



## **VCOC 4th QUARTER MEETING**

**Thursday, 6 October 2022,**

**1000-1200 hours**

**Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, VA, and Zoom Meeting**

### **1. Administration, Meeting Called to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 1001 hours by Linc Smith, CDR, USN (Ret). Linc welcomed all to the meeting.
- Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation were offered. Ken Ruppard, LTC, USA (Ret), VCOC Chaplain, gave the invocation and led the pledge.

### **2. Secretary's Report**

- VCOC Secretary, John Down, LtCol, USAF (ret), reiterated the welcome. Mention made that the meeting needs to conclude on/before noon as Linc has another commitment that cannot be missed.

#### **• Roll Call & Determine Quorum**

John Down conducted the Roll Call. Ten chapters were represented of the total of sixteen active chapters; 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. Also Attending: Jim Pauls, VIPMOAA; Mark Rich, Ken Ruppard, and Vince Cammarata, of RACMOAA; Sherry Ferki, PACMOAA; and Maria Kelly (no chapter cited).

#### **• Adoption of the Agenda**

John Down asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Mary Lou Wassel of RACMOAA so moved, with second by Monti Zimmerman of the Northern Virginia Chapter. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **3. Approval of 3rd Quarter Meeting Minutes**

- John Down then asked for a motion to approve the Third Quarter Meeting minutes. Jim Pauls of VIPMOAA so moved, with second by Monti Zimmerman. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **4. President's Report**

- Regarding activities connected with the Major Richard Star Act, Linc Smith noted his presence at the 13 September internment of MAJ Star at the Arlington National Cemetery. (See "Legislative Report" later in these minutes for an update on the Act.)

- Linc briefed everyone on the MOAA Mid-Atlantic Leadership Training Workshop held in Raleigh, NC, from August 12-13. Linc pointed out the following: as hosted by the North Carolina COC, an overall outstanding conference. Well done breakout sessions on Chapter, Legislative and Surviving Spouse affairs. Further, productive dialogue between Council and Chapters Leaders with MOAA Leadership on a variety of concerns, such as the MOAA Committee Module rollout and new Levels of Excellence standards. However, Linc noted that there was a general feeling among attendees that MOAA leadership may not be in tune with what the various councils and chapters in our region are concerned about. Special concerns about dwindling MOAA membership and challenges presenting councils and chapters to recruit leaders for officer and board positions.
- Linc presented the following: The Virginia Council of Chapters and North Carolina Council of Chapters are now in the planning stages for a Conference in 2023, purpose of which is as follows: meet the new MOAA leadership, present issues related to MOAA and Chapters, as identified at the Leadership Conference held in Raleigh in 2023, most importantly, develop solutions to the identified issues. Specific details regarding the forthcoming Conference, to include venue, date(s), agenda, attendees forthcoming.
- In summary of Council “Advocacy in Action” legislative events, Linc noted that between 21 January and 8 July we had five teams who contacted both our Senators and many of our representatives to Congress. He thanked all the participants for their outstanding efforts.
- Linc Smith presented the state and federal “Legislator of the Year” awards to Delegate Kathy Tran and *in-absentia* to Representative Elaine Luria, respectively. Delegate Tran was instrumental in getting the real property tax JLC initiative put forth as a bill which eventually passed both state houses and was signed by the Governor. Representative Luria of the Second District was not able to be present and was represented virtually by her Chief, Legislative Affairs, John Brodtke. Rep. Luria was the driving force in the House of Representatives for extending Tri-Care service coverage to family members up to age 26, a move seen as fairness to military families. Mr. Brodtke, in turn, relayed Rep. Luria’s thanks to the VCOC for all that we do. Delegate Tran thanked us for her award and extended those thanks to her constituents and Monti. She thanked us for supporting antidiscrimination practices for military spouses.

## **5. Treasurer’s Report**

- In the absence of the Treasurer, John Down presented the information previously sent out by Treasurer Jim Stephan, LtCol, USAF (Ret.). John briefly noted the expenses for MOAA travel include the planned travel expenses for the Council President, travel mileage and parking partial reimbursements for Monti and John Down connected to JLC business, and the awards and mementos which were presented. At the end of the Third Quarter, we have a balance of \$5,957.60 which represents a decrease of \$656.11 from the Second Quarter. Our only Third Quarter income item was \$50 from MOAA HQs for recruiting. We note that Jim Stephan is stepping down from his role as Treasurer and CPT (Former) Maria Kelly, USA, replaces him in the Fourth Quarter. A financial review is planned to ensure a smooth turnover of the VCOC account.

## **6. Standing Committee Reports:**

- **Communications & Public Affairs**

○ As always, Linc Smith touted “The Crier” which is posted on the VCOC website. Chapters should send their inputs to him at his email address ([mvng288@aol.com](mailto:mvng288@aol.com)).

