QUANTICO AREA CHAPTER

US NAVAL ACADEMY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD 15 JUNE 2023

President George Williams opened the Council meeting on Zoom at 6:33 pm/1833. Council members in attendance included George Williams, Nancy Springer, Ryan Steenberge, Steve Ritacco, and Bob Taylor. Jim Ripley and Bob Sonnenberg also attended the meeting. However, since QAC now has an 11-member Council (with the addition of the 202x decade representative) this meeting did not achieve quorum (six Council members).

The first order of business was approving the minutes from the last Council meeting (5 Apr 23). Nancy had attached a copy to this meeting’s Zoom invitation. Since she did not receive any corrections or feedback, Nancy made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Bob Taylor seconded the motion, and George called for the vote that was unanimous in the affirmative. Later in the meeting, Nancy realized the meeting did not meet quorum, invalidating this vote, and advised George to send the minutes to the Council for an electronic vote.

After the vote, Bob Taylor updated the group on the upcoming Women Can Fly (WCF) event scheduled for 24 June 23 at the Warrenton-Farquier Airport in Midland, VA. Women Can Fly is a volunteer organization whose mission is to promote women of all ages to fly. Jim Ripley confirmed that three BGOs, two of whom are aviators, will attend the event and set-up alongside us at our table. Bob Taylor announced that he invited the Manassas-based Civil Air Patrol (CAP) who accepted his invitation and will attend, though Bob does not know the level of their participation or their theme/intent. Bob also informed us that his classmate, Rusty Yeiser, who works for USNAAA&F, is looking for either USNA-based active duty women aviators or women who work in aviation support. Through a referral from Ron Diefenbach, Bob contacted HMX-1’s public affairs office that assisted Bob in submitting a formal request for female HMX-1 pilots and/or Marines serving in aviation military occupational specialties and for a static display. George, Steve Ritacco, Bob Sonnenberg and Nancy will volunteer on-site at the event while Bob Taylor provides aircraft flights for participating women and girls. In conclusion, we had a short discussion about what QAC, as an organization, should bring or showcase, though the conversation was inconclusive.

Following that discourse, George and Ryan opened a discussion about intra-Chapter and intra-Council communications, especially during working hours. They are both searching for an accessible, timely communications method that is compatible with the restrictions on commercial internet/email at George’s and Ryan’s respective workplaces. Of note, George is able to access LinkedIn during working hours but not his commercial email.

Chapter membership was next on the agenda. Unfortunately, Chapter membership declined this past year. Bob Taylor reported that Robin Dreeke sent out a membership renewal reminder to affected members encouraging them to renew memberships, though he doesn’t know who or how many responded. He will contact Ron to get that information. The group then discussed a few ideas for recruiting currently unaffiliated area alumni and retaining our current members. A few of the ideas included cold calls/texts to area alumni, placing FaceBook live recruiting/retention/activity messages on the QAC FaceBook page (and our other social media platform [LinkedIn]), and creating and publicizing a regularly scheduled “open door” Zoom session with George during which any alumni in the QAC area may join and obtain additional information about the Chapter.

The next agenda item pertained to the financial report. Unfortunately, Ron was not at the meeting, though Bob Sonnenberg offered that the Chapter’s on-hand assets currently total approximately $20,000 (based on the last financial report Ron submitted [for the Distinguished Chapter package]).

Filling the Breakfast Speaker Series roster was the next topic. Ryan, who will be the primary point of contact for this area, informed the group that he’s working on sourcing a Midshipman to speak at the August breakfast. Bob Sonnenberg suggested inviting Jeff Webb, the new Foundation Director; the prospective Superintendent and Commandant of Midshipmen, and the new USNAAA director of engagement (when hired). Nancy offered to invite BG Work, the Army’s Director of G3/5/7, whom she met at her VFW’s U. S. Army birthday celebration. She also offered to contact Virginia Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Craig Crenshaw (MajGen, USMC, Ret.) for a speaking engagement and/or tour of the Virginia Capitol. Nancy and George also talked about a Marine guest for the November breakfast/USMC birthday and Nancy suggested the Director, Manpower & Reserve Affairs (M&RA) whom she will contact in the very near future.

Last month’s Evite invitation had several unexpected and uncharacteristic technical problems that severely limited the invitation’s transmission. George will follow-up with Ron and find out the problem and the mitigation strategy to prevent a reoccurrence.

Next, Nancy updated the Council on the bylaws review and the status of the Distinguished Chapter package. The membership approved, by silent acclamation, Amendment Seven of the bylaws that Bob Taylor recently posted on the website. The Board of Advisors members are currently reviewing the Distinguished Chapter rough draft with comments due by 16 June. Nancy will incorporate the comments and sent the resulting version to Ryan for his review and scoring of the package. Nancy also confirmed that George will be available the last week of June (until 28 June) to do a final package review, sign and submit it to USNAAA (Isaac Phillips) by the 30 June due date.

George informed the Council that he is writing a President’s message that he plans to publish, likely as an Evite attachment, at least three weeks prior to the August breakfast (target date: 16 Jul 23). In it he plans to include the benefits of Chapter membership and the highlights of the upcoming Chapter year. George may choose to routinely use the President’s message space on the QAC homepage, and will let Bob Taylor know his decision as soon as possible. George also asked the Council to consider QAC’s unique offerings and the difference it can make.

In conclusion, the outstanding tasks from this meeting are as follows:

George and Ryan: Explore accessible and effective intra-Council and intra-Chapter communications methods as an alternate to commercial email (that government office networks may or may allow).

George: Contact Ron to learn the Evite technical problems and to confirm the Chapter’s finances; publish a President’s letter (target date: 16 Jul 23).

Ryan: Contact the appropriate USNA authorities to source a Midshipman for the August breakfast.

Bob Taylor: Finalize coordination for QAC’s inaugural WCF participation and contact Ron to learn the response to Robin’s membership renewal message.

Nancy: In conjunction with Ryan, invite BG Work, Andy Lennon (Sea Cadets), Secretary Crenshaw, and M&RA to speak at a Chapter breakfast.

Since QAC traditionally takes a holiday in July, the next Council meeting will be Thursday 17 August (1830). There being no further business, George adjourned the meeting at 1927.

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N. A. Springer G. S. Williams

QAC Secretary QAC President