

Western NC Chapter MOAA
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Saturday – 20 April 2024
Meeting: 11:00 AM– 1:12 PM
Kenmure Country Club

Elected:

Steve Watkins	President
Stacie Litsenberger	1 st VP/Programs Chair
Kevin Ritter	2 nd VP/Membership Chair
Doug Abbotts	Treasurer
Joe Neubert	Secretary

Directors:

Rod Honeycutt - Absent	US Army Rep
Herb Mensch	US Navy Rep
Vacant	USMC Rep
Jeff Snyder	USAF Rep
Jim Steinbaugh	At Large Rep
Kevin Ritter	Black Mountain Satellite Chair
Rod Honeycutt - Absent	Woodfin Satellite Chair
John O'Donnell - Absent	Smokey Mountain Satellite Chair
Donna Culp - Absent	Immediate Past President

Appointed Positions:

Vacant	Chaplain
Rick Deveraux	Senior Advisor
Donna Culp/Steve Watkins	Newsletter Editors
Dr. Vivian Wersel - Absent	Legislative Affairs, Federal
Tricia Vinson	Legislative Affairs, State
Jeff Snyder	JROTC Liaison
John Shawkins	VA Liaison
Sharon Woodcock /	Surviving Spouse Liaison
Donna Culp - Absent	Surviving Spouse Liaison (Support)

Meeting was called to order at 11:00 AM followed by the Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, and Introductions of all present. Quorum was declared and followed by a motion to approve the January 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was approved.

President's remarks

Welcome to the new VA Representative, Mr. John Shawkins. John is a past Apache pilot recently retired from the Army and living in the Mills River area.

Congratulations to Donna and John Culp for their efforts and leadership of the WNC-MOAA Newsletter and Website which were recently recognized by the National MOAA office for three prestigious awards:

WNC-MOAA.....2023 5-Star Level of Excellence Award
WNC-MOAA Newsletter.....2023 5-Star Harris Communications Award
WNC-MOAA Website.....2023 5-Star Harris Communications Award

Shared a SWAG brochure which will be available at future meetings. Included are shirts, golf items, jackets, etc. all with our WNC-MOAA patch. Supplied by a local veteran owned firm (Grace Apparel Co) that will produce to order. A suggestion was made to see if a removable patch could be made. Steve will investigate that option.

Reviewed the concept of an informal vs. formal summer Chapter meeting. Motion was made and passed. Stacie has begun advance planning and will review later in the meeting.

Emphasized the need to start discussions and planning for fall events (i.e. Wreaths across America)

There is a 1-day workshop in planning for the passing of a veteran spouse/parent along with heirship planning.

Officer Reports:

Secretary: Received positive feedback on the process for publishing the minutes. Will continue with goal to have draft minutes within 1 week of a meeting.

1st VP: Stacie reviewed her advance planning for a summer picnic at Fletcher Park. A covered area has been reserved for 17 August from 10 am – 2 pm. A group will be formed to complete the detail planning. Target is to have all details finalized NLT mid-June to allow for broad communications to Chapter Members. Also reviewed some ideas for other possible MOAA Chapter activities and received feedback from the board.

2nd VP: Kevin reported that have been no new members since our last meeting.

Treasurer: Doug reviewed the cash flow report as of 4/16 which is now posted for all board members to view and review. Discussion of the member dues status report and update on the MOAA National Website conversion, which continues to be shut down as of this time.

Service Representatives & Satellite Reports:

Army & Woodfin Rep: Not in attendance

Navy Rep: No updates

Marine Corps Rep: Vacant

Air Force Rep: No update

At Large Rep: No update

Smoky Mountain Satellite: Not in attendance

Black Mountain Satellite: No update

Woodfin Satellite: Not in attendance

Appointed Positions Reports:

Chaplain: Vacant

Federal Legislative Affairs: Over Tuesday and Wednesday, we visited all 16 Senators and Representatives' offices, 14 through appointments, and 2 stop-ins. NC Team: Vivianne Wersel, Au.D. Herb Segal, Ph.D., and Dana Tucker, Ph.D., along with. Jeri Graham and Stephanie Dawson also joined Dana on his visits. We covered NC 100%!

