

**Minutes of the
Air Force Public Affairs Alumni Association
Board of Directors Meeting
June 24, 2022**

Call to Order: Chairman Perry Nouis called the meeting to order at 2 p.m EST. The meeting was held via ZOOM teleconference.

Roll Call: The following members were present: Chairman Perry Nouis, President Brett Ashworth, Treasurer Phil Ratliff, Secretary John Dorian, Directors Julie Briggs, John Terino, Jim McGuire, Doug Kennett and Carla Sylvester. Chuck Merlo and John Gura joined as meeting was underway. A quorum was present.

The following board members were absent: Greg Smith and Jerry Renne.

Others attending: Christine Queen, Jim Hart, Jay DeFrank, Eric Schnaible (incoming Secretary), Art Forster, Judy Bivens and Hank Hufnagel.

Minutes from the last meeting: Chairman Nouis made a motion to accept the minutes from the last meeting, as presented. Carla recommended clarification of service alumni association leaders-RADM Ret Jurkowski cited as rep for both Army and Navy PA alumni groups and Perry suggested minor typo edits which John Dorrian would make. Jim McGuire made motion to approve, John Torino seconded and motion passed.

Financial Report: Treasurer Phil Ratliff reported that as the endowment fund had lost some momentum with the fluid stock market. The bank balance is \$4,999,973.50 and hoped the worst of the market decline has passed. He reported our expenses have been low, except accountants received a letter in April from the IRS informing that as a non-profit organization, we must file our annual tax returns electronically vs. via mail and our filing was being returned.

Our accountants then immediately filed them electronically. The IRS subsequently sent a \$1,840.00 penalty bill and Phil advised our accountants, who requested the IRS waive the fee since e-filing for I-90s was not available. Payment to our accountants is now being held until issue is resolved to our satisfaction. Jim Hart advised of his recent experience with the IRS website and Covid challenges that may delay issue final resolution.

Phil suggested we 'stay the course' with our investment strategy in the endowment fund and recommended the finance committee report be adopted by the board. Jim McGuire seconded. Motion passed.

Eric was welcomed to the board by Perry as incoming Secretary

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Membership Committee:** Christine Queen reported that membership is on a downward trend, to 497. 100 members are up for renewal and effort will be made in end of Sept mailing. Three members to be dropped if not renewed. Suggestion made to contact them with soft appeal to rejoin. Membership directory printing costs \$2,000 commercially; \$1,000 by BAE, not including

mailing costs and Christine's personal time in stuffing 500 issues. Directory will be shorter with by-laws removed to reduce costs. Jim asked what Col Todd Vician is doing in his San Antonio region retirement to help get involved with AFPAA. Motion made by Phil, seconded by Doug. Motion passed.

- B. Annual Meeting Update:** Perry briefed he has been in contact with PA coordinators for a TBD Oct-Nov 2023 McDill AFB/Tampa Fla location for the annual meeting week, but we are not able to secure firm commitments more than a year out. Jay Steuck may be a possible contact lead at HQ USSOCOM Strategic Communications to perhaps facilitate. Somewhat surprisingly, DINFOS Commandant Col John Hutcheson declined our visit request to Ft Meade, Md., as our group may be too large, but with his retirement (today), we may want to readdress with the new US Army commandant. Julie will inquire as he settles in.
- C. Communications/Newsletter:** John Terino stated the newsletter would be in the mail to be received by 1 July. The 8-page newsletter included board election results and McDill story and Best of the Best winner and Hall of Fame. John is transferring leadership of the newsletter after 20 years, to Dick Cole for next (Oct) issue but he would flight follow production. Address labels and stamp costs have been saved by John's personal efforts and recommended keeping same printer and way ahead for labels and mailing.
- D. Website/Oral History:** Jim McGuire reported continued building out the new Hall of Fame page content, working with PRSA and incorporating a new system for forms, such as seen during election voting. Helpful tool to automate voting for Kathy McCollum, Election Committee. Larger pictures used to attract viewers and contact page in development to reach AFPAA contacts. John Gura was unable to join online. Judy advised our Facebook site has 500 AFPAAA members, with 1,000 total members since open to Air Force Public Affairs professionals and posts continue.
- E. AFPAA Name Change Initiative:** Jay DeFrank provided a comprehensive background, history and rationale for the initiative to change our name, dropping "Alumni" from AFPAAA's official name to be more inclusive of active membership participation, maintaining valued relationships and providing mentoring and professional development opportunities. Current name was chosen in 1994 to provide former PA professionals a fraternal organization to stay in touch with the USAF PA community with active duty members welcome to join. Art Forster advised AFPAAA's scope has evolved with more programs to support the SAF/PA mission, creating in-roads to reach active force and sees greater, positive interest forthcoming. Jay shared feedback of continued desire for continued PA engagement, but may not be enough to entice membership and active involvement. Decision paper summary findings of recent survey provided, including 93% supporting AFPAAA mission, 89% would like to see more active duty participation; 71% support a name change. Army and Navy PA associations achieved their membership objectives by incorporating their active duty members. May have significant work ahead to attract active duty members with value-added opportunities and we'll need to enhance the value proposition (positive experience received) for the existing membership. Recent SAF/PA senior leaders have demonstrated their full commitment

