Tennessee Council of Chapters

Military Officers Association of America

Minutes of the Meeting 16 April 2025

Tennessee Council of Chapters, MOAA met 16 April 2025 in person and via zoom, 11:00 AM CST.

Those in Attendance were

Guest Speaker: Jay Johnson

CC Chattanooga (TN01)
Ray Mitchell Pres
Tony Crowder VP
BJ Keepers
Edward Jewell

ETC East Tennessee (TN02)
No Rep

MC Memphis (TN03)
Kathy Desjarlais Pres
Jim Thomasson Trea – via zoom

MTC Middle Tennessee (TN04)
Larry Cotton Pres
Doug Minton CoC MC
Patricia Bergquist, CoC SSL – via zoom
Karon Uzzell-Baggett NB/Past Pres
Dale Kiser VP
John Ohlinger

SCC Sumner County (TN11)
Stu Reeve Pres

MEC Mountain Empire (TN05)
Don Thompson Pres – via zoom

UCC Upper Cumberland (TN06)
Scott Jacobson Pres
Robert Martin VP

FCC Ft Campbell (TN07)
Monroe Gildersleeve CoC Trea
Eddie Sumbler, CoC Chaplain
Ivan Adames CoC Past Pres
Monroe Gildersleeve CoC Trea
Brian Lynch Pres – via zoom

SRC Stones River (TN10)
Pete Warner CoC Pres
Sandy Warner CoC Sec
Doug Gilbert VP

Gen Andrew Jackson (TN12)
John Wade
Bill Moss

Tennessee Council of Chapters MOAA welcomed guest speaker Jay Johnson *J2 Servant Leadership, LLC*.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2025 MEETING INFORMATION IN THE MINUTES!

Council President Pete Warner began the meeting at 11:08 AM and led the pledge to the flag. Following the pledge of allegiance to the flag Chaplain Eddie Sumbler said a prayer of opening for the meeting.

Acceptance of Minutes
Minutes of the 15 January 2025 meeting had been sent out on 11 April 2025 to all the chapter presidents and Council members Kathy Desjarlais moved that the minutes be accepted. The motion was seconded by Doug Gilbert and approved unanimously

Financial Report

The financial report for the period of January 1, 2025, to March 31, 2025.

The council had three disbursements during the quarter, to Pete Warner for travel expense visiting TN02 East Tennessee Chapter reimbursement of $365.84 and incidentals to support the rebuilding of our East TN chapter of $116.44. Marketing expense for east TN of $235.96

The council had no deposit from MOAA National.

Total funds on hand at the end of the quarter were $5,363.53, which included restricted travel funds of $595.07.

Kathy Desjarlais moved that the Financial Report be accepted. The motion was seconded by Karon Uzzell-Baggett and approved unanimously.

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 (SSL) information, except the East Tennessee Chapter. A Surviving Spouse Liaison may be a surviving spouse, spouse, or an officer in your chapter. Please update Patricia of any Surviving Spouse Liaison changes. If a Chapter Surviving Spouse Liaison needs assistance helping a surviving spouse, please contact Patricia at p_bergq@hotmail.com or (615-948-4960).

ADVOCACY/LEGISLATION

1) H.R.2055 and S.611- "Caring for Survivors Act of 2025" sponsored by Rep. Johana Haynes (D-CT), Rep. Brian K. Fitzpatrick (PA-R) Sen. Richard Blumenthal (CT-D), and Sen. John Boozman (AR-R) are to expand Title 38, United States Code, to improve and expand eligibility for the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) paid by the VA to surviving spouses and others whose veteran died on active duty or from a service-related injury/illness. This legislation would increase DIC from 43% of a single, 100% disabled veteran's compensation to 55%. The 2025 DIC flat rate is $1,653.07 per month. Passage of these bills would mean an increase of $454 per month per recipient and increase the DIC flat rate to $2,107.07 per month. Since 1993, DIC has only been increased by Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). This increase is needed by not only our aging surviving spouses, but our young surviving spouses raising children alone due to active-duty death, service-connected death, and suicide! Also, the bills would lower the 10-year requirement for a 100% veterans' rating to 5-years to award DIC for a non-service-connected death. Proportionate payments for 5-10 years of 100% rating. There are 506,492 DIC eligible surviving spouses as of December 31, 2024.

