



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



Minutes of the Meeting 17 July 2024

Tennessee Council of Chapters, MOAA met 17 July 2024 in person/via zoom, 11:30 AM CST.

Those in Attendance were:

**CC Chattanooga (TN01)**

BJ Keepers

**MC Memphis (TN03)**

Kathy Desjarlais

**MTC Middle Tennessee (TN04)**

Larry Cotton Pres

Doug Minton CoC MC

Patricia Bergquist, CoC SSL via zoom

Karon Uzzell-Baggett Past Pres

John Ohlinger

**MEC Mountain Empire (TN05)**

No Representative

**UCC Upper Cumberland (TN06)**

Scott Jacobson Pres

Robert Martin

**SCC Sumner County (TN11)**

Stewart Reeve Pres

Frank Edwards 1VP

**FCC Ft Campbell (TN07)**

Brian Lynch Pres

Monroe Gildersleeve CoC Trea

Eddie Sumbler, CoC Chaplain

Eunice Sumbler

Bill Summers TNVET

Ivan Adames

Tim Powers

**SRC Stones River (TN10)**

Keith Prather Pres

Pete Warner CoC Pres

Sandy Warner CoC Sec

Jim Hueburger

Phil Short

Suzanne Short

**Gen Andrew Jackson (TN12)**

Bobbie Bell Pres

John Wade

Jeff Rice

**ETC East Tennessee (TN02)**

No Representative

The Tennessee Council of Chapters MOAA welcomed guest speaker: Dena Kilgore, CAE Program Director, Council and Chapter Affairs Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

***MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2024 MEETING INFORMATION IN THE MINUTES!***

Council President Pete Warner began the meeting at 11:35 am. and led the pledge to the flag. Following the pledge of allegiance to the flag Eddie Sumbler said a prayer of opening for the meeting.

## **Acceptance of Minutes**

Minutes of the 24 April 2024 meeting had been sent out on 01 July 2024 to all the chapter presidents and Council members Kathy Desjarlais moved that the minutes be accepted. The motion was seconded by Keith Prather and approved unanimously.

## **Financial Report**

The financial report for the period of April 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024. The council had two disbursements during the quarter, Pete Warner ordered 100 coins reimbursement of \$609.63 and a Council banner with stand and carrying case reimbursement of \$319.20.

The council had one deposit from MOAA National, Military officer payment TN CoC for \$800.00.

Total funds on hand at the end of the quarter were \$6,298.47, which included restricted travel funds of \$1496.10.

The council accepted the Treasurer's report.

## **Surviving Spouse Report – Patricia Bergquist written update provided as follows:**

All Tennessee MOAA Chapters have provided their Surviving Spouse Liaison information. Please remember to update Patricia when there are Surviving Spouse Liaison changes. If a Chapter Surviving Spouse Liaison needs assistance helping a surviving spouse, please contact Patricia at [p\\_bergg@hotmail.com](mailto:p_bergg@hotmail.com) or (615-948-4960).

## **ADVOCACY/LEGISLATION UPDATES**

*Please refer to the January 24, 2024 TN CoC Surviving Spouse Report and all documents attached separately for "detailed" information on the bills which are updated as of July 16, 2024 below.*

- 1) H.R.3232 and S.1588 - "Respect for Grieving Military Families Act"  
*H.R.3232 has 17 co-sponsors (1 from TN: S. Cohen)  
S.1588 has 2 co-sponsors (NONE from TN)*
- 2) H.R.1083 and S.414 - "Caring for Survivors Act of 2023"  
*H.R.1083 has 97 co-sponsors (1 from TN: S. Cohen)  
S.414 has 22 co-sponsors (NONE from TN)*
- 3) H.R. 3651 and S. 1266 - "Love Lives on Act 2023"  
*H.R.3651 has 55 co-sponsors (NONE from TN)  
S.1266 has 33 co-sponsors (NONE from TN)*

Failure to make legislative changes to #1 above often causes financial hardship and emotional pain.

