

**Minutes of the Meeting of the April 27, 2017, NCMAC Quality of Life Committee Meeting
Smith Anderson, 150 Fayetteville Street, 23rd Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kirk Warner, Acting Committee Chair
Tony Stimatz, (by phone), Voting Member
Bill Hatcher, Voting Member
George Breece, Voting Member
ET Mitchell, Voting Member
Ron Massey (by phone), Jacksonville
Kimrey Rhinehardt (by phone), A/R for UNC System
Anne Shaw (by phone), A/R for NC Community Colleges
Jim Prosser, Asst. Sec. for VA, DMVA
Sebastian Montagne, A/R for NCDOT
Jason Cain, Asst. Sec. for MA, DMVA
Willie Casey, Installation Coordinator, DMVA
Kelly Jackson, Service Member and Family Coordinator
Kelly Barretto, DMVA, MA Administrative Coordinator
Dr. Michael Dunsmore, Supt. Wayne Co. Public Schools
Doug Taggart, A/R for DPI, Troops to Teachers

Call to Order: At 10:07am Acting Committee Chairman Warner opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

In his introductory remarks, Chairman noted some agenda items, advised that acting MAC Chair Pat Walker asked him to take over for Mr. Sanborn who stepped down from his role as Quality of Life Committee Chairman. He has only been on the Committee for 3 or 4 meetings. Our goal is to provide as much feedback to the Commission and ESG issues that they need to weigh in on and address. Chairman Warner has been attentive to issues affecting the military that need to be addressed, and relies on the Committee to be a “reconnaissance team” for the State in identifying and getting to the right people and do something about it.

Mr. Breece is in DC and would like a correction to the last meeting’s minutes to say he attended in person, not on the phone. Please let the minutes so reflect.

Chairman Warner struck it from the record.

Mr. Breece updated that the former Chair and Secretary stated he would be moved to Legislative Affairs Committee, although his name was not updated in time for the Leg Affairs Committee meeting. He will continue with Quality of Life – it’s in his DNA.

Ms. Mitchell added that she was also moved to Legislative Affairs – members should take responsibility to be in the right place at the right time.

Mr. Breece shared the dynamics with the Secretary of the Committee make-up; it will be addressed. Most will serve on one or two committees, for now, per Chairman Warner.

Chairman Warner took the roll of attendees. Kelly Jackson of DMVA will be tied to this Committee, and Willie Casey of DMVA to the Base Sustainability & Community Affairs Committee.

Minutes Approval:

Mr. Breece reiterated that he was there in person. Minutes are so amended. With no additional questions or comments, a motion to approve was entertained. So moved by Mr. Breece and seconded by Ms. Mitchell. The minutes stand approved as corrected with all in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Children's Crisis Stabilization Unit:

This was discussed at a Commission meeting. The location not being a rural county was a stumbling block and it was pending someone figuring a way around that. Mr. Cain understood that the grant was intended for rural areas specifically, and Fayetteville was not authorized to apply for that money. Mr. Cain will follow up on this. We should be keeping an eye on other potential funding sources for this, per Chairman Warner, as this deserves focus.

Mr. Breece suggested we could ask the hospital to come up with \$800k. If Mr. Cain would speak with Sen. Meredith, he could provide more background on this issue. Mr. Cain agreed adding he is unsure if there is a state grant-writing office.

Mr. Breece was asked if they received an authorized bed transfer. Mr. Breece thinks all has been lined up with where beds would be and reconfiguration; Dr. Mike Ragowski is President and CEO. Sen. Meredith told Cape Fear Valley there would have to be sharing of costs on their part.

Chairman Warner asked if anyone has worked with Health Service Command to see if Womack can either be expanded or converted to have this service or an MOA or arrangement between them and Cape Fear, to come out of DoD dollars? It is a service for active duty and their families, certainly that would be a DoD need, and Womack should be able to expand to provide that. Mr. Breece noted that there has likely been a change of command at Womack. He mentioned Dr. Fleischmann and Dr. Breeden Blackwell who can answer many questions along with the garrison commander at Fort Bragg who leaves June 15. Please keep Kelly Jackson of DMVA in the loop on this to determine how we can reach a solution. Any volunteers for this please let Kelly Jackson know at Kelly.jackson@milvets.nc.gov to assist with this project. Kelly will send her contact information.

Easing Transient Military Spouse State Professional Licensing Requirements:

SB8 adds temporary relief and eases the occupational licensing burdens on military families by allowing military members and their spouses to practice their professions under licensure from another state while transitioning to the requirements of the licensing boards of North Carolina.

In-State Tuition / NC Legislative Update:

Chairman Warner asked for Ms. Anne Shaw's input. She does not have fully familiar with this but emailed Lisa Chapman to ask for update on college credit piece that she would like to circulate to the Committee. We know that the infrastructure is in place for this, added Chairman Warner.

The Guard is moving on the Civil Relief Act mirroring the federal Act to ensure coverage while activated by the Governor only. There has been legislation created to deal with anything that takes away from USERRA or SCRA. We should remain alert to this.

