



VCOC 3rd QUARTER MEETING

Wednesday, 12 July 2023,

1000-1200 hours

Zoom Meeting and In-Person, Dodona House, Leesburg, VA

1. Administration, Meeting Called to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 1007 hours by Linc Smith, CDR, USNR (Ret). Linc Smith welcomed all to the meeting. Some minor technical issues with Zoom were resolved which delayed a timely meeting start.
- Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation were offered. Ken Ruppard, LTC, USA (Ret), VCOC Chaplain, RACMOAA, gave the invocation and led the pledge.

2. Secretary's Report

- VCOC Secretary, John Down, LtCol, USAF (Ret), reiterated the welcome.

• Roll Call & Determine Quorum

John Down then conducted Roll Call. Twelve of fifteen chapters (80%) were represented; some chapters had multiple representatives but only one voting member per chapter. A quorum was thus achieved. Please refer to Attachment 1 of these minutes for details of the roll call. (Note that I have added an additional list of attendees as I was able to discern/hear. Please let me know if you were there and I did not place you on the list.)

• Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda as drafted was adopted by unanimous vote; motion to approve from COL Monti Zimmerman, USA (Ret), with second by Ken App, CDR, USN (Ret).

3. Approval of Second Quarter Meeting Minutes

- John Down then asked for a motion to approve the Second Quarter Meeting minutes. Monti Zimmerman so moved, with second by Ken App. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

4. President's Report

- Linc Smith thanked John Down, LtCol, USAF (Ret) and the rest of the board for all efforts of the past several years.
- Linc stressed that MOAA Council and Chapter dates to include in-person and/or virtual meetings are posted on the VCOC Home page.
- Linc said that he had received great feedback from MOAA on the first Council *Crier* for 2023.

- Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (ret), was MOAA CEO and President from 2015 through 2022. VCOC is recognizing General Atkins with Honorary Membership in the Council. Linc Smith presented a challenge coin in recognition thereof, with CAPT Jim Carman, USN (Ret), MOAA VP of Council and Chapter member support, accepting on behalf of the General who could not attend the meeting.
- Discussion following with CAPT Carman noted that the next MOAA Roundtable will be July 27th and will feature chapter assessments. The MOAA Board of Directors meets November 3rd at the Sheraton in northern Virginia. The next State Legislative meeting, hosted by retired Army LTC Dan Wolfinger meets on July 18th at 8PM EDT.
- Linc Smith thanked MOAA's Frank "Tank" Michael, CAPT, USN (Ret) for flowers that Linc presented at the second annual Flowers of Remembrance ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. (Tank was not present at the VCOC meeting.)
- Finally, Linc Smith introduced LTC Mark Belinsky, USA (Ret), MOAA Director of Currently Serving and Retired Affairs. Mark's comments are presented under the Legislative Committee report.

5. Treasurer's Report

- Maria Kelly, CPT/Capt, former USA and USAF, respectively, and Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret.), jointly presented and discussed the first and second quarter budget report, revised draft, and as per comments rendered at the VCOC Second Quarter meeting. Both spent many hours, along with Linc Smith, to identify and rectify any errors or irregularities they might find. Victoria Revilla, COL, USA (Ret), should also be commended for her efforts to accommodate the transfer of the account and records from the prior Treasurer. Budget guidelines update needed, per Victoria.
- We discussed VCOC quarterly meetings meals reimbursements. At the current meeting, several members who ordered meals did not attend but the Council is required to pay the Dodona Manor. Linc Smith and Monti Zimmerman posted \$25 each to cover those costs. In a past quarterly meeting, there was meal reimbursement which, per discussion, should not have occurred and will not be repeated in the future. The Council will pay for meals for special guests that have been invited, in this case, State Senator Jeremy McPike (State Legislator of the Year). Virginia Under Secretary for Defense and Veterans Affairs Jason Pak was to receive an award as well and he was unable to attend. The Council paid for his meal as he was absent due to illness.
- Sherry Ferki has agreed to succeed Maria Kelly as Treasurer for 2024-2025. This in addition to her current position as Surviving Spouse Chair. (Thank you, Sherry!)

