

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER

MINUTES - BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

19 September 2024

Call to Order

President Gary Powers called the meeting of the Board of Directors of The Southwest Virginia Chapter, Military Officers Association to order at 1000 hours Eastern Standard Time on 19 September 2024.

Chapter Officers and Directors Present

President and Public Affairs Officer Gary Powers; 1st Vice President, Director and News Letter Editor Tom Dalzell; Treasurer and Membership Chair Robert Brown; Secretary and Personal Affairs Representative Steve Jamison; Chaplain and Bereavement Committee Officer David Gilleran; Sergeant-At-Arms Larry Johnson; VCOC Representative and Past President Matt Haag; Surviving Spouse Representative Mary Lou Summers; Facebook Editor Lee Ensley; Director John Miller; Director Evelyn Cox.

Chapter Officers and Directors Absent

Legislative Affairs Representative and Awards Chair Robert Habermann; Webmaster Klaus (Ted) Lonitz; Director Roger Burnett; Director Don Sowder;

Opening Prayer

Chaplain David Gilleran led the Board of Directors in prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

President Gary Powers led The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag recited by all present.

Approval of Board of Directors Meetings Minutes

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of 8 April 2024 were approved with one correction. The date for the October 2024 meeting is 17 October not 21 October.

President's Report

- Passing of LTC Daniel E. Karnes, USAR (Ret) on 7 June 2024. Flowers were sent and the chapter received a \$50 donation in memory of Dan Karnes from Pegram Johnson. The SWVC sent a \$100 donation to St. John's Episcopal Church in Dan's Honor.

- Acknowledged participants in the successful picnic in May with legislators.
- The chapter is looking for volunteers to fill vacant SWVC Chapter Officer Positions. 1st VP; 2nd VP; Transition Team Representative; Community Services Volunteer Representative.
- Participated in the VCOC ZOOM Call in July.
- Received invitation for participation in the Virginia Veterans Parade, Saturday 9 November 2024. There is a request for Sponsorships. \$500?
- The Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, Virginia will be held on 14 December 2024. CAPT Powers will be the Master of Ceremonies. COL Tom Dalzell will send out a request for service volunteers to participate in the ceremony.

Secretary's Report

- Chapter roster, membership dues update, new members, members dropped.
- New member LTC Paul M. Booton, Jr, USA (Ret)
- Gary Powers mentioned a Ross Campbell as a potential new member.

Treasurer's Report

- Income and Expenses Budget vs. Actual – 1 January – 10 September 2024
- Income - \$9,254; Expenses - \$9,150.21
- Prime Checking Account balance 10 September 2024 - \$9,109.77
- Savings Account balance -\$2,969.97
- Gary Powers questioned the \$348 cost for the WIX web site. He will look at changing to a less costly site.
- A question was asked about the chapter seeking grant funds for chapter use. Gary will request clarification from MOAA.

1st Vice President's Report

- It was suggested that the chapter develop a list of potential candidates for the vacant chapter leadership positions as well as offices and Board members for 2025. Are there other leadership positions in need of rotation? Aging of the membership population. Burnout! Action? Current Board members!!

Membership Chair Report

- Steve Jamison and Bob Brown sent out over 50 letters this summer to members who have not been attending monthly meetings regularly and to all who were not up to date on their dues. This resulted in \$300 in dues receipts and several returned letters due to address changes.
- One new member: LTC Paul Booton, Jr., US Army (Ret).

Program Directors Report

- Meeting programs scheduled for 2024.
 - **19 September 2024.** Mr. John Long on the “**Tragedy on Slapton Sands**”. On the night of 27th April 1944 during World War Two, a terrible tragedy unfolded just off Slapton Sands on the coast of Devon. **946 American servicemen died during Exercise Tiger**, the rehearsals for the D-Day landing on Utah Beach in Normandy, France.
 - **17 October 2024.** Mr. Ron Boyd, President and CEO of LOA (**Local Office on Aging**) on the many and diverse programs and services available to residents and veterans in the community. The Local Office on Aging is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to helping older persons remain independent for as long as possible administering over 25 community services that provide nutrition, education, advocacy and socialization.
 - **21 November 2024.** Ms. Sara Stanford or Ms. Carly Harris on the “**Sports Nutrition Program For Athletes At Virginia Tech**”.
 - **19 December 2024.** Mr. Martin Leamy, President and CEO, Central and Southwest Virginia Honor Flight on the Virginia “**Honor Flight Program**”. Their mission is one of gratitude for their service, sacrifice and selflessness by proudly celebrating our veterans with a day of honor in our nation’s capital.
- Other Programs Being Considered.
 - Mr. John Ketwig a retired automotive service and parts executive and the author of “**And a Hard Rain Fell: A G.I.’s True Story of the War in Vietnam**”, and a book titled “**Vietnam Reconsidered: The War, the Times, and Why They Matter**”.
 - Dr. Brian Unwin, M.D. Carilion Center for Healthy Aging on “**The Cost of Aging**”.
 - Mr. Larry Johnson, CAPT USA (former), Vietnam veteran helicopter pilot on “**Helicopters In The Vietnam War—A Personal Perspective**”.
 - CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) on “**The Role of Naval Intelligence During the Cold War**”.

Surviving Spouse Representative Report

- Mary Lou Summers reported that the Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, Virginia will be held at 1300 hours on Saturday 14 December 2024. Eight (8) military will be required to represent the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force, POW, and

Commonwealth of Virginia. COL Tom Dalzell will contact chapter members to volunteer.

