

Tampa Reunion Meeting Minutes

1. BOD Meeting, Wednesday 19 April, 2017
2. Membership Meeting, Saturday 22 April, 2017
3. BOD Meeting Saturday 22 April, 2017

1. 55TH WING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES - WEDNSDAY, 19 APRIL 2017 TAMPA AIRPORT HILTON WESTSHORE

The meeting convened and was called to order by President Jim Thomas at 1610. No quorum of elected members was at this 'strategy' meeting, and although no official business could be conducted, there were extensive discussions on important topics to be raised at both the Saturday Membership and Board of Directors meetings. Specific actions were to take place then.

Those present were: Thomas, VP Ricky McMahon, Jim Maloney, George Ross, Errol Hoberman, Val Dugie, Max Moore, active duty representative LtCol David Preisman (*who flew in specifically to attend this meeting*), Joe Spivey, and Tampa reunion chair Richard Ray.

There were no minutes from the San Antonio 21 October 2015 reunion BoD meeting as no quorum was present then.

Pres Thomas made opening remarks concerning the agenda for the 'strategy' meeting and major issues. Foremost was the situation of not being able to convene Board meetings with the necessary number of elected members to seat a quorum. In this case, a majority of ten of 18 were needed.

Thomas reiterated that this is an issue worthy of future discussion: The long standing problem of obtaining a quorum for Board meetings at reunions, and ways to solve the situation. Various options were discussed none of which received enthusiastic support. It is a complex issue deserving of more attention, and perhaps a committee study.

Moore mentioned the next newsletter was aimed at publishing in July, and there is an intent to produce an updated Association membership directory. The last one was July 2015. This package will be mailed first class postage. Moore mentioned the advantage of that as the package would either be forwarded or returned to the Association. The usual third class mailings do not afford either.

Hoberman suggested that the Association should request 'ancillary service endorsements' and to provide the USPS with instructions on how to handle 'undeliverable-as-addressed items'. He noted that another organization he works with does this successfully. (*Details on how to do this were subsequently sent to the newsletter editor and treasurer in an e-mail 30 April 2017.*)

Thomas once again explained the specifics of meeting the IRS requirements for 501K tax exempt status for the Association: 95% of the membership must be documented veterans. Thus the revised membership form revised in January 2016.

The president mentioned his intention to recommend Treasurer/Membership Chair Michael Cook, and webmaster Jim Maloney for Life Membership in the Association to recognize their sustained superior service to the organization.

The president recognized Ross for a motion. He moved same. There was a consensus for approval, but the actual motion would be deferred until the Saturday meeting when a quorum would be present.

Pres Thomas then recognized Reunion Chair Ray for his stellar work in planning and executing the Tampa reunion. Thomas said Ray 'hit the ground running' just three weeks after the October 2015 reunion and never let up.

Ray noted that significant donations from corporations and businesses paid for the Thursday reception, buses, and other items, all of which led to keeping the registration

fee reasonable. Those sponsors will be given attribution on the banquet program, at the banquet, in the newsletter and via thank you notes.

A discussion ensued on how, what, where and when to plan the next reunion; all the while understanding the recent trend of reduced attendance spanning the last five reunions. Also considered was using the Reunion BRATS planning organization if/when Association on-site planners are not available.

A consensus was to tentative plan for the next reunion to be in Omaha/Offutt one more time in the spring of 2019, a two year break. If possible, and the 55th Wing gets the Birthday Ball back on a March/April schedule, the reunion can end with the Ball as was done in 2014, which proved to be a 'yuge' draw.

Pres Thomas then discussed the recommended changes to the By Laws. He had previously asked George Ross to review the By Laws, and this topic's details and rationale were discussed at length. Most are administrative changes in wording, such as: timing of reunions every 18-24 months is to be determined by the BoD; and the number of elected BoD members was reduced from a maximum of 19 to 17.

A significant recommended change was to include for eligibility as the active duty representatives to the BoD, of members of the Air National Guard, who virtually serve as active duty with the 55th Wing. This action was to be finalized at the Saturday BoD meeting.

The slate of nominees for election to the Board of Directors at the Saturday membership meeting was listed by Pres Thomas. They are current members McMahon, Maloney, Ross, Hoberman, Ernst, Thomas, Dugie, Krishna, Griffin, Kelly, Censullo, Seinwill, Cook, Jeanes, Moore, plus newcomers, Joe Spivey and Ham Kennedy. Incumbents Herd, Glenboski and Todd chose not to stand for election this time. President Thomas recognized and thanked them for their diligent service to the Association during their tenure.

Thomas then announced his intention to step down as Association president after 12 years (*the longest tenure of any Assn president*) and stated his rationale that it was time for

fresh leadership. He recommended as his successor, Joe Spivey. Thomas related Spivey's past record in the 55th and since, and noted his willingness to serve as president.

The formal nomination and election of executive officers will take place at the 22 April, Saturday Board meeting

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1830.