   H.R.2055 has 53 co-sponsors (1 TN: S. Cohen (TN-09)
   S.611 as 1 co-sponsors (NONE from TN)

2) H.R.1004 and S.410 - "Love Lives on Act 2025", endorsed by over 50 Veteran Service Organizations, was introduced by Rep. Sen. Jerry Moran (KS-R) and Sen. Raphael Warnock (GA-D) with 22 original co-sponsors and Representatives Richard Hudson (NC-R), Joe Neguse (CO-D), Derrick Van Orden (WI-R), Kelly Morrison (MN-D), Morgan Luttrell (TX-R), and Ro Khanna (CA-D). Approximately 30,000 surviving spouse who receive benefits would be impacted positively by passage of this legislation.

   Currently, surviving military spouses are not allowed to remarry before the arbitrary age of 55 without losing ALL their benefits.

Specifically, we understand the bill allows the following:

- Allows retention of Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) through the Department of Defense at any age,
- Allows retention of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) upon remarriage at any age;
- Allows remarried surviving spouses to regain their TRICARE benefits if their marriage subsequently ends due to annulment, divorce, or death.

H.R.1004 has 45 *co-sponsors* (NONE from TN)
S.410 has 33 *co-sponsors* (NONE from TN)

In the last Congress through the Sen. Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefit Improvement Act, three (3) of the provisions in the original bill passed into law:

- Allows remarried surviving spouses access to Commissary and Exchange benefits;
- Allows remarried surviving spouses to maintain eligibility for education benefits under Fry Scholarships (Chapter 33) upon remarriage; and
- Removes the "hold themselves out to be married" clause from 38 USC, Section 101, Paragraph 3, which could cause loss of survivor benefits.

Note: Remarried surviving spouses who desire Commissary/Exchange access effective October 1, 2025 (per the bill) will be required to have proper ID. We are waiting for the Department of Defense to release the process for obtaining identification.

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) under leadership of Ashlynne Haycock-Lohman, TAPS Legislative Director, continues to lead the charge to advocate on Capitol Hill, and keeps the Love Lives On Act of 2025 Facebook group focused on the e-mail campaign to U.S. Congressmen and Senators to garner co-sponsorship and support for the bill.
ADVOCACY:

While MOAA National only has these two pieces of legislation in its second or third priority tier, e-mail campaigns continue to both Congressmen and Senators across the United States to garner co-sponsors and support. Please encourage all MOAA chapter members and surviving spouses to contact their Congressmen and Senators to advocate for legislation impacting our surviving spouses as follows:

MOAA's Legislative Action Center at https://www.moaa.org/takeaction or https://moaa.quorum.us to send a MOAA prewritten message which you can personalize (recommended) to your Congressman and Senators.

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). Follow up your phone call with an e-mail to the MLgA.

Please use the attached, updated (3/20/25) TN Congressmen and Senators Contact List for the MLA name and e-mail

You may also e-mail your Congressman or Senators directly via their website.

Please *do not* use USPS to contact congressional leaders. USPS mail is screened off site before delivery and prolongs delivery time!

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

- "DIC Surviving Spouses/DIC Increase Advocacy"
- "Love Lives on Act of 2025 Advocacy"

MOAA PUBLICATIONS

There are numerous MOAA Publications available at no cost to Premium and Life MOAA members on the moaa.org website. Once on the website: Click on Resources, then browse to find the following recommended publications for spouses and surviving spouses:

1) The MOAA publication "Personal Affairs Guide: A Personal Inventory for Peace of Mind " is a good tool to guide members in getting their affairs in order

2) "Preparing For the Loss of a Military Spouse" The publication serves two purposes: 1) to provide help getting affairs in order, and 2) to guide surviving spouses through the first steps to take following a military spouse death.

3) Updated Survivor Checklist"

Publications on "Former Spouse Benefits" as well as "The Remarriage Guide" (digital only) are available also.

Military Officer Association of America
Council/Chapter Advocacy Guidelines

Using The MOAA Capitol Switchboard

- Call 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 handling military or surviving spouse legislation. (See Note)
- Again, once connected, give them the name, bill number (if you have it) and any other information you have including your personal story regarding the issue.
- Follow-up your phone call with an e-mail.

  Note:
  Use the Tennessee Congressmen and Senators Contact Listing (Updated 3/20/25) to obtain MLA name and e-mail address.

Other Options:

- Email your Congressman or Senators Military Legislative Assistant directly.
- E-mail your Congressman or Senators directly.

TENNESSEE CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS

Updated March 20, 2025

CONGRESSMEN*:*

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Legislative Laison Update: no written update due to both Laison being at the capitol for the vote.

See TNVET website for updates: tnvet.org

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.

