



FAOA

Foreign Area Officers Association ♦ Board of Governors

BOG Meeting Minutes

16 October 2009: 1800 - 2200

Chez Andr e French Restaurant and Bar

Attendees: Michael Bucher, Gary Espinas, Michael Ferguson, Coyt Hargus, Kurt Marisa, Vincent Martinelli, Ivan Raiklin

Agenda:

- I. Opening
- II. Officer Reports
 - a. President
 - b. Vice President
 - c. Treasurer
 - d. Secretary
 - e. Editor
- III. Old Business
 - a. FAOA Charter Review
- IV. New Business
 - a. Pentagon FAO Hall of Fame
 - b. 2010 FAOA Dinner
 - c. FAOA Briefing
 - d. Sponsors
 - e. Outreach
- V. Any Other Business
- VI. Closing

Minutes:

Meeting called to order by Gary Espinas (GE) at 1838. GE reviewed agenda and asked for additions (IV d. and e. added). President GE then provided an overview of his meeting with the previous BOG President Steve Norton (SN) where SN offered a number of suggestions/comments.

First, the policy luncheons have been an effective tool for the FAOA to generate new members and should be continued. SN suggested we always aim high with speakers to draw crowd. RADM Lemmons is still willing to support next (or another) luncheon. Discussion turned to luncheon format with suggestions of having the service proponents either as "opener" for main speaker to update on service-specific items or perhaps a panel of all the proponents, even expanded to include the service "FAO chiefs" as part of a 1-day or 1/2-day conference.

GE also passed around the current certificate used to make each speaker an honorary BOG member. Suggestion was made to make them instead lifetime members and have a sponsor support the dues (include qtrly luncheon and yearly dining out). Motion made and carried to make this discussion for next BOG meeting.



Second, SN stressed the importance of the Journal. In the past, DIA and USA paid substantial amount for hard-copies sent, but no longer do. **AI** - Stephen Wilkins (SW) to contact organizations again and solicit payment for provided hard copies.

Third, SN promoted the dining out as an excellent outreach but need to start planning now. Ideas discussed relating to the dining out included inviting foreign attachés and get sponsors to pay their costs; perhaps have instead a dinner and a separate reception (where the foreign attachés could be included); shoot for a reception in the capitol rotunda for 2011; form a committee similar to last one made of local FAOs (include 1-year membership as thanks); post on website and in journal “Need Help” postings for dining out, editors at large, GC assistant, accounting assistance, etc...

Fourth, GE passed out a memo that had been prepared by the DIAC Assistant General Counsel concerning acceptable behavior of serving officers in conjunction with the FAOA and interaction with USG agencies. GE suggested each member review and considers their actions to determine if they are appropriate/legal. Acting officers may not be able to promote the FAOA in certain circumstances.

Last, GE suggested that the BOG post meeting minutes on the FAOA website. All BOG members agreed it was a good idea.

Vice President’s Report: Kurt Marisa (KM) will pursue with the USAF AWC establishing a writing award focused on FAO and suggested this be expanded to other service schools. This will provide recognition for the FAOA and input for the Journal. Suggestions made to include a plaque and certificate, perhaps with awards named for service-specific historically-significant FAOs. **AI** - Mike Ferguson (MF) will research and provide info on these. **AI** - KM will work to establish award for USAF AWC writing award.

KM suggested we develop an editorial board (at large) to boost the quality/prestige of the Journal as a “peer-reviewed” product (similar to other journals). Typical is two editors per input, provide recognition in the Journal. Tapping our retired/lifetime members as possible editors, BOG editors as main coordinating board. Motion made and carried to explore options and provide proposal to the BOG within 60 days. **AI** - Coyt Hargus (CH) will provide editorial board proposal to BOG.

KM highlighted the importance of coming to terms with the database and increasing its validity as much as possible since this is the primary means of connection with our membership (sighting the recent policy lunch cancellation).

