

## **2014.04.OMA**

**55<sup>th</sup> STRAT RECON WING ASSOCIATION  
2014 REUNION & Birthday Ball - OMAHA  
55<sup>th</sup> WING ASSOCIATION**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES 9 APRIL 2014**

**LAVISTA (NE) CONFERENCE CENTER**

President Jim Thomas opened the meeting at 1710. A quorum was present: those directors attending were VP Ricky McMahon, Trea. Michael Cook, Max Moore (acting secretary), Bill Ernst, Jim Maloney, Dennis Haun. Larry Utley, Fox Censullo, George Ross, Don Kelly, MSgt Jeannette Johnson. Also so attending, Historian Bill Sargent and Awards Chair Ham Kennedy.

Members absent: Errol Hoberman, Sam Pizzo, Don Griffin, Pete Glenboski, Kevin Todd.

Thomas made opening remarks welcoming the Board; then read excerpts from minutes of the last Board meeting in Colorado Springs, 5 September 2012. One major point was that VP McMahon had been tasked with canvassing his peer group for future nominations to the BoD.

Moore moved to dispense with the reading of the previous minutes. Cook seconded, motion carried.

Cook gave a power point report on membership numbers: as of 1 April 2014, 535 in good standing, which includes 17 active duty. Over 70% of those due to renew in 2014 have done so thus far. Sixty-one members, whose dues expired 31 December 2013 and did not renew, were dropped from the rolls on 1 April. Widows (about 170) receive the newsletter complimentary

Next Cook gave an in-depth treasurer's report, including the 2014 budget which was approved in January. Each Board member was given a hard copy of the report. The treasury balance on 1 April was \$44,585. Among the comments were that the reunion was seeded \$2000. There was a detailed discussion on the dues timelines, expectations, encouraging renewals, etc, all of which are explained in every newsletter.

It was suggested that Pay Pal be considered for future dues payment options. Cook will look into using Pay Pal and he will report back to the Board on feasibility, associated costs, methodology.

The necessity to maintain the Association membership veteran status was emphasized. To comply with IRS regulations for tax exempt status, the membership must be at least 95% veterans. The president stressed that the Association must maintain documentation with the best practical data on its members' veteran status to prove to the IRS, should we be audited, that we have the required percentages of veterans in order to maintain our tax exempt status and donation deductibility status. We are using the membership form to collect military service data. The form was changed a few years ago to gather that data. When members fill out the form to update data, please include your military service data requested. If you know you have been a member so long so as not to have used a latest form, and have not included your military service info, please send us an update. We will update our data base and thus have the data regarding veteran status.

Ernst moved the treasurer's report be approved. Seconded and carried.

Pres Thomas recognized Sargent and Kennedy who detailed plans to refurbish/renovate/update the Association's Award for Excellence trophy. They had been tasked with improving the visual appearance of the trophy and possibly using new technology to upgrade the award. The current trophy would be retained and refurbished, but referring to it as it is a 'living trophy', Sargent displayed potential design options for a more modern version.

After comments and discussion, McMahon moved that Sargent and Kennedy be given the authority to proceed with the plans and report progress back to the Board. With multiple seconds, the motion was carried.

Sargent also displayed some memorabilia from Robb Hoover's collection. He announced his project to ID as many persons as possible in the September 2003 Cold War Memorial dedication panorama photo. It will be displayed in the reunion hospitality room with enlarged panels and sign-up sheets to help people list the names. This will be an ongoing project.

McMahon announced that as a result of attending John McKone's internment ceremony at Arlington in January, contact with the family about getting McKone's memorabilia distributed to the USAF Museum or National Air and Space Museum was discussed with them. He is to follow-up on that this summer to see how he can help with that effort.

An extensive discussion ensued on supporting historical and heritage preservation of the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW/Wing, and how much responsibility should the Association accept and by what methods. It was firmly expressed by the consensus of the Board that it was foremost the responsibility of the Wing units to preserve their artifacts which are AF property. It was a general consensus, and resolved, that the Association should assist the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Historian whenever we can in those efforts.

President Thomas announced that current BoD members Dennis Haun and Larry Utley would be retiring from the Board after many years of dedicated service to the organization in many ways. The president recommended that both gentlemen be awarded Life Membership per Bylaw 2.4 for their long and faithful service to the Association while serving on the Board of Directors.

Ross so moved. Motion was seconded by several, and carried.

Larry did state he would continue as the Association BX sales rep until another volunteer could take over.

Pres Thomas mentioned he had extended conversations with Jack Kovacs, the Association's point man in Dayton on The Cold War Monument's upkeep, about the assistance Larry La Flair had given to Jack over the years. Kovacs sent an e-mail concurring that La Flair had indeed been a valuable asset in helping to keep the Memorial in good appearance. The president recommended that Larry La Flair be granted Life Membership for his years of dedicated work in maintaining the Monument alongside Jack. Moore so moved. Seconded and carried.

The president made a special introduction of MSgt Jeannette Johnson of the 55<sup>th</sup> Operational Support Sqd, who has been an active duty representative on the BoD since September 2012, but was attending her first reunion. Both Thomas and Moore noted that she has been a dynamic participant from her first day, and a very positive influence among the active duty enlisted force for the Association. Most notably, she personally recruited a large number of volunteers to assist this reunion on tours, in the hospitality suites, etc.

