



**Tennessee Council of Chapters**  
Military Officers Association of America



Minutes of the Meeting 16 October 2019

Tennessee Council of Chapters, MOAA met 16 October 2019 at Sammy B's, 705 Cadet Court, Lebanon, TN with **14** members present as follows:

Chattanooga: No Representative  
East Tennessee: No Representative  
Ft. Campbell: Ivan Adames, Monroe Gildersleeve, Tim Powers, Eddie Sumbler  
General Andrew Jackson: John Wade  
Memphis: Jim Thomasson, Kathy Desjarlais, John Dixon  
Middle TN: Patricia Bergquist, Bob Bussey, Doug Minton, John Ohlinger  
Mountain Empire: No Representative  
Stones River: Pete Warner  
Sumner County: Frank Edwards  
Upper Cumberland: No Representative

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2020 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 11:10am.

Chaplain Eddie Sumbler delivered the opening prayer. Jim Thomasson led the pledge to the flag. Lunch was enjoyed during the meeting.

### **Financial Report**

Bob Bussey, Treasurer, delivered the financial report for the period July 1 – September 30, 2019. There was not much activity. The Unrestricted Funds (operating account) shows one expenditure to cover April meal cost for guest, Col Coles. *There is one outstanding check of \$100 dated September 27<sup>th</sup> payable to TVET covering the Council dues.*

There were two expenditures from our Restricted Funds covering travel reimbursement for the Council President's visit to Mountain Empire Chapter and Memphis Chapter. There is one proposed chapter visit remaining for the year. Any Restricted Fund balance will be offset by the MOAA 2020 Travel Incentive Payment of \$580. Since the payment does not go far, Doug Minton reported that he and others who had visited chapters decided to charge half of the cost. If an overnight stay is required, an officer's personal hotel points can be used.

Our 18-month Certificate of Deposit (2.47% interest) at Regions Bank has earned \$18.66 in interest. **\$6,259.87** is the ending balance of council funds.

Doug Minton asked that the Council accept the Treasurer's Report as presented without question. All agreed.

Every two years, the Past President audits the Council financial records. Kathy Desjarlais, Past Council President, will audit the Council financial records in January 2020. The 2022 audit will be done by Doug Minton.

In January, Jim Thomasson, Ivan Adames, and John Dixon will go to Regions Bank and sign signature cards for the checking accounts. The same will be done in June or July with the savings account. Bob Bussey provided the secretary wording for an addendum to the minutes which the bank will require to be presented when the signature cards are updated on the accounts.

### **Acceptance of Minutes**

Minutes of the 17 July 2019 meeting were approved by acclamation.

### **TVET Update**

Steve Singleton provided an update stating that TVET is a coalition of 12 veteran organizations.

On 28 September a strategic planning meeting was held. The constitution and bylaws were reviewed. The dues ceiling (\$100) was not set high enough to cover initial upfront costs and annual expenses (state fees to setup, website development, insurance, mailbox, etc.) of the 501(c)19. Dues will be \$50/\$100/\$150/\$200 (see chart below) with membership total of 1501 and above being capped at \$200 beginning with the new fiscal year and collection begins 1 June 2020.

<u>Membership</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Annual Dues</u>
1-500	1	\$50
501-1000	2	\$100
1001-1500	3	\$150
1501-	4	\$200 max
Corporate Member	N/A	\$50

Further, a Legislative Development Committee will liaise with the Veteran Caucus and the Legislature, perform ground work for legislation, and present to TVET so they can draft bills far enough in advance.

Proposed issues pending input from the Legislative Development Committee are as follows:

- 1) Restore Disabled Veteran Tag: In 2014 Disabled Veteran tag was changed from 2 to 1. Bill language to "restore" emphasizes TVET is not requesting anything new. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Purple Heart tag can be removed as it was not there initially and the 2<sup>nd</sup> tag increases state revenue loss.

