



## MEETING MINUTES

### BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

January 14, 2025

**Call to order:** The National Executive Board meeting was called to order by National President Rebecca Stafford at 6:30 P.M. CST.

#### **Opening:**

PNP/ Chaplain Stacy Anders opened with prayer. PNP Carla Brodacki led the Pledge of Allegiance. PNP/VAVS REP Anne Parker led the Preamble. Recording Secretary Amy Jo Hutchinson conducted roll calls.

#### **The following were present:**

- National President-Rebecca Stafford
- 1VP-Karen Stillwell
- 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-Barb Cook
- Dept. MN President-Jen Pecarina
- Parliamentarian-Patti Elliott
- Julie Straw – Finance Chair - Excused

**Minutes Approval:**

Minutes from NEB Meeting December 10, 2024, were sent to the NEB. No corrections were noted.

**MOTION** to approve December 10, 2024, NEB Minutes was made.

**Seconded**

**Call for the Vote.**

3 Abstentions / No Opposed – **MOTION PASSED**

Motions coming from Finance Committee to NEB prior to November 2024 NEB meeting during October 20<sup>th</sup>. We will read these motions again and vote to ratify. Email vote was taken in November, Our November NEB meeting had to be cancelled, and these motions needed to be sent.

- 1) Motion to approve and set aside for audit the Revised August 31, 2024, financials. This motion is in hopes of getting the financials to the auditor earlier than in prior years to expedite the audit process.**

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

- 2) Motion to disburse the three Convention Body approved 501c3 \$500 donations as soon as possible. Since the 8/31/2024 financials are showing a significant net loss, we will not need to wait for audit results to calculate a percentage for the donation amounts as in prior years but rather will be applying the new financial policy of a minimum \$1,500 (combined) donation.**

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**3) Motion to approve the purchase of three HP Model N5030 laptop computers (for 2VP, 3VP, and Rec Sec) at a cost not to exceed \$450 each for hardware. Necessary software licenses will either be transferred from existing computers or purchased as necessary at nominal cost from TechSoup. We would like to get these purchased as soon as possible to take advantage of any current holiday specials.**

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**4) Motion to approve three online store bundles for immediate launch during this holiday season.**

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**5) Motion to approve the refund of \$100 for the 2024 yearbook ad payment to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. We believe this was discussed and approved prior, but we could find no record of it in NEB or FC minutes.**

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**6) Motion to allow chapters to spend up to \$15 on a Welcome Packet for each NEW member as approved by the Chapter membership (i.e. - either in their budget or with general membership approval and applied consistently.)** Significant discussion has occurred over the years regarding this issue. We are attempting to get everyone on the same page, particularly the FC, the NEB and the mentors when answering a question of this nature. We felt that setting a \$15 limit would allow for printing costs or a small pin, patch, or token of appreciation in welcoming new members and would not run afoul of any IRS regulations since they are well within our boundaries. This would prevent chapters from going overboard and trying to provide uniforms, shirts, etc.

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

Finance Committee Report to NEB January 14, 2025.

**1. MOTION coming from committee to accept December 2024 Financials.**

All NEB was sent via email for review.

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**2. Annual Audit and tax returns progress and CPA adjustments to inventory.** Now that we are using the inventory function in Quick Books the CPA adjustments to inventory as a result of 8-31-2024 audit is now reflecting treatment of inventory according to GAP. FC requested a copy of the most recently signed 990 forms for C. Mccracken in regard to the McGuire and Macguire Inc. The webmaster should also receive a copy for posting on the national website.

**3. Convention Planning for 2025.** The Convention Committee received a grant to cover the cost of the Convention bags. 4Imprint awarded \$500 that had to be spent with their company, so we purchased Convention Bags. There will be no cost to BSMA. The release of the registration form for the convention is planned for later this month. Np will work with webmaster and make a few changes to the form before releasing. There was discussion regarding journal entries for NEB members and others who have their convention costs covered by BSMA. At the convention it was voted that registration fees for NEB, current PNP, Parliamentarian, and Finance Chair convention committee co-chairs, or anyone who is required to be at Convention would be paid by BSMA. NP and Webmaster are working on a form for those people to use that will not have Convention fees so that we do not have to reimburse. The form should allow for attendees to pay separately for Big Dipper or extra meals. NP is asking that NEB does not register for convention until these forms are ready. The Convention Committee is sending out donation request forms for businesses in Milwaukee. We updated the form.

4. Update for McGuire and McGuire – Christine McCracken needs to submit the new application for M. P. May Inc. new name for McGuire and McGuire. There was some discussion regarding sending “ask” letters directly to donors. We are not doing CFC anymore as we were putting more energy into it and not getting must out of it. The question was why we are not doing our own donation letters as a National Organization instead of paying someone to do it. The Finance Committee is working on this. There are a couple of people working on the donation letter that we have and working to use it to explain who we are and what we do, so it would also help get the word out about our organization. Discussion was had for the need for a Fundraising chair, someone who can spearhead this committee. Two people from the Finance committee have offered to co-chair.

