



Tennessee Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America



Minutes of the Meeting 18 July 2018

Tennessee Council of Chapters, MOAA met 18 July 2018 at Sammy B's, 705 Cadet Court, Lebanon, TN with **22** members present as follows:

Chattanooga: Chris Dooley, Ray Adkins, Billy Hewitt, Bob Crates, Steve Leach
East Tennessee: No Representative
Ft. Campbell: Ivan Adames, Eddie Sumbler, Bill Summers, Howard French, Monroe Gildersleeve
General Andrew Jackson: John Wade, Phil Ponder
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, Doyle Winters

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2018 MEETING INFORMATION IN THE MINUTES!

Mrs. Eunice Sumbler, spouse of Eddie Sumbler, and Shelia Brigham Jones, Middle Tennessee Survivor Outreach Services Support Coordinator who replaced Russ Maxey in January, were our guests 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 9 May 2018 meeting were approved by acclamation.

Financial Report

Bob Bussey, Treasurer, reported the quarter account activity was two deposits totaling \$70: bank refund of our \$20 check order fee, and the \$50 MOAA membership incentive. Our MMFI donation of \$100 was the only expenditure. \$5,971.85 is the account balance. Motion made and seconded to approve the report.

Surviving Spouse Report

The MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter (MSSVC-02) held its first quarterly meeting via FreeConferenceCall.com on June 5th at 8pm EDT with 22 of the virtual chapter's 44 members on the call. As of July 12th there were 54 members in 18 states and 1 overseas. Eleven applications for membership are outstanding with no response to date. The next conference call is scheduled for September 18th at 6pm EDT.

The MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee (SSAC) will add Shari Bondi (IA) as a virtual member in October. Hopefully, the SSAC nominee who was not selected will serve in the other virtual position. These members will work with the SSAC by telephone, e-mail, and teleconference for a 2-year term with no travel requirement.

Two traditional SSAC members will rotate off the committee at the Annual Meeting in Phoenix, AZ. The four-year term, with an optional two years, begins in October 2018 for the two new members of the committee: **Nancy Mullen (TN)** and Kathy Thorp (MD).

The deadline for submitting nominations for the 2018 Surviving Spouse Level of Excellence Award is Wednesday, August 1. The application is available on the MOAA website.

Patricia reported on the SBP/DIC Offset. Current legislation to repeal the offset is: **H.R. 846** with 268 co-sponsors and **S. 339** with 48 co-sponsors. 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.

HR 2411 (Yarmuth – KY) was submitted as an amendment to NDAA 2019 to repeal the SBP/DIC using less than 1% of tax breaks to big corporations and billionaires to fully repeal the offset. The House Budget Committee voted 14-18. If five co-sponsors had voted “yes”, the amendment would have been included in the House Budget version. Interesting, that Diane Black along with others who had co-sponsored H.R. 846 voted “no” on the amendment favoring big corporations and billionaires over military surviving spouses.

The surviving spouse Facebook groups are working to obtain Senate Budget Committee support in their budget version. MOAA continues to support full repeal of the offset and works on the issue.

Legislative Report -TVET

Bill Summers reported that TVET will launch on Saturday, July 28th, with eight to ten organizations on board. They will establish and approve the constitution, by-laws, and appoint a Board of Directors. VFW is coming on board which is huge. Bill expressed appreciation to the MOAA TN Council of Chapters for their support.

Everyone who has been involved with TVET hopes a VFW member will assume the role of Chairman and that Steve Singleton, who has been involved in the establishment of TVET, will provide continuity as Vice-Chairman.

6 February 2019, Wednesday, is Tennessee Veterans Day on the Hill unless notified otherwise. If anyone has ideas for legislation for TVET consideration and focus, please e-mail Bill Summers. TVET wants to hone in on 3-5 bills of importance to the veteran community. Also, TVET needs to establish a pool of people who can be called upon to attend sessions on The Hill as needed.

Senate Proposal on TRICARE Increases

Jim Thomasson reported that the Senate and House versions of the NDAA are in reconciliation conference now. Agreement is expected by the end of July.

