

Minutes
Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission
Quarterly Meeting
Jefferson City, MO

December 16, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was held by conference call placed from the Harry S. Truman Building in Jefferson City MO, 65101.

MMPEC Members: Chairman Steve Ehrhardt, Royal Turner, Steve Wallach, Hart Nelson, Greg Frencken, Sen. Gina Walsh, Sen. Wayne Wallingford, Rep. Steve Lynch, and Military Advocate Joe Driskill (DED Director designee)

Guests: Abe Forney, General Charles Hausman, Dorsey Newcomb, Joe Scallorns, John Hixson, Lawson, Rachel Gilroy, Col. Chris Callis, Herbert Crumley, Andy Dearing, Clayton Campbell, Col. Matt Calhoun, J. Murphy, Norman Lucas, SOP, Tammy Long, Tama Wagner, Tracy Brantner, D Berczek, Scotty Allen, Ali Janet, Sue Pollman, Andrea Goodson, LTC Cline, Steve Hyjek, Mike DuBois, Hannah Stash

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Ehrhardt and roll was called. A quorum was established with eight statutory members and one ex-officio member designee participating.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED, the Commission hereby approves the minutes of the September 1, 2020 meeting, as submitted.

Motion made by Senator Walsh, seconded by Commissioner Nelson. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Chairman Ehrhardt recognized the MMPEC members who will be leaving. These included former Chairman Robert Hagedorn, Sen. Walsh, Sen. Wayne Wallingford, and Rep. Lynch. They will be given a token of appreciation.

REPORTS AND BRIEFINGS

Missouri National Guard – BG Charles Hausman provided the briefing for the Missouri National Guard. He reported that they are working on the state rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine. BG

Hausman discussed several MILCON projects that are in progress. They are planning to build a new readiness center in north St. Louis during FY23. The 1107th AVCRAD in Springfield, MO has been undergoing a large MILCON project that is in multiple phases. Phase Three-Alpha was completed in November, and they hope to do a ribbon cutting ceremony for it next spring. Phase Three-Bravo and Phase Four are currently unfunded and they are working with their federal partners on them. They are still waiting to hear if they will get the Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron in St. Joseph.

National-Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA) – Sue Pollman (program director for NGA West project) provided the update for the NGA campus in St. Louis. In regards to the new NGA West campus, Ms. Pollman reported that they are in the midst of a design-build contract with McCarthy-Hitt. It is moving forward very well despite pandemic. They completed a major milestone – their design for the building – two weeks ago. She said they are looking to see how they fare when the omnibus and other legislation is passed in the next couple of days. In the realm of education, they are focusing on getting more STEM educators so more students in the future pursue STEM careers. This initiative is important both for NGA and for Missouri.

Whiteman Air Force Base (WAFB) – Col. Chris Callis gave the report for Whiteman AFB. He went over some MILCON projects that are in progress. The first is a combined operations building for the 509th and 131st missions that costs approximately \$30 million. They plan to occupy the whole building by April 2021. The second is a vehicle maintenance facility which will cost about \$27 million dollars and benefit both the 509th and 131st. Col. Callis said he found out that the Office of Energy Assurance through the NDAA is looking at creating a \$17 million project on WAFB to enhance their energy resilience. LTC Scott Cline said that this project would provide a central 10 megawatt plant.

FLW – No one on the line to give update.

Rosecrans & St. Joseph Community Alliance – Abe Forney provided the update. He reported that they are pushing to keep around 290 total C-130s in their fleet. They have a couple of units deployed or deploying soon. They have also been heavily involved in the testing site in St. Louis and with passing out food to facilities. In addition, they are participating in the COVID-19 hotline. Mr. Forney said they are still waiting to hear if they will be getting the Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, and they already have a building that would be perfect for the new mission. Currently, in terms of MILCON projects, they are building a communications building and a levee. They did the groundbreaking ceremony for the simulator building, and they're looking forward to getting the ramp built on the north end of the base. Finally, he invited the commissioners to attend an air show coming up May 1 and 2.

GeoFutures in STL – Andy Dearing gave the report for the GeoFutures initiative in St. Louis. The main goal is for GeoFutures to help efforts that are already underway. Moonshot Labs at T-Rex is going to be completed in 2021. They are also working with early-stage startups in an accelerator that was launched with the Missouri Technology Corporation (MTC). The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is building a curriculum for K-12. DESE and the American Youth in Business Alliance Academies will be offering some credits to

high school students who take and pass the collaborative training. There was only one course at one school in the state of Missouri focused on geospatial studies, but they are working to increase that around the state.

Whiteman Area Leadership Council (WALC) – Joe Scallorns gave the report for the WALC. Mr. Scallorns said they are still working to support the airmen on the base, despite having to do things a little differently. They recently held a holiday ball virtually. WALC continues to meet virtually and participate in several projects with long-term impacts on the base. The Air Force did a survey of the quality of school support at all of the bases, and the school support at Whiteman Air Force Base led by the Knob Noster district was ranked number one out of all the Air Force bases in the country. He also reported that some schools are participating in a Space Force STEM education initiative this month called DeSTEMber.

The 442nd fighter wing just returned all personnel and equipment safely from a deployment. The 20th Attack Squadron just received an award as the top RPA squadron in the Air Force. The nuclear strategic mission at WAFB is ongoing despite the circumstances. Its mission-readiness is reported to be the best it has ever been since its conception. Col. Shriner is coming off his third quarantine. It is not easy but they are getting it done.

Lake City Army Ammunition Plant – No one on the line to give update.