Frequently check the TN council website: tncoc-moaa.org

Council President's Report

If there is any old/new business you will get your chance when you are called for your chapter, keep it for then you will have your chance.

Please join me in congratulating our 2024 MOAA Council and Chapter Award Winners. MOAA has recognized your exemplary efforts in the following areas:

2024 Level of Excellence Awards

Five Star Level
TN00 - COC
TN01 - Chattanooga
TN03 - Memphis
TN04 - Middle TN
TN05 - Mountain Empire
TN10 - Stones River

Four Star Level
TN11- Sumner County

2024 Harris Communications Awards

Five Star
TN00 - COC/Website
TN01 - Chattanooga/Print/E-Newsletter
TN01 - Chattanooga/Website
TN05 - Mountain Empire/Print/E-Newsletter
TN05 - Mountain Empire/Website

Four Star
TN04 - Middle TN/Website
TN10 - Stones River/Print/E-Newsletter
TN11 - Gen. Andrew Jackson/Print/E- Newsletter

From the bottom of my heart thank you to all of you who submitted their packages for the 2024 Awards. I hope our chapters can make submissions for 2025.

I want to thank you all for coming in person and on zoom and thanks to our guest speaker Jay Johnson for making time in his busy schedule and for coming all the way from San Antonio, TX to speak with us.

I need to add something that you are not aware of, the MOAA service center is one department but the people who can really help you, that's Frank, Victoria, Dena, and two others, that staff has been cut in half. Because Fahria and Joey are gone, and they are training two new people in that position and Victoria is out on 12 weeks leave of absence. We need to have a little grace Frank and Dena are on the road most of the month. I wanted you to know when you are dealing with National right now.

Yesterday was Tax Day hope everyone got their 990's in. 990M is due every April to the IRS.

MOAA Survey covering Chapters/Council/National

CM/NRT Rollout – give MOAA Feedback

A thank you goes out to General Andrew Jackson's chapter Bobbie for not cancelling her meeting since we were just coming off the exit a mile away when the alarms were going off for tornado and flash flood warnings in Hermitage

On the 1st of March, the East Tennessee Chapter stood up and I want to thank the Chattanooga, Mountain Empire, and Upper Cumberland Chapters for sending the Presidents, Vice Presidents and Membership chairs and Larry Ellis from Stones River for their help with the East Tennessee chapter rebuild.

We just put out on the council website a survey right now just for the presidents if their membership wants to take the survey, they will need to give their emails so it will be up to the chapters presidents to find out if the membership would want to take the survey.

A quick recap of AIA last week topics and scheduling

The Council website **tncoc-moaa.org**

Showing up in person at the Council meetings gives the chapters a chance to share information with each other face to face in discussion.

Next meeting – July 16, 2025, at 11:00 AM CST, at Sammy B's restaurant in Lebanon, TN.

Membership Chair: written report provided by Doug Minton as follows:

1. MOAA Dues Payment System
   - System Works well once you accomplish set-up. Set-up begins with your request to join the process (MOAA Council & Chapters). Once you have met C&C requirements then the Cheddar-up App process begins. It is not difficult but does require some time & effort.
   - https://www.moaa.org/content/chapters-and-councils/council-and-chapter management/sign-up-for-electronic-funds-transfer/
   - The process is working for MTC and Chattanooga.
2. Committee Module (CM)
   - Chapter President & Membership Chair ONLY will have access to modify CM data.
   - Read the instruction sheet before you attempt to access the CM. https://www.moaa.org/contentassets/67ca3ac4aa3c4ec49c59278940a6c090/cm instructional-guide_v4.pdf
   - Sign into MOAA.org (and yes you may be afforded the opportunity to change your password), then go to your Profile followed by Switch to Partner Portal. This will take you to a list of the TN Chapters and Council (FTCKY will see the same thing for KY Council & Chapters). Select your chapter and click on Show Community Group Member. This will take you to a listing of everyone that is shown as active in your Chapter. (For a list in alphabetical order hover over the last name and select the up arrow).

- **At this point read the instructions again.**

- You can modify individual member roles and activated/deactivated dates by selecting the member (button to the left of their row) and then selecting Show Community Group Member. This will provide the data MOAA is willing to share about each individual member and you can input for role, activation date and inactivation date.

- After scrolling through the member listing, you will identify that MOAA has not removed anyone that you reported as passing away (TAPS) since July 2024. You can remove these by entering the date they passed as their inactive date.

