

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.
National Executive Board
Minutes
Regular Board Meeting
Meeting Date: 12/20/2011

Call to Order:

The December 20, 2011 regular board meeting of the BSMA was held by electronic means (Go to Meeting) telephone and computer. The meeting convened at 7:40pm (EST), President Robin McCarthy presiding and Charilyn Damigo, Recording Secretary (Cathy O'Shields pro tem at 8:30pm EST). A quorum was present.

Roll Call of Officers -- (Recording Secretary)

Attendees:

Members in attendance:

President Robin Barnes-McCarthy

1st Vice President Janet Broussard

2nd Vice President Rev. Lin McGee

3rd Vice President Teresa Bullock

4th Vice President (Pro Tem) Rose Ann Elliott

Recording Secretary Charilyn Damigo

Financial Secretary Anne Parker

Treasurer Julie Roberts

Dept of OH Pres Pat Pell

Dept of OK Pres Cathy O'Shields

Dept of MI Pres Kristine Wirgau

Dept of MN Pres Jean Duane

PNP Susan Naill

PNP Karen Stevens

Chaplain Gloria Cervantes

Absent: none

Excused: none

Prayer -- (Gloria Cervantes)

Pledge of Allegiance -- (Pat Pell)

Blue Star Mothers Preamble -- (Kristine Wirgau)

Business

Approval of Minutes

- MOTION: Recommendation that the Minutes from the 10/25/2011 & 11/29/2011 meeting be accepted and posted to the website. Motion is seconded and passes on vote.

Officer and Committee Reports

Finance Committee (Karen Stevens)

- Meeting held on 12/5/11 with all members in attendance. Discussed roles of the chair, policies of the finance committee, budget process, expense approval now that all members of the committee are in place.
- MOTION: Recommendation from the Finance Committee to add a requirement to the Compliance Spreadsheet, requiring each chapter to submit a copy of the electronic receipt received when submitting the postcard version of the 990, OR the first page and signature page

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for a chapter filing the complete 990. Motion passes on vote.

- MOTION: Recommendation from the Finance Committee that the NEB hire ATIC (Advanced Technical Intelligence Center), in an amount not to exceed \$2000 (200 hours), immediately, to research any breaches of security that may have occurred. Motion passes on vote.
- MOTION: Recommendation from the Finance Committee that, if necessary, the NEB use existing budgeted funds from 3 line items: \$5300 Memberclicks expense line, up to \$10,000 from contingency, and a portion of the \$30,000 set aside for the 2012 convention, to pay for a new website. Motion passes on vote.

Treasurer (Julie Roberts)

- All payments for membership were made before the website was shutdown, but some of the addresses were not up-to-date so some chapter checks have been returned. She and Anne are working on getting these fixed and sent back out. Also there were about 4 errors made as far as paying other chapters for the wrong membership and this was being fixed.

Financial Report (Anne Parker)

- MOTION: Recommendation that the financial reports be accepted and posted to the website. Motion is seconded and passes on vote.
- Question about BSMA flag purchases for chapters not going through Service Flags. Answer is that Service Flags cannot make this flag so it is being done through another company.

Convention Report

- Recap: To be held in Cincinnati, OH. Hotel will be the Garfield Suites, with convention at the Cincinnati Club. Dates are 8/1 – 8/4 (NEB meeting 7/31). Cost per person \$125 (includes one meal). We may need to rent some AV equipment if not provided.
- MOTION: To accept the Cincinnati location for the convention and to pay the \$1000 deposit. Motion is seconded and passes on vote.

First VP (Janet Broussard)

- All memberships are up-to-date now that the website is back up.
- Membership cards have been issued to all of the newly chartered chapters for their members.

Second VP (Lin McGee)

- Newsletter:
 - Lin is currently working on the November newsletter. Should be sent to Robin when it is completed for review.
 - The October newsletter never went out to the membership and was not posted to the website. Robin will work on getting it posted.
- Yearbook:
 - New forms for release authorization cannot be posted since the website is not up completely, so no pictures have been submitted at this time. Julie will create a release form that can be sent out to members after Robin's approval.

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- Currently no ad sales to cover the cost of the yearbook have been received.
- Yearbook committee is down to 3 people.
- Yearbook is at a standstill, primarily because of the website issues.

Third VP (Teresa Bullock)

- There have been more deaths from Afghanistan since last meeting: 3 Marines and 7 Army
- Teresa will be writing up a statement to be used for funerals that are not combat-related, such as PTSD or overdose, or suicide.
- Teresa spoke at her local VFW (which is wanting to get another chapter started) and found out there are many fallen soldiers from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam whose families did not get a Gold Star Banner.
- She is also planning to take a few of the veterans with her to visit one of the local hospitals, but wants to make sure to cover all of the triggers that might cause a PTSD episode to recur, is worried she might need some assistance.