Public Relations Report

- Chapter Newsletter The Communiqué – 3rd quarter (JULY-AUG-SEPT 2024) published on 3 October 2024.
- Chapter Website & Face book – Up and running. According to WIX Traffic Overview, there have been 222 site sessions and 598 page reviews so far this year. This is a significant increase for the same period last year. About 3/4 of the visits were from people directly accessing the site (i.e. most likely had the website bookmarked), with the remainder getting there via a search engine (i.e. Google, etc.).
- Gary Sayre to become the Chapter Public Affairs Officer. Currently drafting an article for local publication to highlight chapter and member's service.
- Chapter Website & Face book – Up and running.

Past President's Report

- No report..

Directors Report's

- CAPT Burnett – No report.
- LTC Gilleran – Reported on his recent vehicle accident. Recovering going well. Toys For Tots in Floyd, Virginia on 10 November 2024, Veterans event at VFW Post, parade event.
- COL Miller – Reported on AUSA events in May at Vinton War Memorial; June meeting; Flag Day; new AUSA president Martin Leamy; 27 September at Roanoke Veterans Center Pizza and Bingo night.
- Capt Johnson –No report.

Legislative Liaison Report - LTC Habermann

- **MOAA's Legislative Priorities** for advocacy as the 118th Congress continues its work. Their focus remains on all seven of the uniformed services and their service-earned entitlements.
 - Compensation and Service-Earned Benefits
 - Military Housing
 - Health Care for Currently Serving and Retirees
 - Health Care and Benefits for Veterans
 - Service Families
 - Survivors
 - Guard and Reserve

As protecting health care and service-earned benefits is a challenge, MOAA will press forward to engage Congress to shape outcomes in these vital areas. There are steep hills before us. Our nation has a rising debt of more than \$30 trillion and a deficit of more than \$3 trillion.

Because of this, MOAA anticipates robust attempts to control federal budgets, reduce or eliminate unprogrammed expenditures, and reduce entitlements. MOAA needs you to be ready to reach out to your legislators and keep that engagement going as necessary to make sure your voice is heard. Details can be found at: <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/moaas-legislative-priorities-118th-Congress/>

VCOC Report – CAPT Matt Haag

- **JLC Policy Initiatives for 2024:**
 - Policy 1-1.1 -- Request Relief from Gaming regulations for VSO's
 - Policy 2 -- Standard Certification for Service Dogs
 - Policy 3 -- VANG Tuition Assistance Waiver
 - Policy 4 -- Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses
 - Policy 5 -- Enhanced Emergency Response Medical Protections
 - Policy 6 -- Income Tax Subtraction of Age Requirement

Committee Chairperson's Report – LTC Bob Habermann

- **Awards Chair Report** – Notifications will be sent to the JROTC, ROTC, CAP units for the 2025 Chapter Leadership Awards, Archer Awards and MOAA ROTC and JROTC Medal Awards in February 2025 requesting nominations.
- **Community Services Volunteer Representative** – No report.

Old Business

- Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia held their annual **Appreciation Event Celebrating Veterans, Brain Injury Survivors and their Families** at a reception and baseball game at the Salem Memorial Baseball Stadium on Saturday 24 August 2024. Members of the Southwest Virginia participated in the event and set up an information table at the event. AUSA was also represented and raised \$124 from donations plus cans of food at this event.
- Vittles For Vets – Discussed fund raising events being held.

New Business

- New Freedom Farm's Bluegrass Beats for Brave Hearts Gala, A Night of Honor and Celebration - 5 October 2024 - 1730 to 2200 hours at New Freedom Farm, Inc., 6118 Lithia Road, Buchanan, VA 24066.
- Renovation Alliance 2024 “**Community Renovation Day**”, 5 October 2024 at 752 Rock Lily Road Wirtz, Virginia. SWVC members to volunteer.
- LTC David King emailed LTC Bob Habermann concerning the Bassett High School hosting a drill meet on 28 September. In the past, Carroll County High School as well as the ROTC programs in Pittsylvania County has participated in

the meet. We do a lot of things to recognize cadets including giving them money in addition to medals, certificates and even plaques. Unfortunately, because of the limited opportunities to interact with the cadets, they have no idea about who we are or what our organizations stand for. I don't know how much it will help, but I plan to set up a table at the meet with information and a display of the awards we provide. I still have a couple of MOAA medals and certificates on hand along with items from AUSA, MOWW, etc. and I have the support of 1SG Corely the Senior Army Instructor (SAI) to do this.

One other consideration is this is an opportunity to distribute the items for the awards. If I get the approval of the AUSA EXCOM at the meeting next Thursday, I plan to distribute the AUSA medals and certificates to the instructors of the programs we support. We could do the same for MOAA. This would put the ball in the instructors' court, and all we would need would be the names for the checks and the plates that go on the plaques. I have two engravers in Collinsville and could handle that as well if it would help. I don't know how well this would work, but I don't think we have anything to lose.

- Inquiry from the Adult Care Center of Roanoke Valley on some form of working together. The Adult Care Center is a resource in the Roanoke Valley for families with dependent adults still living at home. They also work closely with the VA Medical Center across the street and as a result Veterans make up fully half of their participants there. They are looking for supporters as well as financial assistance. The point of contact is Mr. Guy Byrd director of Philanthropy.
- Bob Habermann and Lee Ensley planning a ARMY-NAVY Football game party and tailgate at the 419 Restaurant at 1500 hours on Saturday 14 December 2024.

Adjourn – President

Meeting adjourned at 1130 hours.