

**Minutes**  
**Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission**  
**Jefferson City, MO**

June 13, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was held at the Harry S. Truman Building, Suite 493-494, Jefferson City, Missouri, 65101. There was also an option to join via Webex for those who could not attend in person.

MMPEC Members: Steve Ehrhardt, Steve Wallach, Greg Frencken, Hart Nelson, Sen. Steven Roberts, Sen. Sandy Crawford, Rep. Ashley Aune, Rep. Bill Hardwick, Harry Roberts (DED Ex-Officio member)

Guests: Becky Willard, Mike DuBois, Abe Forney, Dorsey Newcomb, Nick Humphrey, David Pearce, Samantha Dickey, Jerrod Wheeler, Hart Nelson, Tammy Long, Karl Kramer, Randell Gelzer, David Berczek, Michele Weigand, Keith Dupont, Ray Bozarth, Andrea Goodson, Tama Wagner, Stephen Standifird, Colonel Gordon Meyer

**WELCOME**

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Chairman Ehrhardt and roll was called. A quorum was established with eight statutory members participating.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**, the Commission hereby approves the minutes of the March 21, 2021 meeting, as submitted. Motion made by Commissioner Wallach, seconded by Representative Hardwick. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**REPORTS AND BRIEFINGS**

Abe Forney – City of St. Joseph: Mr. Forney provided a status update on the joint-use airfield budget and upcoming construction work and provided an update on the tower project.

Dr. Jerrod Wheeler – Whiteman Air Force Base: Dr. Wheeler reported that the Whiteman Base Community Council has resumed their in-person meetings. He noted that the Whiteman Area Leadership Council is currently working on its strategic plan. During the Month of the Military Child in April, Knob Noster hosted Dr. Miguel Cardona, Secretary of Education, and First Lady Dr. Jill Biden. Dr. Wheeler also mentioned they would soon break ground on the Innovation Campus at Knob Noster High School.

Keith Dupont – Fort Leonard Wood: Mr. Dupont discussed the recent Community Salute to Service event which honored area high school seniors who have committed to serve in the Armed Forces, serving in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), or who received an

appointment to a service academy. He mentioned that this past week was Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Regimental Week. The installation will be welcoming new senior leaders this summer.

Dorsey Newcomb – Sustainable Ozarks Partnership: Mr. Newcomb reported that the organization is looking forward to applying for the FY2023 Military Community Reinvestment Grant program. He mentioned that the Waynesville R-VI School District recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the early childhood education center that will be funded with money from the Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP). They are working with the community to prepare an application for the current DCIP application cycle. Additionally, Mr. Newcomb mentioned they have the funding now to build a new terminal at the Waynesville-St. Robert Regional Airport. The Sustainable Ozarks Partnership will be having its annual meeting in August. The organization recently completed its Military Spouse Employment Needs Survey and provided the results to Fort Leonard Wood leaders. They are working with several employers to see if they would be willing to provide employment opportunities to military spouses in the region.

Nick Humphrey – Missouri National Guard: Mr. Humphrey gave a report on behalf of the Missouri National Guard. He provided an update on some military construction projects around the state and discussed the upcoming budget. He reported that the National Guard will be able to hire several new individuals around the state. Additionally, he mentioned that voters will soon be able to decide if the National Guard becomes its own department. This would allow them to directly compete with the administration for resources.

Senator Crawford mentioned that someone should organize public outreach to garner support for this ballot item. The commission agreed with her and decided to make it an action item.

David Berczek – National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency: Mr. Berczek discussed the recent USGIF GEOINT Symposium in Denver and Admiral Sharp's presentation at the event. He said that the organization released its "Tech Focus Areas" at the convention.

Randell Gelzer – Boeing: Mr. Gelzer reported that the Boeing F/A-18 site is still looking to hire employees. He also discussed the recent Spirit of St. Louis Air Show that Boeing sponsored.

Becky Willard – Hawthorn Foundation: Ms. Willard discussed the organization's large fundraiser held during the previous week. She mentioned that they continue to do work to support education, license reciprocity, and other community initiatives.

Harry Roberts – Missouri Military Advocate: Mr. Roberts gave his second report as the new Military Advocate. He discussed key initiatives that his team is working on, including work to increase the transparency of high-education credits for military training and education as well as spousal license reciprocity issues. He mentioned that a spouse must have a license in another state for at least one year before obtaining that license in Missouri. A recent Air Force report

noted that as a problem. Mr. Roberts mentioned that the military family resource guide that his office is working on is near completion. He said the graphic designers sent them sample pages to review and they will be able to complete the project soon.

Mr. Roberts is also working with Shad Burner from the Department of Economic Development to see if any American Rescue Plan Act funding could be used for off-post housing at Fort Leonard Wood. He said that the funding would not be able to be used on the installation. He reported that he has been working with Paul Eisenstein and the National Security Crossroads initiative to submit an application to the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) for a grant. He then discussed his activity report.

Ray Bozarth from Senator Josh Hawley's office mentioned the housing budget issue at Fort Leonard Wood after Harry's report. He said that Senator Hawley recently pressed Army Secretary Christine Wormuth and Gen. James McConville, the service's chief of staff, on why funding was not appropriated to Fort Leonard Wood for the construction of new houses. Ms. Wormuth agreed that the issue would be prioritized.

After Mr. Robert's report, Chairman Steve Ehrhardt recognized Hannah Hooven for her work as the Executive Assistant to the Military Advocate. Ms. Hooven's last day is June 14.

David Pearce and Samantha Dickey – University of Central Missouri and Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, respectively: Mr. Pearce and Ms. Dickey provided a report on the work they have been doing to improve transparency in how Missouri's public higher-education institutions award credits for military training and education. They also discussed next steps.

After this report, Mr. Roberts announced that the Hawthorn Foundation has decided to renew its contract with Kit Bond Strategies and Baker Donelson. These consulting firms provide services for the Office of the Military Advocate and MMPEC. This decision came after a formal evaluation process.

Mike DuBois – Kit Bond Strategies: Mr. DuBois provided a report on behalf of Baker Donelson and Kit Bond Strategies. He provided an overview of what's been occurring in Washington, D.C. He mentioned that inflation is at a four-decade high (8.6%) and there are ongoing supply-chain issues. He provided an overview of the FY2023 budget, including the major domestic initiatives, national security initiatives, Army budget highlights, Air Force budget highlights, and other priorities. He also mentioned that the Continuing Resolution will likely continue. He reported on military leadership changes, and the status of various military construction projects, and discussed FY2023 Missouri defense and military federal activities. Finally, he provided a brief report on his recent engagements.

Hannah Hooven – Office of the Missouri Military Advocate: Ms. Hooven provided an update on some quality-of-life initiatives she has been working on. These included an update on the

resource guide for Missouri's military families as well as a mentorship program for veteran small-business owners. She mentioned that the mentorship program is nearly finalized and will be ready to start once signatures are obtained for the cooperative agreement.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Harry provided a brief update on the current budget. He mentioned that the office is currently under budget, but some more bills will be paid before the end of FY2022.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Ehrhardt led a discussion regarding the strategic plan. He mentioned that the strategic plan would need some updates as the current one expires soon. He would like the commissioners and stakeholders to participate in discussions before the next quarterly meeting in September so they can provide feedback and suggestions.

Representative Aune believes the strategic plan should address veteran homelessness and mental health issues. Mr. Frencken mentioned that the state needs to do a better job competing with other states in order to retain missions. These issues will be discussed further in the upcoming discussions.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Having no further business on the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 1:07 pm. The motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Frencken and seconded by Representative Aune. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.