



## **2026 MID YEAR MEETING MINUTES- DAY 1**

### **BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.**

**February 27, 2026**

**Call to order:** The National Executive Board meeting was called to order by National President Karen Stillwell at 9:01 A.M. CST.

PNP Anne shared a video called "Above and Below the Line as a leadership tool."

#### **Opening:**

Chaplain Becky opened it with prayer. PNP Anne led the Pledge of Allegiance. PNP Carla led with the preamble. Recording Secretary Leslie conducted roll call.

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

- National President-Karen Stillwell
- 1VP- Sonya Stowers
- 2VP- Beth Bruening
- 3VP- Amy Jo Hutchinson
- 4VP- Karla Keller
- Recording Secretary-Leslie Majocka
- Financial Secretary-Carrie Beck
- Treasurer-Jacqueline Ransom
- PNP/Chaplain - Rebecca Stafford
- PNP/VAVS REP-Anne Parker
- PNP Carla Brodacki
- Dept. MI President-Linda Powers
- Dept. Ohio President-Barb Cook
- Dept. MN President-Sharon Skaro
- Parliamentarian-Patti Elliott

**Minutes Approval:** Minutes from January 20, 2026, were approved with corrections.

**MOTION to approve.**

**Seconded**

**Call for the Vote.**

**No Opposed/no abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**Finance Committee Report coming from the NFS and NT:**

**MOTION coming from the committee to approve the January 2026 financial statements to be set aside for audit.**

**CALL for a vote.**

**No opposition, no abstentions.**

**MOTION PASSED**

- CPA is still in the auditing process. When complete, all current year statements will be submitted to NEB
- FC asking what consequences will be for chapters that did not attend or view financial training videos
- Convention planning- nothing new to add
- Compliance update: 135 chapters/depts/auxiliaries completed the financial portion of compliance, 31 chapters in progress, the rest have not been received.
- ACH still not working through member clicks
- FC requesting input for policy and budget changes.
- FC discussed need to improve vetting of financial officers

**Financial Officer Training for chapters/departments/auxiliaries**

- NP posted video links to the financial training and encouraged financial officers to review, and complete questionnaire.
- Suggested to have a Q&A and have members submit questions ahead of time. NF will also set up another QuickBooks training.

**MOTION coming from committee to ratify the vote to approve \$250 grant for MN 7**

**CALL** for a vote.

**No opposition, no abstentions.**

**MOTION PASSED**

**MOTION coming from the committee to approve \$250 grant to FL3**

**CALL** for a vote.

**No opposition, no abstentions.**

**MOTION PASSED**

**Logos and Branding:**

- Discussion on how to move forward with logo approval. Minimal fees are being collected from chapters for logo use.

**MOTION to approve forming a Branding Committee**

**Seconded**

**Call** for the Vote.

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

- NP requested NEB to send ideas to her to pass on to committee
- All chapters will be advised not to purchase items with alternative logos while logos are being reviewed.

**Leadership Handbook:**

- Last revision was 2018. PNP Becky requesting NEB reviews and makes recommendations to her by March 15.
- Recommendations should be made as a chapter member vs NEB member. Should be “task’ related.
- Chapter positions should mirror NEB
- Discussion was had regarding topics that need to be added to leadership handbook.

Lunch Break 1:04 p.m. – 2:13 p.m.

**Convention:**

- Tentative 6 p.m., NEB only, meeting on Sunday, July 26, 2026

- Rooms are booked – if coming earlier than Saturday, you will need to book room on your own.
- Tentative agenda discussed; Presidents Reception, BDA fun night, breakout sessions.
- VAVS project; donation of gift cards from states beginning with the letter “M” and the rest to donate sweatpants. Central Ohio Stand Down may be an option as well to accept donations. Upcoming meeting scheduled with local VA, final decision TBD.
- Guest speakers are still being worked out. VAVS, ShipThrifty
- Presidents Project is “3rd & Goal Foundation” founded by Brady Quinn, former Notre Dame quarterback.
- Grant for 250 members to attend museum, lunch provided by a donation from Chapter OH57, bus fees are not yet covered.
- “Give Butter” platform sent out for convention donations, please share the link with family members.
- Request for financial questions ahead of the financial training. Will have a form in folder ahead of time.
- Reminder to send out to members, required to stay for transition on Saturday at end of convention, if elected for officer position.
- Review transition documents and make sure they are updated and simplified. Submit to RecSec and NP by July 1, 2026.

