



MEETING MINUTES

BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

September 10, 2024

Call to order: Our National Executive Board Meeting was called to order by National President Rebecca Stafford at 7:30 P.M. CST.

Opening:

PNP/Chaplain Stacy Anders opened with prayer. 2VP Karla Keller led our Pledge of Allegiance. PNP/VAVS REP Anne Parker led the Preamble. Recording Secretary Amy Jo Hutchinson conducted roll call.

The following were present:

- National President-Rebecca Stafford
- 1VP-Karen Stillwell (Excused)
- 2VP-Karla Keller
- 3VP-Jacqueline Ransom
- 4VP-Sonya Kay
- Recording Secretary-Amy Jo Hutchinson
- Financial Secretary-Carrie Beck
- Treasurer-Stacy Breithaupt
- PNP/Chaplain-Stacy Anders
- PNP-Carla Brodacki
- PNP/VAVS REP-Anne Parker
- Dept. MI President-Trudy Wysocki
- Dept. Ohio President-Dianna Lynn Feldman
- Dept. MN President-Jen Pecarina
- Parliamentarian-Patti Elliott
- Julie Straw – Finance Chair

Minutes Approval:

Minutes from NEB Post Convention Meeting August 13, 2024, were sent to the NEB. Several corrections were noted.

MOTION to approve the August 13, 2024, NEB Minutes with noted corrections.
Seconded

Call for the Vote.

1 Abstention / 0 Opposed – **MOTION PASSED**

Finance Committee Report to NEB September 10, 2024

1. FC meeting held on Sunday, September 8th to discuss financial matters:

You do not have the August financial statements at this time. We are in the process of streamlining the accounts (in quantity and presentation) along with tracking year end matters that will end up affecting the 8/31/24 financials. Some questions/clean up are going to be discussed with the Auditor.

Please note: The current year NEB should have “View only” rights to the Online QuickBooks. Please check your email or reach out to the FinSec if you would like to be able to see the accounting process and don’t currently have your password for access.

2. Chapter Grant Applications:

A. Discussion concerning eligibility of CA26 that was approved last month (question arose as to if it had been 2 years since their last grant). Matter resolved - check will be sent.

B. Six existing chapters applied prior to 8/31/2024 and were approved to be paid with 8/31/24 budgeted funds: NC16, MN1, OH15, CA40, NC17 & CA39.

Motion coming from Committee to approve six-chapter grants (NC16, MN1, OH15, CA40, NC17 & CA39) out of 8/31/24. budgeted funds.

Seconded

Call for the Vote.

0 Abstentions/ 0 Opposed – **MOTION PASSED**

- C. Three existing chapter grant applications received after 8/31/2024: FL15, TX15 & TN7. One of these chapters is having difficulty seating a 5-member board. Motion coming from Committee to approve two-chapter grants (FL15 & TX15) out of current fiscal year budgeted funds.
3. Progress of FYE Audit & Tax Return - Online store inventory audit is complete - online store is open.
 4. Convention update: Big Dipper is due the Fun Night registrations collected by BSMA minus any catering expenses.
 5. Maguire/Maguire, Inc. transition to M.P. May, Inc. Update: None at this time.
 6. Registrations:
 - A. Dunberry # and registration has been located - FinSec will figure out how to update it to the address of our DC Registered Agent.
 - B. United Way registration response is in process.
 - C. DC Sales tax exemption registration needs to be revisited by Finance Chair.
 7. Compliance -
 - A. Any stragglers from 2023 are not of a financial nature.
 - B. Progress is being made on streamlining 2024 Compliance - Review committee members are receiving training and guidance.
 8. Equipment purchases for NEB: no purchases made yet - please have 2VP & 3VP get with Treasurer to discuss laptop needs asap.
 9. NFS and NT Reports (combined):
 - A. QuickBooks renewal came through at \$160 over budget (6%).

B. Flourish account needs Username and 2FA switched - in process.
C. Member clicks now due on 9/1 each year (had been October) - switched to ACH payment to avoid debit card expiration difficulties in the future.

D. Online Store

1. Restocking:

a. Motion coming from Committee to order 36 Light Blue logo Polo shirts (qty in each size determined by Treas.)

Motion coming from Committee to order 36 Light Blue logo polo shirts quantity in each size determined by Treasurer.

Coming from Committee a second is not required.

Call for Vote.

No Abstentions/ No Opposed - MOTION PASSED

b. Motion coming from Committee to order 36 Red logo Jackets (qty in each size determined by Treas - emphasis on Small, Medium & Large.)

Motion coming from committee to order 36 Red logo jackets (quantity in each size to be determined by Treasurer - emphasis on Small, Medium, & Large.