6. Standing Committee Reports:

• Communications & Public Affairs

- As always, Linc Smith rightfully touted "The Crier" which is posted on the VCOC website. Chapters should send their inputs for the next edition to him at his email address (mvng288@aol.com). This is the chapters' chance to share chapter highlights which may be submitted on an on-going basis.

• Membership & Chapter Affairs

- John Prevar CDR, USN (Ret.) prepared the Membership report as of 30 June 2023. John presented the numbers as he received them from the chapters. We noted that membership overall continues to drop, now at 2,011. As with prior meetings, we noted that not

yet having a workable replacement for the current and cumbersome MOAA Committee Module continues to hamper chapters in their efforts to keep their membership data aligned with MOAA's numbers. Some specific chapter notes: Southside Chapter reports 80 regular members and 10 "Auxiliary" (Surviving Spouse) members. PACMOAA reports 67 members, up one member from end of March.

7. Legislative Committee Report

- Third Vice President Monti Zimmerman provided an overview of on-going legislative activities. State Sen. McPike's efforts to get JLC 2023-01 passed despite partisan bickering were truly outstanding. Monti nominated Sen. McPike for "State Legislator of the Year," and he was previously voted by unanimous acclaim by the Council. Monti presented him with his award at the meeting. JLC 2023-01, in brief and to recap prior discussions, provides through Senate bill SJ231 a Constitutional amendment for property tax exemption for surviving spouses of soldiers who died in line of duty (in addition to those killed in action). Senator McPike was thankful to the VCOG for his award among brief remarks he made.
- Monti said that the elections this year are going to have significant consequences. In the state House of Delegates, about one-third will be contested and perhaps another third may not run again, possibly providing many newcomers to the General Assembly (GA). It is possible, he noted, that the Senate could "flip" as well.
- Monti continued by saying that there are three main things for the next three years.
 - General Atkins supported us in the state income tax issue, an issue that we continue to pursue in the next GA. This refers to the age 55 issue for receiving [incremental] state income tax relief. General Atkins supports making Virginia a favorable place for veterans to settle here.
 - While JLC 2023-01 passed the first time, it must be presented to the GA again in 2024 and voted upon. If passed, it will then go on a 2024 ballot for electorate approval. If approved by vote, it becomes effective in 2025.
 - Bryce Reeves, through a study/working group, is looking at adding NOAA and PHS retirees to the state income tax relief law. These two groups were overlooked before. Senator McPike is to be co-patron of any bills in this regard.
- LTC Mark Belinsky, MOAA HQs, was introduced, and he had the following to say:
 - Grass roots advocacy works, and it works on co-sponsor levels in Congress.
 - The services are in a recruiting crisis. 83 percent of our current forces are from military families.
 - He suggested that MOAA members sign up for the digital newsletter. Go to MOAA Legislative Action Center and select the Call to Action button. Or use the MOAA Hotline at 1-866-272-6722.
 - Relating to a couple of bills:
 - HR 1413 relates to study and reporting to expand Arlington National Cemetery.
 - HR 2537 relates to bringing back Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) from 95% to 100% again. Rep. Jen Kiggins, Virginia 2nd District, is reported to have said that the housing is both "awful" and "embarrassing."

- HR 3232, Respect for Grieving Military Families Act. [My Note for Reference and Context: This bill amends title 10, United States Code, to direct the forgiveness or offset of an overpayment of retired pay paid to a joint account for a period after the death of the retired member of the Armed Forces.]

8. Surviving Spouses (Sherry Ferki, Maj, USA, Ret.) Many surviving spouses do not use the internet and so they can only have access to all MOAA Surviving Spouse info posted on the MOAA website if via their chapter newsletters. Please ensure that surviving spouse information is included in printed chapter newsletters. Sherry also asked chapters to update their Surviving spouse liaison POC and related info in the VCOC Directory.