**Breakout sessions:** (30-45 people)

- **Fundraising & PR-** Kari Frye, Amy Zienta & possibly PNP Anne
- **Recruitment & Retention-** N1VP & a CP
- **Team Building “Sisters Social”-** Deb Waltz, Pam MacMurdo & Barb Cook, Sue Sanders to help cut out cards
- **Website** – Jeanne Ulmer, Brenda Ternullo
- **OPSEC & Security** – NP will reach out to local military connection.  
(NP to have webmaster put something on website regarding phishing emails)
- **Leadership Training “Lead the Mission-Light the Way!”** – NP, PNP,& a CP  
Show leadership video; discussion was had about securing a prize for completion of training.

Members participating in the training sessions should have their material to NP by June 1. Each breakout session will get together and do a Zoom “run through”.

Seeing nothing else for the Good of the Order our NP asked our Chaplain to close us for the day in prayer at 5:54 P.M. CST.

Respectfully submitted,  
Leslie Majocka, National Recording Secretary

APPROVED



## **2026 MID YEAR MEETING MINUTES- DAY 2**

### **BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.**

**February 28, 2026**

**Call to order:** The National Executive Board meeting was called to order by National President Karen Stillwell at 9:21 A.M. CST.

#### **Opening:**

Chaplain Becky opened it with prayer.

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

- National President-Karen Stillwell
- 1VP- Sonya Stowers
- 2VP- Beth Bruening
- 3VP- Amy Jo Hutchinson
- 4VP- Karla Keller
- Recording Secretary-Leslie Majocka
- Financial Secretary-Carrie Beck
- Treasurer-Jacqueline Ransom
- PNP/Chaplain – Rebecca Stafford
- PNP/VAVS REP-Anne Parker
- PNP Carla Brodacki
- Dept. MI President-Linda Powers
- Dept. Ohio President-Barb Cook
- Dept. MN President-Sharon Skaro
- Parliamentarian-Patti Elliott

#### **Finance Policies:**

- FC will be going over budget and policy.

- Discussed budgeting an “insurance policy” for a paid bookkeeper in the event of an emergency situation arises. Suggested a \$3,000.00 buffer that if needed would protect the organization. Discussed adding to GD next year that in an “emergency” we can pro-tem someone that has previously timed out in that position.
- Compliance reviewers should meet prior to beginning the process to fully understand. NEB in agreement.
- NFS is currently working on ACH issues and streamlining the process for future change of financial officers

**MOTION to stop using current ACH processor and allow NFS to continue to use QuickBooks process and allow PNP to assist in transition if necessary.**

**CALL** for a vote.

**No opposition, no abstentions.**

**MOTION PASSED**

- Reminders will be sent to pertinent chapter officers to ensure the PO Box has both the chapter name as well as the official BSMA name to avoid returned checks
- Agreed to print/stamp on our checks to cash within 180 days
- Reissuing checks if chapters are unable to cash or have not received. NEB agreed that updated addresses need to be within 10 days of address change. NEB recommended leaving the decision on reissuing checks to the FC and bringing it as an amendment to the financial policies at convention.
- Discussion was had regarding acquiring gift cards or prizes as an incentive for members that complete the training.
- NEB recommendation to ask FC to consider raising chapter grant amount to \$500. Also educate CPs to encourage them to apply every 2 years.

### **Compliance**

- Discussed simplifying the process for compliance. Have tabs on the website, for uploading different documents.

- “Chapter election required documents” tab: bank signer forms, officer rosters and affiliation agreement should be sent in immediately. 1VP “bank signer form” should reiterate “This account is open and fully functional, and only the Financial Secretary and Treasurer should have a bank card”. Sent to 1VP
- Add a form that verifies that financial officers have completed the training, to be signed by the CP. Sent to 4VP.
- Separate tab with all bank account statements; (1)statement of activity, (2)profit and loss,(3) balance sheet, (4)checking/savings(optional) account statement , (5)PayPal statement (optional)
- Annual report to be rewritten by select members, and will bring to NEB
- Revisions to VAVS form- VA can only track hours, need to be able to capture monetary donations, in-kind donations, etc. Change wording to “Impact” vs annual report.

### **Nomination Forms**

- Change to “for which she is being nominated”
- Combine the 2 sections -150-word limit
- Delete description of duties of the Financial Officer, add “additional description of duties related to financial oversight or management not previously stated (limited to 50 word)”
- Add working knowledge of YEARS of work knowledge in Word, Excel, Power Point, Google Drive, publishing software
- Financial officers shall have 4 min to present.
- See revised version.

### **Additional Zoom Board Trainings**

- Presentation and Q&A for President, 1VP, Rec Sec, Fin Officers, Compliance
- Step by step guide/resource for Blue to Gold (3VP/NT)
- Separate training on (1) QuickBooks (break out session for those not using QB) (2) Balance sheets and P& L; (3) budgets -NFS/NT follow up

### **Breakout session**

- Everyone was asked to write down a goal they had for the organization and discussion was had with everyone’s ideas.