Coming from committee a second is not required.

Call for Vote.

No Abstentions/ No Opposed - MOTION PASSED

ii. New possible items: Discussed potential umbrellas, aprons, modern design for logo pens, knit hats, cutting boards, President's project and VAVS patches.

Motion coming from Committee to order 200 VAVS patches at a cost of \$1.82 each, sell for \$5.00 each, profit to be earmarked to VAVS.

Coming from committee a second is not required.

Call for Vote.

No Abstentions/ No Opposed - MOTION PASSED

10. United Way discussion, the address on file is not correct. Some discussion followed. NFS will update the address. If they do not take a P.O. Box, we will use the address of the NFS and add this to the transition documents for next NFS.

Next FC meeting on Sunday, October 20, 2024

Officer Reports

1VP – Excused from meeting.

2VP – Newsletter articles due by 15th

3VP – nothing to add.

4VP – nothing to add.

REC SEC – nothing to add.

FIN SEC – nothing to add.

TREAS – nothing to add.

PNP/Chaplain- Mentioned the Gold Star Cards and the crew she has formed to help work on them as they are more time consuming. This is to save money, but they will work together and get them ready. No return address on them this year.

PNP-Carla Brodacki – nothing to add.

PNP/VAVS REP-Anne Parker – nothing to add.

Dept. MI President- nothing to add.

Dept. Ohio President-nothing to add.

Dept. MN President- nothing to add.

Parliamentarian-nothing to add.

Old Business

- **MOU with our American Legion Auxiliary** has now become **Resolution of Support**. Document was approved and presented at their convention. Our PNP/ VAVS REP was in attendance. She is going to scan a copy of it for our website so all can see it.
- **Our MOU with The American Gold Star Mothers** will also be scanned and added to the National Website as well.
- **Mid-Year 2025** – Pensacola, FL February 19 -26, 2025. Arriving the Wednesday prior to and leaving the Wednesday after. Contract has been signed. Please look into flights. Our NT has been setting up corporate accounts with airlines to save the organization money as well. She is also

making accounts with Hilton for hotels as well. NP needs to know days you plan to be there.

- **Convention 2025** – Next Convention city has been confirmed. Dates will be July 28 – Aug 1, 2025. There is a new Convention committee she is working to plan this event. This will be a training year, planning breakout sessions with all officers. The sessions that would not be a breakout, but speaking to the Convention as a whole would be our This may also include our National Mentor Chair, our VAVS REP, Wreaths Across America, and possibly ShipThrifty.
- 4VP has two old printers sitting at her house that she needs direction as to what the NEB wants her to do with it. Suggestions are to donate or recycle them. She also has an old briefcase that was sent to her.

MOTION was made for these items to be donated and if not possible to recycle them.

Motion seconded.

Call for Vote.

No abstentions/ No opposed – MOTION PASSED

- **Memorial Day weekend** – May 23 – 25, 2025. Rolling to Remember/ Remembrance Week. No details available at this time.

New Business

- **Department Conventions**
 - **Ohio Convention is October 4 – 6**
 - **Minnesota Convention October 11-12**
 - **Michigan Convention October 25 – 27**
- **Garrison Hats** – We are working to get them to be consistent and uniform. The idea was mentioned that NEB officers purchase their own hats and that National would pay to get them embroidered. That way everyone has the correct size and retain the hat at the end of their time of service as that particular officer. More discussion to follow after the NP verifies the embroidery process.
- **Bass Pro Shops/ Cabellas** – NP forwarding email to the NEB regarding the program of a Jerky Drive for our Troops. 45,000 to 50,000 bags are expected to be donated during this campaign. This runs from Saturday October 19, 2024, until Saturday November 16, 2024. They are asking to use our branding and to support the stores if we have one local to our

chapters. NP will ensure that there is no cost to us at dispersing the jerky collected. Question if there is no Chapter sending out Troop Boxes, where would we send the Jerky? It was suggested that we send to the local base or military installation or possibly the VA Hospital. NP will get more information and send to NEB on how we can support this event.

MOTION to move forward and work with them on this campaign.

Seconded.

CALL for VOTE

No Abstentions/ No Opposed – MOTION PASSED

Yearbook Purchasing: 2VP regarding yearbook pre-buying for next year. There is an offer to get them at a discounted rate. We bought 50 this year, have 19 lefts. First 5 ordered we get 1 free and a discount on remaining purchase by December 15, 2024. 2VP will get clarification on if we order 30 can we get the discounted rate. Also deciding if we are going to go ahead with the VAVS pages again. PNP noted that it is in the Financial Policy that the money will go towards the VAVS.

MOTION do we want to add the extra pages noting that it is already established that the money raised will go to the VAVS.