- **Membership & Chapter Affairs**

- John Down briefly presented the Membership report on behalf of John Prevar, CDR, USN (Ret.). This report presents the membership data as of end of the Third Quarter. Since the Fourth Quarter meeting is so early in that quarter, there is a possible impact to chapters as they attempt to update their membership reporting. Duly noted. What has been reported as of 30 September is a Council membership total of 2,044, which represents a decrease of 53 members from the June ending balance.

## **7. Legislative Committee Report**

- Third Vice President Monti Zimmerman provided an overview of on-going legislative efforts.
  - Although not a JLC initiative, the state income tax reduction effort needs Council and chapters support.
  - HB 957 attempts to change the state code from “killed in action” to “died in action” for purposes of real property tax exemption. Would affect roughly half of the total of surviving spouses today. Not all counties, and of note, Fairfax County, support this voluntarily. Delegates Tran and McGuire are heading bi-partisan support for a constitutional amendment which if voted on favorably will make it mandatory across the state.
  - MOAA and the National Guard Association initially proposed that the state adjust the exemption of the first \$3K of National Guard pay to \$6K from state income taxes and increase the pay grade eligibility to O-5 from O-3. Monti commented that, we are seeking the grade exemption to all grades, not just to O-5. He says we need this to compete favorably with Guard units from neighboring states.
  - In terms of federal legislative advocacy, Monti stated that the Major Richard Star Act has passed the House but has not yet passed the Senate. Linc Smith noted that nine of the eleven House members from Virginia have signed on to co-sponsor this Act.
  - Mary Lou Wassel thanked Monti for his JLC leadership and attempts to get bi-partisan support for our initiatives.
  - An Air Force attorney on his two-weeks active duty with the Reserves has a father who is 100% disabled and who is seeking property tax relief; he ran into problems. There are three options for dealing with this, and they are contradictory.
  - Monti said that the National Guard is seeking free access to state parks like the federal government does for active and Guard members accessing National Parks. John Down stated that there is a catch to this at the state level. If Guard members get free access to state parks, the state could lose any federal government reimbursement for those parks’ fees received.
  - Frank Michael, CAPT, USN (Ret.), MOAA Councils and Chapters office, attending virtually, commended Linc Smith and Monti Zimmerman for their advocacy. He said that LtGen Atkins considers them “force multipliers.” Linc Smith thanked him but said that praise needs to be extended to the chapters

in VCOC that have actively participated in legislative advocacy all year, and not just to Monti and himself.

**8. Surviving Spouses (Sherry Ferki, Maj, USA, Ret.)**

- Sherry stated that she has provided a document to Linc relating to Council surviving spouses. She mentioned a MOAA “Surviving Spouses Corner” which could be helpful to provide information to surviving spouses, also noted at last quarter’s informational meeting.
- Directory updates should be provided to VCOC Secretary John Down for surviving spouse points of contact in each chapter.
- Ken App of the Portsmouth Chapter asked about documentation support.

**9. Old Business**

- Victoria Revilla, Southside Chapter President, incorporated the changes from the approved 14 May 2022 changes document into the existing 15 October 2015 version to create a new document dated 1 October 2022. She asked the VCOC President and Secretary to review the new document and make any necessary administrative changes only. She stated that she was leaving for San Antonio, TX, and that this would be her last meeting. We all thanked her for her many contributions to the Council and MOAA.
- At the April meeting, the boxes of past Council documents were given to volunteers to review the contents and recommend disposition of same. John Down asked who besides Ken App had the boxes, and what was in them. There was no answer to the question. Therefore, this is tabled to the next quarterly meeting.

**10. New Business**

- CAPT Erin Stone, USN (Ret.), MOAA Council and Chapters, recently lost her son in an accident. She is asking for donations in his memory to the MOAA Education Fund. There was discussion primarily led by Victoria and Mary Lou who believe that any donations should be voluntary versus a Council consideration in line with prior Council policy on such actions. Attendees agreed to post notice on the Council website that voluntary donations be made on an individual basis.

**11. Discussions opened to the floor. Hearing none, and with no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:46 hours.**

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

**ATTACHMENT 1, Roll Call of Chapters, 6 October 2022**

	<b>CHAPTER</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>REPRESENTATIVE</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Central Virginia</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>John Down</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Falcon's Landing</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Phil Walsh</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>George C. Marshall</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Hampton Roads</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>John McLaren</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Heritage</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Bill Gooding</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Heritage Hunt</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Jim Beavers</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Mt. Vernon</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Northern Neck</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Northern Virginia</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Monti Zimmerman</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Piedmont Virginia</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Portsmouth Area</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Ken App</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Potomac</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Richmond Area</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Mary Lou Wassel</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Southside Virginia</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Victoria Revilla</b>
<b>15.</b>	<b>Southwest Virginia</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>16.</b>	<b>Virginia Peninsula</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Tom Shubert</b>

**DRAFT**