



Tennessee Council of Chapters
Military Officers Association of America



Minutes of the Meeting 21 October

Tennessee Council of Chapters, MOAA met 21 October 2020 on-line in a Zoom meeting with **15** members on-line and CAPT Stone from MOAA national as follows:

Chattanooga: John Davenport
East Tennessee: No Representative
Ft. Campbell: Ivan Adames, Steve Singleton
General Andrew Jackson: J.D. Rottero
Memphis: Kathy Desjarlais, John Dixon, Jim Thomasson
Middle TN: Mike Patenaude, Patricia Bergquist, Doug Minton
Mountain Empire: Mark Tipton, John Rice
Stones River: Betty Moshea
Sumner County: Steve Petersen
Upper Cumberland: Scott Jacobson

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2021 MEETING INFORMATION IN THE MINUTES!

No guests attended on Zoom

Council President Jim Thomasson began the meeting at 11:30am.

Ivan Adames led the pledge to the flag. Council President Jim Thomasson said a prayer for the attendees of the meeting and their families, and for those In-uniform for our country

Acceptance of Minutes

Minutes of the 15 July 2020 meeting were approved by acclamation.

Financial Report

John Dixon, Treasurer, delivered the financial report for the period July 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020. The 18month CD matured in July and was not renewed. The funds of \$3,112.80 were deposited in the checking account. The Council received \$90 from MOAA for zoom expenses, which the Council will incur in the 4th quarter. In this quarter the Council paid its annual TVET dues of \$100 and made a \$250 contribution to the MOAA Covid-19 Relief Fund. Total funds on hand were \$7,001, which includes \$1,322.72 in restricted travel funds.

The Council accepted the Treasurer's Report as presented without question by vote.

Surviving Spouse Report

Patricia Bergquist, our surviving spouse representative, gave the following report:

MOAA and The Military Coalition (TMC) continue to work with Congress on many bills to improve survivor benefits, to eliminate inequities in the law with the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, to improve Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), eliminate the remarriage penalty, and a number of other areas where inequities and inconsistencies still exist. A brief summary of those areas are attached.

Patricia also discussed at length the removal of the DIC/SBP offset over the next three years and the expected confusion among surviving spouses over the many issues of implementation. No new information has been provided by DFAS. Those who were involved in the fight for the repeal are starting to receive many questions from surviving spouses and they advise people with questions to contact DFAS as a starting point. DFAS will NOT answer questions on what an individual surviving spouse will receive.

Patricia has consulted with other leading experts among the surviving spouses and there is not agreement on how the many implementation issues will be addressed. The first installment in reducing the offset will be 1 February 2021.

She urged those with questions to call DFAS as a starting point. They have a list of common questions and answers that may be helpful.

TVET Update

Col Doug Minton, USA, (Ret), who is the Council's representative to TVET briefed on the following issues:

TVET has identified the following bills for the 2020/2021 legislative session and is working to document/investigate all options for their consideration:

Disabled Veteran Sick Leave Policy – creates a medical leave policy for veterans to attend VA appointments of up to 96 hours per year. Often the veteran will have to travel to Nashville or Murfreesboro for specialty treatment. This will incentivize them to make and keep VA appointments. There is a federal government and Montgomery county policy in place. (Montgomery county policy is attached)

COVID-DIC – require county/city coroners and attending physicians to review VA disability certificates on deceased veterans to determine relationship between veteran's death and service-connected disability. If veteran passes from COVID-19 and service connected disability is not included as an underlying factor, the veteran's spouse will lose Death Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

Deployed Veterans on-line voter program. Because of the difficulty in veterans being able to vote while deployed overseas or hospitalized, a proposal has been made to

create an on-line system that will allow them to verify identity and vote remotely. This proposal was submitted by Doug Minton, MOAA. The problem will be getting approval for an on-line system and the funds to pay for it. This system is being used in WVA and was funded by a foundation (we are researching similar opportunity). This will be a DEPLOYED VETERAN specific bill.

