



Executive Committee Meeting

ROA Minute Man Memorial Building

October 4-5, 2024

Minutes

Attendance

The following members of the Executive Committee were present: President, Lt. Col. Layne R. Wroblewski; Immediate Past President, Capt. Robert H. Carmack; Army Vice President, Col. Anthony K. Atlas Sr.; Army Junior Vice President, Capt. Nina N. Kazibwe; Army Executive Committee Members, Maj. R. Reece Newsome, Col. Stanley G. Remer, and Col. Monti G. Zimmerman; Air Force Vice President, Lt. Col. Susan E. Lukas; Air Force Executive Committee Members, Col. Donald C. Brown, and Lt. Col. Judy M. Ford; Naval Services Vice President, Capt. Henry E. Plimack; Naval Services Executive Committee Members, Cmdr. John Leonard, and Capt. Samuel Wright; and Executive Director, Mr. Jeffrey E. Phillips.

Appointed national officers present were Chaplain, Lt. Col. Hazel L. Robinson; International Programs Office, Col. James R. Sweeney; Judge Advocate, LT j.g. Jesse P. Samluk; Public Relations Officer, Capt. Henry E. Plimack; Sergeant-at-Arms, Command Sgt. Maj. Terry R. Atchison; and Treasurer, Col. Thomas H. Hueg. Representing the staff were Ms. Diane Markham, Mr. Matt Schwartzmann, and Cmdr. Trey Criner.

Committee chairs in attendance were: Col. Scott Russell, Department/Chapter Development Committee; Mr. Mike Hutchison, Family Readiness and Support Committee; Lt. Col. Don Stockton, Minute Man Memorial Building Committee; Cmdr. Ed Isom, Constitution and Bylaws Committee; Capt. Henry E. Plimack, Marketing and Communications Committee; Lt. Col. Karen Aravich, Resolutions and Legislation Committee; and Lt. Col. Mark Vardaro, Strategic Planning Committee. Additional attendees present included: Capt. Kalen Arreola, Col. Ann Campbell, Col. Denise Enders, Col. Mark Griffith, Ms. Alyssa Leavitt, Maj. Ed Manak, and MG Peggy Wilmoth.

Elected and appointed officers absent were: Air Force Junior Vice President, Capt. Rebecca Arango; Air Force Executive Committee Member, Col. Barbara D. Ortiz; Naval Services Junior Vice President, Capt. Steven J. Arango; Naval Services Executive Committee Member, Col. Scott Willis; and Historian, Lt. Col. Peter Powell.

Ms. Diane Markham, recording secretary, took the role. With a quorum in attendance, President Wroblewski called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Friday, October 4, 2024

Call to Order

President Wroblewski opened the meeting asking for a moment of silence to think about those that have been impacted by hurricane Helene, followed by an invocation led by Lt. Col. Robinson. He then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.

Executive Director's Update

Executive Director Phillips said he joined the staff in December a decade ago. He said the organization was in tough shape at that time, but today it is in pretty good shape. He said one of the remaining hurdles today is membership. He said there is some dynamic thought around that and what we might do in an innovative way.

Mr. Phillips thanked the Executive Committee for their service to the association. He said in his 10 years of service, the ExCom has gotten better each year, and ROA has benefited significantly from that increase in quality.

Mr. Phillips said we are increasingly seeing ideas, rigor, and oversight, coming from the ExCom which is creating an advancing quality in the way we run the organization. The Budget and Finance Committee in particular has really had a lot of rigor with the budget. He said we don't have a money problem. We have a money challenge. We want to make more and spend less. But, he said, our expenses are down, and our revenue is up. He credited a lot of that to the Budget and Finance Committee taking their job very seriously.

National Treasurer's Report

Col. Hueg said he is pleased to announce that the association is in good financial hands. He said compared to where we were last year things are really, really settling down nicely. Our revenues are up mostly because we did not build into the budget the insurance surplus. It was a great surprise when that was received last spring, and that's helped us along.

Col. Hueg said the markets are up. While there is nothing we can do to control that, it is a good thing and it does help us breathe a little easier.

He said it's been a very good year, mostly due to good discipline. We have been on top of the budget the whole time. We're on top of our expenses. We pay our expenses on time, and nothing goes without a good reason.