5. Financial officers are requesting a Quick Book reader because we are now invoicing directly through Quick Books. Information on transactions will automatically be loaded into Quick Books. Fees are less than using PayPal.

**MOTION to purchase the One Quick Book Card Reader cost is \$49.00.**

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**6. Online Store standard restocking items.** There are some items on the online store that are considered uniform and that we need to keep in stock on a regular basis. So, we clarified what those items are. NT will add this list to her transition document so that the incoming NT will know what we have to keep in stock and that there may be additional items added to this list in the future. Those items are the Garrison hats, the uniform gloves, the uniform white logo  $\frac{3}{4}$  sleeve tailored shirt, both size official BSM pins, the Past President Chapter pin, the Associate Pin, BSMA Official Challenge coin, BSMA Logo 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch patch, 3 inch metallic BSMA patch, 3 inch branch patch, and BSMA logo notecards.

**MOTION to be able to have standard restocking of the following items for the online store. The Garrison hats, the uniform gloves, the uniform white logo  $\frac{3}{4}$  sleeve tailored shirt, both size official BSM pins, the Past President Chapter pin, the Associate Pin, BSMA Official Challenge coin, BSMA Logo 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch patch, 3 inch metallic BSMA patch, 3 inch branch patch, and BSMA logo notecards.**

**Coming from committee a second is not needed.**

**Call for VOTE**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**7. FC will work with webmaster to correct the PayPal button on the National website as a couple chapters paid their compliance for VAVS incorrectly through PayPal. 4VP has been working with FINSEC to correct these payments.**

**8. Finance Committee meeting next meeting scheduled for February 9<sup>th</sup>, so a motion was made, and they voted to move the meeting to February 16, 2025.**

### **Officer Reports**

1VP – has sent all Midyear flight information to Freddy the Transporter, any changes to flights please let her know asap.

2VP – will be out of town for a few days, email will note that she is away.

3VP – nothing to add.

4VP – Since her report she has had ten more chapters complete compliance. 120 more emails to cover.

REC SEC – nothing to add.

FIN SEC – nothing to add.

TREAS – nothing to add.

PNP/Chaplain- verifying her flight information with NT.

Dept. MI President- nothing to add.

Dept. Ohio President-nothing to add.

Dept. MN President- nothing to add.

Parliamentarian-nothing to add.

PNP/VAVS REP – noted she is having some vision issues and thank you for your patience as she waits to see the doctor.

### **Old Business**

- **Mid-Year 2025** – Pensacola, FL February 19 -26, 2025. Everyone is working on their draft transition documents. NP would like all of us to review them at midyear so we can see where we overlap and get them to be complete. That way we are all on the same page.

NP has also asked for a draft of your training for the convention this year pertaining to each officer's position and requirements.

- **Convention 2025** – Dates will be July 28 – Aug 1, 2025. Nothing new to update on. Hotel registration has been launched. Working on registration forms and NEB registration forms and it should be available soon. The registration form will ask if they are a Veteran or GOLD Star Mother. NP asked NEB to get with the NT to get their flights booked.
- **Membership Form** – 1VP worked to update our Membership form to reflect if the person is a Veteran or a Gold Star Mother. This will help our Chaplain in the future in sending cards. She works with Gold Star Mothers to grow our list and this will also help. As not every Gold Star Mother join both organizations.

#### **New Business**

- **February NEB Meeting** – Scheduled for Feb 11, we will be at Midyear the following week. It was suggested that we postpone our meeting until our Midyear meeting.  
**Motion was made to postpone the February NEB meeting until we meet at Midyear.**  
**Motion seconded.**  
**Call for Vote.**  
**No Opposed/ No abstentions – MOTION PASSED.**
- **Memorial Day weekend** – Previously called Rolling to Remember, now called Remembrance Weekend. We are behind on the planning. This year we have been limited to thirty-five attendees. The NP invited all NEB members on this call. We are staying at a different hotel. All attendees are responsible for flights, hotels, and food. Arriving Wednesday May 21 – leave Tuesday May 27<sup>th</sup>. Plan more expenses for meals as we are not at the same hotel as last year. Plans are to tour Pentagon on Thursday, Friday bikes arrive and blessing of the bikes, Saturday go to WIMSA and visit section 60, and Thunder Alley, Sunday the Ride and Capitol Tour, Monday half go to Arlington, half go to Parade. Leave for home on Tuesday. NEB members email NP if you are planning to attend.