Seeing nothing else for the Good of the Order our NP asked our Chaplain to close us in prayer for the day at 5:50 P.M. CST

NEB Minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Majocka, National Recording Secretary

APPROVED



## 2026 MID YEAR MEETING MINUTES- DAY 3

### BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

March 1, 2026

**Call to order:** The National Executive Board meeting was called to order by National President Karen Stillwell at 10:00 A.M. CST.

**Opening:**

Chaplain Becky opened it with prayer.

**The following were present:**

- National President-Karen Stillwell
- 1VP- Sonya Stowers
- 2VP- Beth Bruening
- 3VP- Amy Jo Hutchinson
- 4VP- Karla Keller
- Recording Secretary-Leslie Majocka
- Financial Secretary-Carrie Beck
- Treasurer-Jacqueline Ransom
- PNP/Chaplain – Rebecca Stafford
- PNP/VAVS REP-Anne Parker
- PNP Carla Brodacki
- Dept. MI President-Linda Powers
- Dept. Ohio President-Barb Cook
- Dept. MN President-Sharon Skaro
- Parliamentarian-Patti Elliott

Discussion regarding volunteer hours, to include travel time, meetings, responding to emails and phone calls. Can go toward America 250 and can go toward annual reports. NEB members hours go toward their chapter reports.

## **Big Dipper Documents**

- Governing Documents Chair made several recommendations regarding proposed BDA standing rules. Must change to say that standing rules are not valid until reviewed by the NEB; NEB will make edits at midyear and then they go to the membership for vote.
- After lengthy discussion regarding BDA standing rules, the NEB agreed that multiple BDA proposed rules fall under the BSMA bylaws.

**MOTION made to not accept the BDA Leadership Handbook pending the publication of the BSMA National Leadership Handbook  
Seconded**

Call for the Vote.

**No Opposed/no abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**MOTION made to approve the proposed changes to the standing rules to be sent back to the BDA leadership.**

**Seconded**

Call for the Vote.

**No Opposed/no abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

- See attached BDA standing rules
- All references to BD must include “Auxiliary”; notify webmaster to make changes to quick reference guide.

## **Mentor Program**

- Per Mentor Committee- chapters will now be contacted at 2 months and 6 months to assess that they are working the mission.
- Discussion was had for finding qualified mentors. Must be member for 3 years and have working knowledge of BSMA.
- Ideas to be sent to Mentor Chair/Committee
  1. Ask CP for referrals
  2. Mentors need to know they must represent BSMA well, to include social media posts.
  3. Friendly, positive, good listener, patient, able to give advice without being forceful.

4. Have good knowledge of and being able to reference governing documents.
5. Advertise in the newsletter for new mentors.
6. Emulate the spirit of the mission.
7. Ensure all chapter members know about their mentor; encourage mentors to make quick appearance on zoom meetings and/or join chapter social media platforms.
8. Leadership Handbook will be a tool for them to reference
9. Build relationship between chapters and NEB. Be approachable and clear.

#### BDA Nomination Form

- Discussion was had regarding the nomination process for BDA

**MOTION was made to instruct BDA that we will provide them with a modified nomination form, that mirrors nationals, of where to send applications and the verification of BDA membership.**

**Seconded**

**Call for the Vote.**

**No Opposed/no abstentions – MOTION PASSED**

**NP took NEB into CES at 2:31 P.M. CST.**

**NP took NEB out of CES at 6:36 P.M. CST.**

Seeing nothing else for the Good of the Order our NP asked our Chaplain to close us in prayer at 5:50 P.M. CST

NEB Minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Majocka, National Recording Secretary



Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.  
National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Report  
February 2026

- Attended all NEB Meetings/Calls and Mid Year
- Processed memberships, renewals, and transfers in reporting month
  - a. New Members Processed –100 new members
  - b. New Associates Processed – 5 new associates
  - c. Renewals Processed – about 5, about 1970 since August 1
  - d. Transfers – all requested transfers checked and processed
- Worked with webmaster to get lapsed members access to renew, to figure out some issues that came up with memberships
- 8 Chapter Rosters created and sent
- Monitored Officer Rosters and Affiliation Agreements – processing and notifying chapters of approval or rejection, answering related questions – 8 processed in February, almost 230 so far this FY (includes resubmissions). 6 have not submitted yet.
- Assisted the National President when needed
- Followed processes when new members indicate they are Gold Star Mothers, so far this FY 22 new members have indicated they are Gold Star Mothers on their online applications, so far 18 CP or MC have responded that they are NOT Gold Star, 1CP has confirmed that a new member IS a Gold Star, awaiting response for 3 others. Spreadsheet allows for tracking and follow up.
- Working with Webmaster on updating applications – online and paper – and on making sure our profiles collect the information we request.
- Answered calls, texts, and emails from members
- Communicated via calls, texts, and emails with members and those with Chapter questions.
- Communicated with potential members
- Provided support and information to all Chapters sending basic questions to the N1VP and forwarding to other officers if that was appropriate
- Worked with Webmaster, FinSec, and Treasurer to process dues renewal questions, new members, and transfers
- Assisted with some Chapter questions about elections, pro tem positions, and closings
- Assisted Chapters in navigating the website, their profiles, dues, renewals, and new memberships
- Responded to members not wanting to renew. Positive response to contact with a few members choosing to renew or asking for temporary change to Associate status.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sonya Stowers  
National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President 2025-2026  
[1vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:1vp@bluestarmothers.us)  
309-370-0712