- 2) Mental Health Training for TDVS staff: TDVS required to provide training for all staff interacting with veterans. 2-3 hours of training would be required to recognize suicide risk in veterans.
- 3) Standardize Naming TN Veteran Homes: Former TDVS Commissioner, Many-Bears Grinder opposed this bill, and considered eliminating the practice of naming homes for individuals. TVET believes veteran groups involved in getting these homes funded deserve input in the naming of the home, and to name parts of the home (dining areas, chapels, etc.). This will likely require working with current TDVS Commissioner, Courtney Rogers, to promote understanding of why veterans want to be involved in the standardized process.
- 4) Women Veteran Recognition: TVET seeks a resolution to recognize Women Veterans role in our nation's defense. Rep Moon needs to be reminded of his commitment to get this resolution in 2020.

TVET has new legislative issues related to Veteran Farmers. Many veterans farm for a second career income and also to treat PTSD. Consequently, more meat processing facilities are needed to address all of the products farmers produce. More hemp processing facilities are needed too. TDA (Tennessee Department of Agriculture) promotes hemp in Tennessee, but there is no growth in processing facilities. With hemp growth rising, there are avenues available for veterans who desire to hemp farm for support through federal and state initiatives.

Mark your calendars: **February 5, 2020 is TN Veteran's Day on the Hill.** Please plan to participate!

TVET will need liability insurance for Nissan Stadium parking and a lift capable van for use between the parking lot and the Cordell Hull Building.

Mission BBQ has funded meals for the last 3 years. Hopefully, their support will continue. Be sure to thank them for their support of veterans.

Doug Minton stated that the TVET endeavor is going to be a winner for us. Doug Gilbert, MOAA member and ROA Representative in TVET, also worked with the legislature which is a plus.

There was continued discussion about groups such as American Legion and VFW who are still not members of organization.

### **Surviving Spouse Report**

The House Bill, H.R.553, sponsored by Congressman Wilson (SC) and Congressman Yarmouth (KY) who is Chairman of the House Budget Committee, has 377 co-sponsors. The Senate bill, S.622, sponsored by Senator Jones (AL) and has 76 co-sponsors. All Tennessee congressmen and senators have co-sponsored the respective bills. While nonbinding, they serve as a strong recommendation to the conferees (the members of the House and Senate tasked with finalizing the NDAA). The differences between the House and Senate NDAA are being hashed out in the Conference Committee by the conferees. MOAA stands ready to share its position and serve as a resource for the conferees on the issues impacting our currently serving, retirees, families, and survivors.

At this time, there is no new information. MOAA is making two big pushes: 1) Social Media, and 2) another article coming out Thursday.

MOAA ask everyone to contact their Senators/Congressmen for support of the House NDAA as it contains the Widow's Tax and other important issues impacting our servicemembers both active-duty, retired, and their families. It is believed that the real issue will come down to the Senate. So, focus on the Senate when making your contacts.

Grassroots advocacy is needed! So, let's bury the Senate by mail and phone! Keep the pressure on House leaders to insist on retaining it in the final bill!

Please respond to the MOAA Legislative Take Action in articles, utilize the MOAA Legislative page, call the offices in DC utilizing the Capitol Switchboard (**1-866-272-6622**) and talk with staffers responsible for legislative/DOD issues. Even e-mail both local and DC offices.

By the way, government appropriations run out November 21, just 5 weeks away.

The MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter (MSSVC-02) will hold its quarterly meeting via FreeConferenceCall.com on Tuesday, October 22nd, at 12Noon CDT and 1PM EST. The dial in phone number and code will be published soon. Chapter Surviving Spouse Liaisons will be e-mailed the information as soon as it is available.

Jim Thomasson reminded everyone MOAA can track advocacy through our use of "Take Action".

Kathy Desjarlais reported that in the Memphis Chapter the surviving spouses do not believe anything can happen to their benefit. They have it and do not care about anyone else.