Doug Taggart added that Dr. Chuck Gross signed a letter of support for the Troops to Teachers Grant and built in work with him. They will bundle a group of military instructor programs and have him review them against teacher education programs to possibly shorten teacher education programs for teachers that have military instructor backgrounds. This is being reviewed. The grant award is through May 2018.

Kimrey Rhinehardt added that when federal government adjusts qualifications for the Frye Scholarship for Dependents of those who have died in service. The feds made an adjustment to Frye; as such, the states must adjust to remain compliant with federal law as it relates to offering in-state tuition. Ms. Rhinehardt understands that this is in process and wanted to make everyone aware.

Asst. Sec. for Veterans Affairs Jim Prosser added that he will meet with Rep. Cleveland to look at the state scholarship for dependent children; one of the things being changed is to add another eligibility category that if you have completed one enlistment and are in your subsequent enlistment, then you have the combat qualifications to apply for those scholarships. These will be competitive. Chairman Warner asked that Asst. Sec. Cain keep us apprised.

NEW BUSINESS

An email from John Simmons was discussed about comments that came from the Education Secretary while in Cumberland County. He understood the Scott Choice Bill was going to expand from disabled children being put into private schools off-post, and asked if anyone had updates or comments. We ask Matrix to update whether anything has changed since those email exchanges in light of the CR, and update at the ESG meeting.

Commissioner Mitchell expressed concerns about wording including language about children whose military parent's disability application is in progress and the interim period until the application is processed.

Dr. Michael J. Dunsmore of Wayne Co. Public Schools

Thanked the Chair for the invitation. The ESSA has been approved – this takes us to federal funding for public education and pushing it down to the states. Dr. Dunsmore says that Florida has published one of the best booklets for military families. With the NC licensing requirements, if we can get a 3-month turnaround, that is one of our best ones. It has taken up to a year to get licensure. Part of this is manpower at DPI and part of it is "red tape" in comparing of licenses and what you need. A good example is Virginia where you must have a 3-credit course on Virginia history or you don't teach in Virginia. One of the challenges in North Carolina, is that, if I bring in a teacher with ten years of

experience from another state, they're obviously paid a lot higher salary. Until their license clears, I can only pay them as a first-year teacher. We have the option of local funding, but is a minefield to navigate. Getting teachers here will be difficult with smaller class sizes presenting a challenge. Wayne is part of 18 systems that hired a law firm and bypassed DPI, taking our agenda items directly to the State Board. One of the items raised was certification funding, to get clarity on some things we are doing. The Senate is right; they are funding smaller class sizes. I get a pool for K-3 teachers but within that are my art, music, languages, and PE classes. Our State Board of Ed policies granted us a waiver going over the cap by 3 or 4 kids. I applaud that they are going to look at that by each line item. Many military family students travel and are musically gifted, for instance, I don't offer strings in my schools right now, we can't afford it, but have military families paying for private lessons to have their children continue. Doug asked Dr. Dunsmore about quality of life and the arrangement between the base and public education. Gen. Zorbas is very interested in this. He discussed how the Pennsylvania school system worked around constraints. No Child Left Behind Act created loopholes and provided three options: turn over entire staff, shut down and start over, but within that you have flexibility for certification funding. Goldsboro High as a low-performing school did a re-start program. He disagrees that they should have to earn the additional credits. Dr. Dunsmore and Brig. Gen. Slocum spoke and agreed on the condition of the school system.

We have tried to continue the open line of communication with Brig. Gen. Slocum. We are posting jobs on Seymour Johnson's website, using social media to transitioning military what they need to do to get connected with enrollment. We have changed the message and are improving feedback. He represents impacted schools with Onslow County – they go to DC twice a year and contact House and Senate members monthly, attend annual National Conferences to interface with all for idea exchanges. The big issue is school choice. You hear about voucher choices at the federal level. We are looking at how to open school choice across the County. The big issue is transportation, a state-controlled budget. We are lobbying with the NCGA and involving the military. IDA and insurance companies do not align. The military will only pay for that time during the school day. Wayne has blind lottery magnate school of engineering 6-12 with a waiting list of 600 children. He discussed school attendance on occasions of deploying parent(s) and credit for attendance. He toured stakeholders through both a flooded school and to a solar-powered middle school to show a contrast. They are breaking ground on a new elementary school just off base – started with \$18 million to begin with for that school building and the bond referendum went through for just under \$30 million. They are adding a developmental day school for special needs children and put a project in for another high school they were not asking for.

When he is asked to the base, he meets quarterly with parents of special needs children.

If he could ask one thing of this group, is to continue this communication. We don't have that many bases in North Carolina, but he is proud to be a part of Seymour Johnson. He and the Onslow Superintendent are lobbying and need to get other Superintendents around the table. Because of the brand-new school that was built that 30% military population attends, the other 70% of the population benefit as well.

Chairman Warner asked about any meetings with other County Superintendents: the State Superintendent is being asked to join Nationally Impacted Schools and Nationally Impacted Federal Schools. Dr. Dunsmore asked base leadership to attend a town hall, and they are there. How can this group best engage? Being out there to see what the schools are doing.