to our success and cooperation to promote. Timing is optimal now for support and AFPAA's character and structure should not radically change, but we will need to work a strong plan and have reasonable outcome expectations. Their committee unanimously recommends deleting Alumni from AFPAAA name for the Board vote, prior to full membership vote, conducted electronically prior to next annual meeting (Fall 2023) for widest consideration and to avoid skewing outcome. Jim Hart suggested we fulfill all agreed-to commitments if/when the board concurs with change. Recommendation made to send out background information on change rationale for widest membership review prior to vote, as well as website and newsletter posts. Perry motioned the board accept the committee recommendation to send to members and Doug Kennett seconded. Discussion followed for greater clarification on motion that we cannot change name w/o membership vote as impacts changing our articles of incorporation and maintain non-profit status in compliance with law. Zoom feedback interruption followed by John Dorrian motion that board accept the Name Change Committee recommendation, Doug seconded. Discussion continued noting 2/3 majority of votes cast would be required and would incur printing and mailing costs. Jay noted being in favor of full flow of information to membership for their informed consideration. Motion carried by board to Dorrian/Kennett motion. Jay's committee will prepare informative materials to be sent out with the annual membership directory mailing to all members, if Christine Queen can work the accommodation. John requested name change information be shared first with AFPAAA members to later be followed by a full membership vote. Jay asked if committee membership timelines should be changed to accommodate those who'd like to join or leave the committee. John Gura asked the board agree to send their approved

Old Business:

Update on Hall of Fame: Committee Chair Art Forster reported no major updates; board has info to release on the five new inductees in the Hall of Fame. Perry read a heartfelt letter of appreciation from HOF inductee Col Virginia Prybla.

Update on Dalton Scholarship: Chuck Merlo reported he has forwarded the six (four enlisted, two officer) Dalton Scholarship applicants for board review and praised their credentials. He further discussed criteria for those separating or retiring in the not-too-distant future, recognizing their performance. He asked for a 6th scholarship (from five in the past), based on their merit and achievement and secured the Dalton family's support in honoring their dad. Perry sought motion to approve this sixth \$1,000 scholarship for 2022 alone. Carla motioned and John Gura seconded. Motion unanimously carried. Art suggested SAF/PA send out notice of award to demonstrate AFPAAA's support of the active duty PA force. Phil suggested we include an AFPAAA membership application with scholarship award checks.

Continuity of Operations: Perry suggested board members capture how they accomplish their roles to help facilitate position turnover roles, responsibilities and best practices.

Closing Comments: Perry invited new Secretary Eric Schnaible to make any comments on joining the board (who had to drop off for a work-call) and Brett Ashworth, new board chairman, who briefly said he looks forward to membership. John Gura thanked the board for his two + decades of service on the AFPAAA board and was congratulated by all for his faithful service and mentorship. Perry acknowledged this was a lengthy meeting and he would send out a memo

soliciting dates for next meeting, then moved to adjourn the meeting. John seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor of adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Schnaible, AFPAAA Secretary