Reunion chair Don Kelly briefed the reunion highlights. He stated that the event is off to a great start with first arrivers today and a bigger influx expected Thursday. He anticipates a very successful reunion. Nearly 200 attendees are signed up for all or some of the events. The Joslyn Castle dinner will have 101 diners; tour participation has been good, particularly the base tour and lunch. Friday's reception will have about 200 there, and about the same number at the Birthday Ball.

The president, and others, recognized Kelly for his superior leadership, planning and execution of the Association's 30<sup>th</sup> reunion. Appreciation to the entire committee was expressed by the body.

Discussion turned to the next reunion site and timing. At this point there is no volunteer reunion chair, so date and place are TBD. It was generally accepted to stay with the 18 month intervals which would target Sept/Oct 2015. Also generally conceded was that a location in the central US would benefit more members for travel. It was also suggested that a return to the Omaha/Offutt area was a future possibility. This item is OPEN.

Pres Thomas recognized VPres McMahon as nomination chair to discuss the slate of members nominated for the Board of Directors at this reunion's election. His charge was to seek out members of his peer group of 55<sup>th</sup> alumni over a diverse geographic spectrum of the

country. He looked at areas where members are concentrated, such as: Colorado Springs, central Texas, Virginia/DC area, etc.

The results were to nominate Jeff Herd, a former 55<sup>th</sup> Ops Gp CC; Trish Seinwell, an RC EWO and former Chief of Wing Protocol; Paul Jeanes, a past 343<sup>rd</sup> CC; Val Dugie, a former CC at Souda Bay; and Colonel Mohan Krishna, another former 343<sup>rd</sup> CC, and now inbound to be the next 55<sup>th</sup> Ops Group CC this summer.

The remaining nominees are current BoD members: Jim Thomas, Ricky McMahon, Michael Cook, Sam Pizzo, Don Griffin, Bill Ernst, Max Moore, Errol Hoberman, Jim Maloney, Don Kelly, George Ross, Fox Censullo, Pete Glenboski, and Kevin Todd, totaling 19 nominees for the maximum positions stated in the bylaws.

The nomination slate will be presented at the Membership Meeting on Saturday, 12 April.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1940.

Respectfully submitted,

MAX R. MOORE

Acting Secretary

55<sup>TH</sup> WING ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES 12 APRIL 2014

LAVISTA (NE) CONFERENCE CENTER

President Jim Thomas opened the meeting at 0835, noting that the announcement for the meeting was published in the December 2013 newsletter, and that a quorum was present.

After welcoming remarks he gave the president's report: The relationship with the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing at Offutt remains well established and ongoing. He explained the regular interaction with the Wing's senior staff regarding the Association's executing the Hall of Fame process, the Award for Excellence, and coordination for the reunion, the Tales of the 55<sup>th</sup>, and the Birthday Ball.

All of which gives the Association positive exposure to the active duty force.

Minutes of the last membership meeting in Colorado Springs in September 2012 were published in the January 2013 issue of the *Videmus Omnia* and on the Association's web site. Max Moore moved to dispense with reading of the minutes. Seconded by many and carried.

Thomas noted the organization is financially sound due to a loyal membership. The numbers are steady and holding with regards to renewed and new memberships. It was noted that recruiting remains a constant need to balance any membership losses due to attrition.

Announcement was made of the awarding of Life Memberships to two retiring Board members, Larry Utlely and Denis Haun, who have both served the Association faithfully and with dedication for many years. Also awarded with a Life Membership was Larry LaFlair, recognized for his many years devoted to the stewardship and upkeep of the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW Cold War Monument at the National USAF Museum Memorial Park near Dayton.

Treasurer Michael Cook then gave an extensive report on membership and finances. As of 1 April there were 535 members in good standing. He once again explained the timing for dues payment: They come due each January after a member's expiration date on 31 December of that year. There is a grace period to 1 April before being dropped from the rolls. Sixty-one lapsed members were dropped as of 1 April 2014.

Cook stressed the need for members to keep their contact information updated and urged using the membership form when paying dues and updating any changes of address, etc.

Thomas reiterated the Association's IRS 501k tax exempt status needed to comply with 95% of its membership as veterans, and to maintain its service activities.

The president emphasized that the Association must maintain documentation with the best practical data on its members' veteran status to prove to the IRS, should we be audited, that we have the required percentages of veterans in order to maintain our tax exempt status and donation deductibility status. We are using the membership form to collect military service data. The form was changed a few years ago to gather that data. If members fill out the

form to update data, please include your military service data requested. If you know you have been a member so long so as not to have used a latest form and have not included your military service info, please send us an update. We will update our data base and thus have the data on your veteran status.

As of 1 April 2014, the treasury had \$44,585. The 2014 budget was approved by the Board in January. Projections for income and expenditures were shown to be in good order for the immediate future.