They have one outstanding issue that is awaiting input on action taken by the TN Department of Veterans Services:

Outstanding issue - policy was to be written by TDVS VA home director to standardize naming conventions for state-run veteran homes. We need to follow up to ensure this has happened.

Other Items from Doug Minton

- Chapter Membership Entry in the MOAA Council & Chapters Database (Committee Module – CM). Very important to maintain your current membership in the database. MOAA remits a membership incentive on a quarterly basis and the following Chapters should be receiving their incentive payments for the number of new MOAA members (in parenthesis) that were recruited during the 3rd quarter:
 - Middle TN Chapter (8)
 - Stones River Chapter (5)
 - Ft. Campbell Chapter (4)
 - Upper Cumberland Chapter (3)
 - General Andrew Jackson Chapter (honorable mention but new member did not earn an incentive)These incentives will be paid out using the EFT capability that each of these Chapters has enabled, and the funds should be received in the next week or so.

- Reminder on availability of the 2020 MOAA Council & Chapters Policies & Procedures Guid.pdf.

Council President

The following items were briefed/discussed:

- From the August 20 Webinar, MOAA urged members to be active on social media and to follow MOAA national on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. With young people more active on social media, they are more likely to be attracted to MOAA if chapters are active on such programs.
- Levels of Excellence Awards:
 - No ceremony in 2020
 - 170 of 173 submittals won either a 4 star or 5 star award for 2019
- A third virtual chapter has been established – the U. S. Public Health Service

- A new Association Management System, Salesforce, will soon be implemented to manage the chapters and councils throughout the country (previously mentioned in earlier webinar)
- Covid-19 Relief Grants
 - 80 applications had been received by 20 August
 - Over 1500 donors had given \$165,000
 - One chapter in North Carolina had submitted 18 applications
- The training workshop in Louisville on Nov 13, 14 will be virtual and is open to all members in our state
- The national convention for 2020 is being held virtually this Friday afternoon and is still available, but you must register.
- A list of Tennessee state Veterans Benefits (18 pages) was recently sent out by Doug Minton, our TVET representative as a source document for members to review and use

At the request of the Council president, the January Council meeting was moved from January 20, 2021 to January 13th, at 11:30 to avoid conflicting with the Presidential inauguration. It will be a zoom meeting.

Chapter Updates

Memphis - Kathy Desjarlais/John Dixon

1. Chapter has supported charity golf events for Alpha Omega and the Southern Tipton County Chamber of Commerce with donations.
2. Monthly BOD meetings have continued with zoom meetings. No chapter meetings since February.
3. Chapter has begun a Pay-pal payment option for members, most recently for chapter challenge coins.

Ft Campbell – Ivan Adames

1. Last in-person Chapter MOAA luncheon was this past Saturday, Sep. 17, at Fort Campbell; a catered Schnitzel buffet, with 34 members attending.
2. Currently, Fort Campbell has one location which can handle large groups (30 - 40 person) in a 4 per table arrangement (Cole Park Commons); and for November/December
3. (If needed), they are working to re-open the Smoke Haus (former Sportsmen's' Lodge) to handle additional large group for the up-coming holidays.
4. Clarksville and Hopkinsville have two venues to handle our Chapter attendance volume in a COVID environment of table seating capacity (cost \$\$\$\$)
5. We are continuing to have our monthly Executive Board meeting via Zoom.
6. We will be involved with the upcoming Veterans Parade (Nov 7); Gander Memorial Ceremony - Hopkinsville/Fort Campbell (Dec 12); Wreaths Across America (Dec 19). No float this year.

Mountain Empire – Mark Tipton

1. John Rice is the new chapter president.
2. BOD meetings have resumed meeting in person, every other month. Chapter meetings are still not in-person.
3. Next chapter meeting is Nov 15th, with special guest Miss Virginia Courtney Lynn, an Army Reservist. Meeting is contingent upon local conditions. The September meeting had been cancelled.

General Andrew Jackson – J. D. Rottero

1. In-person meetings have not resumed, at least partially due the normal location not allowing on-site meetings.
2. Chapter members have stayed in touch via email and conference call since then.

Middle Tennessee – Mike Patenaude

1. Two combat veteran scholarships this year.
2. September BOD meeting was first in-person meeting this year and will continue in-person
3. September was also first chapter meeting in-person with 36 at their normal location at the country club. Next week the October meeting will be in-person.
4. Operations Stand-Down Heroes Breakfast scheduled for August has been postponed to November 12 with a planned in-person and virtual option available – more to follow.
5. Two (2) scholarships are being awarded to students at Lipscomb College and Belmont University.

Upper Cumberland – Scott Jacobson

1. Two scholarships were recently awarded, one for \$2000 and one for \$1500.
2. Summer picnic was held in mid-September. This is 30th anniversary of chapter.
3. Last BOD meeting was held in-person.
4. A Christmas party is planned.

Sumner County – Steve Petersen

1. BOD meetings still by Zoom.
2. Long time chapter leader on BOD passed away in July.
3. Steve recently advised a new widow about the Armed Forces Mutual Aid Association based at Ft Myers, VA. They can greatly help new widows with one phone call if the widow/service member are a member.
4. Steve discussed the issue of the rules changing for burial at Arlington National Cemetery. MOAA is looking for member comments and suggestions.

Stones River – Betty Moshea

1. Chapter is now enrolled in MOAA's on-line payment system, with 2 members paying annual dues just in the last week.
2. Two new members just recently joined the chapter.
3. This quarter the chapter donated \$125 to Project Healing Waters, a non-profit that outfits and guides wounded warriors on fly fishing excursions, and \$100 to the First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro for their annual "Night to Remember" gala dinner for veterans. The dinner was cancelled, and the funds will go to veterans in need.
4. The chapter presented a MOAA chapter coin to a chapter member, Lt Col Jacob (Mac) McClenny, USAF (Ret) who was a WWII B-17 pilot, who turned 100 years old on October 6, 2020! Lt Gen Huber made the presentation via Zoom. Proclamations were also made

by Governor Lee of Tennessee, the mayor of Murfreesboro, and the mayor of Rutherford County.

Chattanooga – John Davenport

1. The chapter hosted its MOAA dinner meeting on August 25th with Congressman Chuck Fleishmann as the speaker. 40 people attended. Attendees were both in-person and virtually.
2. The chapter is participating in the Chattanooga Armed Forces parade on Friday, October 23rd.
3. The chapter is hosting its next dinner meeting on October 27th with Dr Jackson, CEO of Erlanger Hospital, as the speaker. Attendees will be both in-person and virtually.
4. The Veterans Day parade has been cancelled.
5. The local national cemetery is filling up. John mentioned this as a comment following the discussion of Arlington National Cemetery.
6. Many local MOAA members are also members of the Reserve Association of America.

Conclusion of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned about 12:50 CST.

Upcoming Dates

1. MOAA National Meeting will be held in Kansas City, MO on 23 October 2020. On-line only.
2. MOAA Chapter Leaders Training Workshop will be held 13-14 November 2020. Invitations will be for (4) from each Chapter: President, Membership Chair, Legislative Chair, and Surviving Spouse Liaison. Invitations will be based on Committee Module assignments, so Chapters need to work to see that all (4) positions are filled for the New Year. All workshops are expected to be on-line only.
3. TVET Storming the Hill in Nashville, Feb 3, 2021.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for **13 January 2021** at 11:30 am in another Zoom meeting.

Future Meetings – at Sammy B's or on Zoom Mark Your Calendar!

TN CoC Meeting:	21 April 2021
TN CoC Meeting:	21 July 2021
TN CoC Meeting:	20 October 2021

Minutes prepared by Jim Thomasson, President and Secretary
Respectfully submitted by Jim Thomasson, President, TN Council of Chapters