

**Military Women Across the Nation**  
**Board of Directors National Midterm Minutes**  
August 19-20, 2023, Chattanooga, Tennessee

**Saturday, 19 Aug 2023**

**08:31 am Meeting called to order** by President GinaMarie Doherty

12 BOD Members Present: (*Onsite*) President GinaMarie Doherty, VP Membership Debbie Crutchfield, VP Unit Liaison Patty Parks, VP Finance Maura Mooney, Regions 1 & 2 Representative Lynne Pine, Regions 8 & 10 Representative Beth Wingfield, Region 9 Representative Michele Batliner, (*Zoom*) Region 6 Representative Jouay Koppari, Secretary & Region 7 Representative Ginger Daniels, Regions 5 & 11 Representative Jenn Baun, Region 12 Representative Dassa Carvey & Region 13 Representative Alicia Rodriguez

2 BOD Members Absent: Region 3 Representative Martha Alderman & Region 4 Representative Annette Dunseth

2 non-voting guests present: Supply Locker Officer Linda Coffield & Unit 151 member Becky Dickerson.

**QUORUM MET..**

Welcome, introductions and agenda review by GinaMarie.

Official installation of Maura and Patty into BOD positions by GinaMarie

2022 National Convention Minutes were presented and reviewed. **Motion** to approve by Debbie, Second by Lynn. **Motion APPROVED.**

2022 National Convention Post-BOD Meeting Minutes were presented and reviewed. **MOTION** to approve by Michele, Second by Debbie. **MOTION APPROVED.**

2022 National Convention Financial Report & Recommendations were presented by Patty. Total financial loss of \$5,899. A thorough review of documents associated with the convention planning and execution reflects the following primary concerns: 1) Shortened planning period, 2) Incomplete/delayed original budget submission, 3) Planning committee inexperience, 4) Limited research on previously unused tactics, 5) Lack of routine activity monitoring. Recommendations to prevent similar future problems:

- A. Submission of complete budget for BOD approval before any funds are released to the committee. Routine communication between MWAN VP for Finance and Convention Committee Treasurer, to include a monthly review of expense/income tracking and budget adherence.
- B. Selection by the Convention Committee Chair(s) of an experienced, successful, past convention committee chair to act as an advisor. The advisor shall be in regular contact with the Convention Committee Chair(s) on a monthly basis to review the status of all arrangements.

**ACTION: Reconciliation of 2022 National Convention & recommendations to be submitted in writing by Patty no later than 1 Jan 2024**

GinaMarie offered thanks and appreciation to Unit 21 for donating \$3,000 to re-establish the convention seed money.

2023 Midterm Reports were made available with some being presented in detail. Copies of all reports received to date were on hand for review. Personal comments/discussion points were provided as follows:

1. Webmaster Lynne said the funding on the proposed budget for website maintenance could be eliminated, because she is covering that cost.

2. Bulletin Editor Patty addressed the possibility of sending the bulletin digitally only. The August 2023 issue was emailed to 247 members, the remaining 464 members received the bulletin by postal mail. Recommendations included setting a specific date to allow members time to prepare for digital-only distribution, and providing the bulletin digitally to ALL new members.

BOD members requested the following information: a) Details of cost savings since digital mailings began, b) At what point will it become impractical to physically mail bulletins (Bulk mail permit cannot be used for fewer than 200 pieces).

**ACTION: Details of bulletin cost savings since 2016 as well as estimates on future costs to be submitted in writing by Patty no later than 1 Jan 2024**

3. Supply Locker Officer Linda brought up that the cost of the free t-shirt is causing financial problems. MWAN gets the \$10 paid by new members, while the Supply Locker is paying for increased shirt & postage costs. Because of this, the Supply Locker has not realized enough profits to make its annual donation to MWAN. **MOTION** to discontinue giving a free T-shirt to new members and reduce new member dues to \$25 effective 30 Sep 2023. Motion by Lynne. Second by Beth. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Discussion ensued about offering leftover, convention-specific items as a gift to new members, and whether to continue charging new members the additional \$10 as an administrative fee. **MOTION** to charge new members a \$10 administration fee and provide new members with a BOD-determined item. There will be no reference to the item on the application form. Motion by Ginger. Second by Lynne. **MOTION APPROVED.**