Based on the Tom Philpott article, there are no proposed increases for TRICARE for Life. The Senate version sets forth that current and future retirees below the age of 65 (about 1M retirees) could see increased fees and cost shares beginning in 2020 per DoD request. Also, the Senate bill would repeal the grandfather provision in current law which protects current retirees from many TRICARE fee changes. This means fee changes target only members who enter military service this year and beyond and later retire. Any savings would be used to fund readiness and unspecified programs, not to improve military health care.

TRICARE Prime enrollment fees would go up 21 percent.

TRICARE Select enrollment fees for the first time of \$450 per person, \$900 per family. Out of network fees would have an annual deductible of \$300 per person, \$600 per family. Annual catastrophic cap on total out-of-pocket costs would rise from \$500 to \$3,500. Bottom line: over time higher out-of-pocket costs for working age retirees, not yet eligible for Medicare.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects that 450,000 retirees in TRICARE Select would have out-of-pocket increases per individual of \$570 to \$1,160 and families \$1,645 to \$2,800. The 600,000 retirees using TRICARE Prime would see out-of-pocket increases of \$60 to \$730 per individual and \$120 to \$1,790 for families. CBO expects that within a year 20,000 would stop using TRICARE totally and rely on other insurance. A typical TRICARE family will cost on average approximately \$17,800 per year in 2021.

CAPT Kathy Beasley, USN (Ret), MOAA Director of Health Affairs, reports that letter writing to congressmen and senators is effective in pressuring Senators on the issue.

Doug Minton reminded everyone that chapter members who are not MOAA National members can still go to the MOAA website and use the platform as a guest to contact their Congressmen and Senators on legislation.

Items For Discussion

“Legion of Merit” License Plate: Doug Minton reported that both previous sponsors for the “Legion of Merit” License Plate have retired. The attempt to gain sponsorship in 2019 is underway. When there is a new sponsor and a bill is introduced, he will share information which can be used to get your State Representative to co-sponsor the bill.

MOAA Committee Module: It is the intent of MOAA Council and Chapters to replace the existing MOAA Chapter Recruiting Link with the Committee Module process used by each Chapter. Currently, the big issue is you cannot add a non-MOAA-member (former officer or new officer that retired but never joined MOAA) using the Committee Module process. In these

cases, chapters must still use the Chapter Recruiting Link to report these members who are not MOAA National members. MOAA is trying to work this problem out.

The MOAA Council and Chapters Mid-Atlantic Regional Leadership Workshop is scheduled for 7-8 September 2018 in Greenville, SC. Mountain Empire and East TN are invited. To date, Mountain Empire has two chapter leaders who are considering attending and East TN has none.

On 31 December 2018, the Defense Health Agency's TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) ends. This is important to those currently serving and retirees. The replacement program is the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) with open enrollment 12 November through 10 December 2018. You do not have to be enrolled in the TRDP plan to enroll in the FEDVIP plan. *Note: Those currently enrolled in a TRDP plan will not be automatically enrolled in a FEDVIP plan for 2019. You MUST enroll during open season.*

Doug Minton suggested that each Chapter go to the MOAA Chapter Locator and look at your website for needed updates. If a chapter does not have a website, you can use the MOAA platform to develop one.

Chapter Discussion – Chapter Meetings

Previously, the tradition of the TN Council was for each Chapter President or representative to share an update of their recent Chapter activities. At this meeting, the topic “Chapter Meetings” was chosen and each Chapter shared what works or does not work relative to meeting time, location, content, and special events.

Chattanooga – Chapter meets bi-monthly at a downtown restaurant (\$30 meal) and attendance averages 40-50. Their attendance is high in the summer due to daylight savings time and lower in the winter months. Their ROTC Banquet generates a large attendance. They have a Christmas Gala with Toys for Tots and the Choo-Choo Chorus. A Breakfast Meeting was tried this Spring but only 22-24 attended. Their programs vary. Also, the 3rd Tuesday of each month 20-25 spouses and surviving spouses get together for lunch. While Congress is in recess during August, they invite their congressman to speak at their chapter meeting.