Webmaster Jim Maloney then gave a video demonstration of the Association's web site, to include: the diverse content, how to navigate, *Facebook* addition, various links, and available information access on the site, Memory Lane and heritage videos, to name but a few of the sections.

Bill Ernst gave a brief review of the Cold War Monument's history and evolution. He stated that memorial bricks to honor friends, family and comrades can still be ordered for the patio. He is the point man and information on how to order is on the web site and in each issue of the newsletter. New bricks will be placed this spring when the weather is suitable. Ernst also mentioned that Sarpy County (Nebr) National Veterans Cemetery is on track and funded. It will have a monument section and he suggested the Association consider commissioning one for the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW/Wing. This topic will be discussed at future Board of Directors meetings and moved for membership approval if/when it progresses. OPEN item.

Moore then gave a short list of 'etiquette hints' for the Ball on check-in, seating arrangements, etc. He stated that for many this was a first time experience and it should be an enjoyable one for all attendees. A great way to wind up this reunion in style.

Thomas then opened the discussion about when and where to have the next reunion. There being no pre-planned location or volunteer, the subject is TBD. Various suggestions were made about timing, but it was generally agreed sticking with the 18 month rotation, which means shooting for the fall of 2015. San Antonio was mentioned, but with no one to chair a reunion there, the discussion only got so far as John Olivo rising to say he wasn't a volunteer reunion chair, but that he would do the research on costs and hotels, and report back to the Board for future action, if any, by those willing to head same. OPEN item.

Terry Murphy took the floor to heap effusive praise on Don Kelly and his committee for how well organized and run this reunion went in every phase. "It is also the most fun!" he commented. He stated he has been to many other organizations' reunions and none are executed so well. Murphy had kudos for the enlisted active duty volunteers in the hospitality suites and on the tours.

Pres Thomas recognized VPres McMahon as nomination chair to discuss the slate nominated for the Board of Directors for the membership election. His charge was to seek out members of his peer group of 55<sup>th</sup> alumni over a diverse geographic spectrum of the country. He looked at areas where members are concentrated, such as: Colorado Springs, central Texas, Virginia/DC area,

Offutt-area, etc. The object being to look toward the 'next generation' of leadership for the Association.

The results were to nominate Jeff Herd, Trish Seinwill, Paul Jeanes, Val Dugie, and Colonel Mohan Krishna (now inbound to be the next 55<sup>th</sup> Ops Group CC this summer.) The remaining nominees are current BoD members: Jim Thomas, Ricky McMahon, Michael Cook, Sam Pizzo, Don Griffin, Bill Ernst, Max Moore, Errol Hoberman, Jim Maloney, Don Kelly, George Ross, Fox Censullo, Pete Glenboski, and Kevin Todd, totaling 19 nominees for the maximum positions stated in the bylaws.

Murphy moved to accept the slate of nominees as presented. Seconded by Al Feldkamp. Motion carried in voice vote.

Thomas opened the floor for further nominations. There were none.

Rudy Smart moved the nominations be closed, and that the slate be elected by acclamation. Seconded by Bill Simon and others. Motion carried.

As business of the membership was concluded, the meeting adjourned at 1000.

Respectfully submitted,

MAX R. MOORE  
Acting Secretary

\*\*\*\*\*

*(Noteworthy of mention regarding the BoD election: although there have been women on the Board before, they were active duty representatives. Thus, Trish Seinwell is the first elected woman Director. Colonel Mo Krishna had served on the BoD before as an active duty rep (Sep 09-Sep12) and is now an elected member. There have been other elected active duty reps. The active duty reps were elected by the membership in May 1998, October 1999 and May 2001. When it became obvious that the turnover rate, and timing of when active duty personnel left the Wing, did not make it practical to have an election by the membership, the selection/replacement process was established as it currently exists.)*

12 APRIL 2014 55<sup>th</sup> WING ASSOCIATION

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES - LAVISTA (NE) CONFERENCE CENTER**

The meeting, held immediately after the Association Membership Meeting, was called to order by President Jim Thomas at 1005, who welcomed the newly elected members of the Board.

Constituting a quorum, also attending were VP Ricky McMahon, Trea. Mike Cook, Bill Ernst, Jim Maloney, Fox Censullo, George Ross, Don Kelly, Max Moore (acting secretary), and newly elected directors, Patricia (Trish) Seinwill, Val Dugie, Paul Jeanes and Jeff Herd.

Absent BoD members: Kevin Todd, Errol Hoberman, Don Griffin, Sam Pizzo, Pete Glenboski, newly elected Mohan Krishna, and MSgt Jeannette Johnson.

Pres Thomas turned the floor over to Moore.

Moore moved that the current office holders, except for secretary, be re-elected.

Motion had multiple seconds, and carried by voice vote.

Moore then nominated Trish Seinwill for election as secretary. Motion seconded by many and carried.

Thomas indicated the appointed positions of Membership chair, Historian, Webmaster, Newsletter Editor and Enlisted Liaison would continue in those assignments. Larry Utley had stated earlier that he would continue as the Association POC for sales until such time as another volunteer could take over.

Meeting adjourned at 1015.

Respectfully submitted,

MAX R. MOORE  
Acting Secretary

\*\*\*\*\*