- New members were not always added as well. Return to the alphabetical list and choose new member. In the Contact field enter their MOAA Member #, or their email address. One of these should return their entry, allowing you to then enter an activation date as a "member".

- You will note that on individual records there is a lot of data missing (address, phone numbers, etc.). This is information that MOAA expects each individual member to maintain in their profile, so we need to sue a gentle reminder to our Chapter members.

- Still a lot of questions/concerns to be addressed; it is a work-in-process. Please follow the process covered in the instructions to report questions/concerns to MOAA. And re-read the instructions again.

3. Near Real Time (NRT) Report.
   - Another work-in-process, so review carefully before reaching out to everyone on the list. It still contains potential members who live outside individual Chapter cachement areas, as well as those who have reached ages that may preclude active participation

Chapter Updates

Chattanooga TN01: written update provided by Ray Mitchell as follows:

JANUARY 2025:
1. Five of the eight Mentors for Veteran's Court are from our Chattanooga Chapter. The Mentor Program is vital for the success of the Hamilton County Veteran's Court. The court is held each Thursday and for those of us who are assigned a veteran, we go to court with them.
2. January 13th - Chattanooga Chapter Board Meeting. Among several issues discussed it was agreed to move forward with the purchased of chapter D&O and General Lability Insurance. Total cost for both policies was $ 1,100.
3. January 15th – Attended the TN Council Quartey Meeting by ZOOM.
4. January 21st - Monthly Chapter Spouses Lunch at the Chattanooga Golf and Country Club.
5. January 25th - About a dozen chapter members assisted with removal of the wreaths at the Chattanooga National Cemetery. With so many people in attendance the wreaths were removed in record time.
6. January 29th - Many chapter members regularly attend the Southeast Coalition Meeting. This is where stakeholders within our community come together to coordinate and collaborate veteran's support for our region.

FEBRUARY 2025:
1. Several members are in Veterans Court each Thursday.
2. February 4th – Participated in the Zoom meeting with the Knoxville Rebuild Team**.**
3. February 8th - Three-chapter member were requested to be a judge in the American Legion's Scholarship Program. These are High School Juniors and Seniors, and they are asked to talk on a constitutional issue of their choice. We judged the three finalists on the merits of their topic, how well they presented it, and if it was convincing.

4. February 18th - Monthly Chapter Spouses Lunch at the Chattanooga Golf and Country Club.
5. February 25th - MOAA Chapter Dinner Meeting. Criminal Court Judge Boyd Patterson swore in the new Chattanooga Chapter leadership team. We also had Dr. James Haynes, Family Medicine Residency Program Director at the University of TN College of Medicine-Chattanooga/Erlanger Family Medicine residency program. Also in attendance was a colleague Dr. Greer and LT Lincoln Mitchell. LT Mitchell was attending his residency at Erlanger and once complete will be placed in the Army as a Captain.
6. February 26th - Southeast Coalition Meeting.
7. February 26th - Met with Barnett and Association concerning our investment accounts. Reestablished our Risk Assessment and discussed the process to establish an endowment for the chapter.
8. February 27th - MOAA National Roundtable by Zoom. CM/NRT Training – Database Updates.

MARCH 2025:
1. Several members are in Veterans Court each Thursday
2. March 1st - MOAA East Tennessee Chapter stood-up. Two members from the Chattanooga chapter participated the re-establishment of the Knoxville Chapter, now called the East Tennessee Chapter and thanks to Pete and other chapter leaders we now have an active chapter in that area.
3. March 2nd - The Chattanooga Chapter was notified by the CAVC that it was selected to host the Memorial Day Ceremony for Chattanooga this year. This annual event on May 26th at the Chattanooga National Cemetery is rotated between veteran organization each year. The Chattanooga Area Veterans Council is responsibility for several regional events including the Memorial Day Ceremony and the Armed Forces Parade, the longest running parade in the nations.
4. March 4th – Several chapter members attended the CAVC Parade Planning Committee.
5. March 5th - New Leaders training by Zoom.
6. March 10th - Chapter Board Meeting.
7. March 14th – Several members attended the CAVC Parade Planning Committee Meeting.
8. March 14th - CAVC Awards Dinner. The Chattanooga Area Veterans Council host an annual awards dinner. This year, one of our own, CDR James Hargrove was selected as Chattanooga's Veteran of the Year. We are all very proud of Jim's success and well-deserved recognition.
9. March 18th - Monthly Chapter Spouses Lunch at the Chattanooga Golf and Country Club.
10. March 21st - VA Veterans Center Cookout and Quartey Stakeholders Meeting. Several chapter members attended the Veterans Administration, VET Center's luncheon. In addition, the chapter was asked to participate in the VA's Quarterly Stakeholders Meeting providing feedback to help improve services.
11. March 26th – Attended the Southeast Coalition Meeting
12. March 27th - MOAA National Roundtable, Advocacy for Action
13. March 29th – Many members attended the ribbon cutting event at the Medal of Honor Heritage Center in downtown Chattanooga for CPT Larry Taylor's (MOH) new exhibit. Once again, we got to meet Dave Hill, one of the 4 soldiers rescued on that mission.

