

**MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA
NEW HAMPSHIRE CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES
8 June 2023**

Call to Order: The BOD meeting at Roger's Pizza in Dover, NH was called to order by President Jim Lefebvre at 1157 hours. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by VP Miller and recited by those assembled followed by the invocation from Gary Terhune.

Attending: Balcom, Burdett, Coulter, DuVall, Hulse, Jaffin, LeFebvre, Lovgren, Luti, McLean, Miller, Terhune. A quorum of members was present.

Opening Remarks: President LeFebvre welcomed everyone who attended and mentioned that we had greater than a quorum for attendance. Jim read several reports from those unable to attend. He read four reports from the absent members on recruiting, programs, web communications, and surviving spouse below.

Immediate Past President Remarks: Bob Jaffin was present and felt that the AIA meeting in DC was very successful.

Vice President Remarks: The VP mentioned that D-Day was celebrated recently and that he joined the military also on 6 June in 1966.

Secretary's Report: For the May minutes, Michael received no comments or corrections. A motion to approve the May minutes was made, seconded, and approved by all present.

Finance/Treasurer's Report: Roby is still having issues with his computer email account and waiting for Comcast to resolve his issues. He can receive and read, but not respond to emails. He told Jim that we are solvent but "be careful with your nickels and your dimes".

Trustee of the Trust Fund: Drew was absent in LA. Due to Roby computer issues, there was no financial report. Gary mentioned that the investment accounts were doing okay.

OLD BUSINESS:

Advocacy in Action Update: Bob Jaffe mentioned that one problem was that they ran out of time with two of our Congressional delegations although we generally had more time with them than anybody else. Bob had originally allowed 30 minutes for each meeting. He would like to increase the time to an hour next year. Larry asked whether the staff would allow us that much time and Bob responded that they were willing to stay longer, but we had to move on to the next meeting. He stated that our delegation and Congressional staffers are used as a model for other states. He had to walk out of two meetings early but got an hour with Senator Hassen and her staff.

Clambake Discussion: Gary Terhune said that Chad, Peter, and others on the committee had been continuing to work diligently. They have inventoried the equipment, trailer, but lost some cardboard due to an infestation a year ago. Gary recommended we charge \$27 for the meal based on current prices. Lobster prices should be under \$6/pound (last year they were \$6.85/lb.). We are going to add Kielbasa (\$4/lb.) to the menu restoring some things that we removed in the past. We're going with a 50/50 combination of mussels and clams. The cost of clams is double that of mussels. We're ordering 16 gallons of clam chowder for \$300. He is still seeking volunteers to help out and needs an Admin OIC, if possible. Gary has been trying to contact John Graham unsuccessfully to take care of butter issues (Butter OIC). Gary's wife will be Kitchen OIC (she is declining). Jennifer Wright will assist with check-ins. Tom Moore, Carol Moore's husband, has also volunteered to do some check-ins. Brenda Pennels (?), from the southern Maine chapter, significant other will assist Gerry Boyle with steak cooking. The price of steaks, by the way, has dropped (down \$3). Gary went to BJ's and spoke to the butcher and saw a package of NY strip steaks for \$9/lb. This beef is coming from Canada and is just as good as US Choice, if not better. Current needs include getting the trailer down from Pete's to the seacoast, so we need someone who can physically tow the trailer. Looking to see if Ken Lull will do this. We are currently paying \$85 to rent a charcoal grill. The shipyard has propane grills and Gary will see about getting one of our use or someone volunteers to bring a large personal charcoal grill. Gary will also check out the local American Legion post in Portsmouth to see if they would loan one to us. Bernie asked what beer we should buy? Suggestions were Coors Light and either Heineken, Pabst Blue Ribbon, Miller, or Sam Adams for non-lite beers. Tom Goff asked what kind of marketing we had planned for recruiting. **The meeting adjourned for lunch at 1244 and reconvened at 1311 hours.** Continuing on, Gary said he needed a butter OIC to have melted butter in cups for bread, corn, etc. Larry Miller volunteered for this. It was asked with we had separate prices for children, and we have not done that in the past. Because this was a new team running the event this year, we didn't want to make any significant changes to the menu and complicate things. Because of this, we might be discouraging younger officers and families from attending. Those points are appreciated but would significantly complicate the process especially for this year's event. In addition, Michael was sending the flyer to the printer tomorrow (9 Jun), so we're unable to make changes at this point. Larry suggested that we maintain the price at \$30 due to not having an established contract for our food and this would protect us from any price increases in the interim. Jim suggested that if we get extra money from this event, we might use it to purchase a grill for next year. Michael stated that profits from the clambake were used to offset losses from any other luncheons. We have never used any profits from the clambake for scholarships. Any extra sale of food at the end of the clambake was used to support our scholarship program. Gary also needs a volunteer to replace Mary Beth who made cookies to support the scholarship fund. Bob Jaffin suggested that if no one volunteered, we might open this to Girl Scouts or organizations like the PTA. Peter mentioned that if we purchased a charcoal grill for next year, there is space in the trailer to store it. Jim suggested that Gary talk with Geoff Corson and send out a blast email about some of these issues as well as Jennifer Wright for social media. Again, we have never made a specific statement about children under 12 attending or eating for free. We've never given them lobsters or steaks. Again, it becomes a logistical issue. Bob Jaffin mentioned that the SVAC puts out information about all kinds of events and we should ask them to post our flyer. Jim