Col. Hueg said where we could improve our financial situation is in contributions. We've been blessed with some very generous donations over the year, but we need a programmed giving program. With MNPC stepping out as of July we don't have anything to replace them right now. Our resource development campaigns are kind of dead in the water. We need to get those reinvigorated, and that will give us even better options for the future.

Budget and Finance Committee Report

Lt. Col. Lukas said this year is our first really firm budget. Better than 2024. The B&F Committee is looking at some things so we still have some improvements to make to the budget.

She said the 2024 budget was used as a template to start the 2025 build. Micro adjustments will be made each year to ensure we were always looking at a very realistic budget. It was hall-marked by discipline, adhering to the budget plan and keeping a close eye on expenses and cash.

Lt. Col. Lukas said in 2024, fundraising was only funded for half a year. For 2025, the B&F Committee recommends recompeting the fundraising contract with requirements for accounting of the funds raised. She said we need to look at what our fundraising is and make a strategic approach to it.

The 2025 budget reflects a conservative take on revenue and a realistic take on expenses. Expenses were removed if they either did not meet a business case return on investment or where the committee asked for a reset. She said we can't fund based on aspirations. We need to understand the true strategy of how the funds will be used and how we will get the results we are paying for.

Lt. Col. Lukas said we are now tracking cash flow as part of the budget process in a way we never have before. This enabled ExCom to approve draws from investments as part of the budget process instead of needing emergency draws throughout the year. She said the 2025 budget again includes planned draws. The intent is for draws to not exceed 4% from investment accounts. She said the goal is to draw only from earnings. To do that, however, we must start putting money into corpus. That is how our earnings will increase.

Lt. Col. Lukas said the Budget and Finance Committee won't consider ROA to be in a good financial position until there is no longer a need to draw from investments. This means we have to continue looking at ways to fund the corpus out of where we are now or have dynamic fundraising. We need to have a strategic approach to how much fundraising revenue can be used toward expenses vs how much revenue needs to go back into investments.

The 2025 budget includes a Medal of Honor breakfast. It also includes a hard copy magazine about half the size of the 2024 issue, the Leaders Conference, an annual meeting in Washington, DC., an increased legislation presence, additional school kits, Reserve Education Forum events, an upgraded AMS and website redesign, updating plaques on the 5th floor and Wall of Gold, and carpet upgrade on the 4th floor.

Lt. Col. Lukas said the Budget and Finance Committee recommends the following:

1. Establish a policy for an after-action report for staff travel events to be completed. This will provide a basis for determining if these trips have a ROI and are worth the expense/effort. The departments/chapters do pay some expenses for some of these travel events, but we still do not know how these efforts benefit ROA.
2. Establish how STARS-supported School Kits will be managed now that it is not covered by MNPC. The school kits could be expanded to be used for other recruiting events, such as Retirement Kits, Disability Kits, Grassroots Kits.
3. Determine how tabletop packets for Yellow Ribbons will be managed and what they will include since they can be used for other membership events beyond Yellow Ribbons such as installation family days.
4. Recommend items 3 (Business Plan), 7 (REF) and 8 (Fundraising) be completed as recommended by the 2024 Budget Recommendations. These three items have a budget impact.

Upon a properly made motion by the Budget and Finance Committee, and upon a unanimous vote, it was resolved to adopt the 2025 budget as presented.

Upon a properly made motion by the Budget and Finance Committee, and upon a unanimous vote, it was resolved to adopt the Budget and Finance Committee recommendations as presented.

Resolutions and Legislation Committee Report

Lt. Col. Aravich reported that over the past seven months, the Resolutions and Legislation Committee has studied 22 resolutions. Of those, the committee recommends the termination of two of them: 1) 21-06 Air Force Warrant Officers Reinstated, and 2) 21-19 Health Professions Scholarship Program. The termination is recommended because the related issues have been achieved.

Upon a properly made motion by the Resolutions and Legislation Committee, and upon a unanimous vote, it was resolved to terminate the following resolutions:

- *21-06 Air Force Warrant Officers Reinstated*
- *21-19 Health Professions Scholarship Program*

International Programs Report

Col. Sweeney reported that the CIOR/CIOMR Congress in Talon, July 30 – August 2, 2024, was successful, as were the other programs, such as CIMIC, MILCOMP, YROW and the Language Academy. He said he, along with Capt. Bob Carmack and Lt. Col. Peter Powell, presented the ROA International Medal to outgoing President Toomas Luman. Then, along with Peter Olson and Peter Powell, he presented the International Medal to Squadron Leader Graham Banks.