4. VP for Membership Debbie is designing a Recruitment Award and Membership Drive. She also recommends units include a Zoom option to enhance member involvement. She also encourages units to reach out to members-at-large in the hope of creating a desire to form a local unit. She also endorses MWAN members working with other veteran organizations, because missions are to support veterans, even though MWAN focuses on sister veterans. Finally, recruitment is on-going; members come and go, and not all members will attend all events/meetings.

OFF-AGENDA Question/Discussion regarding MWAN Honorary Memberships. Consideration was requested for MWAN Honorary Memberships to be offered as recognition for exceptional support to MWAN on the national level. Due to the complications previously encountered with honorary memberships, the BOD determined some type of an MWAN service award would be a more appropriate way to recognize exceptional support at the national level. Service awards of varying degrees are offered by other 501c19 organizations, so a committee was formed to research options and determine award criteria.

**ACTION: Service Award Committee Chair Jenn, supported by members Lynne and Debbie will research, explore and develop the idea with a written report due to the BOD by 1 Jan 2024.**

2023 Midterm Reports (continued):

5. VP for Unit Liaison Patty, new to the position, plans to contact each unit with an introduction. Her initial plans are to bring all units up to the minimum standard with current officers, unit bylaws and MWAN Charters. She will also encourage the formation of new units.

2024 National Convention Update: Non-unit specific sponsorship will be co-chaired by GinaMarie and Lynne. The convention is set for 22-25 Sep 2024 at the Crowne Plaza Providence-Warwick Airport, 801 Greenwich Avenue, Warwick RI.

GinaMarie will coordinate convention committee assistance with Rhode Island Units #118 & #158 as well as other MWAN members nationally, and she will solicit support from her local

DAV, VFW & VFW Auxiliary. Since there is no host unit, any profits realized will go to the MWAN general fund.

Lynne has negotiated with Crowne Plaza Sales as well as Warwick Convention & Visitor Bureau to obtain the following concessions: No room attrition penalties; No minimum food & beverage service; No deadline on the room rate; Free hospitality room, meeting rooms & banquet space; Free parking; Free wifi; Free shuttles to/from airport; Free breakfast; Free Banner display, & 20% off restaurant purchases. Alcohol is permitted in the hospitality room, but the door must be kept closed. Hotel quiet hours begin at 11pm.

Crowne Plaza is holding 40 sleeping rooms for the convention at the rate of \$159 +tax each, per night, for up to 4 people. Unclaimed rooms will be released to the public 30 Aug 2024 but if rooms are still available, MWAN members will continue to get the \$159 rate. If MWAN members find a better rate (AAA, AARP, Senior, etc.), the rooms will STILL count toward the group total. The agreed room rate is available 3 days before & 3 days after the convention dates. Using the code provided, rooms may be booked online or by phone.

Lynn presented a formal, written proposal & scope of work submitted by Sharon Danitschke, an event planner for Military Reunion Network, to coordinate the 2024 MWAN National Convention for \$2,500. Since MWAN members with the requisite skills have volunteered to coordinate the event at no charge, the BOD voted unanimously to decline the proposal.

**ACTION: GinaMarie and Lynne will submit the proposed convention registration fee supported by the convention budget no later than 1 Jan 2024.**

**11:30 am Recess meeting for lunch**

**1:00 pm Reconvene 2023 MWAN MidTerm**

2024 Budget: Guest Immediate Past-VP for Finance Terry Taylor joined the meeting via Zoom.

As part of her turnover to Maura, Terry developed and submitted the 2023 Finance Report and Proposed Fiscal 2024 Budget. She provided a review of the report and answered questions. ALL MWAN funds have been transferred into one savings account (Scholarship/\$11,618; Convention Seed/\$3,000; Sister to Sister/\$1,155) and one checking account (General Operating Funds/\$28,708) located with Navy Federal Credit Union.

