



Tennessee Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America



Minutes of the Meeting 9 May 2018

Tennessee Council of Chapters, MOAA met 9 May 2018 at Sammy B's, 705 Cadet Court, Lebanon, TN with **23** members present as follows:

Chattanooga: Chris Dooley, Ray Adkins, Billy Hewitt, Bob Crates
East Tennessee: No Representative
Ft. Campbell: Ivan Adames, Eddie Sumbler, Bill Summers, Richard Noggle, Tim Powers, Howard French, Monroe Gildersleeve,
General Andrew Jackson: John Wade, Phil Ponder, Jim Perkinson
Memphis: Kathy Desjarlais, Jim Thomasson, John Dixon
Middle TN: Doug Minton, Patricia Bergquist, John Ohlinger, Bob Bussey
Mountain Empire: No Representative
Stones River: No Representative
Sumner County: Steve Petersen
Upper Cumberland: Mark Pfaffenroth

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2018 MEETING INFORMATION IN THE MINUTES!

Mrs. Eunice Sumbler, spouse of Eddie Sumbler, was our guest at this meeting.

COL Doug Minton called the meeting to order at 11:15am and welcomed everyone. Jim Thomasson led the pledge to the flag and Eddie Sumbler delivered the opening prayer.

Minutes of the 24 January 2018 meeting were approved by acclimation.

Committee/Standing Reports

Bob Bussey, Treasurer, reported that account funds were transferred from PenFed to Regions Bank primarily to establish a personal relationship with a banker and Regions has branches across the state. Three signatures are on the Regions account: Doug Minton, Jim Thomasson and Bob Bussey. We had a \$20 expenditure for new checks during the quarter and \$6,001.85 is our current balance. The check order fee will be refunded and reflected in the next quarter's report. A \$50 MOAA incentive is coming too. Motion made and seconded to approve the report.

Howard French has audited our council records and found them to be in good order.

Doug Minton suggested a council donation to the MOAA Military Family Initiative of \$100. Bob Bussey made a motion to make the MMFI donation and John Dixon seconded it.

Doug reported on the “Storming the Hill” experience. Two currently serving spouses were assigned to the team with he and Patricia. These spouses were valuable and passionate advocates on what a pay raise means and the effect of TRICARE increases on currently serving families. A synopsis of the visit with each office was provided with the agenda for the meeting.

MOAA Committee Module

Roster Incentive for Committee Module is \$50 and all chapters should have received or been notified of their payout. Chattanooga and East Tennessee have not submitted their rosters yet. The TN CoC also received a \$50 incentive payout for using the membership module.

Council & Chapters has advised that now new members should be inserted using the committee module. If you cannot find the new member there, then they can be reported using the New Member Recruiting Link on the Council & Chapters section of the MOAA Website.

MOAA Council and Chapter Affairs Meeting Remarks

Doug Minton reported on the national membership statistics: 49% Life, 26% Premium and 25% Basic. There are 6,450 MOAA members in TN with 1,159 of those members in our TN chapters.

Per MOAA Council and Chapters, MOAA Basic Membership is a 3-year membership if over 35 regardless of currently serving, former, or retired.

Grassroots advocacy (State level) will be important during the summer recess (August). Those planning to visit the local congressional offices then may want to request an appointment now. More information along with talking points will be coming from MOAA later.

The MOAA Annual and Board of Directors Meeting will be held in Phoenix, AZ October 30 through November 2, 2018.

Due to the MOAA geographic schedule, TN will probably not be invited to another Regional Meeting until 2020. Hopefully, the Mountain Empire Chapter can attend the Virginia Regional Meeting.

Please look in this month’s issue of the Military Officers Magazine (about 2/3 of the way back) and you will see new staff that has been added or promotions within MOAA. MOAA hired an outside consultant to recommend improvements. Some of these staff will likely work in those areas of improvement.

One of the recommendations of the consultants was to immediately assign the Basic Members to a chapter membership roster. This was not very well received by attendees at the MOAA Council and Chapters Meeting. Chapters do not want their membership rosters inflated with people they do not know or have not recruited. Terri Coles, Council and Chapters, is looking for options.

The MOAA Military Family Initiative soon will be called the MOAA Military Family Foundation. MOAA has a new YouTube Video about the MMFF on the MOAA website. If you like, you can download a link to it for your chapter website, but DO NOT download the video to your website as it is too big!

MOAA has two new virtual chapters: MOAA Uniformed Services Nurses Advocates Chapter (MANAVC) and the MOAA Surviving Spouses Virtual Chapter (MSSVC-02).