Seconded

CALL for VOTE

No Abstentions/ No Opposed – MOTION PASSED

Motion to have 2VP verify the discount if we purchase the yearbooks and our free books.

Seconded

CALL for VOTE

No Abstentions/ No Opposed – MOTION PASSED

NP took the NEB into CES at 7::39 P.M. CST

NP took the NEB out of CES at 8:31 P.M. CST.

Membership Cards: When will they be on the National Website? The RECSEC noted that the needed changes were made, and the webmaster should have them posted soon. It was noted that the RECSEC has a standalone hard drive to house the needed documents she needs to change every year IE: Membership Cards, Governing documents, bank letters, all of those things to pass on to the

next officer. RECSEC will get with NT to get help on getting a new laptop that works.

QuickBooks Training: DEPT of MI noted that she been asked for a printout type of what they can use to make their QuickBooks more user friendly. NT and NFS will be able to provide a simple layout for the chapters to use regarding Chart of Accounts and what a Balance sheet looks like.

Southwest Rewards Accounts: NEB Officers check email for adding yourself to this as a NEB officer to help with NT planning of travel. NT still working to add American Airlines as well.

Reminders

- Please check email at least once per day.
- Newsletter items to 2VP by the 15th of the month

Seeing nothing further for the GOOD of the Order she asked our National Chaplain to close us in prayer.

NP Closed the meeting at 9:05 P.M. CST.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Jo Hutchinson, National Recording Secretary



National 1st Vice President September Report 2024

- Worked with the Webmaster to update expiration dates
- Assisted with connection to Flag Lady Store for an order of Gold Star Banners
- Communicated through emails and phone calls with multiple members and those with Chapter questions
- Processed Renewals, New Memberships and Transfers
- Assisted the National President when needed
- Provided support and information to all Chapters sending basic questions to the National 1stVP and forwarding to other officers if it was appropriate

-Working with the Webmaster, Fin Sec and Treasurer to process dues renewal questions, new members and transfers

-Assisted in some Chapter issues and questions about elections, pro tem positions and closings

-Assisted Chapters with navigating the website, their profile, dues, renewals and new memberships

-Assisting new Chapters with profiles and website information

-Working with old and new Chapters regarding chartering and transferring members

-Working with 4VP on training documents

-Designed and submitted a membership page for the newsletter

-Worked with PNP Pat on designing and publishing a newsletter to answer questions for members eligibility

-Updating instructions for the Officer Roster and Affiliation Agreement

-Responding to members not wanting to renew

-Approving Officer Rosters and Affiliation Agreement

-Working on a list of duplicate renewals to distinguish between Chapter errors or a members intentions

Respectfully Yours in Service,

Karen Stillwell

National 1st VP 2023-2025

1vp@bluestarmothers.us

[614-893-1180](tel:614-893-1180)



National 2nd Vice President September 2024 Report

- Attended NEB Zoom meeting
- Worked on yearbook
- Reviewed emails for September Newsletter and verified receipt of each email
- Reviewed list and photos from 3VP of September Fallen Heroes
- Added list of deceased Veterans, received from 3VP, to September Newsletter
- Designed and edited pages for the September Newsletter
- Finalized September Newsletter
- Emailed National President and webmaster for approval and distribution of September Newsletter
- Verified with Treasurer that the remaining yearbooks that were ordered were sent to those who didn't attend National Convention
- Assisted National President as needed
- Responded to texts, emails and phone calls

Respectfully submitted by
Karla Keller
National 2nd VP



National 3VP Report

September 1 – September 30, 2024

- Attended NEB meeting
- Researched 25 Active Duty Military deaths
- Reported 22 Active Duty deaths including 5 Repatriated
- Added 498 Veterans to the Fallen Veteran list
- Sent list of Fallen Veterans to 2VP
- Sent list and pictures of Active Duty deaths to Chaplain and 2VP
- Assisted chapters with Blue to Gold protocol questions
- Answered phone calls, emails and text messages



National 4th Vice President
September 2024 Report

- Attended all NEB meetings.
- Attended Finance Committee meetings
- Tracked all compliance related documents received from DCAs – so far 83 DCAs have submitted at least one component of compliance, many have submitted multiple. Two chapters are fully submitted, approved, and compliant. Those two chapters have received their email stating that they have completed the process.
- Created more Compliance Email Training documents to be mailed to all DCA presidents/membership chairs. The next 4 have been sent with continued positive response.
- Worked with Financial Review Team for Annual Report financial document review. They have started their reviews.
- Updating Compliance Guide.
- Worked with webmaster with compliance related questions.
- NC18 chartered.
- Working with two new chapters regarding chartering. One has submitted all documents; the other just got their 6 needed members lined up.
- Answered multiple emails from potential new chapters, researched locations, sent getting started information (14 locations in discussion).
- Building processes for opening new chapters, documenting it out in writing.
- Building processes for closing chapters, documenting it out in writing.
- Answered emails from potential new members re chapters near them.
- Answered emails/calls/texts from DCAs.