Chapter Presidents are encouraged to 1) remind all members and surviving spouses to inform their spouse/family of the need to inform DFAS, VA, SSA, and other pay entities of the servicemember or surviving spouse death immediately; and 2) to be sure all beneficiary designations with DFAS, other pay entities, insurance policies, etc. are correct. This applies to both active duty, retired personnel, and surviving spouses. Recent incidents outside of TN were shared to support the need for these reminders.

As you can see, only one of our TN Congressman has co-sponsored any of the bills cited in this report. Our remaining Congressmen and both of our Senators have not. Without advocacy, we cannot move the needle on these bills!

E-mail campaigns continue to both Congressmen and Senators across the United States to garner co-sponsors and support for these three (3) pieces of legislation. Please continue to encourage all Tennessee MOAA chapter members and surviving spouses to contact their Congressmen and Senators to garner their co-sponsorship and vote for these three pieces of legislation impacting our surviving spouses using one of the following:

MOAA's Legislative Action Center at [www.moaa.org/takeaction](http://www.moaa.org/takeaction) to send a MOAA prewritten message which you can personalize, if desired, to Congress.

Contact your Congressman and Senators, using the MOAA Capitol Switchboard (1-866-272-6622), ask to be connected to your congressman or Senator's office, once connected ask to speak with the Military Legislative Assistant (MLA) or Legislative Director. *Get name and e-mail address of the MLA or Legislative Director, if you do not already have it, and follow-up your phone call with an e-mail.*

The *most active* surviving spouses FaceBook groups following these bills are:

- "DIC Surviving Spouses/DIC Increase Advocacy"
- "Love Lives on Act of 2023 Advocacy"
- "Military Survivors DFAS/SBP Issues"
- "MOAA Surviving Spouses and Friends"

For your information:

The Society of Military Widows was established in 1968. SMW will formally disband at their Annual Meeting in September 2024 in Colorado Springs, CO.

Attrition and age along with expenses greater than their ability to sustain them on the fixed incomes of most active members have taken a toll. Only six chapters remain, and several have less than ten active members. There may be a reunion in 2025.

**TNVET Update – Bill Summers spoke at council meeting as follows:**

**MOAA is the chairman for TNVET this year through 2025**

**Continuation 2024 100% disable funds are out of money, property tax exemption**

**Property values up, vets are losing money on tax assessment values not changing**

**Separate Legislative Update**

**NEXT STEPS:**

**Stay Informed.** Be sure to subscribe to the weekly *MOAA Newsletter* for the latest AIA news and updates. Keep up with all the latest advocacy news at [MOAA's Advocacy News page](#).

Visit the MOAA website and navigate to the Advocacy in Action page to find out about virtual conferences and legislative visits to make your voice heard. Remember that its numbers as well as the message that counts.

**MOAA discussion**

**Statewide Convention at Arnold Air Force Base in 2025**

**Branding of MOAA Council**

**Zip code sent into National**

**TN02 boots on the ground Knoxville rebuild**

**Website reaching out to a younger crowd getting it up an running**

**Each chapter President introduction to Dena (coined)**

**Introduction of Dena Kilgore CAE guest speaker from National MOAA**

**Next meeting – October 16, 2024, at Sammy B's restaurant In Lebanon, TN**

**Council Updates:**

May 2024 – Council President Pete Warner put forth Three (3) Proposals via email.

Proposal 1) - Create a council website. Proposal 2) - Purchase council challenge coins.

Proposal 3) - Purchase a banner w/ stand.

Proposal 2 & 3 have been accepted unanimously, and the orders were placed.

May 25, 2024, Council President Pete Warner with Sandy in tow, accepted an invitation from Ray Mitchell, President of the Chattanooga Chapter and arrived at the Lookouts baseball game and dinner for Military Appreciation Day with the Chattanooga Chapter.

May 2024 – Interest in a new Tennessee Chapter brought forth by Savannah TN Philip Crabtree, to National MOAA and in turn sent to TN Council President Pete Warner.

May 2024 President of the TN Council requested and booked as Guest Speaker at the Stones River Chapter meeting June 20, 2024.

