



## MEETING MINUTES

### BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

May 13, 2025

**Call to order:** The National Executive Board meeting was called to order by National President Rebecca Stafford at 6:33 P.M. CST.

**Opening:**

PNP Carla Brodacki opened with prayer. 1 VP Karen Stillwell led the 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
- 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) (Excused)
- PNP/Chaplain -Carla Brodacki
- PNP/VAVS REP-Anne Parker
- PNP Pat Soler
- Dept. MI President-Trudy Wysocki
- Dept. Ohio President-Barb Cook (Left the meeting at 9:25 P.M. CST)
- Dept. MN President-Jen Pecarina
- Parliamentarian-Patti Elliott
- Julie Straw – Finance Chair

**Minutes Approval:**

Minutes from NEB April 8, 2025, were sent to the NEB. No corrections were noted.

**MOTION** to approve NEB Minutes from April 8, as presented.

**Seconded**

**Call for the Vote.**

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

**Finance Committee Report – Financial Chair Julie Straw**

1. FC meeting was held on Sunday, May 4th and Wednesday, May 7th, 2025, to discuss financial matters: The NEB received the April financial statements to review.

**Motion coming from Committee for the NEB to approve the April 2025 financial statements to be set aside for audit.**

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

**CALL for vote.**

**No Opposed/ No Abstention – MOTION PASSED**

2. Annual Audit & Tax return - CPA has completed the audit and is working on the Form 990 tax return. No update at this time.

3. Convention planning 2025 A. Discussed repetitive transportation costs for the American flag and BSMA flags from DC to Convention locations and back.

**Motion coming from Committee to purchase an American flag and a BSMA flag, two flag poles, one American flag topper (Eagle), one BSMA flag topper (Generic) and one double flag storage bag to be retained with the Online Store to be used at Convention each year; AND for current flag set to be retained by the DC Rep for use in Washington DC.**

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

**CALL for vote.**

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

4. General Discussions - Discussed the use of the BSMA app and also the possibility of incorporating a Lifetime membership provision . . . no actions taken at this time.
5. Compliance matters of a financial matter - 4VP - can provide you with a more current update, but we were informed that we had sixteen chapters still pending.
6. Financial Officer Updates, Concerns or Requests
  - a. FC is still looking into possible alternatives to B of A - there is an increasing number of online FDIC guaranteed 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).
  - b. NT is confirming with Coins for Anything that BSMA challenge coin meets DOD requirements.
  - c. Presidents' hotel room for Washington, DC for Memorial Day events.

**Motion coming from Committee to pay for the NP's hotel room for four nights for Memorial Day weekend in Washington DC.**

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

**Call for Vote.**

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

- d. Brochure reorder - currently only 180 in stock.

**Motion coming from Committee to order 1,000 brochures at a cost of \$250 plus shipping.**

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

**Call for Vote.**

**No Opposed/ No Abstentions - MOTION PASSED.**

7. Chapter Grants -

**Motion coming from Committee to approve a Chapter Grant for OR1 and MI194. (existing chapters) with instructions from the FCC.**

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

**Call for Vote.**

**No opposed/ 1 Abstentions - MOTION PASSED.**

8. Proposed Financial Policies Last month, the FC recommended a complete rewrite of the existing BSMA Financial Policies. Input from committee members and NEB were reviewed and the copy you have in front of you is the Proposed 2025-2026 Financial Policies that the FC would like to present at Convention. You also have two “cheat sheets” which will help you navigate from the current policies to the proposed and vice versa. Your FC as a group has spent over 10 hours in session (not to mention the countless hours by individuals of the committee) attempting to make the policies as clear and concise as possible. Discussion was held on several parts of these proposed changes. The NEB made some suggestions on wording, and some changes in wording were made.

**MOTION was made to accept these Proposed Financial Policies to be presented to the convention body at 2025 Convention.**

**Motion was seconded.**

**Call for Vote.**

**No Opposed/ No abstentions - MOTION PASSED.**

9. Proposed 2025-2026 Budget

- a. Discussed the potential effect of tariffs on the online store purchases
- b. Discussed the increased transportation costs
- c. Prepared a Proposed 2025-2026 Budget in light of the previous two fiscal year budgets.
- d. Weighed the effects of proposing a large deficit budget and the need to set an example at the national level to use available funds to further the BSMA mission.

**Motion coming from Committee to present the Proposed 2025-2026 Budget to the Convention body.**

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

**Call for Vote.**

**No opposed/ No Abstentions - MOTION PASSED.**

The next regularly scheduled FC meeting is June 8th. If the Proposed Policy Changes and Proposed Budget will be finalized and distribute to the membership ahead of convention.