## NATIONAL 2nd VP FEBRUARY REPORT

- ★ Attended Mid-Year
- ★ Attended NEB closed session meeting
- ★ Received and responded to chapter reports for the news letter
- ★ Prepare National newsletter for NEB President for approval
- ★ Assisted a few chapters with newsletter submission
- ★ Worked on February Newsletter
- ★ Replied to or forwarded emails from Members
- ★ Formed a team Yearbook
- ★ Prepared email to send out about Yearbook ads for NEB president approval.

Respectfully submitted by  
Beth Bruening  
2nd VP

Respectfully submitted by

National 2 nd VP Report for November  
Beth Bruening



## National 3VP Report

February 2026

- Researched/ Reported Active-Duty Military deaths
- Researched/ Reported Repatriated Military deaths
- Assisted chapters with Blue to Gold protocol questions
- Answered phone calls, emails and text messages
- Attended DC Preparation Zoom Meeting
- Attended Mid-Year NEB Meeting



National 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President  
February 2026 Report

- Attended NEB Meeting
- Researched and replied to 34 emails from potential new members regarding chapters near them.
- Spoke with four people interested in starting a chapter: KY, NY, IL and WY
- Received 1 charter applications, NY
- 133 D/C/A have completed compliance as of 2-28-2026
- 29 D/C/A are just missing one or two items for compliance, mostly chapters needing to submit updated financials
- 1 has not started, and is probably closing
- TX22 was chartered and TX15 has closed
- MI203, FL16 and TX21 are working to complete everything for their new chapters
- ID3 voted to close, working on closing procedures
- CA9 is closing, voting in March, emailed closing procedures
- Answered multiple emails asking general questions about Blue Star Mothers
- Participated in two chapter calls with another NEB member regarding chapter issues
- Answered emails/calls/texts from D/C/A's
- Attended Mid-Year Meeting Feb 25-March 4

Respectfully Submitted by  
Karla Keller  
National 4<sup>th</sup> VP

# **NATIONAL TREASURER REPORT**

**February 2026**

Paid bills and reimbursements as approved

Posted expenses in QuickBooks

Continued working on Transition document

Continued working on Chapter EIN and opened/closed Chapters list

Shipped 16 Online Store orders

Worked with chapters on uncashed checks

Updated chapter addresses as needed in QuickBooks using EIN reports

Worked on suggestions to clarify items in Financial Policy

Attended Finance Committee and NEB meetings and MidYear

Answered telephone calls, texts, and emails

Yours in Service

Jacqueline Ransom



## **Financial Secretary Report: By Carrie Beck**

**February 2026**

Attended all requested Finance Committee meetings

Attended Mid-Year Meeting

Answered emails and phone calls

Received and recorded mail

Recorded all deposits/Reconciled Accounts

Produced Financial Reports

Processed financial aspects of renewals, transfers, refunds

Currently working on finalizing the ACH portal bank transfer

Worked on spreadshirt Team Shirt, Poppy Shirt and uploaded all to purchase

Met with a several chapters to assisting their compliance records.

Answered and made necessary changes from CPA requests

Participated in a chapter call with another 4VP regarding chapter issues.



Department of Michigan Presidents Report  
February, 2026

- NEB meeting
- DEB meeting
- Working on Michigan 2026 Convention
- Held a virtual 2026 MI Convention meeting with the team.
- Answered phone calls, emails, and text messages regarding Department business
- Worked on the Department newsletter
- Sent President's letter for February.
- Attended Mid-Year.
- Responded to Mid-Year e-mails
- Work on Financials with the financial team.
- Attended MI-186 chapter meeting.
- Attended Sisters-In-Action meeting.

Linda Powers  
President Department of Michigan



Department of Ohio President  
Barb Cook  
February 2026

Help my chapter with Valentines for Vets.  
Worked with North/South  
Attained mid-year  
Made cards for nationals.  
Worked with chapters on finishing the compliance.

2026 Feb Report MN Dept.

Attended NEB mid-year meeting  
Minn DEB meeting  
Responded to calls and emails as needed  
Work on speakers for Mn Spring Meeting

Respectfully,

Sharon Skaro  
President  
Department of Minnesota  
Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.