Hearing from many chapters regarding our website vendor selection **proposal** (email sent on 6/3/2024 at 9:26AM), Time with our potential vendor on Monday, 10 June at 6PM (CST) to hold a Zoom Meeting. ... Mr. Joseph Leonard (cc'd) from NonProfitDynamics.com, listen and ask questions on what Mr. Leonard has to offer the Council.

**Proposal 1)** had an informative zoom meeting with Joseph Leonard @ Non-Profit Dynamics on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 6pm CST / 7pm EST.

Introducing goals for Chapter Websites Advance the Mission and Engage the Members; Council Website it's Advocacy.

Noting that Sponsors would pay for space on the website, his example was USAA paying \$100.00 for their ad.

Joseph Leonard's prices bring it home as he donates his time/equipment and only charges for expenses at a flat rate of \$400.00 per year for Council Websites and \$300.00 per year for Chapters. The Domain name he stated is a separate cost of \$25.00 per year. A few sponsor ads could cover the annual fees.

Customized functions on the website will be able to reflect our needs. This gives the council a way to protect each member with the ability to opt out/in.

FTC President Brian Lynch, UCC Vice President Robert Martin, MTC Past President Karon-Uzzel-Baggett, SRC President Keith Prather, MTC Doug Minton, CoC Pete Warner and Sandy took turns asking questions that would help each chapter and the Council move forth in this technological world and gain access to a younger crowd and expand our memberships with fresh ideas.

Thanks to those that sent word even though they were unable to participate, for their thoughts on this Proposal 1.

One item during this meeting that stood out above all others was the Council would have total control over said Website. YES, that means we would need a \*\*\* Website Administrator \*\*\* and without hesitation CoC President Pete Warner informed us he is willing to learn all he can to keep this Council in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

To be able to inform everyone on what's being offered Pete requested a shorter presentation to use by the TN Council and Chapters.

By the end of the zoom meeting the information gathered was very encouraging and would seem very helpful for Chapters that could not afford their own website to have a platform on the TN Council Website to share their information.

## **Chapter Updates**

### **Chattanooga TN01 – Ray Mitchell: written update provided as follows:**

I'm extremely proud of our chapter with our recent recognition. We were recognized as a 5-Star Level of Excellence chapter and once again this year, we have a 5-Star winning Newsletter. We had one of our MOAA members selected as the Calvin Coolidge Chattanooga Veteran of the Year, LTC Bill Brooks. We gave out four \$1,500 scholarships to some very deserving young

adults, three local high school JROTC cadets and one University of Tennessee at Chattanooga SROTC cadet.

About 25 of our members had a great learning experience during our Chickamauga-Chattanooga Battlefield staff ride in April. The National Park Service Historian, Mr. Jim Ogden, told the story so well that it made you feel a part of the battle.

The Lookouts ballgame and picnic in May was successful in many ways. First, we had a great time with good food and great fellowship. We also drew in other veteran organization like folks for the local Navy League chapter, several American Legion Post, several folks from the VA Outreach Department and special guest, Mr. Dan Ducker the CEO of Tennessee Valley Health Care and Mr. Pete Warner and his wife Sandy, President of the MOAA Tennessee Council. What an honor but most important, we recruited a new MOAA Member.

Another chapter social event is several of us are planning to attend some Saturday nights gathering to hear bands on the river provided by Chattanooga's Riverfront Nights. Each Saturday night through the summer the city hosts free concerts on the river and it's another great time getting to know each other. We also continue to work to schedule a train tour of the Hiwassee Valley.

Although more of a fund raiser event than a social event, looking forward to our Veterans Golf Classic on September 16th. The success of this event is critical for our scholarship funding. Among the many things our chapter does in our community, scholarships are a major reason our chapter exists. Traditionally, we are only able to raise \$4,000 or \$5,000 for scholarships, basically from the goodness of our member's contributions. Although admirable, this is a far cry from what we hope to do in the future and the Veterans Golf Classic has the potential to triple this amount.

We were able to send seven members of our leadership team to MOAA National's formal training in Greenville, S. C in May. The training focused on Leadership, Members Services, Legislative Affairs, and Spouse and Surviving Spouse rights and benefits. In addition, one of the real benefits was being able to collaborate with other chapter leaders across the southeast where we shared knowledge and experience within each other's chapters.