My Schedule: Rep Virginia Foxx 9 AM: Reunited with Jason Harvey, the same staffer I had the privilege of meeting last year. This was a delightful surprise, as our previous interactions have laid a strong foundation for our ongoing discussions. Sen Tillis 10 AM- Engaged with Staffer. Rep Edwards (my district), at 11:00 AM, met with the staffer. Sen Ted Budd: 1:30 PM met with Sr. Staffer Ryan Alban, the same staffer who played a pivotal role in advancing my Gold Star Wife Resolution. It was a pleasure reconnecting with him (I met with him last year at AIA). Kathy Manning: At 3:30 PM, I met with the member.

Overall, it looks very promising, except that both Senators and Virginia Foxx will not sign on for the Richard Star Act.

On Another Note: After MOAA AiA, I flew to Atlanta for the American Academy of Audiology to present on "Navigating Congress." The presentation, consisting of a ten-minute PP and a group activity, was met with great enthusiasm and engagement. This successful delivery has inspired me to consider presenting at the chapter meeting on Advocacy in the future. The slot for the presentation was 30 minutes, with the PP taking up 10 minutes and the activity lasting 15 minutes (everyone participated in 3's). The last 5 minutes were dedicated to a roleplay demonstration by one of the audience teams,

which was received with great appreciation. This presentation truly resonated with everyone.

(Presentation saved on the BOD Google drive)

State Legislative Affairs: Reviewed current status of the Richard Star Act. Currently the act is not funded so support is on hold to allow for development of a funding path.

Reviewed the leadership change due to the retirement of Secretary (Dept of Military & Veteran Affairs) Gaskin as of 1 April. Governor has named Grier Martin as the new Secretary. Grier is a retired US Army Field Artillery Reserve LTC with a Law Degree from UNC and has served 8 terms in the NC House.

VA Liaison: John reviewed the potential for support to feeding of patients at the Veterans Hospital. Discussion continued that our chapter used to do this prior to the current VRQ monthly lunch prep. Jeff and John to have further discussion along with finding out if this would be solely a funding contribution or if chapter members would serve meals. There is a 22 May Buncombe Co Homeless Veterans Stand Down Day. Continuing to determine if there is a role the Chapter can fill.

JROTC : Our Chapter continues to sponsor annual leadership awards for local JROTC units. Jeff briefed the Board that all 18 JROTC units in WNC have been mailed their MOAA leadership award packages and 8 units have informed us they will be having external award ceremonies this spring. Chapter members will present the award to a rising senior at 6 of those award ceremonies and the ranking instructor at the unit will present the award on our behalf at the other two units”.

Surviving Spouse Liaison: Sharon will be attending the MOAA National/Regional Leadership Meeting in Greenville SC on 17-18 May

Senior Advisor: Rick and Herb both serve on the WNC Service Academy nomination committee in support of Chuck Edwards. The committee may be updated in the future and if anyone is interested to serve, please contact Rick. Noted there are only 12 applicants for all 4 service academies.

Immediate Past President: Not in attendance

Newletter/Website: Not in attendance

Chapter involvement partnership updates:

Veterans Restoration Quarters (VRQ): Jeff Snyder
WNC-MOAA is entering our 9th year of preparing and serving lunch at the VRQ.

Old Business:

1. Overdue member dues: Due to a number of factors (MOAA National dues process, spreadsheet transitions, etc.) it is clear the current dues status report is not accurate. After numerous communications and efforts, Steve and Doug have been unable to fully reconcile the accuracy for a limited number of members. Therefore, Steve proposes that for all outstanding past dues (per the status report) as of this date, we recognize those members as paid through 2024. Tricia made the motion to approve the proposal. *Motion was approved by the Board.*
2. Steve will attend the NC Council of Chapters meeting with National MOAA in May. Plan to discuss the process of local chapter assignment by National MOAA. Currently only ~ 35% of National MOAA members are recognized as Local Chapter Members.
3. Satellite Budgets: Correction of past information that 20% of Chapter dues are forwarded to the Satellite. This is not in the By-Laws or in the Memorandum of Understanding/Standing Operating Procedures. Doug stated that in order to support our satellite chapters, they submit requests for needed funding that can then be reviewed per existing By-Law process.