Terry recommended the BOD investigate the investment of some operating funds (up to \$15,000) in CDs with staggered maturity dates, now that interest rates have improved.

The FY2024 Budget projects income of \$12,050 & Expenses of \$11,525. The BOD voted to **APPROVE the FY2024 Proposed Budget.**

Maura requested BOD members submit expense reimbursement vouchers within 30 days of the expense being incurred, and requested that submission specifics be included on the blank voucher published in the new Procedures Manual.

GinaMarie requested that Terry update the finance report and provide a new copy. No due date was specified. Terry then left the meeting.

OFF-AGENDA Discussion regarding an annuity from MilitaryBest.com. Lynne arranged a personal agreement in 2010 with MilitaryBest.com whereby MWAN would receive 10% from all MilitaryBest.com sales of women's products. Royalties were not tracked for several years, but have amounted to about \$25 per year for the past few years. Lynne has had success working with this company on a regular basis and would like to know what the BOD thinks about contracting with MilitaryBest.com to acquire & process some or all of the products currently offered through MWAN Supply Locker.

Discussion topics included: Personal challenges faced by the Supply Locker Officer with respect to supply maintenance (variety of sizes, styles, etc.), and storage of all items as well as continual cost increases (products & postage), and decreasing sales; Ways

MWAN could control the use of its emblem, and monitor the effectiveness of the partnership. The following details were brought up:

1. Linda has been the Supply Locker Officer since September 2012 (11 years) and no one has stepped up to take over. Currently, the only other option is to close the Supply Locker.
2. MWAN emblem and products could be (at our discretion) available worldwide giving the organization more exposure directly to military women. While the Supply Locker has never previously operated as a source of revenue for MWAN, this type of action could generate more income.
3. No official talks have been undertaken with MilitaryBest.com, however a list of items carried by the Supply Locker was provided to the company which indicated they could provide all of the items, and more.
4. A business contract would define MWAN's expectations of service including product specifications, restrictions regarding the use of the MWAN emblem, the frequency of sales reports, and what financial benefit MWAN could expect (usually a percentage of specific sales). The company is physically located in Scottsboro, AL, and, according to the website, has been in business since 1999. Jenn, who designed the original MWAN emblem, still holds the copyright, and will refile the emblem to remove the silhouettes.

The BOD decided to move forward with this idea. Because of Lynne's previous association with the company, she was asked to negotiate a contractual option between MWAN and MilitaryBest.com, with a goal of presenting a finalized option at the 2024 National Convention.

2024 MWAN Scholarship Topic: Scholarship Chair Barb Turner submitted the following four essay topics for consideration by the BOD: 1) The History of Military Women in Space, 2) Why should I serve my country in the Armed Forces?, 3) Military Women in Command, 4) Women who served in Combat Special Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. Following several minutes of discussion, the BOD unanimously agreed to select "Military Women in Command."

2024 National Officer Nominations & Election. Monica O'Hara has been appointed chair of the 2024 National Officer Nominations Committee, and will begin seeking candidates in September. Current elected officers are asked to notify Monica if they plan to seek reelection. Candidate recommendations would be appreciated.

Procedures Manual Revision Review. Patty provided a draft copy of the Procedures Manual and asked other BOD members to provide feedback on the changes made so far. The work will continue with past officers being contacted for input and ideas, and new unit officers being contacted for their opinions as to what would be helpful.

Proposed Bylaw Changes. No Bylaw changes were proposed.

OFF-AGENDA Discussion on Member Database distribution. Concerns were raised that sending databases through email is violating Personally Identifiable Information (PII) security. Lynne suggested using Google Docs methodology to make the MDB available to those who need access. GinaMarie will host a Zoom Google Docs-training session in November in anticipation of moving in that direction.

**4:36 pm** Adjourn 2023 MWAN MidTerm

Submitted by: Patty Parks, Acting Secretary



Date: 29Aug2023

Approved by: GinaMarie Doherty, MWAN President



Date: 29Aug2023