We continue to be very active in the veteran's community with Chapter members participating in many veterans' events in the local area. Many members were either a part of the organization of the event and/or participated in the Chattanooga's 75-Armed Forces Parade and luncheon on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May. We also participated in a VA's outreach program in late May at the Alhambra Temple for the Veteran community. Several of us continue with training and attendance at the Hamilton County's Veterans Court.

As we get closer to Christmas time we will ring the bell for the Salvation Army. We will collect toys for the Marines Toys for Tots program and hold a food drive for our local Food Kitchen.

I'll close by saying we are proud of our chapter's moto "never stop serving" and I see it every day with our member's contributions, both financially and talent, to our area veteran's community. Because of your help we are making a difference.

### **East Tennessee TN02 (Knoxville) – Revitalization underway.**

The TN CoC has been working hand in hand with National to bring life back to East Tennessee TN02 chapter. Bill Potter stated he would step down if he hears it from National. Dena Kilgore noted that before they send the letter, they will attempt to contact Bill Potter. Doug Minton mentioned trying to contact Bill Potter would be a waste of time as this has been going on for years.

If you know of anyone in the Knoxville area interested in joining a MOAA Chapter let the Council President know.

**MOAA Memphis TN03 – Kathy Desjarlais: written update provided as follows:**

April speaker was a retired USAF Lt Col KC-10 pilot who relayed his experience finding and leading a bomber with electrical problems from Afghan air space to a safe landing outside the area of operations.

May speaker was chapter president who relayed info from the Greenville conference

June speaker was a chapter member who talked about D-Day along with showing a slide presentation about the landing, its aftermath, and little-known facts.

**Middle Tennessee TN04 – Larry Cotton: written update provided as follows:**

**I. Luncheon Meetings**

a. April 2024 – Monthly luncheon meeting held 23 April at Operation Standdown Tennessee. Mr. Ed Harries, Tennessee State Veterans Homes Executive Director, provided an “Update on Tennessee State Veterans Homes”.

a. May 2024 – Monthly luncheon meeting held 28 May. Mrs. Dietliende Spears spoke on “My Life: From Nazi Occupation to Democracy”.

a. June 2024 – Monthly luncheon meeting 25 June. Mrs. Susan Hunter spoke on her book and theatrical releases pending “77 Letters” about correspondence with soldiers in Vietnam.

**I. Advocacy**

a. Each of the luncheon meetings concluded with a briefing on the 2024 legislation being emphasized through MOAA’s Legislative Action Center. Chapter members were encouraged to use the platform as often as possible.

**II. Community Outreach**

a. \$1,500 approved by MOAA for the OSDTN Holiday Market planned for December but the final date is not yet determined. The cards for veterans will likely be primarily from Publix and limited to non-alcohol items.

b. \$2,000 approved by MOAA for OSDTN Military Spouse Employment Seminar on Friday, September 6, 2024, at Operation Stand Down Tennessee – Clarksville. Twelve (12) military spouses will be sought for 1-day seminar.

c. Hunger Action Project planned for Friday, September 20, 2024, at Operation Stand Down Tennessee from 12PM - 3PM.

a. Completed presentation of three MOAA ROTC Leadership medals to the Vanderbilt Army and Navy ROTC, and TN State University Air Force ROTC programs. We also completed award presentations for eleven of the thirteen JROTC programs we support.

**I. Other**

a. Our Chapter has added eight (8) new members during the first quarter of 2024 and has another three additions in the works. Our best recruiters continue to be our current members!

b. MTC MOAA also held its annual Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony on Saturday, 25 May 2024, at the Middle Tennessee Veterans Cemetery.

**Mountain Empire TN05 – Written update not provided.**

**Upper Cumberland TN06 – Scott Jacobsen written update as follows.**

Participated in "Get Involved Expo" in Fairfield Glade on April 8th

March Membership meeting on Saturday, March 23rd with Ethan Hadley, Head of the Crossville Chamber of Commerce.

JROTC MOAA Medal presentations at 5 area High Schools, and ROTC MOAA Medal presentation at Tennessee Tech University.