<u>East Tennessee TN02</u> (Knoxville) – Rebuilding Chapter – No Rep

Comments provided by Doug Goins as follows:

East Tennessee Board has been collecting information and close to being organized. We are making contacts with the community especially the ROTC connection. We are moving swiftly towards the first membership meeting this coming up month.

Tom Peck MC – has the chapter bylaws in hand and updated to reflect TN02 ETC current status, just waiting on the approval from the board and membership.

Record of the rebuild as follows:

East Tennessee Chapter MOAA (TN02) Rebuild team came together with military officers in the area; to establish the membership for this chapter. Larry Ellis Membership Chair from Stones River Chapter MOAA, and Sandy Warner Secretary from TN Council of Chapters worked the registration table making sure each member received an application for this chapter and a thank you pen from the TN Council of Chapters. A good showing of support and interest from the community of Knoxville, TN.

Mary Boring had refreshments set up in the back of the room for the meet and greet and had added to the refreshments brought in. A great addition to this meeting and could not have been done without her.

A quick call to order and introduction of what is to be gained from this meeting.

Pete Warner TN Council of Chapters President started the meeting at 10:15 AM EST with the pledge to the flag and John Woods gave an opening prayer. Pete giving a brief description of what will be presented took a moment to have the crowd sing his wife Sandy Happy Birthday, as he stated they gave up their Saturday and she gave up her birthday for this.

Pete introduced Frank Michaels Senior Director from Affiliated Councils and Chapters National MOAA.

Frank was put off guard by seeing his good friend and mentor Matt McCloskey. A real surprise for him. This revitalization of East Tennessee has been underway for quite a few years, and it took Pete's leadership to get it here in a better place, with the help of lots of folks. MOAA is the largest military advocate association in the United States, having more than 350,000 National members and for 18 years in a row have been on the list of the top ten advocates in Washington DC across the board for advocacies and are certainly the number 1 association for Veterans on the Hill and work very hard to maintain that status. We have 11 paid lobbyists on staff that work every single day on behave of the association. MOAA what do we do, in one sentence it would be "We champion and safeguard your benefits and promises made for all veterans and their families"
We have nearly 400 Affiliated chapters councils satellite chapters and went on to explain a few details of what the affiliates were. There are three areas that chapters really make a difference for us:

1. Membership – as seen today this is a perfect example of what we ask of chapters. To help grow membership within the chapter and National as we are doing today. We have 350,000 National members with only less than 35,000 belonging to chapters. We must get younger folk involved the average age of a MOAA member is about 64 the average age of chapter members is 76 we need to get relief on board we are going after 40–60-year group.
2. Advocacy – chapters are the state level advocacy and support for veterans.
3. Community – the work you do in the community

Thanking all of you for showing up today for MOAA, wanting to be a part of this chapter and a part of this MOAA mission.
Pete had invited some guest to explain their duties for this chapter, then introduced Don Thompson Mountain Empire Chapter President. Don had mentioned a book titled "Thank you for your Service" and found it interesting at who supports the military. Don introduced John Rice.

John Rice Mountain Empire Chapter Past President. Targeting the younger people 40 – 60 is important but do not leave out the younger people who do not know MOAA, we need to be educating them. He sees a great need for this program to be successful here and thank you for letting us come to talk to you today, you have a great opportunity here do not let it get past.

Pete introduced: Ray Mitchell Chattanooga Chapter President, who stated he brought Scott Hardin with him who is all about MOAA. MOAA helped us out with grant money by doing things out in the community if you have veteran related issues that fit the criteria, MOAA is pretty good about giving you money to support and help with those issues. Chattanooga is an older chapter and have struck out to find those younger members and have brought in about 10 members who are under the age of 60 this

year. We try to become more of a family we reach out and join with the community. He thanked Pete for making this happen because if it were not for Pete, it would not have happened and Frank for coming down Thank you.