Respectfully submitted,
Max R Moore, Acting Secretary.

2. 55TH WING ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES SATURDAY 22 APRIL 2017 TAMPA AIRPORT HILTON WESTSHORE

The meeting convened and was called to order by President Jim Thomas at 0905. He stated that notice of this meeting was published in the January 2017 issue of *Videmus Omnia*, the Association newsletter, and that a quorum consisting of the attendees was present.

Max Moore moved to dispense with the reading of the last membership meeting minutes, which was held at the San Antonio reunion in October 2015. Seconded and carried. He noted that those minutes were published in the January 2016 newsletter and are posted on the Association web site.

The president then referred to the Treasurer's report and membership report, both of which were provided as handouts to the members attending. He stated the Association was in good shape with regard to budget and expenditures.

He also noted that while the Association membership numbers were holding steady at about 500, there was the constant diligence in having members renew their dues, and to recruit new or lapsed members. The report also emphasized that dues should be renewed in January after the year dues expired on 31 December, as shown on the newsletter address label and in the Members Only section of the web site. There is a grace period until 1 April each year before non-paying members are dropped from the members-in-good-standing data base.

Thomas once again explained the specifics of meeting the IRS requirements for 501K tax exempt status for the Association: 95% of the membership must be documented veterans. Thus the membership form revised in January 2016 for specific data.

Thomas stated that the relationship between the Association and the 55th Wing at Offutt was excellent. The commander and his staff 'are on board 100%'.

A new 55th commander will take over in a ceremony on 8 June. Sometime in August an Offutt area cadre of members will host the new leader at a dinner, details TBD.

Next was an explanation of how the Wing's Birthday Ball came to be delayed from the slated 1 April date into September, details also TBD. There was an unfortunate IRS tax compliance situation preventing the Ball committee from seeking donations and other financing for the event.

When the actual date and venue are resolved, Heritage Week will precede the gala, and the Hall of Fame ceremony and Tales of the 55th will fall into place. Info on those events will go out via the web site, social media, e-mails just as soon as details are known.

Nominations for the 55th Wing Association Award for Excellence are already in the selection process. The winner is announced at the Birthday Ball.

Thomas mentioned that what is now an established annual rite, the Association and the 95th IS at RAF Mildenhall, UK, participate in the laying of wreaths at Madingley, UK, to honor the 55th Fighter Group members who died in WWII. The 55th WA provides the wreath and the 95th participates in the Memorial Day ceremony. Those plans are being coordinated for this year's event.

He noted that among other ways the Association has established PR exposure is by sending the newsletter to 51 wing units and offices; and the replication of the Palm Memorial Trophy, which was presented to the Wing at last years' Tales.

Moore stated that a new/updated Association directory will be published and mailed with the next issue of the newsletter, targeted for July. He emphasized the necessity for members to keep their contact information updated with the membership chair, especially when relocating, by using the Membership Form. The info that changes most often are e-mail addresses by name or server. Any member who maintains two residences, please tell the Association which one is primary for correspondence.

Jim Maloney was recognized to provide info and updates on the Association web site. He said that NOTAMS provide timely news items, as are TAPS notices. The web site is the best means to get the latest news on reunions, the Birthday Ball, etc. He said that the web site has a Facebook connection for those so inclined. There is a Members Only section which is password protected, where the most recent newsletter is posted, as well as the dues expiration dates for each member.

The president noted that the strategy meeting last Wednesday did not have a Board quorum, but did accomplished meaningful discussions on all the topics addressed at this meeting.

He then recognized the former enlisted troops in attendance: Doug Eddins, Chuck Burmeister, Joe Shanley, David Aaron.

Pres Thomas told of the Omaha National Veterans Cemetery beginning internments last September. Several Association members serve on the advisory committee and/or as volunteers there.

Moore related that the reunion survey instituted in the July 2016 newsletter netted ten responses. As reported in the January 2017 issue, that could mean the Association is doing okay in the reunion planning, or members just did not care to respond.

Nonetheless, reunions were a matter of intense discussion on what to do about the decline in attendance at recent gatherings.

Tentative plans are for the next reunion to be in Omaha/Offutt one more time, in the spring of 2019, a two year break. If possible, and the 55th Wing gets the Birthday Ball back on a March/April schedule, the reunion can end with the Ball as was done in 2014, which proved to be a huge success.

Also considered was using the Reunion BRATS planning organization if/when Association on-site planners are not available. It was noted that Big Safari, B-47 and other related organizations have used that group with success. A major advantage is that BRATS is in the business and regularly negotiates better hotel rates. The Association would provide a coordination committee to state our needs and desires. The slate of nominees for election to the Board of Directors meeting was listed by Pres Thomas. They are current members McMahon, Maloney, Ross, Hoberman, Ernst, Thomas, Dugie, Krishna, Griffin, Kelly, Censullo, Seinwill, Cook, Jeanes, Moore, plus newcomers, Joe Spivey and Ham Kennedy. Incumbents Herd, Glenboski and Todd chose not to stand for election this time. President Thomas recognized and thanked them for their diligent service to the Association during their tenure.

