

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Texas Council of Chapters Minutes of 3rd Qtr, 2009 Meeting August 22, 2009 Wichita Falls, TX

Meeting was duly called to order by President Jim Cunningham at 0805 hrs. Invocation was given by Spencer Smith followed by the pledge of allegiance and self-introductions.

Attendees:

James Cunningham	<u>TCC Officers</u>	
Spencer Smith	President, (Alamo)	jimbob48@sbcglobal.net
David Briggs	1 st VP, (Central Texas)	shs-kgs@hotmail.com
Louraine Robertson	2 nd VP, (Greater Dallas)	davidcbriggs@sbcglobal.net
David Patrick	Treasurer, (Highland Lakes)	lir@zeecon.com
Bob Rymal	Secretary, (Alamo)	dwpatrick01@gmail.com
	Past Pres, (Greater Dallas)	jg7346@verizon.net
	<u>MOAA Board of Directors</u>	
Ginny Alloway	Alamo	valloway@satx.rr.com
	<u>Chapter Attendees</u>	
Ed McCarthy	Alamo	suened@earthlink.net
Wes Lokken	Austin	lokken@earthlink.net
Pat Christ	Central Texas	pchrist@hotmail.com
Martha Mareth	Dallas/Ft. Worth	mmareth@tx.rr.com
Ed Dillon	Del Rio/Ft. Clark	eld@geologist.com
Jerry Jackson	East Texas	jeackson337@suddenlink.net
Ed Stone	El Paso	blackbearcamp@yahoo.com
Judy Stone	El Paso	
W. Edgar Murphy	Greater Lubbock	genmurph@suddenlink.net
Gary Harber	Greater Lubbock	gary.g.harber@us.army.mil
Vince Tobola	Heart of Texas	vtobola@aol.com
Dale Fixsen	Highland Lakes	dfixsen@meadowlakestexas.com
Grady Fairbairn	Lone Star Officers Club	g.fairbairn@sbcglobal.net
Rose Marie Vickery	North Dallas/Ft. Worth	p.vickery10@verizon.net
Jim Snow	Rose Capital	jksnow5@aol.com
Larry Petrash	Wichita Falls	lpetrash@aol.com
Cleveland Pratt	Wichita Falls	cpratt@sw.rr.com
James Chilcott	Wichita Falls	james_chilcott@yahoo.com

14 Chapters Represented
25 Attendees

Additions to Agenda: Wes Lokken asked to speak on the proposed Memorial for Veterans of the Iraq War.

Opening Comments: Jim Cunningham thanked Larry Petrash and his Wichita Falls Chapter team for hosting the meeting and the first-class dinner and program the previous evening. A certificate of appreciation was presented to Larry Petrash on behalf of the TCC leadership.

Secretary Report: The minutes from the 2nd Quarter teleconference, May 2, 2009 were filed and made a matter of record. David Patrick asked all attendees for their help in keeping email addresses updated on their Chapter leadership – send changes to David at dwpatrick01@gmail.com .

Treasurer Report: Louraine Robertson gave the financial report. The financial report was filed and made a matter of record – **see Attachment 1** to these minutes. Proposed budget for 2010 was presented for final approval at the next meeting.

Legislative Report: David Briggs commended the chapters for sending out e-mails and responding to e-mail alerts. MOAA continues to emphasize that chapters should visit congressional offices in their districts as issues arise. Discussion centered on the fact that this is an unrealistic expectation but acknowledged that chapters should make at least one visit per year and continue to follow-up with phone calls. All chapters were encouraged to prepare postcards and have them at their events so they can be mailed to their legislators. The template for the postcards is on the Toolkit on www.texas-moaa.org. Chapters are also encouraged to have a legislative committee to share the legislative workload and responsibilities – like they do in the Greater Dallas Chapter. We will continue to send legislative updates on a monthly basis so chapters can use the information for their newsletters. David Briggs mentioned that a recommendation is being staffed to split the VP-Legislative duties into State and National responsibilities with David handling the National and Jim Cunningham the State. The attendees were in agreement; this change will be included in the next revision of the bylaws. Pat Crist asked that TCC please support legislation for the continuation of the property tax exemption for spouses when member dies. Jim Cunningham stated it is in the works for the next legislation session.