Sponsored and participated in the annual Tennessee Tech ROTC Golf tournament

Inaugural MOAA Officer's Call at Brass Lantern Restaurant

Summer "Beach Party" Picnic with food and entertainment, at FFG St. George Marina on 3 June 2024

**Ft Campbell TN07 – Brian Lynch: written update provided as follows:**

April - 20 Apr Chapter lunch at the Montgomery County Public Library  
Guest speakers: Erinne Hester, Montgomery County Property Assessor  
Hector Santos, Director, Montgomery County VSO

27 Apr KY Council of Chapters, Ft Knox, KY  
Received the MOAA 5 Star awards for Newsletter and Web page

May - 17-18 May MOAA Leaders Workshop, Greenville, SC  
18 May Chapter lunch at the Fort Campbell USO  
LTC Dewey Browder (USA)(RET) gave on a talk on “The Last Victim of the Cold War”

June - 15 Jun Chapter lunch at Pablo’s Restaurant (Clarksville)  
Guest Speaker: The 917 Society

**Stones River TN10 – Written update provided by Keith Prather as follows:**

In April we ended our first successful Shoe Drive Fundraiser for our scholarship fund.

In May we had our regular monthly business meeting with a guest speaker

In June we had our regular monthly business meeting with our TN Council President Pete Warner providing us with a State of the State address.

**Sumner County TN11 – Stewart Reeve: written update provided as follows:**

Sumner County chapter has completed its JROTC scholarship and medal awards program.

In May we awarded two \$500 scholarships to senior JROTC cadets at Hendersonville High School (USMC) and Station Camp High School (Army). We also awarded MOAA medals to junior cadets at these schools and to a junior cadet at Springfield High School (Air Force). In April we awarded scholarships and medals to the Navy JROTC cadets at Gallatin High School.

We continue our transition to Saturday noon meetings from Thursday evening and are working with a new caterer.

We have no meeting in July but will return to our regular meeting schedule (fourth Saturday) in August

**General Andrew Jackson TN12 – Bobbie A. Bell: written update provided as follows:**

**Luncheon Meetings**

- a. May 2024 – our speaker was Katy Morgan, chief meteorologist for the local FOX station.
- b. June 2024 – our speaker was Traci Holton. The VP for New Horizon for the Metro Nashville Airport Authority. She updated us on the construction & changes at the Nashville airport.
- c. July 2024 – our speaker was Richard Detwiler who is Military Funeral Honors Coordinator for the Tennessee National Guard. We got a short lesson on the history of our flag & the process for requesting military funerals.

**Correspondence**

The chapter uses the monthly newsletter as the primary means of communication outside of our monthly meetings. Items are sent out to the whole chapter between meetings. This primarily involves advocacy issues.

**Membership**

Our membership chairman as well as the president scans the MOAA site for prospective new members although with the site being down for some time now, we have not gotten any new names. We have 1 person that remains interested but has to work our meetings out with his

employer. I also have another person who may be interested in moving to our chapter as his current chapter's meetings conflict with another meeting of his. We'll see.

**Advocacy**

The membership is kept informed of the issues & urged to support them.

**Leadership**

All slots are filled & there has been no change. We are looking at prospective officers & board members for 2025.

**Conclusion of Meeting**

Dena was presented with the first Council of Chapters cap gifted by Pete & Sandy to the council.

Passed out CoC caps to all members there. Chaplain Sumbler said a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at about 13:00 CST.

**Next Meetings and Future Events**

**MOAA Virtual Monthly Roundtable of Chapter Leaders:** Thursday 7 PM EST

**Proposed 2024 future TN Council of Chapters Meetings: \_**

Our next meeting is scheduled for **October 16, 2024**, at 11:30 AM CST. The meeting will be in person at Sammy B's in Lebanon, TN.

**Future Meetings – at Sammy B's or via Zoom!**

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| TN CoC Meeting: | 15 January 2025 |
| TN CoC Meeting: | 16 April 2025   |
| TN CoC Meeting: | 16 July 2025    |
| TN CoC Meeting  | 15 October 2025 |

Minutes prepared and submitted by Sandy Warner, Secretary, TN Council of Chapters