Pete introduced: Robert Martin Upper Cumberland Chapter Vice President that had brought Nick Marotta with him. As a Vice President you fill in when the President cannot, or when they can't find a volunteer, they always turn to the Vice President. Our chapter is the average age 76 membership. We have tried meetings at different times to see what fits for our chapter. We bring in local members of the community as guest speakers. We support ROTC units in our area. Within the community we will go out and speak about MOAA wherever we can get invited. And then we have the comradery of the group. My recommendation would be once you get up and running is find what your interest is, and what works best for your chapter and press on. Engage in your community.

Pete introduced Larry Ellis Stones River Chapter Membership Chair. He wanted to mention he was glad to know that at 78 he was of average age, and he appreciates that. Recruiting to me makes no difference between recruiting and retention. He shared a story to never let an opportunity to recruit go to waste. He mentioned that guest speakers need to benefit the group. Brought up the chapter takes trips and tours, and the treasurer is instrumental in that. Brought up important positions like the Secretary that keeps the membership informed. Retention and Recruiting getting the word out.

Pete thanked the team for coming to support this chapter and mentioned Mary Boring who set everything up in this room, was a 12-year Marine veteran and survives the passing of her spouse who also was a Marine. Without her this room would not have happened. He went on to coin Mary Boring and Sandy gave her a TN Council of Chapters pen which has the Tennessee Council website on it.

Pete stated that this gets him to the point of why you all are here today. To get this chapter up and organized and that means today. We have Frank here and an installation script for the President, Vice President, Membership Chair, Treasurer and Secretary if you will all raise your hand and want to do this.

During the Q & A Pete explained the catchment areas in the state of Tennessee and that this area has 11 counties in its catchment area. He quoted stats of Tennessee and we rank 14 in the country in veteran population.

Policy and Procedures were brought up and the general guidelines brought out which also can be accessed online. The secretary caught up with the vote and the Charter was mentioned. We have an existing Charter for this chapter, and we do not have to wait a year for the National board to approve it. Start with the Policy and Procedures Guide and amend along the way.

Pete went on to explain the importance of the Membership chair and there is no requirement to be a CPA to be the treasurer.

The officers filling positions were called up and sworn in by Frank he asked Chaplain John Woods to say a prayer over the installed Board and members of this chapter. This ended the meet and greet, those in attendance came together to create a board for the East Tennessee Chapter TN02. Frank Michaels performed Installation Ceremony at the closed of the meeting.

Frank Michaels, from National MOAA with the Council and Chapters, swore in the following Board for TN02 East Tennessee Chapter on 01 March 2025:

President LTC Doug Goins USA goinsdoug@gmail.com

VP Lt Col Steve Myer USAF SLM85VOL@YAHOO.COM

Membership Chair CAPT Tom Peck USN tlpeck001@gmail.com

Secretary MAJ Daniel Steiger USA steigerdj@gmail.com

Treasurer Lt Col Eric Nicholls USAF ECNICHOLLS@GMAIL.COM

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

<u>MOAA Memphis</u> TN03: no written update provided:

<u>Middle Tennessee</u> TN04: written updates provided by Larry Cotton as follows:

I. Luncheon Meetings

 January 2025 – Monthly luncheon meeting held 28 January. The Executive Board presented its annual report for 2024.

 February 2025 – Monthly luncheon meeting held 25 February. LTG Jason Evans, USA (ret.), CEO Operation Stand Down Tennessee, “Reflections on Leadership”.

 March 2025 – Monthly luncheon meeting held 25 March. MG Tommy Baker, USA (ret.) Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Veterans Services, “Update”.

II. Advocacy

 The January meeting included a demonstration of logging into MOAA Legislative Action Center and reviewing MOAA supported legislation. The February and March luncheon meetings concluded with a briefing on the 2025 legislation being emphasized through MOAA’s Legislative Action Center, as it was available. Chapter members were encouraged to use the platform as often as possible.

 Each monthly newsletter includes a Legislative Update and the President’s Letter discusses how to use MOAA’s Legislative Action Center for individual advocacy.

 The chapter also supported TNVET’s Veterans Day on the Hill with four members and visited many state senators and legislators, including some who did not have constituent veterans present.

II. Community Outreach

 $2,000 (MOAA Grant) for OSDTN Military Spouse Employment Seminar was completed Friday, February 7, 2024, at Operation Stand Down Tennessee – Clarksville. Eleven (11) military spouses attended the 1-day seminar, and all funds were expended.