For David's full report, log on to www.texas-moaa.org - *Quarterly Meetings/Archives/Officer and Chapter Reports*

Auxiliary Report: The report was given by David Briggs In the absence of Alice Karr. The report emphasized the value of the information on www.moaa.org/survivors.

For Alice's full report, log on to www.texas-moaa.org - *Quarterly Meetings/Archives/Officer and Chapter Reports*

Chapter Reports:

Written reports were submitted by the following Chapters and can be reviewed on www.texas-moaa.org - *Quarterly Meetings/Archives/Officer and Chapter Reports*:

Alamo, Austin, Central Texas, East Texas, El Paso, Greater Dallas, Heart of Texas, Highland Lakes, Lone Star, Lubbock, North DFW and Rose Capital.

Verbal Reports were given by:

Del Rio/Ft. Clark – Ed Dillion mentioned they have a very small chapter but are keeping it going and have recently obtained some new members.

Wichita Falls: Larry Petrash mentioned they have a very strong board and have a close relationship with the Sheppard AFB leadership and their base events. It provides great visibility for MOAA and their chapter. Last night's dinner with over 250 attendees was the largest event ever held by the Wichita Falls chapter. Larry put a plug in for the IBOT 4000 Mobility System used by Alan Babin which costs \$26000. Larry suggested we as an organization should consider sponsoring a chair or solicit support of our legislators to support the VA for volume buying of chairs. Cleveland Pratt mentioned that the chapter is very active in administering the oath of enlistment to local National Guard members. Also mentioned was the Wichita Falls chapter membership is growing.

Greater Dallas: George Rymal mentioned that the chapter's Personal affairs committee is very active in providing meaningful assistance to widows and widowers in the area.

MOAA National Update: Ginny Alloway mentioned that her term on the MOAA Board expires in 2010 and that we need individual(s) from Texas to run for her board position. It is a 6-year term. She also mentioned that one of the Texas MOAA board members is on active duty in Iraq and will be returning next August – here is his contact information: Col. Joe Simonelli, J3/5, MNSTC-1, APO AE 09348.

For Ginny's full report, log on to www.texas-moaa.org - *Quarterly Meetings/Archives/Officer and Chapter Reports*

President's Comments: President Cunningham gave a detailed report on the following key areas:

- **What good is TCC? What do they do for me?** TCC is one of the most active councils in the country. It is one of the councils doing the most for its membership. Thanks for your support.
- **Nonpartisan Legislative Efforts:**
 - o Our legislators – both federal and state -- pay more attention to us (MOAA) because we are neutral. We try to get things done regardless of political affiliation and represent all the 34,000 MOAA members in Texas. Whether you are a large or small chapter you need to tell your folks to participate and be visible with your federal and state legislators on a regular basis. Anybody can do it – does not need to be the designated rep in your chapter and you don't necessarily need a formal structure. Bottom line – need to have a relationship with your state and federal legislators!
 - o We are starting now to work the legislative issues for 2011 in TX. I count on you to generate the issues to bring forward—let me know.
 - o Do not be afraid to advocate – but on a nonpartisan basis.
 - o The Vets Scratch Off Lottery is a nonpartisan benefit for our veterans. Another benefit is the passing of the Interstate Compact for Military Children. Both of these are examples of the value of the TCC and its legislative advocacy power!
 - o I encourage all of you to do another “Advocating on the Hill” in Austin in Jan 2011.
- **Give Me 10 (GMT):** It is so easy to recruit new members with this program – keep the sign-up forms with you.
- **Life Membership:** It is a great benefit not only for the member but also for the surviving spouse. Push it.
- **Gold Bar Program:** It helps MOAA tell new officers what MOAA is all about. One year free membership is given under GMT. If you have a ROTC unit in your area please contact them to see what sort of bars and in what service they need. Give Jim Cunningham the head count.
- **Junior ROTC:** Keep it going in your chapter – be involved. It is a worthwhile program!