Everyone should receive the MOAA Legislative Update. Doug Minton encouraged everyone to hammer on members to receive the legislative update.

### **2020-2022 TN CoC Leadership**

Council Bylaws require we rotate officers every two years. Therefore, 1<sup>st</sup> VP rotates up to President, and 2<sup>nd</sup> VP rotates up to 1<sup>st</sup> VP. The Council nominations for 2020-2022 are as follows:

President: Jim Thomasson – Memphis Chapter

1<sup>st</sup> VP: Ivan Adames – Fort Campbell Chapter

2<sup>nd</sup> VP: Locke Kelly – Upper Cumberland Chapter

Secretary: Patricia Bergquist – Middle TN Chapter

Treasurer: John Dixon, Memphis Chapter

There is a four-year window with the 2<sup>nd</sup> VP role. It is a learning role, and not a difficult job. We need to nominate people who will step up for the council leadership.

Kathy Desjarlais stated that at one time the top three positions were from East, Middle, or West regions of the State. If we can get someone from Eastern region, it would be good as it has been a while.

The Nominating Committee confirms the President, and 1<sup>st</sup> VP, and 2<sup>nd</sup> VP. At our January 2020 meeting, we will induct officers. By voice vote the council agreed to the above.

Doug Minton informed everyone that when we go to the Regions Bank next year, we have to present the bank with signed minutes of the meeting or an addendum indicating council leadership with signature authority on our accounts.

### **New MOAA Website**

The new MOAA Website rolled out on October 1.

- Please check out the new website - [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org) to ensure that you can get to all of the tools that are available to Chapter leaders.
- Without a Log-In, you can do a quick check using “About MOAA” Page.
- With a Log-In, Presidents and Membership Chairs can access the Committee Module from your “Profile” page.
- Council & Chapter Forms: the new Common MOAA/Chapter Join Form allows a chapter to modify the membership form with the membership/dues information and use it to sign up new member for MOAA National too.

*(Note: A modified agenda with the sample form attached will be sent to everyone by Doug Minton. You can also find the form on the MOAA Website by going to Chapters, then forms).*

This common form is a good tool! It was suggested that everyone modify and use it as your chapter membership form. If you have any questions about the form or modifying it, please contact Doug Minton.

Discussion ensued about some individual chapter bylaws stating that someone cannot be a chapter member without joining MOAA National.

The “real time” MOAA Recruiting Report is part of the Committee Module update. Key features are 1) it only shows the current month, not cumulative, and 2) includes the “No Contact Report”, cumulative. Instructions and updated webinar are on the Committee Module tab on the MOAA Website.

### **Good of the Council**

Legislative Affairs Exchange Forum: MOAA ask that we engage Chapter and Council Members interested in being involved in the Forum to facilitate the exchange of information across councils relative to working with staffers/legislators at the local level for state/federal issues. This does not replace council/chapter legislative affairs activity. The MOAA Legislative Team will provide guidance for national legislative issues.

Please send Doug Minton your upcoming dates of interest for the January 2020 agenda. Chapter leadership is encouraged to bring other chapter members to the council meetings too. The 2020 meeting dates are on the agenda today and they are also in the meeting minutes.

MOAA shared the following information:

- 5,489 National Members plus 986 Surviving Spouse Members in TN.
- MOAA has about 400 chapters and 10 of those are in TN (9 is the official count).
- 136 chapters earned 5-Star LOE Awards for 2018 with 3 of those in TN.
- 50 Chapters got 4-Star LOE Awards.  
LOE Award submission is not difficult, simply document and photo your activity to support your submission forms. 90% of chapter membership must be MOAA National members.
- President and Past President Pins: Pins are available at no cost to the Chapters, contact MOAA Council and Chapters to request them.

The MOAA Storming the Hill date can change the date of our April Council Meeting.