reviewed the statistics regarding past attendance and total membership. Jim was concerned that opening this event up to all ranks might change the nature of the event as it's been held in the past. He also mentioned that Ft. Myers maintained a separate Officers Club versus the "All Ranks clubs" and that the later organizations didn't survive. Larry mentioned that at the Northeast conference recently, someone approached them and asked who they represented and were told that we were an officer's association, to which they responded that they didn't want to speak to anyone who only represented officers. Judy Terhune asked what was the purpose of the clambake? Gary responded that it was for mainly for social purposes of the members. Secondly, to invite our Congressional delegations and MOAA National leadership. Third, for recruiting new members to MOAA. And finally, for soliciting funds for our scholarship program. Peter didn't think that having the SVAC advertise our event would draw any enlisted folks as they would read the title and self-select out of participation. We also get participation from the MOAA chapter in Maine, but they are not co-sponsors this year. Since there has been still no decision on the viability of the Vermont chapter, Peter suggested sending the flyer to National and letting them decide on whether to send it to Vermont. Bob mentioned that we're entitled to use National's blast email system, and suggested we do that. Jim will add a Profit/Loss column to the historical clambake data and distribute it to the BOD.

Granite Slate Update: Drew was away and unable to attend. Prior to leaving for LA on 6 June, a final draft had been sent to Michael and only needed updates to the last page for new and deceased members. Michael made those updates, and the newsletter went to the printer and was being distributed.

MOAA Northeast Session Update: Larry, Wayne, Michael, and Bob attended this event at the Hilton in Providence, RI. Larry said one of the best sessions was from the surviving spouse speaker, Gail. Pat Miller specifically mentioned that both spouses should have their names on all utility bills (electric, water, phone, etc.) and the women spouses should have credit cards in their own names. As soon as the veteran dies, all credit cards with both names expire so the surviving spouse would be immediately cut off from accessing those accounts. Peter mentioned from his days at Merrill-Lynch that spouses also have durable power of attorney which could help avoid some of the above issues. He suggested that utilities be placed on an automatic payment system to avoid any issues. Larry mentioned that there was a round table discussion the first night and Lyons stressed that we are apolitical and to be careful about having speakers who are currently campaigning speaking to your organizations. There were Chapter meetings with Erin and legislative meetings. Michael mentioned that Bob invited everyone to our Clambake and several people asked about where to find the flyer. Wayne felt it was a good meeting. Bob mentioned that in his discussions with MOAA National reps that they felt we should be in two places this year: Florida and the Clambake. In addition, in listening to other discussions around the room, we should be thankful that NH has an SVAC. A question was asked about having the Surviving Spouse speaker come to NH to do a presentation here such as to the annual meeting and having a break-out session for the spouses. Unfortunately, someone else has already been invited. Larry said that the surviving spouse is a benefit that has not been promoted by MOAA National. He stated this should be emphasized more. Although this seems like a good idea, Michael mentioned that in recent years the turnout by spouses for these

sessions has not been good. Something like this might turn that around. It needs to be promoted.

