

4 June 2017

Minutes of the 3 June 2017 Board of Directors (BoD) Meeting

Board Members Present: CDR Balunis, BG Caruana, CAPT Concannon, Col Pecoraro, COL Peters, CAPT Roche, CDR Lichwala, LTC Kreyer, LTC Ventura, MAJ Privitera, and CWO4 Scalfani.

Visitors Present: LTC Sparacino, Ingrid Balunis and JoAnne Lichwala.

Board Members Excused: COL Braunbach and LT Stitzinger.

CDR Balunis, Chapter President, called the meeting to order at 0905L. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was offered for those currently serving, for COL Cunningham who recently passed away, and for Chapter members who are suffering.

Due to CAPT Roche's early departure, the agenda was modified. CDR Balunis discussed the philosophy behind the MOAA NYS Council of Chapters 45th Convention and is looking forward to the membership support especially since COL Cunningham will have a special tribute made to him during the event. COL Cunningham's interment at Arlington National Cemetery will take place on 14 August at 1300L with further details provided by CAPT Roche to follow (there might be a bus leaving from the Naval and Military Park however this trip will probably be a one night stay).

CAPT Roche added the following updates to the Park's happenings:

- On 4 June @ 1100L, the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park will celebrate the Battle of Midway 75th Anniversary and commemorate RDAM C. Wade McClusky.
- On 17 June, the USS Little Rock fantail is the location for the Garden Party with the Royal Niagara Military Institute (RNMI) catered by Jonny C's. Mike Vogel or his wife will present an address about lighthouses.
- End of August, the Park will honor COL Cunningham's legacy. A COL Patrick J. Cunningham Legacy Society pledge form was distributed to the membership.

Treasurer's Report - CDR Lichwala reported a checkbook balance of \$10,143.77 and distributed a copy of his report. The largest expense was for the Armed Forces Day Tribute Book for \$420.00. All were in agreement the Tribute's Book advertisement was well done! LTC Ventura motioned we accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded MAJ Privitera and unanimously approved by the BoD.

Secretary's Report - Col Pecoraro highlighted the minutes from the March meeting and CDR Lichwala made a motion to accept the report, seconded by LTC Ventura and unanimously approved by the BoD.

Membership Report - LT Stitzinger was unable to attend the meeting and MAJ Privitera presented the report. As of 29 April, there are 932 potential candidates of which 355 have had their memberships lapsed leaving 577 potential members. MAJ Privitera outlined his plan to contact these potential applicants to add to the 179 active Chapter members. For those members whose dues are more than 2 years in arrears, the Chapter Secretary will give them a reminder when the November Dues Notice is mailed. LTC Ventura made a motion to accept the report, seconded by CAPT Concannon and unanimously approved by the BoD.

Personal Affairs - CWO4 Scalfani spoke of the Cunningham, Beagle, and Gannon family members appreciating the Chapter's support. He also informed the BoD about the Veterans Affairs new complaint hot line – if you have a VA complaint, call (855) 948-2311 to have it resolved.

Legislative Report - BG Caruana requested membership support during August when he visits the area's elected officials. He discussed the Legislative Workshop he attended in early May. MOAA's top three Legislative Issues remain:

- To end sequestration

- Fund people and weapons
- TRICARE Reform

A discussion ended with the Veterans Exemption from School Budgets. Some localities have voted for this exemption while others voted this down. Col Pecoraro discussed the reasoning behind this exemption including Veterans volunteer and vote more often than non-Veterans making them better for communities. For information on this study (and future rationale when advocating this exemption) see <https://gotyour6.org/impact/veterans-civic-health-index/>.

Newsletter - JoAnne Lichwala questioned the need of a summer newsletter. After discussion, Col Pecoraro motioned to cancel the Summer Newsletter, seconded by CAPT Concannon and approved by the BoD. The next Chapter newsletter will be in the Fall quarter.

ROTC - LTC Kreyer's discussed the 6 JROTC and 3 Senior ROTC programs. He distributed the purchasing template on the various costs to the Chapter for the medals and certificates. Based on MOAA National pulling their financial support from these award programs coupled with the Chapter never receiving a formal thank you from the cash award recipients, MAJ Privitera motioned we forgo the \$50 cash award to the Senior Programs, seconded by CDR Lichwala and unanimously approved by the BoD. A second motion was made by MAJ Privitera to recognize a leadership award to the JROTC and Military Service Organizations (Sea Cadets and Civil Air Patrol), seconded by CDR Lichwala and unanimously approved by the BoD. LTC Kreyer will formulate a plan based on these motions and will report back to the BoD at the next meeting.

NE Leadership Workshop - CDR Balunis along with other Chapter members attended this workshop. Of note is MOAA has a travel service (Brennco Travel Services, INC) members can use – for information go to MOAAVACATIONS.COM.

Events/Activities/Issues - Below is an overview of the past and upcoming Chapter events/activities/issues:

Board of Directors: Meetings are scheduled at the Father Justin KoC at 0830 during the following Saturdays: 5 Aug, 16 Sept, and 18 Nov. **All Chapter members** are invited to attend these meetings - to obtain a good head count for breakfast; please call MAJ Privitera at 716-693-6121.

WNY Armed Forces Week: Activities in May for Armed Forces Week were successfully concluded. The USAF passed the torch to the US Navy for 2018 planning.

Royal Niagara Military Institute: LTC Ventura highlighted the following RNMI issues:

- Delays in crossing the border.
- Restrictions on Canadian access to the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Base.
- RNMI will not participate in future Garden Parties after this year. The RNMI will meet at their Armory in St Catherine's Ontario and take a bus to various wineries in the local area. MOAA will be invited to attend these future events at a cost of \$40 (Canadian).
- Future Activities: Battle of Chippewa on 5 July and the Battle of Lundy's Lane on 25 July. LTC Ventura will forward details once received.

Speaker Series: Dormant.

NYS MOAA Annual Convention: 19-22 Sept at Lake George NY.

Veterans Day Dinner/Concert: November - standby for updates from Ingrid Balunis for dinner at Panes Restaurant and the American Legion Performance at the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda.

Annual Meeting/Christmas Party: Saturday 2 Dec - MAJ Privitera coordinated with the Father Justin KoC (Cheektowaga) for a family style meal with open bar.

Other Business:

Philanthropic Subcommittee: CDR Lichwala, CAPT Roche, and LTC Ventura will coordinate their future efforts.

Level of Excellence Award: This is a guide on how the Chapter should be operated. CAPT Concannon will continue to coordinate if no one comes forward accepting this responsibility.

Healing Field: American Flags were distributed to those designated last year by the Chapter.

Chapter Nominating Committee: BG Caruana is the Chairman and CDR Lichwala is a member – if anyone would like to serve on this committee, please contact BG Caruana.

Cemetery Veteran Care: Col Pecoraro introduced a future project where members clean Veteran tombstones in coordination with other charitable organizations. BG Caruana cautioned about notifying families before this undertaking. Col Pecoraro will research this and report back at the next meeting.

CDR Lichwala made a motion to adjourn at 1130L, seconded by MAJ Privitera and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. E. Pecoraro", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ROBERT E. PECORARO, Colonel, USAF (Ret)
Secretary