KM also noted the “branding” of the FAOA needs to be refined and made consistent. Currently it is very “Army”, very “DoD” and the logo/seal is not professional. The FAOA is already a known entity; BOG needs to expand our scope and visibility so as not to miss networking opportunities (such as recent FAO conference). As this is developed, it may be prudent to “professionalize” many aspects of the FAOA such as the webpage, the journal, the accounting, etc... through paid positions supported by sponsors.



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Currently there is only one means of receiving the journal via hard-copy - through a membership. However, memberships are geared towards individuals and not organizations. GE suggested the FAOA provide a subscription option for organizations, libraries, schools to receive the Journal.

Treasurer's Report: Ivan Raiklin (IR) reported for SW. Primary account has approximately \$5000. BOG does not know expected or historical income (from memberships, luncheons), nor is there a budget. There is also an investment account with approximately \$15K. Mike Bucher (MB) reported 25 new members this year (that is about \$2400 in revenue from memberships based on 1-, 2-, 3-year or lifetime). MB has no idea what the typical membership dues bring in each year.

Publishing the journal will significantly deplete current funds (if \$3000 per issue is true) and leave little room to publish next quarter. Discussion centered on whether to even publish now or simply go with an electronic copy. Some believe it is important to have hard copies in offices/organizations as an important outreach and visibility. Neither CH nor MB are aware of how exactly the Journal gets published and distributed or what mailing list is used to determine recipients. Membership in roster includes 309 current on dues (180 of which are life-time members). CH was told it costs about \$3000 to publish/distribute the Journal each time; however, BOG is unclear what that includes. Suggestions were made to mail only to the active membership and print some number of extra hard copies to distribute to organizations. Motion made and carried to determine method and estimated costs before deciding. Suggestion also made to change from a date on the Journal (October 2009) to a quarterly designation (4th Quarter 2009 or Winter 2009). AI - CH will contact publisher and previous editor to determine exact method and costs of publishing the current Journal. Steve Wilkins will change over the bank and credit card accounts.

Secretary's Report: MB's primary focus through the end of the year is establishing the on-line membership database. FAOA website host allows multiple email boxes and MB suggested the BOG take over the existing ones (editor, president, vice president) and will send out directions on how to access them. For any BOG members that have photos to add to their bios, please send them to MB.

Editor's Report: Much discussion already on the Journal. CH decided to remove the footnotes/endnotes from the articles as they significantly added to the overall length of the Journal. Suggestion was made to keep them in the on-line version and make a note in the printed version that the foot/endnotes are available on the website.

CH would also like to include a schedule in the Journal to highlight upcoming events (luncheons/dining out/conferences).

CH suggested the Journal title and cover be changed to better reflect the BOG's intent. Suggestions were considered with a subtitle of "The Journal of the



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FAOA". Further, the full-page FAOA seal is distracting and lacks the professional quality CH and the BOG would like to see.

Old Business - FAOA Charter Review: IR suggested Article IV, para b. currently limits the FAOA membership and seems inconsistent with current BOG's vision of what the FAOA should be. Vincent Martinelli (VM) also suggested Article III sections on BOG qualifications (NCR residency) should be amended. Motion made and carried that IR will consolidate and send out via email suggested changes for an email vote by the BOG. Suggestion was made that the charter will likely change as the BOG moves forward and a thorough review might be better accomplished at a later date to reflect changes made. **AI** - IR to propose charter changes via email to BOG. Mike Ferguson and Ivan Raiklin will pursue the possibility of a new FAOA logo design as a possible contribution.

New Business

FAO Hall of Fame: GE reported on discussions in his capacity as a member of OSD Policy with the OSD FAO office on establishing a FAO Hall of Fame in the Pentagon and received enthusiastic support. GE will be point on implementing the HOF but expects this to be a lengthy project.

2010 FAOA Dinner: Per previous discussion, dinner plans need to be made now. General consensus is it is important to establish a date now and location and begin to advertise the event. