

MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 6683
GREAT FALLS, MT 59406

MINUTES OF MEETING BUSINESS SESSION
47th GENERAL CONFERENCE 2004

HELD: 28 FEBRUARY 2004

CALL TO ORDER Chairman of the Board (Lieutenant Colonel) Bryan Fox called the Business Session of the Montana National Guard Association's 47th General Conference to order at 0915 hours, Saturday, February 28, 2004 at Chico Hot Springs, Pray, Montana. The following Officers and Directors were in attendance:

LTC Bryan Fox, Chairman of the Board
LTC Steve Mehring, President
LTC John Swanson, Vice Chairman
MAJ Tim Lincoln, Director
MAJ Wes Robinson, Director
CAPT Tracy Anderson, Director
CW5 Joseph Yuricic, Director
LTC Jeff Ireland, Treasurer
LTC Monte Boettger, Secretary

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was rendered. LTC John Allen gave the Invocation.

APPOINTMENT OF SERGEANT AT ARMS 2LT Brad Caughman and 1LT Keith Kelly were appointed as Sergeants at Arms.

APPOINTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARIAN COL Joe Cusker was appointed as Parliamentarian.

INTRODUCTION OF DISTINGUISHED GUESTS BG Randy Mosely, Assistant Adjutant General – Army; BG Rex Tanberg, Assistant Adjutant General – Air; COL Stan Putnam; COL Mark Meyer – Commander 120th FW; and Mr. Rich Arnold - NGAUS were introduced.

APPOINTMENT OF NOMINATIONS COMMITTEES FOR BOARD/OFFICER VACANCIES BG Randy Mosley was appointed to form a committee to nominate candidates for two board of director's positions on the Army-side. BG Rex Tanberg was appointed to form a committee to nominate two candidates for board of director positions on the Air-side.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS The keynote address was given by Richard Arnold, Public Affairs Specialist, NGAUS. Mr. Arnold spoke about the resolutions process at NGAUS and how the resolutions that result from that process drive NGAUS' priorities. Some of the legislative

priorities for NGAUS in 2005 include Tricare for the reserve components, retirement age at 55, education assistance, tax incentives for employers, maintaining full-time manning, HMMWV up-arming, Blackhawk medevac packages, night vision and navigation aids, targeting pods, precision engagement and milcon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES The minutes for the 46th General Conference were presented by LTC Boettger. A motion to approve the minutes was made by MAJ Fleharty, seconded by COL Cusker and unanimously approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT LTC Jeff Ireland provided the membership handouts for the 2003 year. A motion to approve the Treasurer's report was made and seconded. The motion unanimously passed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT LTC Steve Mehring recognized all Company Grade officers in attendance and presented each person with an award. BG Tanberg was also recognized for his efforts over many years on the Resolutions Committee and assisting the Company Grade officers.

The Web site usage continues to grow. In 2002 there were an average 500 users per month with 1200 pages viewed. In January 2004 there were 1500 users and over 2500 pages viewed. The E-Newsletter continues to improve and distribution is increasing. Currently 100% of Air members receive the letter. However, not all Army members have an email address which is an area for improvement. Many of our Company Grade officers are not being reached.

The Association is financially healthier than it has been in years. In the ten years up to 2001 we were running in the red. This was due to membership dues that had not been increased for 20 years. It was also due to a continuing decline in the Insurance Program revenues. However, because of changes implemented by the Board and the Membership in 2001 we now have a surplus in 2003 for the first time in five years. What does this mean to our organization?

1. We can off set some costs of our next state conference;
2. We can offer incentives for members to attend the national conference;
3. We can increase our work at the state legislative level. We are increasingly becoming recognized as the voice of the members of the Montana National Guard.

These changes were made possible by the leadership and initiative of many members of our organization including Pete Hronek, Loren Oelkers, Bryan Fox and John Swanson, to name a few. With such leadership we expect great things in the future. We want your continued input to make things even better. LTC Mehring recognized the most junior officer in attendance: 2LT Barb Terry, and the most senior officer in attendance: BG Rex Tanberg, who has been an active member for 38 years.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Scholarship Report: LTC Mehring reported that two \$500.00 scholarships would be

awarded this year.

By-Laws Report: No changes in the by-laws are proposed this year.

Legislative Report: BG Mosely reported that we had a very successful session year. The scholarship program and veterans preference for state employees in Montana were among the successes. The Montana National Guard Officers Association is directly responsible for this. The Department of Military Affairs, like all state agencies, has been instructed to submit all legislative proposals by April 1, 2004 along with a one-page summary including proposed costs. The Governor's staff then gives the proposal thumbs up or down. If it is thumbs down, DMA cannot support it in their budget – however, someone else, like the Association can take up the cause. We are looking for input from you on this. If it is thumbs up, we have to draft the legislation to accomplish this and submit it by September. During April – September we attend various legislative subcommittees for review, ask questions, provide information, etc. We must find a sponsor to carry the legislation. The process works best if DMA and the Association can jointly support the effort.