Surviving Spouse Report

The MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter (MSSVC-02) has officially launched. The purpose is to provide a national forum for surviving spouses, common space to communicate, information on concerns pertinent to surviving spouses and families, an advocacy platform for protection of rights for our members and dependents, and a reliable source for surviving spouses who live in remote areas, who are housebound, have jobs/children, or who are unable to participate at the chapter level.

There will be no Virtual Chapter dues, but virtual members **MUST** be MOAA National members. Meetings will be held quarterly via FreeConferenceCall.com with the first meeting scheduled for June 5th at 8pm EDT and 7pm CDT.

The virtual chapter is in no way meant to compete with local chapters, but the intent is to supplement them. In fact, based on the MOAA Uniformed Services Nurses Advocacy Virtual Chapter experience so far, chapters in some areas have gained members.

The MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee (SSAC) is seeking applicants for two virtual members and two traditional members for the committee. Applications for both are on the MOAA website and the deadline for application is 30 June 2018. *Please share these opportunities with your surviving spouses.*

The committee hopes that younger surviving spouses who might not be able to travel due to jobs, children, etcetera, but who have strong interest in working on surviving spouse issues will be interested in the two virtual member roles. These members will work with the SSAC by telephone, e-mail, and teleconference for a 2-year term. No travel will be required.

Two traditional SSAC members will rotate off the committee at the Annual Meeting in Phoenix, AZ scheduled October 30 - November 2, 2018. The four-year term, with an optional two years, begins in October 2018.

Patricia reported on the SBP/DIC Offset. Current legislation to repeal the offset is: **H.R. 846** with 258 co-sponsors and **S. 339** with 40 co-sponsors. The NDAA 2018 failed to repeal the SBP/DIC Offset. However, the SSIA was permanently extended at \$310 per month with future increases tied to COLA. The current SSIA extension covers 25% of the offset. TN is 11th in the list of states with military survivors impacted by the offset. MOAA continues to support and work on full repeal of the offset. MOAA plans an ongoing campaign on the Hill and they will need our grassroots advocacy. Stay tuned for MOAA Legislative Alerts.

TN Senators have not co-sponsored S. 339 due to unidentified funds to cover the cost of the bill. Also, Congressman Duncan (District 2) has not co-sponsored H.R. 846 but all other TN congressmen have co-sponsored.

Legislative Report

Bill Summers reported that TVET had a great year! Four of the five bills were signed into law:

1. SB2030/HB2130 creates Class A misdemeanor offense for criminal impersonation of a member or veteran of uniformed service when person pretends to be a member or veteran to obtain money, services, property, or other tangible benefit.
2. SB2036/HB2682 requires the Governor when appointing members to the board of regents, U.T. board of trustees, and state university governing boards to strive to ensure that at least one board member is an honorably discharged military veteran.
3. SB1675/HB1496 provides continued eligibility for a disabled veteran's property tax relief during temporary periods of confinement in a nursing home or hospitalization if the disabled veteran intends to return to the residence upon recovery.
4. SB1927/HB1956 adds a representative for military veteran recipients to be appointed as a member of the statewide planning and policy council.

SB2004/HB2657 authorizing the Tennessee state veterans' homes board to name the campus, buildings, facilities, and grounds of any state veterans' home; authorizes the administrator of each veterans' home to name any portion of the state veterans' home. Assigned to General Subcommittee of the Senate State and Local Government Committee and died for this year.

Bill reported the problem lies with the Tennessee Department of Veteran Services, not the Tennessee Veterans Home Board. Mark Pfaffenroth stated that they had the same problem in Upper Cumberland naming a State Veteran Cemetery as Commissioner Grinder was opposed to that also.

TVET plans to fully launch in July and meet to register the 501(c)19 and establish its constitution and by-laws. Some discussion ensued regarding benefits of a State Charter versus the 501(c)19. The Marine Corp League, DAV, VFW along with TN CoC of MOAA are onboard. American Legion has issues. Bill thanked the Council for its support. Doug Minton stated that the TN CoC is a TVET member as of February 2018. At a future date, TVET will assess dues based on the number of members in the chapters.

TVET has had great support from Chattanooga, Nashville, Memphis, and Ft. Campbell in its efforts on the Hill. Ft. Campbell has definitely led the way! TVET wants to hone in on 3-5 bills of importance to the veteran community each year. The Tennessee Veterans Caucus worked with TVET. They are trying to get a member list of the Tennessee Veterans Caucus.

6 February 2019, Wednesday, is Tennessee Veterans Day on the Hill unless notified otherwise.

Every chapter needs to invite Commissioner Grinder to speak at their meeting. There is no better time to ask why we have not been able to pass the veterans' home bill, than when she is speaking to the chapter. The office number is: 615-741-2345

Doug Minton presented the 2017 Col Marvin Harris Communication Award Certificate to RADM Crates of the Chattanooga Chapter for their print newsletter. The Ft. Campbell Chapter also won this award for both their print newsletter and their website.