Sustainable Ozarks Partnership (SOP) – Dorsey Newcomb provided the update for the SOP. He gave a review of their accomplishments from the past year. Joe Driskill, Rep. Steve Lynch, and Mr. Newcomb had the opportunity recently to meet with the newly-elected Bill Hardwick who will be serving as the District 122 representative.

Office of the Missouri Military Advocate – Joe Driskill provided his quarterly update. Mr. Driskill provided commissioners with an activity report and read-ahead material prior to the meeting. Mr. Driskill reported that he has had limited travel since the September 1 MMPEC meeting due to the Department of Economic Development continuing to work from home. He traveled to Washington, D.C. twice for his work with the Association of Defense Communities. Additionally, he traveled to the Fort Leonard Wood area and Whiteman Air Force Base, and he has continued to attend meetings virtually or by telephone.

The consultant team (Baker Donelson and Kit Bond Strategies) has continued to be very active in his office's work. They have done a lot of continued work on federal initiatives. The Kansas City National Security Campus (managed by Honeywell) has continued to do very well, and it's a big area of focus in the United States for nuclear weapons modernization. Honeywell has continued to hire new employees there.

In terms of the state's COVID-19 response, Mr. Driskill reported that the numbers of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths are higher than in the spring and summer. The Pfizer vaccine was recently approved and vaccinations will begin today in the state. He then discussed the phases of vaccine availability to various populations in Missouri and the timeline for completion.

Mr. Driskill's office has continued work on military family quality of life issues. Blue Star Families as well as SOP and the state have been working together on spousal employment issues,

but there is some funding barriers there. They have focused on a lot of military and family issues as well and that is a DOD priority.

His office is working on a comprehensive plan to better serve military service members, families, and veterans. This includes ensuring statewide uniformity in the awarding of college credits for military education and training. Mr. Driskill said the college credits issue is really hard to market, especially due to the lack of standardization. In addition, his office is working closely with the Missouri Veterans Commission on the launch of a new website to highlight benefits for military service members, veterans, and their families and show “Why Missouri.” They also want to improve job matching and retention in Missouri.

Mr. Driskill also gave a strategy progress update. Some of his office’s progress has been hindered due to COVID-19, but they are mostly on track.

Mr. Driskill also outlined his recent work with the Association of Defense Communities (ADC). ADC recently hosted their first Summit Series in lieu of their national meeting in Washington, D.C. They have also been working on their COVID-19 Military Support Initiative (CMSI) and “One Military, One Community” initiative, in addition to interacting with their contacts.

Baker Donelson Briefing – Steven Hyjek provided the consultant briefing for Baker Donelson. Joe Biden was certified by the Electoral College as the next president-elect of the United States. President-elect Biden will not nominate any senators for the cabinet because they cannot afford to lose any. News reports today indicate we will get an omnibus bill this week, and it will include a COVID package. COVID response, stimulus, and climate change are the transition team’s top three priorities when President-Elect Biden takes office. They are expecting the administration to have a trust-but-verify relationship with China. They will likely have a much stronger position towards Russia and their military power, and there will probably be a shift in focus in the Middle East. In the short-term the Army and Air Force will do well during the transition. Long-term, however, there will likely be an end to end-strength growth and a movement to halt troop reductions in Afghanistan and Europe. Defense infrastructure will continue to be somewhat starved due to the need to pay for people first. However, there is no doom and gloom—defense will still be important.

Kit Bond Strategies Briefing – Mike DuBois gave the consultant briefing for Kit Bond Strategies. The NDAA was passed by both the House and Senate last week, and it has a veto-proof majority. It authorized \$740 billion total. Of note to Missouri, full-funding was authorized and appropriated for another round of F-18’s and the next three out years for the Super Hornet. The F-15EX was fully funded and authorized as well. Additional funds were added for the Kansas City National Nuclear Security Administration, particularly for weapons programs. The B-21 program was fully authorized and funded as well. Over \$800 million dollars will go to 60 UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopters. The new GLWACH hospital is fully funded by both the House and Senate. The new NGA West campus is also fully funded.

OLD BUSINESS

Driskill provided an update on old news. The Governor’s Office requested the budget cut to be permanent.

Mike DuBois provided an update on the economic impact study being conducted by Kit Bond Strategies and Development Strategies. This study will account for FY19 and major MILCON awards such as the new hospital at Ft. Leonard Wood. This will increase Missouri's DOD impact totals with some significant magnitude. They also will be focusing more on zip codes so they can get a better understanding of local impacts. The target date for completion is Monday, December 21, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS

The MCRG grant applicants were recommended to the commission and representatives from the two organizations gave brief overviews of their applications.

A roll call vote was conducted for each application. The results follow:

Sustainable Ozarks Partnership:

- Chairman Steve Ehrhardt: Abstaining from vote due to conflict of interest
- Commissioner Turner: Yes
- Commissioner Wallach: Yes
- Commissioner Nelson: No Response
- Commissioner Frencken: Yes
- Sen. Walsh: No Response
- Sen. Wallingford: Yes
- Rep. Lynch: Yes

Whiteman Area Leadership Council:

- Chairman Steve Ehrhardt: Yes
- Commissioner Turner: Yes
- Commissioner Wallach: Yes
- Commissioner Nelson: No Response
- Commissioner Frencken: Abstaining from vote due to conflict of interest
- Sen. Walsh: No Response
- Sen. Wallingford: Yes
- Rep. Lynch: Yes

Both organizations were approved to receive the funds they requested.

Mr. Driskill discussed the FY21 goals and strategies for the commission.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Driskill discussed the proposed meeting dates for 2021. The following dates were proposed:

- March 2
- June 1

- September 7
- December 7

Special meetings will be held in-person or by phone, as needed. It was decided that March 5 might work better for the legislative commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business on the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 12:28 P.M.