 The chapter applied for a Community Outreach grant for 2025 to support the annual Holiday Market sponsored by Operation Stand Down Tennessee to alleviate food insecurity among veterans in Middle Tennessee. If supported by MOAA national, the chapter will distribute $50 gift cards at Publix during the Holiday Market.

<u>Mountain Empire</u> TN05: written update provided by Don Thompson as follows.

1. Recent Activities of Note
    a. We participated in the Appalachian Veterans Fair at the Bristol Motor Speedway March 26, 2025. Good discussions at the table; one new member completed MOAA National and MECMOAA applications on the spot; two more took forms and said they would apply on-line. We are still waiting to see the money!
    b. We have had two new members in the past 3 months, both are folks who have moved into the area after retiring.

c. I finally got access to the Committee Module this morning. Mark Tipton, our Membership Chair, has been in for a couple weeks.
d. Our new website via Joe Leonard will go live any day now. It has a great professional look and will simplify many processes. We are even going to cut our treasurer's pay by 50% because of transaction simplification.

2. Upcoming Events
   a. We are actively visiting Junior ROTC Awards ceremonies handing out certificates and ribbons. We have 14 Junior ROTC programs that we support.
   b. I will be attending the East Tennessee State University Awards Ceremony tomorrow to present MOAA certificates and awards to two ROTC cadets.
   c. We will be presenting two $1000 scholarship checks to two ETSU ROTC cadets and $500 awards checks to three Junior ROTC cadets at our May 18, 2025 Membership Meeting. Our speaker will be General (retired) Arnie Bunch, the Hamblen County School Superintendent.
3. Did I mention that we just received three MOAA National Level of Excellence awards?

<u>Upper Cumberland</u> TN06: written update provided by Scott Jacobsen as follows:

1 TTU spring commissioning ceremony will be on 14 May at 10:00. Commissioning books have been obtained via a $300 Grant from MOAA National. The $300 had been deposited in the MOAA Helps Fund. The Awards ceremony will be covered by UC MOAA.

2. A motion was passed to give Col Johnson at Cumberland High School $250 to help stand up their color guard.

3. ROTC medals will be purchased from the MOAA Helps Fund.

4. Membership: The EXPO on 8 April 25 at FFG was well attended. It resulted in two potential members Duane from the Confederate Round Table and a SpecOps Col from Clark Range.

5.MOAA Vacations will give the MOAA Chapter a booking percentage back from our chapter members who use their services if the members tell MOAA Vacations what Chapter they belong to. In addition, MOAA Vacations will give the Chapter $100 if we advertise their services on our Newsletter or website.

6. The UC MOAA Officer's Slate will be presented at the June Picnic. The Slate will include: Robert Martin for President, Scott Jacobsen as Past President, Cal Babby will run again. We will need a new Vice President. The Secretary will send out an email requesting a volunteer for Vice President. The Treasurer's term ends in 2026.

A. Nick Marotta will research establishing a UC MOAA website and report back to the Board.

B. There is a new Documentary on SGT York.

C. 2025 Scheduling: Board Meetings first Monday of each month at 10:00.

Membership Meetings:

11:00-13:00 June 2nd at ST George with the VSO as the guest speaker and Tansi Catering. Young Marines will be present.

September 15th at TCAT 11:00-13:00.

Christmas Party December 7th at 15:00-18:00.

<u>Ft Campbell</u> TN07: written update provided by Brian Lynch as follows:

January

18 Jan Luncheon
Montgomery County Public Library
Two Bell Ceremony (In memory of Chapter members that had passed away in the past year)

29 Jan Veterans Day on the Hill, Nashville, TN
Sponsored by TNVET, the Tennessee State Veterans Coalition. The state version of AiA. Howard French, COL (RET), current Chairman, Steve Singleton, CDR (RET), founding member, and Bill Summers, MAJ (RET), founding member were three of the five people that coordinated and ran the program. Howard, Steve, and Bill are all active members of our Chapter. Several other members assisted with aspects of the program (registration, photography, etc…)

February

15 Feb Luncheon
Montgomery County Public Library
Joe Britton, COL (RET), and Eddie Sumbler, CPT (RET), gave a presentation on contributions made by members of the Black Community to the Armed Forces in honor of Black History Month.

March

15 Mar Luncheon
Montgomery County Public Library
Speaker: Judge Ken Goble gave a presentation on Veterans Treatment Court (which he runs)

<u>Stones River</u> TN10 – No Written update provided:

<u>Sumner County</u> TN11 – Stewart Reeve: written update provided as follows:

During the first quarter the Sumner Chapter installed officers in January and featured the annual surviving spouse briefing in March. Steve Petersen, immediate past president and surviving spouse liaison, and Jeff Oakey, legislative liaison, gave a team presentation which was very informative and well received.