East Tennessee – No Report

Ft. Campbell – Monroe Gildersleeve stated that their chapter meets monthly with an average of 40 in attendance, but summer attendance is low. They visit different venues for each meeting and try to get a guest speaker for each meeting. Special events are ROTC, Christmas “Dirty Santa”, Turkey Shoot, and a Golf Tournament. Eunice Sumbler shared that their Ladies Group consisting of chapter spouses and surviving spouses meets monthly alternating between Thursday and Friday dates each month at a different venue in the area.

Kathy Desjarlais asked if they had that many venues in their area with a private dining room. Chapter President said that when he could not find a private dining room, he resorted to the Library.

Gen. Andrew Jackson Chapter – Phil Ponder reported that the Chapter meets at the McKendree Manor Event Room for lunch (\$10 per meal). Attendance was 38 in June. Special Events include scholarships (one member conducted a fundraiser for scholarships and checks were presented to the Award recipients). Lynn Hutton Smith was their most recent guest speaker.

Memphis – John Dixon reported they meet monthly (usually all evening meetings) at the Officers' Club at NAS Millington. Now, their Summer meetings are going to be in the evening and Winter meetings at lunch. They notice no great change in attendance number but a change in the people who attend. Attendance is 25-30 at any given meeting. Parking was an issue at one location. They have a speaker each month and a variety of topics are addressed. Special events include a special Joint Meeting with the Reserve Officers Association and the Air Force Association in the Fall and Surviving Spouse Appreciation (gift bags, certificates) in December. Patricia Bergquist attended last year and delivered a short speech on the importance of surviving spouses in MOAA National and in Chapters and Councils.

Middle TN Chapter – Doug Minton reported that the chapter once met at University Club at Vanderbilt but encountered parking and cost issues. The venue now is Old Natchez Country Club with ample parking, no room costs. Chapter meets 4th Tuesday of every month except December with a speaker at each meeting covering current or member related topics. Attendance is 35-45. Cost is \$20 per meal. No special events.

John Olinger shared that the 8th Annual Congressional Service Academy appointments were held earlier this month. There is a list of congressmen with points of contact, phone numbers, etc. If anyone is interested, he can provide a copy. It is a great resource.

Mountain Empire – Doug Minton reported the chapter meets the 3rd Saturday of every other month for a lunch meeting.

Stones River Chapter – Doug Minton reported the chapter meets the 3rd Thursday at 18:30pm at The Grapevine. Col Jerri Graham will speak at their 16 August meeting. If you are interested in attending, the deadline for RSVP is 30 July.

Sumner County Chapter – Steve Petersen reported that since 2007 they have met the 4th Thursday of each month at 1800 hours at various restaurants. Now, they rotate between the VFW and the Gallatin Country Club with a catered meal (\$16 per person). They have speakers every month covering topics of interest to members and spouses. Recent speakers talked about deployment and federal and state requirements for employers. Special event is their Christmas Party (1st or 2nd Sunday in December) with Toys for Tots.

Upper Cumberland Chapter – Mark Pfaffenroth reported they meet four times a year: March, June, September, and December. They have a speaker at their March and September lunch meetings at a Crossville restaurant with 25-35 attending. The June meeting is their annual picnic. They have an evening meeting with 35-45 in attendance first week in December. The last several years, they have had a Spouses Luncheon with 25-30 attending.

Good of the Order

Ivan Adames asked what chapters do or how they participate in Veterans Day. While some chapters participate in no special event, others participate in parades, Field of Flags, etc.

Chapter Level of Excellence announcements should be made in August.

Retiree Appreciation Day is in September.

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

Please send Doug Minton your Upcoming Dates of Interest for the October agenda.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for **17 October 2018** at 11:00am at Sammy B's in Lebanon.

Chapter Discussion Topic for October Meeting:

"Communications (Newsletters, Websites, Facebook) What Does It Take?"

Chattanooga and Fort Campbell please be prepared to share.

Future Meetings - Mark Your Calendar!

TN CoC Meeting: 17 October 2018, Sammy B's

TN CoC Meeting: 16 January 2019, Sammy B's

The meeting adjourned at 12:40pm.

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

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