Moore moved the slate be nominated. Seconded by many and passed. There being no further nominations, Terry Murphy then moved the slate be elected by acclamation. Seceded by many. It was.

Thomas then announced his intention to step down as Association president after 12 years (*the longest tenure of any Association president*) and stated his rationale that it was time for fresh leadership. He introduced Joe Spivey and recommended his election as the next president of the Association when the Board meets after the membership meeting. Thomas related Spivey's past record in the 55th and since, and noted his willingness to serve as president. Spivey then addressed the meeting briefly. (*Note here: When Spivey's election was announced at the Saturday night banquet, he spoke eloquently about the responsibilities he was ready to accept.*)

Larry Mitchell had the floor to recognize Reunion Chair Richard Ray for his outstanding planning and execution of the Tampa reunion. Pres Thomas chimed in and Ray was awarded a well deserved round of applause.

Thomas also mentioned that at the banquet, there was to be a presentation to all Vietnam veterans in attendance with a lapel pin in recognition of that service. He then made the first pin-on to David Aaron. Aaron then gave a few remarks marking the occasion.

Gary Smith suggested the Board consider having the Association donate to the Special Operations Command Memorial Foundation to show appreciation for SOCOM's briefings and courtesies displayed during the Friday MacDill tour by reunion attendees. Pres Thomas stated he would raise the suggestion at the Board meeting.

The newly elected Board was reminded to meet immediately after this meeting.

There being no further business for the membership, the meeting was adjourned at 1005.

Respectfully submitted, MAX R MOORE, Acting Secretary.

**3. 55TH WING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES -
SATURDAY, 22 APRIL 2017 TAMPA HILTON WESTSHORE**

The meeting convened and was called to order by President Jim Thomas at 1020. Present was a quorum of nine members elected at the membership meeting just prior to this one: Thomas, Ricky McMahan, Jim Maloney, George Ross, Errol Hoberman, Colonel Mo Krishna, Ham Kennedy, Joe Spivey, and Max Moore.

There were no minutes from the San Antonio October 2015 reunion BoD meeting as no quorum was present.

As mentioned at the Wednesday Board strategy meeting 19 April, and with his rationale, Pres Thomas recommended that Michael Cook and Jim Maloney be awarded life membership in the Association.

The president recognized Moore for a motion. Due to their consistent and enduring superior service to the 55th Wing Association, and IAW the By Laws, Moore moved that life memberships be awarded to Jim Thomas, Michael Cook and Jim Maloney. Seconded by several and carried unanimously.

Pres Thomas then discussed and announced the recommended changes to the By Laws. He had previously asked George Ross to review the By Laws, and this topic and rationale were discussed at length during the strategy meeting of 19 April. Most are administrative changes in wording, such as: timing of reunions every 18-24 months is to be determined by the BoD; and the number of elected BoD members was reduced from a maximum of 19 to 17.

A significant recommended change was to include for eligibility as the active duty representatives to the BoD, members of the Air National Guard who virtually serve as active duty with the 55th Wing.

The approved updated By Laws will be posted on the Association web site in the near future.

McMahan moved to approve the revisions to the By Laws as presented. Motion was seconded and carried.

Pres Thomas noted that near the conclusion of the membership meeting, Gary Smith had suggested that the Association donate to the Special Operations Command Memorial Foundation to show appreciation for SOCOM's briefings and courtesies displayed during the Friday tour of reunion attendees. The SOMF provides financial assistance for higher education to the children of all services special operations personnel who died in the line of duty. Hoberman moved that the Association donate \$250 to the Special Operations Command Memorial Foundation. Seconded and carried.

Thomas noted that the BoD has an open item from the strategy meeting worthy of future discussion: That is the long standing problem of obtaining a quorum for Board meetings at reunions, and ways to solve the situation. It is a complex issue deserving of more attention, and perhaps a committee study. (Open item TBD)

Pres Thomas recognized Moore who moved that the current holders of the offices of Vice Pres (McMahan), Treasurer (Cook) and Secretary (Trish Seinwill) be retained in those positions. Seconded and carried.

Moore then nominated and moved that Joe Spivey be elected president of the Assn. Seconded and carried. Thomas had announced his intention to step down after 12 years at the helm at the 19 April strategy meeting and recommended Spivey succeed him. Thomas had also reviewed Spivey's bona fides and willingness to accept the position at that meeting.

Newly elected President Spivey then made remarks to the Board expressing his appreciation for the Board's support and his intention to follow the leadership examples of his predecessors.

It was noted that members holding appointed positions would remain in those, (membership chair, web master, awards chair, newsletter editor, historian, enlisted liaison. (See *newsletter directory*.)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1049.

**Respectfully submitted,
Max R Moore, Acting Secretary.**