COL Hronek then reported on the Association's state legislative priorities for 2004 that include the following:

1. Continued funding of the state scholarship program (\$350,000.00).
2. Death/disabled benefits while on state active duty equal to that of federal service.
3. Tax exempt pay for state active duty.
4. Tax incentives for MTNG employers while members are deployed.
5. USERRA to protect MTNG members while on state active duty.
6. 100% tuition waiver for MTNG members attending higher education institutions.
7. Conservation license at no charge for one year upon a member's return from official deployment.
8. One free set of license plates to each active MTNG member.
9. Modify Title 10 of the MCA to qualify members for the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act for state active duty of 15 days verses current 30 days currently required.
10. Allow state employees to buy their active duty time for retirement purposes at a reduced rate from current provisions.

COL Swanson gave a report on "Mobilizing our Legislative Force" which is a plan to energize and get all of our members involved rather than just a few. To do this we would establish Legislative Action Teams on a regional basis that would build local teams to work together to develop key legislation. The teams would develop information, devise a plan and then contact their legislators. A sheet was passed out to all of the members to solicit their interest in assisting with and developing this idea.

Membership Report: LTC Mehring reported that at this point overall the membership is down but still hopes to have 80% paid up membership by the end of the year. At this time we are at 39% overall.

We are getting retired members involved again in the Association. For \$25.00 they can obtain a lifetime membership, which also entitles them to the E-Newsletter. We want retirees to be

involved in the Association and our conferences for the leadership and experience they can bring to our efforts.

Company Grade Report: CAPT Tracy Anderson reported that they had the best attendance in the Company Grade Caucus in several years. One of the initiatives that came out of the NGAUS convention last year was a Company Grade “Best Practices” manual. This manual is a very good source of suggestions for Company Grade issues. The Caucus also discussed ways to improve dues payment and increasing attendance at the state conference. The Caucus also discussed meeting with new Company Grade officers to tell them about the Association and NGAUS as well as having meetings with the TAG at the national conference. BG Tanberg chaired the Caucus. He discussed the need for more engagement by senior leadership with subordinates to encourage participation in the Association. BG Tanberg also discussed the need for increased camaraderie - senior officers need to get to know the junior officers - not only army-to-army and air-to-air but army-to-air as well.

Insurance Report: LTC (ret) Remick gave the insurance report. LTC Remick reported that cash on hand for distribution as of 31 Dec 03 is \$3,662.03 which means each Association (officer and enlisted) will receive a check for \$1,831.

Corporate Report: LTC Mehring reported that since the Association started the corporate membership program in 2001 we have gone from 0 corporate sponsors to over 30 sponsors in 2004. Corporate revenues grew to about \$8,000.00 in 2003 and are about \$7,000.00 so far for 2004.

The Corporate Committee is doing a fabulous job. Currently the Committee is developing a new program. The concept of the program is that if an Association member can enlist a company/business to become a corporate sponsor then the member can earn various incentives. The framework of the proposal is as follows:

<u>Corporate Membership Amount</u>	<u>Incentive</u>
\$100	Free registration at state conference
\$250	1 dinner at state conference
\$500	2 dinners at state conference
\$1000	Rooms (2 nights) and dinner at state conference
\$5000 within 3 years	Attendance at national conference 2005 – Hawaii 2006 – New Orleans 2007 – Puerto Rico

Resolutions Report: BG Tanberg and COL Cusker presented the Joint, Army and Air Resolutions for FY 2005 proposed by NGAUS.

JOINT BG Tanberg presented the following resolutions:

- A-1: Relating to Tricare.
- A-2: Relating to DoD requirement for annual dental examination.

- A-3: Relating to reducing age for receiving retirement pay from 60 to 55.
- A-3A: Relating to a sliding scale version of A-3 from age 55 to 60.
- A-4 through A-6: Recommended that we do not sponsor.

A motion was made to support the recommended resolutions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ARMY COL Cusker presented the following Army resolutions:

- B-1: Relating to the modernization of ARNG Aviation.
- B-2: Relating to the modernization and sustainment of the ARNG combat maneuver (mounted) force.
- B-3: Relating to the modernization of the ARNG's command control, communications, computers and intelligence (C4I) areas.
- B-4: Relating to the modernization of the ARNG's fire support/field artillery battle operating systems and related training devices.
- B-5: Relating to the modernization of the ARNG's combat support/combat service support force.
- B-6: Relating to the modernization of the ARNG's combat engineer force.