June 17th Event Update: Gary Lovgren said we currently have 62 reservations for this event, with 10% being their first event with MOAA. Gary called everyone from Dover north in our directory and invited them to the event. We should at least break even without considering beer and wine sales which will cost \$5/glass or bottle. Tuckerman's has agreed to send us two cases of beer. Gary will purchase some wine for sale. He's also looking for any donations, if possible. It was intended to be a combination of what we normally do plus the events at Tin Mountain. Their Chairman of the Board will be present all day with us and will introduce to the facility and its functions and outline what activities are available after the lunch such as supervised walks, children's programs, etc. The NH ARNG SAR team will be doing a presentation with displays. There will be two raffles: one door prize and one 50/50 raffle. Cranmore has donated the door prize worth about \$200 good during this summer. We may get two scenic railway excursions as well. In addition, the lunch will be catered, hence the higher cost. Some people tried to book reservations at the Marriott but didn't make the deadline and the rate went from \$116/night to \$360/night. One problem was that our flyer had the wrong deadline date.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOAA NH Annual Meeting Discussion: We currently don't have a speaker for this event. Bob said he did invite someone to speak from MOAA National, but it has not been confirmed yet. The MOAA National meeting is the day prior to our annual meeting. He will talk to Erin and Dan to confirm. Jim suggested that we try to obtain Gail, the speaker for Surviving Spouses from the Northeast Conference meeting to be the speaker. It was asked if the Commander of the USS Constitution would be invited to the clambake. Michael also mentioned that the three cutters that used to be stationed at PNSY have now left. The Nashua Country Club will again host the meeting and Michael will be negotiating meal costs, and the flyer will be sent out in September.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Government Relations (National/State/SVAC/MLT/Vets Count): Peter Burdett said that SVAC was attended by a number of individuals from chapter in a full room. Kevin Forest from the Manchester VAMC presented a ten-year plan for the medical center renovations. The VA facility rating for Manchester is better than the Connecticut VAMC and is not worse than other New England VA's. The facility is built on a seismic fault line and the facility will get an appropriate seismic upgrade. Kim McKay, the NH Veteran Home Commandant, is still trying to hire more employees. The staffing shortage is preventing filling all the available beds. Long term, they would like to add a third floor. All Covid restrictions are now rescinded. For legislative issues, all that proposals that should pass are moving along. Chris Scott, Senator Sheehan's representative, mentioned that "concurrent receipt" is moving along. Senate Bill 1515/HB 303 are companion bills with a better chance of being approved. Peter passed out flyers for a raffle at Camp Resilience. Peter attended a meeting of the ESGR and asked if anyone is interested in

the 157th ARW "Space Available" notification procedures. An email will be sent out about this program/process. Peter and Bob attended Brenda Pennell's talk about Martin's Point and what's going on in healthcare in NH. Martin's Point is a Medicare Part C provider. Larry mentioned that if the veteran spouse dies, their spouse will lose the veteran's plates on the car. You would have a year to relinquish the plates and efforts are being made to change this. Peter didn't think that this will succeed. Another bill Larry mentioned was a proposal preventing the activation of the National Guard only in the case of war which would remove the authority from the state governor. This too would be unlikely to pass. Peter also attended Phil Taub's event at Delta Dental stadium for the VSO gathering and the room was filled with VSO's. There was a discussion about the Franklin campus project for veterans, and \$23.7M has been supplied from the Governor's office towards the project. The Tilton CBOC replacement should triple in size. Final completion should be somewhere between 2025-2027.

Membership: There were no new members, zero deceased, zero dropped members, for a total of 542. Fifty members have not yet paid their dues for this year and will receive a reminder letter in June.

Personal Affairs: Jim had no report.