The chapter is completing a rewrite of the bylaws and will present them to the membership in April. The rewriting of the bylaws is another step in our process to gain status as a non-profit organization.

The chapter is looking forward to the second quarter of the year when we will present MOAA medals to juniors at four JROTC programs and three $500 scholarships to graduating seniors.

<u>General Andrew Jackson</u> TN12: written update provided by Bobbie A. Bell as follows:

Luncheon Meetings

a. February 2025 – our speaker was Mr. Richard White with the Tennessee State Museum who spoke on the Battle of Nashville.

b. March 2025 – our speaker was the Deputy Commissioner for TN Homeland Security, Gregory Mayes.

c. April 2025– we held our board meeting; chapter meeting despite the fact there was a tornado on the ground in the county at the time! Pete & Sandy Warner were our guests; he spoke to 12 members.

Additionally, the chapter publishes a newsletter each month; has continued spotlighting a member each month. We are hoping to get a Facebook page; website going in the near future.

Membership

We are now averaging about 25 members per meeting. We have a potential new member who is moving; would like to move his membership to our chapter. As he is a JROTC instructor, his attendance will probably be limited but he is already a MOAA Lifetime Member. Our membership chair posts a blurb in each of the local papers (Lebanon, Mt. Juliet, Hermitage, Donelson) to notify the community of our existence with an invitation to visit our chapter although we have not had a response to these as yet. Additionally, calls are being made to members who are in arrears of dues or who have not attended a meeting in some time; we have had some positive feedback on the dues, but attendance has not been reflected in this yet.

Awards; JROTC

We were disappointed that only 2 of our schools submitted applications for our scholarship but they were both excellent candidates. We will be attending the awards ceremonies to hand out our scholarship; MOAA award sets to all our schools we support. Hunters Lane does not allow outsiders in to present; McGavock is doing it within classes rather than an awards program this year. Those schools have received their certificates, medals. We will be extending an invitation to our May meeting to our scholarship winner, his parents, principal, instructor as well as inviting the students from the other schools we provided certificates to.

Advocacy

Members have been reminded of the national issues; encouraged to contact their congressional representative. Our liaison sends out upcoming meetings/zoom meetings, information to our membership throughout the month.

Leadership

Our chaplain has resigned due to health reasons, so this chapter position is currently vacant. All our other leadership positions are filled.

Community Involvement

We currently do not have a community project we are involved in. More to come.

<u>Conclusion of Meeting</u>

Eddie Sumbler gave the closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at about 1:05 PM CST.

Next Meetings and Future Events

Important Dates 2025

April 24: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
Chapter Dues Pay Portal. (Meeting ID: 947 4145 8946)

May 2-3: Leadership Training: Central Workshop (Oklahoma City)

May 29: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
Chapter Health. (Meeting ID: 995 3364 3625)

June 26: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
General Council Issues. (Meeting ID: 957 2961 8519)

July 24: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
Recruiting and Retention. (Meeting ID: 962 0410 4083)

Aug. 13: Virtual Leader Training Workshop (Experienced Leaders)

Aug. 28: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
MOAA Virtual Chapters. (Meeting ID: 937 6468 7886)

Sept. 25: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
Council and Chapter Mentorship. (Meeting ID: 922 2737 5813)

Oct. 23: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
MOAA Foundation. (Meeting ID: 914 4733 5409)

Nov. 14-15: Leader Training: East Workshop (Hershey, Pa.)

Nov. 20: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
MOAA Annual Awards. (Meeting ID: 995 5369 6751)

Dec. 18: Monthly chapter leader virtual roundtable, 7 p.m. Eastern:
Year in Review/2026 Outlook. (Meeting ID: 929 1511 3996)

Proposed 2025 future TN Council of Chapters Meetings:

Our next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2025, at 11:00 AM CST. The meeting will be in person at Sammy B's in Lebanon, TN. 705 Cadet Ct, Lebanon, TN 37087-2648 615.547.4550

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

TN CoC Meeting	15 October 2025
TN CoC Meeting	21 January 2026
TN CoC Meeting	15 April 2026
TN CoC Meeting:	15 July 2026

Minutes prepared and submitted by Sandy Warner, Secretary, TN Council of Chapters tncoc23sec@gmail.com 210.517.2057