Col. Sweeney reported the next presidencies are Denmark, 2026–2028, and France in 2028–2030. However, there were a lot of discussions behind the scenes. Pressure is on the USA to take the 2028-2030 term. He said that is something the ExCom will have to discuss. Something that is attractive about that is, Estonia has agreed to fund during that entire presidency, the back office. So Estonia's Ministry of Defense would pay for the officer that ran has run the office the last two years and perform all of the functions that she did for the Estonia Presidency. So that would be something to consider.

The next meeting will be the in-between meeting. It will be held in Palma de Mayorca, Spain, October 31 – November 2, 2024. The next summer Congress will be 2025 in Madrid, Spain. Vienna will likely be the location for 2026, and then potentially Lyon, France, in 2027.

The UPORFA Congress is going on right now in Lima, Peru, October 2-6, 2024. The delegation is being led by Brig. Gen. Irene Zoppi.

National Chaplain's Report

Chaplain Robinson said the Chaplain of the Year award will be presented to Capt. Adam Henry from the Space Force, and the Religious Affairs Program Specialist of the Year will be presented to Air Force Staff Sgt. Amie M. Steen.

Chaplain Robinson said she will be leading a memorial service this afternoon to recognize our members who have departed. She invited everyone to attend.

DNCM Report

Chairman Robinson reported the Department National Council members will be meeting this afternoon. Their speaker will be talking about service days.

Lt. Col. Robinson said the DNCMs have been meeting quarterly and in between meetings as needed. She said the president has been attending the meetings and they feel well informed and part of the change and transition of ROA.

Committees

- Meetings – Concern was expressed regarding committee meetings that conflict with each other. This makes it difficult for individuals who are on multiple committees to attend all the meetings. President Wroblewski asked a schedule be put together of regularly occurring meetings to help deconflict the schedule. Trey Criner said he would put a list together.
- Written Reports – Several committees provided a written report. They were sent out in advance of the meeting.
- Membership – A robust discussion was had regarding membership. Ideas were exchanged on ways for ROA to be attractive to currently serving reservists. Further discussions included social media and marketing.
- School Kits – Mr. Hutchinson said that the school kit was previously administered by the STARs Foundation. However, as the foundation transitions to focus specifically on fundraising, who will now administer this program? He said the Family Readiness Support Committee will look into this and provide a recommendation to the ExCom.

Judge Advocate's Report

LT j.g. Jesse Samluk, ROA's new national judge advocate, introduced himself and provided some of his background information. He said he is an engineer officer with the Public Health Service ready reserve. On the civilian side, he is a patent examiner with the U.S. patent and trademark office. He holds a PhD in electrical and computer engineering and is a licensed attorney in Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania. He said he has been a member for many years, having joined during his Army ROTC program. He replaced Col. Jim Sweeney as judge advocate in September, so is still fairly new to the position. He thanked Col. Sweeney for helping him get up to speed.

LT j.g. Samluk said that from the conversations he has been privy to, ROA is in a position where it may need to evolve to become more agile. There have been discussions about changing the constitution and bylaws to enable ballot voting changes. He said that if ROA is not at least open to considering change, the ramifications can be felt for years to come.

LT j.g. Samluk then turned the floor over to Cmdr. Isom to present the Constitution and Bylaws Committee recommendations.

Cmdr. Isom reminded the ExCom they previously endorsed two proposed amendments. The first amendment says the executive director is responsible for the preparation of minutes of the ExCom. It currently does not specify who is responsible for preparing the minutes. The second amendment provides for electronic meetings. While this committee has already begun using virtual attendance for meetings, there was nothing in our governing documents that specified that.

Cmdr. Isom said the Constitution and Bylaws Committee is presenting two additional recommendations for ExCom's endorsement.

1. The first one has to do with simplifying the charter. He said anything that the ExCom and annual meeting approves is conditioned upon the approval of the U.S. Congress.

He said it is important that our operations and the way we do business is consistent with how Congress has said we should do business, and that is, of course, outlined in the charter. But we want to accomplish two purposes in our amendment. One is to bring consistency. The other thing is to bring simplicity. We want to reduce the number of words that are found in the current charter.