New Business:

1. August Picnic: Planning committee to be formed by Stacie to propose menu, cost, activities, etc. and discuss with full Board
2. 2024 Budget update:
Discussed and confirmed that all 2023 donations to the Chapter (\$1040) will be donated in 2024 to nominated and approved causes in the WNC community.
3. Update regarding upcoming 2024 events/activities
 - a. Scheduled to set up a recruiting tent at the May 25 Veterans Healing Farm event.
 - b. Honor Flight on 27 April. Encourage everyone to attend the welcome back that evening. This flight includes 3 WWII and 5 Korean War veterans. Steve and Rick are both scheduled to participate on this flight.
 - c. Wreaths Across America: Planning to encourage support for funding of wreaths along with transportation and placement on graves.
 - d. Haywood Co. Veteran Gathering: Board approved \$100.00 to supporting this event as a recruiting activity.

Open Items:

1. Discussed option to hold Board meetings on weekday vs Saturday
 - a. Options could include: Library weekday meeting or YMCA meeting rooms, Brew Pub meeting room.
 - b. There was support for late afternoon. Steve will make a proposal back to the Board.

Meeting was closed at 1:12 pm

Attachments:

1. Meeting Agenda

WNC-MOAA BOD Meeting
Saturday - 20 April 2024
Meeting: 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Vision: *To be a source of information, support, and social engagements for our membership; to provide programs and services for the common good of our communities; and to be a powerful voice supporting MOAA & veterans at the local, state, and national levels.*

Purpose: To brief/update the Board on the status of the organization; to obtain 'approval' for continuing operations; to gain oversight and guidance from Board members and approve budget.

- 11:00am **Welcome**
a) Roll Call – *Quorum*
b) Pledge of Allegiance
c) Invocation
d) Introductions
- 11:10am **Approval of January Minutes**
- 11:12am **President’s remarks** – Steve Watkins
- 11:17am **Officer Reports** (5 minutes each)
a) Secretary – Joe Neubert
b) 1st VP – Stacie Litsenberger
c) 2nd VP – Kevin Ritter
d) Treasurer – Doug Abbotts
 1) 2023 Donation collected to be disbursed in 2024
- 11:37am **Service Representatives & Satellite Reports** (2 minutes each)
a) Army Rep – Rod Honeycutt
b) Navy Rep – Herb Mensch
c) Marine Corps Rep – vacant
d) Air Force Rep – Jeff Snyder
e) At Large Rep – Jim Steinbaugh
f) Smoky Mtn Chair – John O’Donnell
g) Woodfin Chair – Rod Honeycutt
h) Black Mtn – Kevin Ritter
- 11:53am **Appointed Positions Reports** (2 minutes each)
a) Chaplain – vacant
b) Federal Legislation – Dr. Vivianne Wersel
c) State Legislation – Tricia Vinson

- d) VA Liaisons – John Shawkins
- e) JROTC – Jeff Snyder
- f) Surviving Spouse Liaison – Sharon Woodcock
- g) Senior Advisor – Rick Deveraux
- h) Past President – Donna Culp
- i) Newsletter/Website – Newsletter suspense to Donna: 21 April

12:10pm

Old Business

- a) Membership will be IAW Bylaws discussion. Records
- b) Budgets for Satellites – incorrect information put out during last board meeting regarding the %. It is not written anywhere that 20% of member dues goes to the satellites.

12:20pm

New Business

- a) Vacant Board Positions
 - 1) USMC Rep / Chaplain / Black Mtn / SAG
- b) Membership Picnic
 - 1) Planning committee
- c) Finances
 - 1) 2024 Budget Update
 - 2) Budgets for Satellites? How much of annual dues to satellite chairs
- d) How to disperse the donations collected in 2023
- e) Scheduled/scheduling activities/events
 - 1) Veterans Healing Farm – 25 May 2024
 - 2) Blue Ridge Honor Flight – 27 April 2024, 28 September 2024
 - 3) Wreaths Across America – 14 December 2024
 - 4) Satellite events?
 - 5) Workshop – Preparation for Death of Veteran Spouse
- f) Open

1:00pm

Adjourn

- a) Next General Membership meeting – Picnic - 17 August
- b) Next Board meeting 20 July 2024 – Location: TBD