## Old Business

### **Convention 2025**

- Rooms at convention are going quickly. It is the desire of the NP to have the NEB members on the same floor. If you have any objection to sharing a King-size bed please let NP know following this meeting. Please get your registration for convention.
- NEB training if you have handouts that you need to have printed please have them in by June 1, 2025. Transition documents need to be in by July 1, 2025.
- VAVS/ REP Anne noted we have received four hundred pairs of sweatpants to date.
- Presidents Project has raised \$6300 to date.
- Gavel club have decided to have their charity of choice be Operation Surf in honor and memory of PNP Stacy Anders, as she was a member of the gavel club.
- **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. We are good to have these as we are not selling them to make a profit, only for chapters to use to present them.

## New Business

- Red Flag Patches are sold out in the store NFS asked on behalf of the NT if we could restock. Some discussion ensued. NFS looking for amount we normally stock and price before a motion can be made.
- Letter from Pick Rights International Incorporated on behalf of the Associated Press to NFS regarding a flag photo that is in use on our National Website asking us to take down the picture and pay for the past use. It was determined during discussion that this is possibly a fraud as it

originated in Canada. We will file the letter and wait to see if anything more is sent.

- National Store orders may be delayed for next couple of weeks as out NT attends family. The NT is responding individually to each order as she is able. No need to close the store at this time.

**NP took NEB into CES at 8:41 P.M. CST**

**NP took NEB out of CES at 9:30 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 PNP Carla Brodacki to close us in prayer at 9:35 P.M. CST.

NEB Minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Jo Hutchinson, National Recording Secretary



## National 1st Vice President May 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
- 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

-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

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

-Approving Officer Rosters and Affiliation Agreements

-Processing Convention Delegate Forms and Chapter Rosters

-Working with the webmaster on some website issues and questions

-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

-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; directing them to join a Chapter and/or to 4VP for new charters

-Working on documents for Convention Training

-Attended Celebration of Life for PNP Stacy Anders in CA

-Assisted the National President with a Zoom Chapter election as well as several communication emails and calls for a struggling Chapter

-Attended Remembrance Week and Rolling to Remember supporting our Gold Star Sisters and Our Fallen

-Deferred new members and renewals changing start and expiration dates; as well as communication with the members, the Chapters and our Financial officers with the changes

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 May 2025 Report

- Attended NEB Zoom meeting
- Worked on yearbook
- Reviewed emails for May Newsletter and verified receipt of each email
- Added list of deceased Veterans, from April, received from 3VP, to May Newsletter
- Designed and edited pages for the May Newsletter
- Followed up with Gold Star Mothers regarding their child's story for newsletter and yearbook
- Contacted Treasurer regarding Microsoft Office products no longer on computer
- Finalized May Newsletter
- Emailed National President and webmaster for approval and distribution of May 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
- Emailed Call to Convention to membership as webmaster is out of country
- Attended Remembrance Week in DC
- Designed Last Call newsletter for yearbook submissions, sent to National President for approval and webmaster to email to membership
- Responded to texts, emails and phone calls

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



## National 3VP Report

May 1 – May 31, 2025

- Researched 10 Active Duty Military deaths
- Reported 4 Active Duty deaths including 2 Repatriated
- Assisted chapters with Blue to Gold protocol questions
- Answered phone calls, emails and text messages



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

May 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 – 4 chapters still outstanding
  - 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 more 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 4<sup>th</sup> VP

# **NATIONAL TREASURER REPORT**

**May 2025**

Attended Finance Committee meeting

Paid bills and reimbursements as approved

Posted expenses in Quickbooks

Created invoices for Convention registrations

Created report of Convention registrations for Conv Chair

Created invoices for and filled 32 Online Store orders, shipped 29 orders

Worked on Transition document

Answered telephone calls, texts, and emails

Yours in Service

Jacqueline Ransom -ProTem



Department of Michigan Presidents Report  
May 2025

- Held Michigan DEB meeting
- Attended NEB meeting
- Attended (Michigan) Troy Collins funeral
- Attended Michigan Big Dipper meeting
- Working on Michigan 2025 Convention and guest speakers
- Answered phone calls, emails, and text messages regarding Department business.

Trudy Wysocki  
President Department of Michigan



Department of Ohio  
May 2025  
President Barb Cook

Heald monthly meetings for the department.

Attend the chapter Memorial Day Parade.

I attended my president's project event they were holding near where I live.

I had the honor of meeting another Gold Star Mother from the 13 who were killed at Abbey Gate.

Helped the development 2 VP on the Ohio's newsletter.

Answered phone calls, emails, and text.

MAY 2025 DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

\*Attended the May NEB meeting

\*Attended the Memorial Day events in Washington, DC

\*Conducted department business via call, text and email

\*Attended celebration of life for past national president Stacy Anders

\*Prep work for Department of MN fall convention