We need to get more chapter members involved in TVET from Stones River, General Andrew Jackson, and Upper Cumberland. Steve Singleton stated that the rubber meets the road when the Committee Meetings begin on the Hill. These are often called very quickly!

Paperwork for the MOAA Communications Award is simple. Ft. Campbell has won 4 years, and Chattanooga 5 years.

### **Information from Chapters**

Ft. Campbell: Steve Singleton was awarded a "Quilt of Valor". Monroe Gildersleeve reported that the following: November 8<sup>th</sup> is the APSU Military Alumni Chapter Annual Scholarship Endowment Dinner, the 2019 Montgomery County Veterans Day Parade is November 9<sup>th</sup>, and the Veterans Day Breakfast is November 9<sup>th</sup>

General Andrew Jackson: John Wade reported for J.D. Rottero. They continue to meet at the McKendree Manor with their Board of Director's Meeting immediately prior to the luncheon meeting. Membership stands at 41 with 25-30 attending meetings and they have a door prize each month. Courtney Rogers, Commissioner, TDVS, was a recent speaker. If you would like to have Commissioner Rogers speak at your meeting, contact John Wade or J.D. Rottero for her contact number. Five schools in their area benefit from JROTC scholarships.

Note: Community grant funds have to be watched more closely. It is easier if funds are managed quarterly.

Memphis: Kathy Desjarlais reported that Maurice Tyler died last month. For the month of October, John Dixon was selected as "Veteran of the Month" for Tipton County and honored with a reception.

Middle TN: Doug Minton stated that they had 40+ in attendance at their last three meetings. They have 250 members and the number will drop due to members leaving the area or death. Succession of officers is good! Speakers are limited to 45 minutes. Their biggest issue is dues collection. In their scholarship fund solicitation letter, they request a \$25 donation from each member. Strangely, while some do not pay dues, they do donate to a good cause.

John Ohlinger suggested everyone Google: Bass Military Scholarship Program. He stated that they will pay up to \$25,000. In March 2020, the Association of Graduates West Point Leaders of Character will focus on middle school and high schools relative to ethics and leadership. This will consist of two, six-hour days.

Stones River: Pete Warner stated that Jim Parks is still quite ill.

Sumner County: Frank Edwards reported that Steve Petersen is out of town. The chapter is struggling to find a place to meet in Gallatin. They were meeting at the country club, but their Board of Director's now wants to charge \$300 for them to use the club for their meeting. So, they have shifted to the VFW in Hendersonville. Due to attendance, they are considering meeting every other month. Only 15 of their 60 members attend, and where they meet does not seem to matter. The chapter funds three ROTC scholarships

**Important Deadline Dates for Chapters:**

- MOAA Community Outreach Grants Submission: 1 December 2019 – 28 February 2020
- TN Veterans Day on Hill: 5 February 2020
- COL Marvin J Harris Communication Award for Calendar Year 2019 (print, e-newsletter and website) Submission: NLT 28 February 2020
- MOAA LOE Award: NLT 30 April 2020
- MOAA National Meeting will be held in Kansas City, MO on 25 October 2020.
- MOAA Chapter Leaders Training Workshop for our area will be 13-14 November 2020. Four from each Chapter – President, Membership Chair, Legislative Chair, and Surviving Spouse Liaison will be invited based on Committee Module assignments. At this time, workshop location is slated to be Lexington, KY (*Note: Chapters need to work to insure all (4) positions are filled for 2020*).

**Next Meeting**

Our next meeting is scheduled for **15 January 2020** at 11:00am at Sammy B's in Lebanon.

**Future Meetings - Mark Your Calendar!**

TN CoC Meeting:	15 January 2020, Sammy B's
TN CoC Meeting:	15 April 2020, Sammy B's
TN CoC Meeting:	15 July 2020, Sammy B's
TN CoC Meeting:	21 October 2020, Sammy B's

The meeting adjourned at 1:00pm.

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