



Minutes of December 9, 2017 Council Meeting

Location: O'Loughlin's Restaurant
1258 Bay Dale Drive
Arnold, Maryland

Attendees: The following members of the Council were in attendance: Jim Campbell,, Jim Dittbrenner, Don Donahue (General Smallwood), Andy Fallon (Annapolis), Bryon Hartzog (Fort George G Meade), Brad Jewitt, Mike Johnson (Upper Eastern Shore), Harvey Kaplan, Naomi Kaplan, Dave Peterson (Montgomery County), Ray Rowland (Prince Georges County), and Jim Shiffrin. Also attending were National Board member Mike Rogers, Tonya Dickerson, and Neil Johnson. Due to the adverse weather conditions, there were no representatives from the Upper Potomac, Susquehanna, Southern Maryland, and Star Spangled Banner chapters.

The meeting was called to order at 1200 by Council President Harvey Kaplan. Following the Pledge of Allegiance and Grace, the meeting then proceeded, with a break when lunch was served. The agenda for the meeting was followed and is attached to these Minutes and made a part hereof.

The Minutes of the September 9, 2017 meeting, previously distributed, were approved unanimously.

In the absence of the Treasurer, the President handed out copies of the Treasurer's report, which is attached to these Minutes and made a part hereof. It was noted that the Council does not have a tax exempt number from the State of Maryland. Following discussion, there was a unanimous decision that one was not needed.

The Council Secretary passed out the working version of the 2017 council roster, again requesting that members provide any corrections or updates to keep it current. A letter from Senator Barbara Mikulski thanking the Council for its MOAA Scholarship Fund contribution in her honor was circulated to those present.

Webmaster Jim Shiffrin discussed the Marvin Harris Communications Award and encouraged all chapters to submit for the award. The Council will be submitting its entry again this year. All were encouraged to view the Council website regularly.

It was noted that legislative affairs at the national level can best be described as "a confusing situation." Brad Jewitt noted that there may be a BRAC in 2021, but that the enabling legislation between House and Senate are considerably different in approach to the issue. There will apparently be no formal BRAC commission for the next round. He noted that Maryland is doing a much better job of developing information related to BRAC preparations.

The discussion then turned to Maryland legislative issues. Harvey Kaplan discussed the November "veterans summit" and handed out the list of issues that now comprise the 2017 General Assembly veterans agenda, which is attached to and made a part hereof. Harvey noted that we as a council should support the issues in this agenda. Also discussed as a Maryland issue were the ongoing efforts to enact property tax credits in local counties. There is movement in both Prince Georges County and Ann Arundel County to advance this benefit to vets. Harvey also noted that the MRVTF will be standing down in 2018.

Brad Jewitt provided a report on the activities of the Maryland Veterans Commission. He personally represented the Secretary on 2 events. He discussed the status of the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, noting that it had its biggest year yet, making \$81K in grants. Also discussed were issues related to Charlotte Hall, the flying of the POW flag at state buildings and the prospect for a Desert Storm war memorial on the Mall.

Jim Dittbrenner gave his report of transition activities. His report is attached and is made a part hereof. Jim noted that efforts to sustain a Business and Networking Group (BANG) in Montgomery County have been mothballed for now, due to insufficient local interest by the target audience.

Harvey Kaplan briefly discussed a potential outreach project supporting the Patient Focus Group at WRNMMC. Further discussion was deferred to a later meeting.

Discussion on MOAA Tours and other fund-raising activities was deferred to a future meeting.

Harvey mentioned the upcoming Level of Excellence competition and encouraged all chapters to take advantage of the streamlined criteria for

submission of an entry. Chapter presidents were asked to suggest any items they felt were appropriate for the council's submission.

There was a brief discussion on the Zip Code realignment of chapter catchment areas. Harvey mentioned that a change in the MOAA membership model may be in the offing.

The last item for discussion was a round robin by chapter presidents or representatives providing brief reviews of chapter activities since the last Council meeting. Of particular concern is the status of the Southern Maryland chapter, which is looking to merge into the General Smallwood chapter. The Prince Georges County chapter is to undergo chapter rescue with MOAA Council and Chapters Department in January. Chapter recruiting is underway at the Meade chapter and their leadership succession struggles are ongoing, as it is at the Montgomery County Chapter. New presidents are onboard at the Upper Eastern Shore and Upper Potomac chapters. A new slate of officers for the Annapolis chapter may also be elected shortly.

Jim Shiffrin moved and Jim Campbell seconded a motion to continue the council objectives on the council website. Approved unanimously.

The next Council meeting will be on Saturday, March 10, 2018, again at O'Loughlin's. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1500.

Respectfully submitted,

Captain David H. Peterson, NOAA (Ret)
Secretary