CALL TO ORDER  Chairman of the Board Lt Col Tim Lincoln called the Business Session of the Montana National Guard Association’s 55th Annual General Conference to order at 0855 hours on Saturday, March 31, 2012, at the Grouse Mountain Inn, Whitefish, Montana. The following Officers and Directors were in attendance:

Lt Col Tim Lincoln, Chairman
LTC Lonnie Cook, Vice Chairman
Col Steve Mehring, President
Lt Col Jennifer Conwell, Secretary
CW3 Pam Frost, Treasurer
BGen (ret) Jim Higgins, Director
COL (ret) Mike Stone, Director
Lt Col Pat Hover, Director
LTC Garth Scott, Director
Maj Joe Ferda, Director
Maj Keith Kelly, Director
1st Lt Justin Hutchins, Director
CW5 John Purpuro, Director
CW3 Rich Heitstuman, Director

INTRODUCTION OF DISTINGUISHED GUESTS  BG John Walsh, Former Adjutant General for the State of Montana; BG Matt Quinn, Commander, Montana Army National Guard; BGen (Ret) Jim Higgins; and Col (ret) Pete Duffy, Director of the Legislative Staff, NGAUS, were introduced.

APPOINTMENT OF SERGEANT AT ARMS  Capt Mike Loy and 1LT Adam Rahmlow were appointed as Sergeants-at-Arms.

APPOINTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARIAN  Lt Col Jennifer Conwell was appointed as Parliamentarian.

APPOINTMENT OF NOMINATIONS COMMITTEES FOR BOARD/OFFICER VACANCIES  Col Nugent was appointed to lead the caucus to nominate candidates for two at-large director positions on the Army-side. Col Fox was appointed to lead a caucus to nominate candidates for one at-large director positions on the Air-side.
RECOGNITION OF FIRST TIME ATTENDEES – CO GRADE  The following seven new company grade officers and warrant officer were first time attendees and the Association paid for their hotel rooms: WO1 Michael Brown, 2LT Chris Oelkers, 2LT Andrew Yetter, 2LT Angela Richards, 1LT Michelle Bogden, 1LT Adam Rahmlow, 1LT Marieke Min, 1LT Hope Kincheloe, and Capt Mike Loy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES  The minutes for the 54rd General Conference were presented by Lt Col Lincoln. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

INSURANCE REPORT  Col Bryan Fox briefed the membership on the State Sponsored Life Insurance program. He reported that there are currently 17 states in our insurance pool. Montana currently has 2,083 soldiers and airmen enrolled in the program. The number is up 17% from last year because of the deployments of the 1-189, 484th, 190th CRD, the 260th and a small number of airmen. He reported that there were five claims made last year in the state totaling $59,000. The deaths in Montana were caused by cancer, auto accident, ATV accident, suicide, and Multiple Sclerosis.

The program remains affordable and continues to provide income to both the Officer and Enlisted Associations. MTNGA received $10,360 from the program last year.

A motion to approve the Insurance Report was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

BREAK FOR CAUCUS  The membership adjourned at 0915 to hold a caucus to nominate board vacancies. The membership was called back to order at 0930.

ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS  Col Nugent presented the following Army nominations for vacancies of board members for the Association:

CW5 John Purpuro for the At-Large Director vacancy
2LT Chris Oelkers for the At-Large Director vacancy

Col Fox presented the Air nominations for vacancies of officers and board members:

Capt Mike Loy for the At-Large Director vacancy

A motion to accept the nominations as submitted was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER  Col (ret) Pete Duffy, Acting Legislative Director, National Guard Association of the United States, gave an informative address including the story of how the Chief of the NGB gained a seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff (C-SPAN video showing Senator Lindsey Graham’s cross-examination of the JCS).

COL Duffy emphasized the current fluidity of the Guard funding issues and encouraged active and frequent engagement of Montana’s legislators and Governor with Secretary Panetta to ensure our needs our met at the national level.

RESOLUTIONS DISCUSSION  Maj Kelly explained our purpose as a lobbying organization
and showed the resources available on the MTNGA website. Our vendors and corporate sponsors can also be a part of the process.

Maj Kelly emphasized that this is our mission as an organization and our standing resolutions can get stale. Be involved in the process to keep our objectives current and relevant. Maj Kelly introduced many proposed resolutions. The Board is currently looking for a lobbyist to hire for the 2013 legislative season.

Maj Tim Crowe made a suggestion to work with the TAG’s staff to coordinate legislative efforts for the state. There are some issues that the TAG is not allowed by law to influence or sponsor and the Association can help support those issues.

The Association also uses Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in and other social networking sites to keep the membership informed.

**ADJOURN**  The membership adjourned for the day at 1145 hours.

**CALL TO ORDER**  The membership was called to order at 0835 hours on 1 April 2012.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**  CW3 Pam Frost gave the report. Revenues for the Association came from membership dues, proceeds from the Association’s insurance program, corporate sponsorships and various other fees and investment income. In 2011, revenues totaled $56,882.82 and expenses totaled $27,211.35. Cash on hand at the end of the year was $93,830.81. CW3 Frost will provide the detailed accounting sheets to any member who requests them.

A motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

**STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT**  Lt Col Conwell reported on the success of informing the Montana Department of Revenue regarding state income taxation of Title 10 and Title 32 pay. The DOR issued a memo outlining rules regarding taxation of military pay.

The membership discussed the needs of the next legislative year. As a lobbying organization we need to invest in our lobbying effort. Any lobbyist hired will need to keep the membership energized and informed.

A motion was made to authorize up to $20,000 to use for state and national lobbying efforts including hiring a lobbyist and utilizing computer programs. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**COMPANY GRADE/WARRANT OFFICE REPORT**  1st Lt Justin Hutchins reported that the company grade officers spoke of developing a mentorship program to aid in professional development and career opportunities.

A motion to approve the Company Grade Officer Report was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

**RESOLUTIONS REPORT**  Benchmade asked the MTNGA to support the resolutions which fit
the capabilities and requirements of certain Benchmade products. The membership discussed the benefit of these capabilities for the Army. A motion was made to co-sponsor the CERFP resolution, was seconded and passed unanimously. A motion was made to co-sponsor the resolution adding the emergency cutter, was seconded and passed unanimously.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT** Col Mehring presented the report. He reported that approximately 25% of officers have paid their dues thus far for 2012. Thirty-one percent of Air officers have paid and 24% of Army officers have paid. Col Mehring noted at both the state and national level the trend has been decreasing participation. The membership discussed benefits and energizing the company grade officers.

A motion to approve the Membership Report was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

**MTNGA CONFERENCE 2013** Col Mehring announced the next state general conference will be held in Missoula, Montana, April 26 - 28, 2013.

**NGAUS CONFERENCE 2012** Col Mehring announced that the NGAUS 2012 conference will be held in Reno, Nevada, September 9-12, 2012.

The Board has identified Capt Mike Loy to attend the NGAUS conference in a military status for Officer Professional Development.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS** Col Mehring opened the floor to any member who wished to address the membership. No comments were made.

**ADJOURN** There being no further business, the Montana National Guard Association’s 55th General Conference Business Session meeting was adjourned at 1300 hours.