9. Old Business

- Once again, the boxes of past Council documents were given to volunteers a year ago to review the contents and recommend disposition of same. John Down had previously asked who besides Ken App had the boxes, and what was in them. There is and has been no answer to the question. LtCol Jim Stephan, USAF (Ret), previously had up to 5 (?) boxes containing documents and other Council artifacts. These were supposedly passed out to chapters at the Second Quarter 2022 meeting at the Virginia War Memorial. We need to recover these.
- Regarding the search for a new slate of officers for the VCOC Board of Directors, Diana Kupchella, Northern Virginia Chapter President, has agreed to be nominated for Council President. We still have two remaining positions to be nominated for: First VP, Director of Communications, and Secretary. All other Board positions have been nominated and agreed to serve their respective terms if elected.
- Nominations for Federal Legislator of the Year for 2022. These nominations would have been made at the Legislative pre-meeting before the Second Quarter Council meeting, but there was not a quorum at the pre-meeting, so nominations were not made, per Monti. (Nominations were also not made from the floor at the Second Quarter meeting, but noting that we no longer, as of this date, have a Congressional Appreciation Luncheon in spring to present the award.) We therefore opened the floor for nominations, and two were made: Senator Mark Warner and Senator Tim Kaine. Following some discussions, and noting the objection to the process made by the Central Virginia Chapter representative, we agreed to the following, with eleven chapters concurring and one chapter dissenting:
 - VCOC Secretary to send notice to all chapters to request their nominations, due by July 31, 2023.
 - The Secretary will compile the nominations list and prepare a ballot for each chapter to vote for ONE nominee for the award, or to vote Nay. This should be done by mid-August.
 - The Secretary will send the results of the balloting to the Board of Directors thereafter so the award, if any, can be prepared for presentation at the Fourth Quarter VCOC meeting at Falcon's Landing in northern Virginia. An award is made only *when warranted*, per Council policy.

○ **New Business**

- Next Meeting is Fourth Quarter and Biennial Business Meeting: October 25, 2023, 10:00am - 13:00pm, Hybrid Meeting (in-person and via Zoom). Details are being worked on. In the past, as Victoria Revilla has previously noted, we will have our Business Meeting, followed by lunch, then the Biennial activities to include the remembrance of those passing away over the previous two years plus the swearing in of the new VCOC officers. [COL Phil Walsh, USMC \(ret\), Falcons Landing Chapter President, is the host for this meeting. Lunch and facilities are being provided at no charge to the Council or the attendees.](#)
 - VCOC Chaplain, LTC USA (Ret) Ken Ruppert noted that the deceased members (and spouses) are to be remembered for a two-year period, beginning October 1, 2021.
 - Linc Smith mentioned the possibility of a VCOC Holiday Party.
- 10. Discussions opened to the floor. Hearing none, and with no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1215 hours.**

Respectfully Submitted By: John F. Down, LtCol, USAF (Ret.), Secretary, VCOC

One Attachment: Roll Call of Chapters, 12 July 2023



ATTACHMENT 1, Roll Call of Chapters, 12 July 2023

	CHAPTER	PRESENT	REPRESENTATIVE
1.	Central Virginia	Yes	Ruth McWilliams
2.	Falcon's Landing	Yes	Phil Walsh
3.	George C. Marshall	Yes	Greg Frederick
4.	Heritage	Yes	Bill Gooding
5.	Heritage Hunt	Yes	Jim Beavers
6.	Mt. Vernon	Yes	John Prevar
7.	Northern Neck	No	X
8.	Northern Virginia	Yes	Monti Zimmerman
9.	Piedmont Virginia	No	X
10.	Portsmouth Area	Yes	Ken App
11.	Potomac	No	X
12.	Richmond Area	Yes	Mark Rich
13.	Southside Virginia	Yes	Victoria Revilla
14.	Southwest Virginia	Yes	Matt Haig
15.	Virginia Peninsula	Yes	Tom Shubert

Also Attending:

John Warnecke, Central Virginia Chapter President

Howard Schue, Falcons Landing Chapter Member

Sherry Ferki, Portsmouth Area Chapter Membership and Surviving Spouse Representative;
VCOC Board Member

Bruce LaLonde, Portsmouth Area Chapter Newly Elected President

Mark Bryant, George C. Marshall Chapter President

Doug "Smash" Yurovich, Mt. Vernon Chapter President

Diana Kupchella, Northern Virginia Chapter President

Greg Pinsker, Richmond Area Chapter Member

Special Guests:

Virginia State Senator Jeremy McPike (D), 29th District

CAPT Jim Carman, USN (Ret.), VP, MOAA Councils and Chapters

LTC Mark Belinsky, USA (Ret), Director, Currently Serving and Retired Affairs

Jay Garbus, North Carolina Council of Chapters (NCCOC) President