very impressive. Ray talked with Phil Todd, one of the co-founders, who put this program together with his wife. Ray invited Phil to one of our meetings, but Phil couldn't as he was going to DC to deliver a \$2M check for what they raised recently. It started with swimmers at Newfound Lake and now involves hundreds of swimmers with Navy Seals at a veteran's festival. They work at Camp Resilience and providing support dogs for veterans. Ray recommended them for this year's award. Peter seconded that recommendation. Jim asked if they would have any problems attending the award ceremony if we slipped the presentation/luncheon back into the April time frame? Peter mentioned that the only conflict with their travel might be in the first week of June when he will be attending the National Security seminar at the Army War College. Ray would like to have them become involved in doing some things with the Chapter in the future, even though Phil is not a veteran. Ray also mentioned he has a nominee for next year who is building houses for veterans in the Lincoln/Woodstock area. A nomination for the above organization was made, seconded, and approved by all present. Michael asked if Ray would prepare the citation and obtain the plaque for the presentation? Ray has a supplier in Concord for the award we present. Ray will contact Phil Todd and advise him of their selection for the award, date TBD.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominations – Directors: No report.

Nominations – Officers: No report.

Web Communications: Jennifer reported that we are getting more hits on Instagram and Facebook. We now have three followers and we're seeing more activity on Facebook. If anyone has something that you would like Jennifer to post, please contact her. The most recent post involved trying to find a "bake Meister" for the annual clam/lobster bake in August.

SUD/JMTF Committee: Drew said there is no new information, and it should be removed from future agenda.

Blast Email: Geoff Corson was absent and there is no report.

LIAISONS

ESGR: Bruce Thompson, the current chair, is going to be replaced. A selection committee is already meeting to select a new chairman.

Transition Assistance: Jim continues to work with the Texas and National MOAA on transition issues. He will keep us posted if anything of interest comes up.

Manchester VAMC: Bernie submitted the following report which was published in the Manchester Union Leader on 8 December 2022. Manchester VA Medical Center will host a PACT Act Week of Action event Tuesday, Dec. 13 to inform veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors about the PACT Act and encourage them to apply for the toxic exposure-related health care and benefits they have earned. The event will include a speaking program, featuring medical center leadership discussing PACT Act benefits. Local VA staff will be present to help veterans to apply for benefits, complete toxic exposure screenings, and enroll in VA health care. The PACT Act is the largest expansion of veteran health care and benefits in decades. Local VA staff will be present to help veterans to apply for benefits, complete toxic exposure screenings, and enroll in VA health care at the event, which starts at 5:30 p.m. in the Training & Education (T&E) Room, 1st Floor, 718 Smyth Road, Manchester. For more information, contact Maureen Heard at (781) 999-2056 or Maureen.Heard@va.gov. Peter wanted to mention again that the Manchester VAMC had another flood affecting the central core of the main building. Drew mentioned that while he was COS there had been two other floods affecting this same area, another when Kevin Forest took over as Director, and now again. These floods have done significant damage to previously renovated sections of the facility (like the operating rooms). The older plumbing really needs replacement to prevent this from continuing.

Martin's Point Liaison: Bob had nothing new to report.

Auxiliary: Gwen recorded five deaths since October 10th. She has sent out three condolence cards, and three letters.

Final Comments: Peter mentioned an Army program called "Fellow & Interns". If there is someone who wants to have an internship during a semester or a graduate who would like to

go into the Army's Fellows program, there is significant compensation offered. For the intern program, they enter as a GS-3 or -4 (\$15-\$23/hour). For the Fellows program, they start between a GS-7 to -11 which is \$44K -\$97K/year. Peter has flyers on these programs if interested. Gary Terhune gave an update on his search for a new "Bake Master". He attempted to contact Joe Daly twice by email and by voicemail on his cell phone. He has not gotten any response. Jim will try again to contact him. If we can't get someone to accept this job, it will end up being done by a committee. Sharon thinks Ken Lull mentioned this at the clambake to Joe Daly who indicated his willingness to help, but not to take on the full responsibility. Jim Spotts gave the same information to Gary as well. Neither Jim nor Bob have spoken to Brenda regarding co-sponsorship of the event. Bob Jaffin asked if anyone else had seen the weekly MOAA National Newsletter? The Kroger/Albertson merger will remove even more pharmacies from the DOD Pharmacy program. Bob said we need to be going after the NH Congressional delegations about this issue. With this merger, the number of participating pharmacies will have been reduced by 1/3 for its previous total of independent pharmacies. Jim asked Bob to forward him this last newsletter. Larry Miller mentioned that the BOQ is closing at Hanscom AFB and are among about eight others that are also closing. Finally, Bob mentioned that MOAA is on the list of most influential lobbying organizations for the 16th year. We should make prospective members aware of this fact.

Next Board Meeting: The meeting adjourned at 1955 hours. The next meeting will be a face-to-face luncheon at T-Bones in Concord on 12 January 2023.

Respectfully submitted

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

[swam.org](https://www.swam.org)

About

9–11 minutes

How It All Started

By Phil and Julie Taub, Co-Founders

Here is our story. We started Swimming With A Mission, Inc. because we felt that we needed to do something! We were frustrated and concerned. Our Veterans and their families have given so much and for some, have made the ultimate sacrifice. Our Veterans deserve more. We live in the land of the free and the home of the brave, because of the brave. We hope that you will join us on this mission to help, support and honor our Veterans.

We started this organization by combining our most fundamental passions: Veterans, lake living and swimming. Our original event features a swim across Newfound Lake, the cleanest lake in the Northeast. Five years later, we now have hundreds of swimmers and volunteers showing up and raising money for our Veterans.

Following the swim, thousands of spectators have showed up to enjoy what has become a huge Veteran festival now being held at Northeast Delta Dental Stadium. Another featured event is a unique team building day led by the Navy SEALs who speak to some of the top companies in the Northeast about leadership, “team first” attitude and mental toughness. Those skills are then

tested in a paintball tournament, which in its has become the highest grossing paintball charity event ever in the USA. We continue to improve on these events to raise important funds for local, state and national Veterans organizations. Last year, we added a new event, Green Beret With A Mission challenge with the help of Camp Resilience. Teams participate and compete in stations that encourage team work and endurance.

As we continue to evolve and understand more about the needs of our Veterans, we are focusing more on providing service and support dogs to Veterans and creating art programs, both of which address the invisible wounds that too many of our veterans are suffering through. This year we are kicking off our art fundraising efforts by bringing Portraits of Courage to New Hampshire, a unique collection of paintings of Veterans by President Bush. We are also focusing on publishing a book about Veterans in NH as well as working with local artist Chris Ward to raise money to support art therapy programs.

We are so grateful that our first five years have been such a great success and are exceedingly appreciative of every donor, sponsor, swimmer, volunteer and participant who have helped make this mission victorious! We have an incredible board, group of advisors and swim committee that are working hard to make year six even better. We are grateful to our friends and family (especially to our children Benjamin and Dani) for joining our mission. Please join us to make a difference!