An example, he said, is the charter tells us how many people should be in our governing body, what they are to be called, how they are to be elected, how long they are to serve, and so forth. The amendment simplifies that, essentially saying the governing body is defined as set out in the Constitution. That uses a few words in substitution for many words and leaves it up to ROA to decide some of the changes that we need to make from time to time. We wish to eliminate all the micromanagement in the current charter and simplify it so that we never have to go back to Congress again. We hope to have it so simple that we can take charge of our own future.

2. Cmdr. Isom said the second proposed amendment takes another step toward implementing ballot voting for the election of officers. The concept of ballot voting was adopted by this body and by the Annual Meeting in 2021. But there was no adoption of any language to say how that was to look. We don't have a procedural plan. We don't have an engagement provision.

Cmdr. Isom said ballot voting is already provided for in the C&B to establish membership types, set dues, adopt resolutions, and amend the charter, constitution, and bylaws. He said the C&B Committee is asking the ExCom to adopt enabling language that basically says, yes, we can utilize silent voting for the election of officers.

Cmdr Isom said this amendment also addresses four housekeeping-type provisions needed because of the proposed charter changes.

Upon a properly made motion by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and upon a majority vote, it was resolved to adopt proposed amendment 2024-03 to amend the charter as presented. (See attached.)

Upon a properly made motion by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and upon a unanimous vote, it was resolved to adopt proposed amendment 2024-04 to amend the C&B as presented and amended. (See attached.)

Department Name Change

Lt. Col. Lukas said the Department of Maryland-Delaware-National Capital Region has requested their name be changed to Department of The Chesapeake. A revised C&B has been submitted.

Upon a properly made motion by Lt. Col. Lukas, seconded by Col. Zimmerman, and upon a unanimous vote, it was resolved to change the name of the Department of Maryland-Delaware-National Capital Region to Department of The Chesapeake.

National Council and Leaders Conference

President Wroblewski presented the dates of Friday, March 14 – Sunday, March 16, 2025, for the next National Council and Leaders Conference.

Upon a properly made motion by Col. Zimmerman, seconded by Capt. Wright, and upon a unanimous vote, it was resolved to conduct the next National Council and Leaders Conference March 14-16, 2025, at the ROA Minute Man Memorial Building, Washington, DC.

Annual Meeting

President Wroblewski recommended the 2025 Annual Meeting be held at the ROA Minute Man Memorial Building October 17-19, 2025. He acknowledged feedback from members that it is expensive to go to Washington, DC. He said when deciding on a location, we must consider three things: 1) the cost for a member to travel; 2) the financial obligations to the association; and 3) the economies of scale (declining number of attendees).

President Wroblewski said using ROA's own meeting space eliminates food and beverage minimums, reduces the AV costs, and enables ROA to commit to only a small block of sleeping rooms. These three items relieve ROA of a large financial commitment.

The 2025 dates have been deconflicted from major holidays and meetings dates of other associations. UPORFA has not yet released their 2025 meeting dates.

Upon a properly made motion by Col. Zimmerman, seconded by Col. Remer, and upon a unanimous vote, it was resolved to conduct the next annual meeting October 17-19, 2025, at the ROA Minute Man Memorial Building, Washington, DC.

Strategic Planning

Lt. Col. Vardaro led the group through refining the strategic plan to add detail to goals, objectives, and resources.

Recess

The meeting went into recess at 3:17 p.m.

Saturday, October 5, 2024

President Wroblewski reconvened the Executive Committee meeting on Saturday, October 5, 2024, at 12:50 p.m.

Strategic Planning

Lt. Col. Vardaro continued the discussions regarding the strategic plan. President Wroblewski said he wants the ExCom working on strategy. He said ExCom shouldn't be talking about operations, they should be talking about the strategic plan and how the organization is moving and

meeting the objectives of the strategic plan. The executive director and staff should be focused on operations.

Next Meeting Dates

President Wroblewski announced the next meeting of the Executive Committee will be Friday, December 6 – Saturday, December 7, 2025. Friday will be half a day in the afternoon.

Adjournment

President Wroblewski thanked everyone for participating in the meeting, then adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeffrey E. Phillips, Executive Director.

JEP/dm