Doug Minton reported it had been suggested that at each meeting a topic be selected, like membership, and each chapter share their best practices on that topic. Something to consider going forward.

Chapter Updates

As is the tradition of the TN Council, each Chapter President or representative shared an update of their Chapter recent activities as follows:

Chattanooga – Chris Dooley reported General Atkins came to help dedicate the monument on the Circle of Honor. Chuck Fleischmann met with them last week and will speak at their August meeting. Congressman Chuck Fleischmann's Military Advisory Committee is just about all MOAA members. They have breakfast with their senators regularly. Their Armed Forces Day Parade generated much praise. The JROTC Banquet totaled 148 attendees with four scholarships presented totaling \$4,000. They have a new president who is a great leader and very involved.

East Tennessee – No Report

Ft. Campbell – Monroe Gildersleeve stated that their LOE was in by May 1. Their ROTC covers 13 high schools and 1 university. ROTC scholarships are presented on the 19 May.

Gen. Andrew Jackson Chapter – Phil Ponder reported on their recent speakers General Stuart Reeves and General John Pickler. The Chapter applied for and received a \$300 Grant from MOAA (USAA) this year which was used to amplify their annual JROTC Awards Banquet. As a result of the additional funding they were able to add the Medal Recipients, their Parents, JROTC Instructors and School Principals to the invitation list for their JROTC Scholarship/Awards Banquet this year. JROTC Scholarship awardees were all female this year. Dan Sullenger, on their Board of Directors, coordinates activities with the JROTC Program. They gave a \$1000 scholarship and 5 MOAA Awards at the Banquet. Congressman Jim Cooper for three years has been a \$500 per year sponsor of their Field of Flags.

Memphis – Kathy Desjarlais reported they are in the midst of changes on their Board of Directors. Congressman Kustoff spoke in February and John Dixon spoke in March. April's speaker was David Dunning, Director of the VA Hospital Memphis. They are looking for a new newsletter person and a new meeting location. They have one more lunch meeting scheduled and then they switch back to evening meetings. They made 17 JROTC presentations, 3 ROTC presentations at University of Memphis, and 1 at U.T. Martin. Operation Stand Down Mid-South is the 2nd Saturday in June.

Middle TN Chapter – John Olinger reported on the chapter’s speakers in recent months. Sean Henry, Predators CEO, is slated to speak at the May meeting, but if Predators win the next game, he will not be available. LOE paperwork has been submitted. Several chapter members are involved in the Mid-July Congressional Academy appointments. This is a great way to stay engaged locally with Congressmen. Lt. Col Doug Gilbert is replacing Kent Crossley as Legislative Director.

Mountain Empire – No report

Stones River Chapter – No Report

Sumner County Chapter – Steve Petersen, President, reported 65 members. Their chapter is involved with three high schools and supports ROTC with \$500 scholarships. They meet every 4th Thursday and switch between the VFW and the Gallatin Country Club.

Upper Cumberland Chapter – Mark Pfaffenroth, President, reported they continue their focus on the JROTC program in the area. They were invited to the York Institute Family Ball. They attended ROTC programs to present awards. Chapter is looking at establishing a \$250 grant. They are trying to get membership more involved with the ROTC Boards. Their June meeting is a MOAA picnic and those in the area eligible for membership are invited. They are working hard on the Upper Cumberland Veterans Cemetery, and the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services wants them to transfer their collected funds now.

Good of the Order

Ivan Adames reported that Mission BBQ is celebrating Armed Forces Week May 14-18 with a **FREE sandwich** for all active duty service members and veterans at all locations on their designated day. Military Appreciation Days for each branch of military are: (Army...Monday, 5/14; Marine Corp...Tuesday, 5/15; Navy...Wednesday, 5/16; Air Force...Thursday, 5/17; Coast Guard...Friday, 5/18). On Saturday, May 19, Armed Forces Day, lunch with your personal hero who has served our Country - past or present from 11am to 2pm.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for **18 July 2018** at 11:00am at Sammy B’s in Lebanon.

Future Meetings - Mark Your Calendar!

TN CoC Meeting: 18 July 2018, Sammy B’s
TN CoC Meeting: 17 October 2018, Sammy B’s

The meeting adjourned at 12:50pm.

Minutes prepared by Patricia Bergquist, Secretary and Council Auxiliary Liaison
Respectfully submitted by Doug Minton, President, TN Council of Chapters