QUANTICO AREA CHAPTER

US NAVAL ACADEMY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD 20 FEBRUARY 2023

President Robin Dreeke opened the Council meeting on Zoom at 4:01 pm with five other Council members in attendance (George Williams, Ron Diefenbach, Nancy Springer, Bob Taylor and Ryan Steenberge), achieving quorum.

The first discussion topic was the May Membership meeting currently scheduled for 5 May. Bob and Nancy acquainted Robin with the usual subjects presented at the meeting that is essentially a “State of The Chapter” synopsis. Typically, the Chapter President presents the Chapter activities over the past year, the size of the membership (currently 65 paid members) and consequent recruiting/retention actions, the status of the financial account, the Council’s oversight of Chapter operations, and any variances between Chapter year aspirations and subsequent accomplishments. Also, Bob and Nancy suggested we resurrect the physical presentation of the annual Semper Fi Fund donation. This meaningful action would publicly recognize the organization’s work and convey the Chapter’s continuing support. Additionally, we could photograph the presentation for Chapter promotional materials and a Shipmate article. Bob then reported that he connected with Jim Ripley, who is now an Area Coordinator for the Blue & Gold Officer (BGO) program (but remains the Chapter’s BGO). Jim will present a short brief about the program at the May Membership meeting. Last, the group debated whether this meeting should be a breakfast or luncheon, though it deferred the decision to a later time.

The next topic was soliciting a new event coordinator for the annual Memorial Day Run To Honor Remembrance run since Mike Russ is unavailable this year. Nancy and Bob suggested Robin canvass the entire Chapter via email, while simultaneously contacting Clayton Hill, Steve Ritacco and Lynne Malinowski, all RTH plank owners, via a separate email to learn their availability and willingness to lead the event. Nancy will send Robin a short RTH description for his Chapter email. The group also discussed the number of scholarships we want to sponsor this year, using past years’ proceeds, and this year’s fundraising goal (for 2024 and later scholarships). Ron offered that we can afford to fund at least four scholarships this year. He also asked who typically coordinates the event insurance policy (the race director usually completes this task). We tabled the fundraising goal discussion for a subsequent Chapter breakfast and/or Council meeting. Chapter logo-branded merchandise dovetailed with the RTH discussion. Robin reported that he started the process for a Chapter coin (and will follow up with the manufacturer) and will expand that discussion to include Chapter-themed apparel for sale, prizes (possibly for selected RTH participants) and mementos. Of note, Nancy recalled that the Museum prohibits money transactions on the grounds (such as selling QAC-themed merchandise); however, she does not have any notes that corroborate her recollection. Prior to RTH 23, the race director should confirm the Museum/USMC Heritage Foundation’s policies on fundraising.

The next subject was the Chapter nominating committee. For the past several years, Chapter Presidents have selected Bob Sonnenburg as the committee chair; however, Chapter members have not traditionally volunteered to fill the other committee vacancies (at least two, per the bylaws; named by the chairman). The group agreed that Bob should not have to do the entire job himself. Of note, Ryan is considering running for vice-president but wants to discuss it with his family and consider his possible next assignment in the Quantico area before he commits.

Following this discussion, Bob engaged Ryan regarding how the Chapter can enhance its appeal to younger area alumni. Ryan has a unique perspective on this topic and offered several worthy suggestions: increase interaction with the TBS students by coordinating a Chapter breakfast that fits within their training schedule, sending area alumni a Chapter activities/event survey, providing Chapter information to prospective Marine Officers while they are still Midshipmen, informing them of the Chapter’s goals and objectives (and encouraging them to join the Chapter or participate in our events), and offering a “family-focused” event twice per year to make the Chapter more inclusive of younger officers who likely have small children. Suggested family-suitable activities include a themed (aviation, etc.) picnic or a Fredericksburg Nationals (Fred Nats) ball game. Ryan told us that de-conflicting work schedules and the monthly breakfast is very difficult for some younger officers, and some newer alumni may be unaware how Chapter interaction and membership could benefit them. Last, he suggested we rotate some of our events to other locations in the Chapter area to make it easier for alumni with young families to attend.

Of note, George will lead the March breakfast due to Robin’s anticipated absence, and Nancy is still looking for volunteers for the annual bylaws review project.

There being no further business, Robin adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:55 pm.

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N. A. Springer, QAC Secretary