Online platform being rolled out that teachers will be able to proctor with availability once a week. This helps non-traditional students, and adds to state funding.

Doug Taggart mentioned four military liaisons for high military density school systems: Craven Cumberland, Onslow, and Wayne counties. Jamie Livengood, military family counselor, was working with Mr. Taggart. He noted the four funded positions and ratios of counselors to students.

Motion: Commissioner George Breece moved to bring to the Executive Steering Group to add Dr. Dunsmore to the full Commission meeting agenda. Chairman Warner seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously and without further discussion.

Military Child Interstate Compact (State Council of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children):

Asst. Sec. Cain stated we are waiting for the Governor's appointment to this Commission; that person may be in place by the next meeting.

The Compact is a law in each state where the states agree to work with each other in certain ways. This was borne from children moving from state to state and how to transition them as they go from state to state. DoD and school systems and military folks got together to push this idea and got 10 states to join. We were the 11th and joined in 2009.

There are basic tenets around the agreements: e.g., graduation requirements – having juniors transferring because of military service affects student's ability to graduate. Allows school from sending state to issue a diploma. Often this requires getting the schools to communicate. All 50 states are now members of the Compact. Enrollment eligibility, extracurricular placement and participation are additional tenets. On-time record transfer for children; superintendents and principals can waive requirements. Every state is required to have a Council for which Doug Taggart serves at DPI. Minimum members are Superintendent, a House and Senate representative, the Chairman is a Governor's appointment.

Two face-to-face meetings yearly and two monthly phone conferences. This allows school counselors to raise issues to Doug at the Council. He raised the conflict of having legal custody when a guardian steps in that does not fall under the Compact.

Chairman Warner asked for further questions.

Doug added there is a concept called State Comprehensive Plan for Military-Connected Children, an idea to do professional development for teachers around the military family. This is in the Superintendent's office. He is unsure how it is being developed at this point.

Per Chairman Warner, we will add this issue to Old Business at the next meeting.

Troops to Teachers grant: Doug is working on innovations for this grant, follow-through mentorship. This mentorship reveals the fit between a prospective teacher and the field.

NC4ME

Asst. Sec. Cain states NC4ME received \$40k last year, and they have a request in the MAC's budget for \$50k annually if the rest of the budget is recurring.

DoD-Supported Best Practices for States Desiring to Improve Military Quality of Life

We are unsure of what this is – Doug found a 2012 document from MCEC. This can be used as a checklist to develop a document, perhaps with Kelly Jackson. Look at state law, how funding is disbursed, pre-K. Chairman Warner recommends that Doug Taggart and Kelly Jackson work on this.

Anti-BRAC Quality of Life Issues

Chairman Warner discussed road access to Fort Bragg and its impact to railheads to Seymour for instance. What needs to be done with road infrastructure, how they get serviced, etc. Sebastian Montagne of DOT mentioned that the Sustainability Committee is looking at this, too. He broke down the issues of commuting, freight movement, aviation and ports. These issues move up through the MAC, the Governor's office, and most often the local group that works with DOT Divisional engineers with DPW on commands. Division 6 Engineer Greg Burns covers Fayetteville and meets with Garrison Command on a regular basis. Division 2 is John Rouse. He commented on the increased traffic as the result of people moving to Pinehurst, Southern Pines to get to the Moore County schools.

Chairman Warner commented on Secretary Trogdon having a military background, and a potential valuable resource. He asked what the Committee can do other than bring issues to DOT? Mr. Montagne pointed out the need to identify bottlenecks in government and offset state costs. For example, leveraging our size to negotiate better rates for their services. There is a hesitation that exists when requests must go up to the Pentagon -many of these programs require Pentagon approval. Use the clout of the MAC to illustrate the benefits. Involve the Roosevelt Group to influence in DC as appropriate, suggested Chairman Warner.

Veterans Treatment Courts

Jim Prosser, Asst. Sec. for Veterans Affairs, updated that these treatment courts are now in Harnett, Buncombe, Cumberland and starting one in Forsyth, Guilford is thinking about it, Scott Swain is coming down from Veterans Justice next week, the Governor's Crime Commission is still providing some funding, Onslow and Craven are still looking at it since the recidivism rate is so much lower in VTC's. Per Chairman Warner, Rob Radar, has contacted him, Military Bar Assoc. Section is interested, heard about \$2million grant. The goal is to head each of the VAMC's areas having a treatment court and a corresponding treatment plan. We will continue to be supportive of these efforts.

Public Comments

Asst. Sec. Cain added that the OEA office dislikes terminology like "BRAC-proof" "anti-BRAC" and emphasize that we appreciate the value of DoD and motivated by having better partnerships with the military and with DoD, that would be a preferable message.

With no further comments, Chairman Warner thanked all for the great attendance and conversations that were had. We should have superintendents from each jurisdiction invited to meetings going forward. Kelly will add them to the *ex-officio* distribution list.

Chairman Warner adjourned the meeting at 12:14pm.

DRAFT