



MEETING MINUTES

BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

April 8, 2025

Call to order: The National Executive Board meeting was called to order by National President Rebecca Stafford at 6:34 P.M. CST.

Opening:

PNP/VAVS REP Anne Parker opened with prayer. 2 VP Karla Keller led the Pledge of Allegiance. 1VP Karen Stillwell led the Preamble. Recording Secretary Amy Jo Hutchinson conducted roll call.

The following were present:

- National President-Rebecca Stafford
- 1VP-Karen Stillwell
- 2VP-Karla Keller
- 3VP-Mary Johnson (Pro-Tem)
- 4VP-Sonya Kay
- Recording Secretary-Amy Jo Hutchinson
- Financial Secretary-Carrie Beck
- Treasurer-Jacqueline Ransom (Pro-Tem)
- PNP/Chaplain -Carla Brodacki (Excused)
- PNP/VAVS REP-Anne Parker
- PNP Pat Soler
- Dept. MI President-Trudy Wysocki
- Dept. Ohio President-Barb Cook (Left the meeting at 7:25 P.M. CST)
- Dept. MN President-Jen Pecarina
- Parliamentarian-Patti Elliott
- Julie Straw – Finance Chair

Minutes Approval:

Minutes from NEB March 18, 2025, were sent to the NEB. No corrections were noted.

MOTION to approve NEB Minutes from March 18, 2025, as presented.

Seconded

Call for the Vote.

No Opposed/ 1 Abstention - **MOTION PASSED**

Finance Committee Report - Financial Chair Julie Straw

1. FC meeting held on Sunday, April 6th, 2025, to discuss financial matters:

- A. There may be some adjustments needed to the Store inventory (counts need to be confirmed), but FC felt it not material.
- B. Online store shipped to Treasurer Pro Tem - \$791.22 costs to shipped placed under NT Shipping causing this to go over budget
- C. Donations for 2025 Convention are coming in from the backside of MemberClicks as 2023 Convention donations - requesting that the Webmaster change the description to merely be "Donations to National Conventions"
- D. Motion coming from Committee for the NEB to approve the March 2025 financial statements to be set aside for audit.

MOTION to approve the March 2025 Financial Statements to be set aside for audit. Coming from committee, a second is not needed.

Call for Vote.

No Opposed, One Abstention - MOTION PASSED.

2. Annual Audit & Tax return - CPA has completed the audit and is working on the Form 990 tax return. FC is requested that the NP notify the CPA about the change in NT.

3. Convention planning 2025

- A. Name tag deposit of \$500 has been paid via BillPay
- B. DJ deposit of \$550 has been paid via BillPay
- C. Treasurer Pro Tem needs to be added to the Convention Committee.

4. Fundraising & Press Releases MPMay, Inc. - BSMA 990 has been forwarded to them. No current updates on additional campaigns that might benefit BSMA.

5. Compliance matters of a financial matter - 4VP can provide you with a more current update, but we were informed that we have eighteen chapters still pending, five of those in Financial Review.

6. VAVS - FC acknowledged the NEB's motion last month for a 100% match and it was noted that checks for \$183.80 each will be sent to the 98 VA facilities that have no BSM representation.

7. Financial Officer Updates, Concerns or Requests

A. Transferring funds from Flourish to Bank of America accounts - FC thinks it is best to leave this in the hands of the financial officers with notification to the FC at monthly meetings.

B. Treasurer signature cards in process - FS will need April 2025 NEB Minutes confirming Treasurer appointment to satisfy bank documentation request.

C. FC suggests looking into possible alternatives to B of A - there is an increasing number of online FDIC insured banking platforms that do not have Branch locations and as a result, are easier to deal with electronically or online (most have agreements with ATMs to be able to deposit cash).

8. Financial Policy Changes

FC received notes from the Parliamentarian present at Mid-Year, along with notes from other NEB members. We made it through only the Purpose and the first one and a half sections of the current policy during a 4 ½ hour March session. It was apparent we were becoming overwhelmed with the volume of requested changes, not to mention the committee's own suggestions.