- **Non Dues Income:** Hustle the advertising for newsletters, sponsorships at your membership meetings, etc. – these are all effective ways to generate new revenue.
- **Recruiting:** MOAA Council and Chapter Affairs will send out an e-mail (prepared by the chapters) two times a year to recruit potential members in area. They will do same thing for legislature issues.
- **5-Star and 4-Star Awards** – Congratulations to our Texas winners. Please apply—it is very simple.
- **Auxiliary Foundation:** National MOAA is looking for nominations to this foundation – please consider nominating someone from your chapter.
- **TCC Elections:** Elections will be held at our Nov 14 teleconference meeting. Nominees, as recommended by the Nominations Committee, are:

President – Ed Stone, El Paso Chapter

1st Vice-President – Membership & Chapter Development – Jim Snow, Rose Capital Chapter

2nd Vice President – Legislative – David Briggs, Greater Dallas Chapter

Treasurer – Louraine Robertson, Highland Lakes Chapter

- **Awards:** Communications Awards from National MOAA were presented to the El Paso (2 awards) and the Lone Star chapters.

For other comments by President Cunningham, log on to www.texas-moaa.org – *Quarterly Meetings/Archives/Officer and Chapter Reports*

Business Discussion:

Action Items

1. **Jim Cunningham:** Look into putting some of TCC's money into a certificate of deposit. Status: \$4000 to \$5000 will be put into CDs with USAA and Pentagon Federal Credit Union. **Item closed.**
2. **Jim Cunningham:** Get specific clarification on the MOAA policy going forward regarding funding issues for the Gold Bar Program. Status: TCC will help supplement National MOAA funding. **Item closed.**
3. **All Chapters:** Contact ROTC units in their area to see who wants to participate in the Gold Bar Program. Once the numbers of gold bars needed are identified for the 2009-2010 school year, TCC will send that info to national MOAA. Status: **Item Remains Open.** David Patrick will send out e-mail to chapters formalizing the process to determine what sort of bars and in what service are needed.
4. **All Chapters:** Identify an individual(s) in their Chapter who can be assigned (as a good point of contact) to a congressional representative in the Chapter's congressional area and be the focal point for national/federal issues affecting a particular area of the state. This initiative is to be coordinated through the TCC. Status: TCC decided this is an unrealistic expectation but acknowledged that chapters should make at least one visit per year and continue to follow-up with phone calls. **Item closed.**

Rural and Extreme Rural Health Care for Veterans Proposal: Edgar Murphy and Gary Harber reported on the proposal -- **see Attachment 2** to these minutes. Upon a motion duly made and seconded and after full discussion it was resolved and unanimously supported by all in attendance that the Proposal for Texas Council Action be approved as presented and a committee be established to research and formulate a proposed policy

for the Council to follow as the issue pertains to the State of Texas and regions within the State and then present them to the Council for approval and implementation. Committee members are: Gary Harber(chair), Jim Cunningham, John Bickerstaff and David Briggs.

Memorial for Veterans of the Iraq War: Wes Lokken stated there is a movement afoot on a proposed Memorial for Veterans of the Iraq War. As details develop, chapters will be advised.