**N1VP took the NEB into CES at 7:27 P.M. CST.**

**N1VP took NEB out of CES at 8:56 P.M. CST.**

**Reminders**

- Please check emails at least once per day.
- Newsletter items to 2VP by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month

Seeing nothing further for the GOOD of the Order she asked our National Chaplain to close us in prayer at 9:05 P.M. CST.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Jo Hutchinson, National Recording Secretary



## National 1st Vice President January Report 2025

- Attended all NEB meetings – Regular and Special
- Attended special meeting with webmaster
- Communicated through emails and phone calls with multiple members and those with Chapter questions
- Processed New Memberships, Renewals and Transfers
- Assisted the National President when needed
- Worked on Mid- year transportation and menu

-Provided support and information to all Chapters sending basic questions to the National 1<sup>st</sup>VP 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 with some Chapter issues and questions about elections, pro tem positions and closings

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

-Assisting new Chapters with profiles and website information

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

-Working on membership application additions – new, associate and transfers

-Designed a separate associate application for joining online

-Finalized updated 2025 applications with additions for Gold Star children and our Veteran Moms; added to new, associate and transfer forms

-Responding to members not wanting to renew

-Approving Officer Rosters and Affiliation Agreements

-Assisting Chapters with errors on their officer roster and affiliation agreement as well as duplicates and updates

- Assisting Chapters by running Chapter rosters and helping with member renewals by sending instructions

-Worked with the Grievance chair to provide Chapter officer contact information

-Confirmed updated membership information for all VAVS reps and deputies

-Working with webmaster for online profile additions

Respectfully Yours in Service,

Karen Stillwell

National 1<sup>st</sup> VP 2023-2025

[1vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:1vp@bluestarmothers.us)

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



## National 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President January 2025 Report

- Attended NEB Zoom meeting
- Attended NEB emergency meeting
- Worked on yearbook pages
- Reviewed emails for January Newsletter and verified receipt of each email
- Reviewed list and photos from 3VP of January Fallen Heroes and reformatted photos as needed
- Added list of deceased Veterans, for December, received from 3VP, to January Newsletter
- Designed and edited pages for the January Newsletter
- Finalized January Newsletter
- Emailed National President and webmaster for approval and distribution of January Newsletter
- Outlined 2VP talking points for Convention training
- Assisted National President as needed
- Responded to texts, emails and phone calls

Respectfully submitted by  
Karla Keller  
National 2<sup>nd</sup> VP



## National 3VP Report

January – January 31, 2024

- Researched 21 Active Duty Military deaths
- Reported 20 Active Duty deaths including 2 Repatriated
- Added 550 Veterans to the Fallen Veteran list
- Sent list and pictures of Active Duty deaths to Chaplain and 2VP
- Sent list of Fallen Veterans to 2VP
- Assisted chapters with Blue to Gold protocol questions
- Continued revising transition document
- Created Conv training document
- Discussed Conv training with Minnesota 3VP
- Emailed Military Liaisons concerning Casualty Officers
- Sent draft of a contact email for NP approval for Secretary of Department of Defense concerning Casualty Officers
- Answered phone calls, emails and text messages



National 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President

January 2025 Report

- ❖ Attended NEB meeting
- ❖ Attended Finance Committee meeting
- ❖ Answered multiple emails from potential new chapters, researched locations, sent getting started information.
- ❖ Answered emails from potential new members re chapters near them.
- ❖ Answered emails/calls/texts from DCAs.
- ❖ Tracked compliance
  - Worked with D/C/As to complete compliance
  - Emailed all D/C/As who are delinquent, entire chapter membership notified as per SOPs
- ❖ Worked with 1VP and Webmaster on new chapter process improvements
- ❖ WV1 is getting close to being ready to train and then install.
- ❖ Two more new chapters are working on getting started.

Respectfully Submitted by

Sonya Kay Stowers

National 4<sup>th</sup> VP



Department of Michigan Presidents Report  
January 2025

- Held Michigan DEB meeting.
- Attended BDMI meeting.
- Participated in NEB meeting.
- Department/Chapter Compliance call backs.
- Working on Michigan 2025 Convention destination.
- Attended MI33 Margaret Bedard's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.
- Held in person meeting with Dept Recording Secretary.
- Answered phone calls, emails, and text messages regarding Department business.

Trudy Wysocki  
President Department of Michigan



Department of Ohio  
January 2025  
President Barb Cook

Heald monthly meetings for the department.

The board decided to take the funds that the department would make from silent auction items and donate them to the Ohio Big Dipper as they were scammed for just a little over \$900.00.

Sent text to Chapter 64 and didn't get anything back.

Talked with both of my speakers for North/South, worked with the 1VP Department on our North/South newsletter.

Talked at the American Legion Mid-Winter Conference in Columbus

Work with Chapter 21 on compliance.

JANUARY 2025 DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

\*Attended January NEB meeting

\*Attended the St. Paul Winter Carnival parade

\*Attended the emergency NEB meeting

\*Attended to department business via phone, text and email

\*Planning for Spring Meeting