During the FC April meeting, I presented a proposed complete rewrite and reorganization of the BSMA financial policies which incorporated changes already suggested by FC members along with an added Introduction and Glossary of Terms. This is being presented to you with Cross Reference Guides (Current to Rewrite, and Rewrite to Current). In our April 4 ½ hour session, we were able to get through the Introduction, Purpose, and first five sections of the Proposed Rewrite. The FC felt it advantageous to get this to you to begin fielding your comments ASAP. Depending on feedback from the NEB, we may need to have another meeting to work on the Proposed Financial Policies prior to our scheduled May 4, 2025, meeting. That meeting will be dedicated to the Proposed Budget. **Requests and suggestions from the NEB are needed prior to April 28, 2025.**

Finance chair left the NEB meeting at 6:50 P.M. CST

Officer Reports - in addition to reports that have been included with Minutes.

- PNP/VAVS Anne Parker, in addition to her report, she wanted to add that there will be a large amount of money left in the VAVS budget as there will be no in person meeting this year.
- PNP Pat Soler sent her report to NRS.
- 4VP needed to mention she is working on an after-action review of Compliance to note what went well and did not. She will have a report soon.
- NRS noted that the update Affiliation Agreement will be ready for posting to the website this week.

Old Business

Convention 2025

- Presidents Project has been named. The Freedom 13 Foundation. They are based out of Missouri. They are the 13 that were killed in Afghanistan pulling out on August 26, 2021. One of the young men is from St. Charles, MO and his father created this retreat for Veterans and their families. Their goal is to have one of these in all 50 states. We are checking if he is able to come to convention for the check presentation. He is checking to see if he needs to have his travel expenses covered. NP is going to check with the FC to see if we have in our convention budget to cover a speaker for the event as we have in the past. It would be for his flight, one night stay, and his one dinner at the event. This would be his expenses only. NP will follow up with FC on this.
- We have nametags for conventions we are making nametags with magnetic back. They are \$5 each estimating 200, total cost of \$1000. We have paid \$500 per the NFS .
- DJ for Convention Friday nights banquet. Cost is \$550 this has been paid per our NFS.

Follow up on Challenge Coins/ Use of Military Emblems

- Our NT was informed that the maker of our coins has a written letter of approval from the DOD. Pro Tem NT will look into this and bring information back to NEB.

New Business

Gold Star Banners

3VP has a chapter that purchased the wrong banners by mistake, they do not have the Blue Star under them, should they present them? Some discussion ensued. Suggested they apply for a chapter grant which is \$250 and note that they would use the money for Gold Star Banners. They need to purchase two banners at \$16 each plus shipping. If they apply for the grant they would have extra money to use in the future as needed.

Motion was made to instruct OR1 to follow proper protocol and order the proper banners from the Flag Lady Store for their Blue to Gold presentation.

Seconded

Call for Vote

No Opposed/No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED

Purchase of Microsoft 365 for 2VP

- 2VP received a new laptop for use in her position and the Microsoft 365 is expired, apparently when set up it was only a trial version. She is asking the NEB for permission to purchase at \$99.99 per year, which would give her full access. Discussion ensued as we normally purchase these through Tech Soup, but none are currently available. NT Pro Tem did check.

MOTION to purchase Microsoft 365 for the 2VP to use on her laptop at the price of \$99.99 per year.

Seconded

Call for Vote

No Opposed/ No Abstentions – MOTION PASSED

NP took NEB into CES at 7:35 P.M. CST

NP took NEB out of CES at 10:49 P.M. CST

Reminders

- Please check emails 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 PNP/VAVS Rep Anne Parker to close us in prayer at 10.52 P.M. CST.