A motion was made to support the recommended resolutions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

AIR BG Tanberg presented the following Air resolutions:

- C-1: (rec. co-sponsor) Relating to ANG force structure.
- C-2: (rec. co-sponsor) Relating to ANG F-16 aircraft.
- C-3: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to ANG F-15 aircraft.
- C-4: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the ANG A/OA-10 aircraft.
- C-5: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the ANG C-130 aircraft.
- C-6: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the ANG C-17 aircraft.
- C-7: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the ANG C-5A aircraft.
- C-8: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the ANG KC-135 aircraft.
- C-9: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the ANG theater air control system modernization.
- C-10: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the procurement of promina multiplexors for ANG combat communications Units.
- C-11: (rec. support but not co-sponsor) Relating to the procurement / modernization of theater deployable communications (TDC) equipment.

A motion was made to support the recommended resolutions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

COL Swanson recommended that the following individual resolutions be adopted:

1. Proposal that guardsmen/reservists with at least 4 years enlisted time qualify for pay grades 01E, 02E or 03E.

A motion was made to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

2. Proposal that the National Defense Medal be awarded to all Guard and Reserve serving in an active reserve status since 911 to recognize their readiness, training tempo and standby status.
3. Proposal to provide same retirement point recognition and awards for on-line courses as are awarded for correspondence courses.
4. Proposal to amend Title 32 to make retired medical benefits of Title 32 AGR active duty soldiers and airmen the same as Title 10 active duty soldiers/airmen.
5. Proposal to eliminate controlled grade limitation on the AGR force.

COL Swanson indicated that proposals 2 through 5 will be further researched before going forward.

(After an intermission, the business session resumed and was joined by spouses of Association members)

ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS BG Mosley presented the following Army nominations for vacancies on the Board of Directors:

CAPT Barry Gilman (Company Grade seat)
CW5 Joe Yuricic (Warrant officer seat)

BG Tanberg presented the Air nominations for vacancies on the Board of Directors:

MAJ Buel Dixon (at large)
Retired position – the recommendation was to defer a decision to the Board.

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

2003 NGAUS CONFERENCE REPORT Todd Mortag gave the report of the NGAUS convention held at Biloxi, Mississippi. The conference was entertaining and informative. Topics included increased Ops tempo and the impact on troops and families. Area 6 (which Montana is part of) has the lowest membership in NGAUS and ways were discussed to help improve this statistic. LT GEN Blum was a keynote speaker.

2004 NGAUS CONFERENCE REPORT LTC Mehring reported that the 2004 NGAUS conference will be in Las Vegas. The relatively close proximity of this conference to Montana will give the best opportunity for members to attend a national conference in many years. As an incentive, if you sign up before the end of the conference today and pay the registration fee and one night's lodging you will be eligible for a drawing at the banquet to have those fees refunded to you.

2005 STATE CONFERENCE MAJ Lincoln reported that the 2005 state conference will be extended by one day to offer more activities and more available family time. The tentative location is Big Sky. The Air Guard will be hosting the conference.

ARMY BRIEF BG Randy Mosley presented the Army brief for the 2003. 2003 marks an

unprecedented year for mobilizations. The Transportation Battalion HQ, Ground Liaison Teams, the 143rd MP detachment, the 151st Maintenance Company Detachment, 623 Quartermaster Company and Air Ambulance Detachment have all deployed to Iraq. The Artillery Battalion has been placed on alert and made ready for MP duty. 25% of our force structure is mobilized over a wide variety of units. Regardless of the size or readiness of the unit they are taking us. We have sustained casualties. Through it all we have found out how important family is to support and strengthen those deployed. During the year we have also continued to move forward with Jointness. To this end, we have reorganized the Joint Headquarters.

AIR BRIEF BG Tanberg presented the Air brief for 2003. 2003 was also a busy year for the Air Guard. The Red Horse squadron deployed 85 people to Iraq for six months. We went through Air Warrior training using precision guided weapons and Century Eagle practicing air to air combat with F-15's. The 120th FW went through a Unit Compliance Inspective by the active duty and did very well. We joined with our army brethren to fight summer fires. We continued in the homeland defense mission watching the skies over the U.S. Our detachment at March AFB at Riverside is active in this role every day. We are now in the midst of preparing for a July 2004 deployment to Iraq. A tribute has to go to our young people who perform these missions every day.

CLOSING COMMENTS LTC Fox gave the closing remarks. He thanked all of the spouses for attending the business session, the Board of Directors for volunteering their time and President Mehring for his continued efforts in managing the Association.

BENEDICTION LTC Allen gave the benediction.

ADJOURN There being no further business, the Montana National Guard Association's 47th General Conference Business Session meeting was adjourned.

BRYAN FOX
Lieutenant Colonel, MT ANG
Chairman of the Board