Respectfully Submitted by
Sonya Kay
National 4th VP

Treasurer and Financial Secretary Report

August 6, 2024

Hello Ladies,

We have completed our Financial Report together this month and are hoping that you will allow us to continue reporting this way going forward. We have found upon taking on our positions that we work extremely well together as a team and through daily collaborations, we are able to take on and tackle more financial aspects of the organization at once and make the cohesiveness of the accounting practices come together more efficiently. While we each continue to have our individual responsibilities to include but were not limited to, email correspondence, phone calls, meetings, texts from NEB, Finance, and any chapters requiring assistance, we have found that it makes our positions easier if we can understand the process of each other responsibilities to rectify any issues that arise or may arise much quicker than individually.

Current State of Accounts:

Donors and Vendors: Updated vendors and removed all inactive vendors. All current Vendors names, address, and vendor information, and what they provide has been input successfully. Donors were updated to include Chapter's and have been updated with all names, addresses, and EIN number; Member's which is within the Donors tab has had their information updated to include, phone numbers, email addresses, and ship addresses. We are currently In process of placing all active members under their chapter.

Chart of Accounts:

We have started to remove inactive accounts per discussion with the accountant and will continue over the next few months. Also working on eliminating duplicate accounts by combining unnecessary duplication by years; the goal here is to have an accurate and consistent account from year to year without having the creation of more lines of accounting. (i.e.; there should not be an entire creation of accounts per fiscal year. This is literally recreating the chart of accounts yearly instead of a continuation of finances yearly in the correct account.) Quickbooks runs fiscal year reports that divides this information out, which creates a sounder financial record keeping.

ONLINE STORE:

Treasurer met with accountant to review inventory and successfully set up store at residence. She also conferred with webmaster to create a new streamlined and seamless process for orders, while also removing all inactive products from the administrative side of website that was clogging up the system. Also conferring to acquire new ideas/products for sale to generate more income for BSMA.

PAYMENT ACCOUNTS:

Opened QB payment account to attach to store to assist in streamline and seamless accounting process. Individuals who place orders now place orders on website and receive a beautiful, professional invoice within 24 hours of placing the order which they then pay directly through QuickBooks. This process also includes adequate and precise shipping fees that no longer require follow-up invoices to be paid through PayPal due to inaccurate calculations by the purchaser and streamlines the payments directly into the correct receivable accounts per our updated chart of accounts. QB payment fees are also less than our PayPal fees which will result in a higher retention of our income.

BANKING:

Treasurer and Fin Sec have been continually updating the accounts to reflect the current NEB officers on the accounts. Some require documentation which we are currently working through to have a more seamless continuity of Board Member and payment change over. This will result in a seamless transition where reoccurring payments are processed and filled regardless of the board member in the position. Fin Sec has received the check cashing machine and was able to install hardware and make check deposits.

TRANSITION:

We are also collaborating on a continuity document that should help make the transition run more smoothly and with less interruption of the organizations process.

Thank you for a great first month. We have truly enjoyed our new positions, and we look forward to showing you our progress each upcoming month.

Sincerely,

Your Financial Team

Carrie Beck & Stacy Breithaupt

August 2024



Department of Michigan Presidents Report
September 2024

- Attended the NEB meeting.
- Held Michigan DEB meeting.
- Attended BDMI meeting.
- Attended Gold Star flag presentation for Michigan (unclaimed location)
- Working on Michigan Convention hotel/weekend details
- Answered phone calls, emails, and text messages regarding Department business.

Trudy Wysocki
President Department of Michigan

**Department of Ohio
September 2024 Report**

1. Chaired September DEB meeting
2. Attended September NEB meeting
3. Visited OH22 Chapter booth at community festival
4. Continued preparing for Department convention
5. Planning meeting at Nationwide Conventiion center with hotel planner and Ohio Blue Dipper officers
6. Coped documents for convention folders
7. Worked on 2024-25 budget with Department financial secretary and first vice president
8. Attended Gold Star Mother and Family Monument dedication at the National Veterans Museum and Memorial
9. Various emails and calls with Ohio Chapter Presidents, Department Officers, and the general public.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Feldman,

President, Department of Ohio

SEPTEMBER 2024 REPORT DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA

*Attended NEB meeting

*Conducted DEB meeting

*Conducted department business via email, text and phone calls regarding department convention

*Finalized plans for Department convention