Next/Future Meetings:

4th Qtr 2009 – 0900 hrs, Nov 14 - By teleconference
1st Qtr 2010 - Feb 12 & 13 Tyler, TX (Rose Capital Chapter)

Meeting adjourned at 1150 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,



David Patrick, Col, USAF (Ret)
Secretary

2 Attachments

Attachment 1

**TEXAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS-MOAA
FINANCIAL REPORT, 26 APRIL – 14 AUGUST 2009**

Beginning balance, 26 April 2009		\$6,225.02
Income:		
Dues – 2009	136.80	
“Give Me Ten” (National)	500.00	
Interest	<u>2.18</u>	<u>638.98</u>
		\$6,864.00
Expenses:		
Quarterly Meeting (Conference Call)		<u>139.87</u>
Ending balance, 14 August 2009		\$6,724.13

Balance in American Bank \$6,724.13

Respectfully submitted,

(signed by)

Louraine Robertson, Treasurer

TEXAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS—2009 DUES PAID

TX 01 Abilene	31.60	TX 08 Highland Lakes	28.80
TX 16 Alamo	200.00	TX 24 Hill Country	46.80
TX 02 Austin	96.00	TX 11 Lone Star	91.60
TX 22 Central	18.40	TX 31 North DFW	43.20 *
TX 29 Del Rio/Ft. Clark	5.20	TX 23 Northeast	20.00
TX 04 East Texas	13.20	TX 30 Oilpatch	20.00
TX 05 El Paso	200.00	TX 19 Panhandle	21.20
TX 06 Ft. Wolters	6.00		
TX 03 Greater Dallas	136.80	TX 27 Rio Grande Valley	7.20
TX 07 Heart of TX	32.40	TX 25 Rose Capital	46.80

Total Collected: \$ 1,065.20

*Collected in 2008

Still to be heard from: Golden Triangle, Greater Lubbock and Wichita Falls. Brazos Valley has notified us that they are not going to join TCC.

Attachment 2

PROPOSAL FOR TEXAS COUNCIL ACTION

Recently concern has been raised about the implementation of the VA's 2009 Rural Health Initiative as outlined by Secretary Shinseki and the VA. Efforts have been under way to first understand the full ramifications of the initiative and secondly how it might be implemented to relieve the veteran of problems associated with it. It has been requested of the Texas Council that the Council work on addressing the initiative and its associated problems.

Since the issues cover a wide area of the State and some issues might be different from area to area, we would like to propose that Council President form a committee to be headed by Brigadier General (retired) Gary Harber, president of the Lubbock Chapter, who would also represent West

Texas. He would then appoint two additional members, one representing East Texas, and one representing South Texas. David Briggs, our V.P. of Legislative Affairs, should be the staff advisor to the committee. The committee should research and formulate a proposed policy for the Council to follow as the issue pertains to the State of Texas and regions within the State and then present them to the Council for approval and implementation. Following would be some general guidelines and suggestions as to what the committee would address:

1. Establish an outline of the purpose, issues and problems of the VA's Rural Health Initiative including the national organization's position and on-going program.
2. Gather information as to what individual Congressional Districts within the State of Texas are doing to address the issues, e.g. activities to assist in the implementation of the program, proposed legislation, etc.
3. Establish contacts within the Congressional Districts who can help address issues related to the rural initiative.
4. Establish contacts within the VA who can help address issues and with whom individual Chapters across the affected areas can work with to help implement the initiative and work on problems associated with them.
5. Give progress reports and recommendations to the Council during quarterly meetings or at special meetings, as necessary.
6. Recommend to the Texas Council president any VA issue that he should present to MOAA National.

This committee chair will be reappointed annually by the TCC Executive Committee and will select two other members to the Chair in his duties. VA issues other than that outlined might also be addressed, as required. If that becomes the case, however, then establishment of contacts within the various Congressional Districts and Local VA's should prove invaluable in helping address any other issues that may arise.

The committee should also be cognizant of any legislation at the national level which would affect the veteran and the VA, and following the lead of MOAA National should encourage advocacy among the Texas Chapters and Council, however, it's thrust should be taking care of the issues as they affect the Texas veteran.

A copy of these minutes is on www.texas-moaa.org