

**Meeting of the**  
**BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.**  
**National Big Dipper Board**  
**Wednesday, March 11, 2026 via Zoom**

**Call to Order and Welcome:**

The National Big Dipper President called the meeting to order at 5:02pm PT and welcomed all in attendance.

**Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance and Big Dipper Preamble:**

The Chaplain opened the white Bible followed by a prayer. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance followed by reading the Preamble.

**Roll Call:**

The Recording Secretary took attendance by reading the names listed below.

**Present:**

- President– Connie M. Shuck
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Penni Holmes
- Recording Secretary – Julie McGaha
- Treasurer – Jan Rusk, Pro-Tem
- Dept of MI BD President – Claudette Talbot
- PNPBD-1 – Pat Lomonaco
- PNBBDP-2/Chaplain – Doreen Berggren
- PNBBDP-3 – Beth Bohannon
- National President – Karen Stillwell
- Parliamentarian – Brenda Ternullo

**Absent and Excused:**

- Financial Secretary – Lorraine Camire, Pro-Tem
- Dept of OH BD President – Kim Stock Foster

**Approval to Record the Board Meeting:** Presented by the National Big Dipper President

The approval to record must be obtained at the start of each meeting.

The recording of the March meeting was unanimously approved. Having no objections, the meeting will be recorded.

**Approval of Minutes:** Presented by the National Big Dipper President

The minutes of the February 9, 2026 meeting were approved with corrections, after a motion was made and seconded.

Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> VP

## **Presidents Reports:**

- **Dept of Michigan:** Presented by the Michigan Big Dipper President

The Board approved “A Night at the Oscars” as the Fun Night theme, recognizing it as a fresh and inclusive option that provides variety for members.

- **National President:** Presented by the National President

The next Convention Chatter will be released soon and will contain several announcements. The National Newsletter will also be published and will include further updates.

- **National Big Dipper President:** Presented by the National Big Dipper President

The Board received an update on the ongoing work to bring the store inventory and order form up to date. The revised information will be forwarded to the webmaster to post on the website. Members will be able to place orders for items to be shipped directly to them or held for pickup at Convention. Additional information will be presented during the Treasurer’s Report. The President thanked all involved for their hard work and diligence.

## **Financial Reports:** Presented by the Treasurer Pro-Tem

The board reviewed the financial documents distributed in advance, and with no questions or clarifications, the reports were set aside for review.

## **Fun Night:** Presented by the National Big Dipper President

The Board received an update on Fun Night planning. Members have been working diligently behind the scenes. Several members from Ohio have volunteered to assist and are currently working on additional props. The Committee has also received multiple donated items, including folders, paddles, and stickers, which will help reduce event costs.

A volunteer located close to the Convention facility has agreed to receive all Fun Night shipments, ensuring Big Dipper materials remain organized and separate from other Convention items.

The Recording Secretary was assigned to contact local Ohio vendors for potential donations and at this time no responses have been received.

The Board reviewed the prior email vote regarding Fun Night admission fees. The Board had previously voted electronically to maintain the admission fee at \$35, consistent with the past several years.

No questions or clarifications were raised. The Board noted that the fee must be formally ratified. A motion was then requested to approve the Fun Night admission fee of \$35.

Motion: PNPD.1

## **Bonfire Fund:** Presented by the National Big Dipper President

The Board discussed the \$121 currently held by Bonfire proceeds. A proposal was presented to transfer these funds into the Fun Night account to help offset upcoming event expenses. The Board was informed that Fun Night costs will include the DJ, bartenders, and one night of hotel lodging for the DJ to secure the discounted rate offered. Total anticipated expenses are estimated at approximately \$800. Applying these funds would reduce the amount drawn from the Fun Night budget.

No questions or concerns were raised, and a motion was made to approve transferring the \$121 Bonfire balance into the Fun Night fund.

Motion: PNBD.2/Chaplain

**Website Store Update:** Presented by the Treasurer, Pro-Tem

An update was provided on the remaining work to finalize the store inventory. A new storage tub was donated to replace the one damaged during transit. Efforts are underway to upload the updated inventory into QuickBooks; although the system indicated a successful upload, the file could not be located. Guidance has been requested from the National Treasurer on the correct process for uploading and managing the NEB store inventory, and a response is pending following the mid-year meeting. New photos have been taken of items not currently reflected in the online inventory. The remaining steps are expected to be completed by next month, allowing sufficient time for pre-Convention orders and shipping.

**Store Order Form:** Presented by PNBBDP-2/Chaplain

The Board received an update on the revised store order form. As noted earlier, Peter has completed a full revamp of both the order form and the promotional flyer, which will appear in the upcoming newsletter scheduled for release this month. These updated materials will also be posted on the website under the For Sales section, where Big Dipper items are listed alongside items from chapters and other groups.

**Midyear Review of Documents:** Presented by the National President

The National President reported that the National Executive Board (NEB) has been reviewing Standing Rules for chapters and auxiliaries, including Big Dipper. A template for Standing Rules was created approximately three years ago and is used as the standard for all submissions. The NEB noted that several items included in Big Dipper's draft were procedural rather than true standing rules and therefore should not be included if already covered in the governing documents.

Recommendations for revisions have been provided to the Big Dipper's President and Parliamentarian. The Board was advised to review and vote on the recommended Standing Rules. Once approved by the Board, the document must be presented to the membership for final approval.

Standing Rules must be submitted annually. Auxiliaries may resubmit the same approved version or submit proposed changes, which will then be reviewed by the National President and the NEB.

The Board also received an update on the revised nomination form to provide clearer, more detailed information for each position. A Big Dipper-specific version has also been created and has been forwarded to the Big Dipper President for distribution.

The Board was also informed that the NEB is currently developing a new Leadership Handbook that is expected to be released within the next few months.

The National Financial Chair has developed a questionnaire for financial officers who were unable to attend either of the two required financial training sessions. Both sessions, along with the QuickBooks training, are available on the National website. An email will be sent to all members outlining the requirement that financial officers at all levels—including chapters, auxiliaries, and Big Dipper—who did not attend a live training must watch both recorded sessions and complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire is intended to assess understanding and ensure consistency with the 2024 governing document updates, which require financial officers to complete annual training. Completion of the training and questionnaire will be reflected on next year's compliance forms, which are currently being updated to streamline the process. Future financial trainings are planned for October–November to align with post-election officer transitions. The National President noted that the organization is experiencing significant growth, with 14 areas exploring new charters, making consistent training essential for continued success.

**Quilt Fundraiser:** Presented by the National Big Dipper President

The proposed plan is to use the completed squares to create a small pillow that can be auctioned at Convention. The Board noted that enthusiasm for producing a full sisterhood quilt has declined, and participation has largely tapered off. While a donated quilt may still be possible, the Board expects this year's offering to be a smaller item, such as a pillow.

**Membership Update:** Presented by the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

The Board received an update on the current membership with efforts to track down the remaining forms so all 163 members can be added to the official spreadsheet. The 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President was advised of additional membership forms being submitted.

**Adjournment:**

The President informed the Board that a Fun Night Planning meeting will be scheduled within the next two weeks, and all are invited to participate.

At 5:42pm PT, the President requested the Chaplain close the Bible and end the meeting in prayer.

The next meeting will be on Monday, April 13, 2026, via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie McGaha  
Recording Secretary