Fourth VP (pro tem: Rose Ann Elliott)

- She now has all of the past paperwork and is sorting through this and contacting the chapters to see if they still want to be chartered, and is helping the ones that do to gather all of the correct documents to complete the process.
- She has started working on Charters for CA43 and updating MN18.
- She has a concern about the button on the website: it is too easy to start the process of getting a charter without all of the correct documents. For example, there are 37 charters that she is working on; she has emailed or called all of them, but has only heard back from about 6 of them. She is going to contact the others again to make sure they do not want to form a chapter in their area.
- One of the biggest hold-ups on getting chapters chartered is the state requirements. Some states require that chapters file with the Attorney General and the Secretary of State to include the Article of Incorporation. She is working on making up a list of the requirements for each state so that in the future we will know what needs to be accomplished to start a chapter. At this time not all states require chapters to register that as a nonprofit organization.
- MOTION: To rescind the original motion and vote of 10-25-2011 on Rose Ann for 4th VP and a new vote be taken for Rose Ann to fill the 4th VP position for the rest of the year. Motion is seconded and passes on vote.

Department of Michigan (Kristine Wirgau)

- Chapter 1 in Flint, MI is talking about disbanding again and the DEB stepped in to see if they could help. The chapter said with DEB help they will try to stay active for at least another year.
- Kristine stated that during a meeting the topic came up about how to assist soldiers and their families financially, and they came up with a few ideas: Operation Home Front, Care Coalition Special operations groups (Seals and others), USO, and the Salvation Army.
- Last half of March or first part of April they are going to have a School of Instruction. The newest chapter (MI188) will be the host of this event.

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- Recommendation that if chapters hold a fundraiser they should not announce it for specific item, because that is all it can be used for.
- Kristine attended a Christmas party in Detroit for the VA domiciliary, which was hosted by 2 Michigan chapters.
- There is a yearly state requirement for the DEB (which covers the Chapters) that has to be filed at a cost of \$20.
- BSMA reports for the DEB are not listed in the compliance report; Kristine will re-submit if necessary.

Department of Minnesota (Jean Duane)

- Working with the state to get the foreign/corporation transaction act to conduct business in Minnesota, she has to still find out when it has to be renewed – if it is yearly or every 5 years.
- They are expecting to do a mid-year board training retreat.

Department of Ohio (Pat Pell)

- Robin spoke about Ohio Secretary of State paperwork that has to be done; it costs about \$50 every 5 years.
- The board is working on submitted proposals from chapters to award portions of a \$10,000 grant, which was awarded to the Dept. of Ohio
- The Board is working with chapters to get all of the chapters in compliance, and also making sure they are up to all of the state regulations.
- Pat will be attending Blue-to-Gold funeral tomorrow for a soldier that was home on leave from Afghanistan and most likely died from an overdose of alcohol. (It was mentioned that per the DOD regulations there is no reason for the death stated; just that the soldier was on active duty at the time of his death.)

Department of Oklahoma (Cathy O'Shields)

- There will be an in-person meeting for all chapters in Oklahoma to take place in January (in Tulsa) and they will install the new chapter and present the charter. This meeting will give insight on the upcoming NEB Convention location, to give the dates for the DEB convention, and to get all of the chapters that have not completed paperwork for compliance completed.

New Business

Holiday Break:

- MOTION: The NEB will be on holiday break from December 24, 2011 – January 2, 2012. The NEB will resume its duties on January 3, 2012. Motion is seconded and passes on vote.

Blue Star Mothers Bill:

- The bill updating our charter was passed. Notification will be made by Robin to all members and associates.

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AZ5

- Karen Stevens stated this chapter is having major financial issues, so the financial committee and also the disciplinary committee are working with them to get them in compliance, and also working on training the officers of their duties. (The chapter is currently on suspension). Dottie Sills and Sue Stowe are planning to travel to Arizona at the end of January to work with the officers to show them how the chapter is to be conducted in the future. There are issues with the EIN number and also there are many issues with payments being made without back up documents to support the expenses. The goal is to be able to reinstate the chapter as soon as they are in compliance.
- Robin suggested the need to set up training for all chapters, as well as forms on how to process and set up a chapter from the very beginning. The NEB may need to push for Departments in all states with more than one chapter, and should perhaps even consider setting up regions.

CA4

- Charilyn Damigo reported about what had taken place in her chapter with the credit card machines recording the account numbers (grocery chain credit card scam) when they purchased care package items, and an unauthorized withdrawal (fraud) in the amount of \$3000 from their account. There were many other people in the community who were caught in this scandal. The stolen money was reimbursed by the bank, but the scam made the news, and the chapter actually received approximately \$11,000 in donations from the public. The media initially reported incorrectly that the Christmas care package boxes were not able to be sent, but in actuality they had already been shipped, so the theft did not prevent the care packages from being mailed. The FBI was involved in this case, the chapter's debit cards have been replaced, and the chapter will discuss how/when to contact the media in the future.

Announcements

Next meeting – Orlando, FL. January 21, 2012. (10:00am – 6:00pm)

Adjournment

The president adjourned the meeting at 10:30pm EST.