Recruiting: Tom Goff was absent today due to a doctor's appointment. He raised a point about ways to do proxy voting which is currently not in our Bylaws. The President said that this might be something we would want to consider when amending the Bylaws in the future. Jim asked if anyone needed additional flyers for the clambake? Does anyone have contacts at Portsmouth, Manchester, or Nashua area newspapers? If so, please pass them to Tom Goff so he can generate more interest in these events.

Programs: Gerry Boyle was unable to attend but spoke to Jim this morning. He raised some questions about programs, specifically that in September we have historically gone towards the southwestern portion of the state. Gerry has a potential speaker and wants to do an event in Concord area in the middle to late September. This would fill the gap between the Clambake and the November Annual meeting. This would require someone to oversee that event. Jim was looking for volunteers to try to set this up. Peter mentioned that the Pease Air Show is scheduled for 9 September. Another thing Gerry mentioned is again that we should have a process in the Bylaws to allow for proxy voting. Jim felt that this idea warrants consideration by the BOD. Michael suggested that if we implement that suggestion, no one will ever show up at a meeting. Various members suggested that there were ways to limit this procedure. Reference Section 8 of the Bylaws regarding absences of the BOD members. Michael didn't feel he could make the various changes to the Bylaws that have already been suggested before the annual meeting.

Website: Michael said that there were 248 hits in May, up from 182 in April. Popular pages in April were Program notes (33), Group travel (29), Odds and Ends (21), Chapter News (19), Newsletter (12), Hot items (7), TRICARE (2), Membership (1), General (120).

Travel Program: No report.

Scholarship Loan Program: Wayne said there were seven applications so far, and he expected a few more. We still have \$20,000 in the checking account. We have not had to touch any of the investment money so far. Larry suggested that scholarship recipients should have some obligation to help us such as helping out at the annual clambake in the future. Wayne said that many of them live out of state and would not be available.

Granite State Warrior's Award: Jim has received the plaque for SWAM and will make arrangements to get it to the Taub's.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominations – Directors/Officers: Sharon said that she is looking for up to six Directors to fill upcoming vacancies. Please let Sharon, Larry, or Jim know if you have a good candidate. There will be a short meeting affair the BOD meeting to discuss the VP position.

Web Communications: Jennifer Wright was unable to attend today. Jim read her report which stated that she has been posting on Facebook/Instagram as information is shared such as the information reported by Pete Burdett. She is always looking for content to share and so please email her with any updates and pictures from our events. We have 76 followers on Facebook, and a large number on Instagram. She recommended everyone check out these social media sites if you haven't done so.

Blast Email: No report.

LIAISONS

ESGR: See the above discussion regarding "Space Available" transportation.

Transition Assistance: No report.

Manchester VAMC: Bernie was not present but told Michael that he has volunteered to collect the canned goods for the Medical Center's food bank at the clambake.

Martin's Point Liaison: Bob Jaffin said that the recent report at the SVAC will now become an annual report. He had three other comments. First, the US Family Health Plan is almost unique in that it is limited almost entirely to the Northeast US and one provider in the state of Washington. Martin's Point is a provider under this plan which has been extended into parts of Ohio. Second, if you are under this plan, you may buy a Generations Advantage Health plan. Third, it has been identified that there are some problems with the VA and Medicare. The current way DOD is handling transitions out of the military is that enrollment in the VA is an "opt in" process, not "opt out". They spoke to the Congressionals and said that both VA and Medicare programs should only be "opt out" programs. This is affecting provider availability.

Surviving Spouse Liaison: Gwen Devoe that she sent out one condolence card, one condolence letter and made two phone calls to surviving spouses. Of note is that Pat Miller has agreed to pick up the responsibilities of the surviving spouse liaison. Jim asked everyone to applaud Pat for volunteering to replace Gwen Devoe as liaison.

Next Board Meeting: This will be a face-to-face meeting for Thursday, 13 July 2023 beginning at 1500-1600 hours at the Veteran's Home, Tilton, NH. This will mainly be a facility walk through with a short meeting.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 1420 hours which was seconded and accepted by all members present.

Respectfully submitted

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