NEB Minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Jo Hutchinson, National Recording Secretary



National 1st Vice President

April Report 2025

- Attended all NEB meetings – Regular and Special
- 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
- Joined the National President with several Chapter Help Zoom meetings throughout the month
- 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

-Working with the 4VP on compliance issues

-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

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

-Approving Officer Rosters and Affiliation Agreements

-Processing Convention Delegate Forms and Chapter Rosters

-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

-Processing requested transfers and communicating that information to the Financial Officers

-Worked with the PNP's and Recording Secretary to provide Chapter officer rosters and Chapter member contact information

-Provided a Break Out Session for Chapter Help at DPOH Conference

-Working with webmaster for online profile additions

-Update member status as needed; officer changes and Blue Daisy information as I receive

-Provide membership information for all inquiries directed to me and the other National officers

-Providing membership information to all new inquires coordinating areas and options for them

-Working on documents for Convention Training

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 April 2025 Report

- Attended NEB Zoom meeting
- Worked on yearbook pages
- Reviewed emails for April Newsletter and verified receipt of each email
- Reviewed list and photos from 3VP of March Fallen Heroes and reformatted photos as needed
- Added list of deceased Veterans, from March, received from 3VP, to April Newsletter
- Designed and edited pages for the April Newsletter
- Contacted Treasurer regarding Microsoft Office products no longer on computer
- Finalized April Newsletter
- Emailed National President and webmaster for approval and distribution of April Newsletter
- Revised 2VP transition documents
- Revised 2VP talking points for Convention training
- Met with National Webmaster to learn how to send emails to membership while she is on vacation
- Assisted National President as needed
- Responded to texts, emails and phone calls

Respectfully submitted by
Karla Keller
National 2nd VP



NATIONAL 3RD VICE PRESIDENT OFFICER REPORT

APRIL 2025

- Researched 10 Active Duty Military deaths
- Reported 9 Active Duty deaths including 1 Repatriated
- Added Veterans to the Fallen Veteran list
- Sent list of Fallen Veterans to 2VP for newsletter
- Assisted chapters with Blue to Gold protocol questions

- Answered phone calls, emails and text messages
- Learned about a new star, the White Star. The White Star designation recognizes families who have lost a service member to suicide. [Preventing Veteran Suicide - The White Star Project | THE WHITE STAR PROJECT](#)

Respectfully submitted,

Mary

Respectfully,
Mary Johnson
National 3rd Vice President, Pro Tem
Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.
952-220-9523 (Central Standard Time)



National 4th Vice President

April 2025 Report

- Attended all NEB meetings
- Attended all Finance Committee meetings
- 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
 - Contacted chapters still not finished, giving NEB deadlines as needed.
 - Contacted chapters still not finished, offering help per NEB discussions
 - Contacted chapters still not finished with any help requested
 - Several chapters have completed compliance now.
- Worked on new chapter process improvements
 - Multiple more new chapters are working on getting started.
- Working on steps of new chapter process with MI203, OH65, TX21, TX22, as well as working with a good number of potential chapters.
- Assisted NP with Remembrance Week tasks and processes as needed.

Respectfully Submitted by

Sonya Kay Stowers

National 4th VP



Department of Michigan Presidents Report
April 2025

- Held Michigan DEB meeting
- Attended NEB meeting
- Participated in Sisters in Action committee meeting.
- Held Department of Michigan Sisters in Action
- Attended Gold Star luncheon
- Visited the Michigan USO
- In person meeting with Department 1VP
- Working on Michigan 2025 Convention guest speakers.
- Answered phone calls, emails, and text messages regarding Department business.

Trudy Wysocki
President Department of Michigan



Department of Ohio
April 2025
President Barb Cook

Heald DEB meeting

Worked on Ohio's conference

Heald North/South conference

Made cards for some BSM members

Attended Michigans sisters in action.

APRIL 2025 DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Attended April NEB meeting

*Conducted April DEB meeting

*Attended Michigan's Sister's in Action meeting

*Conducted department business via call, text and email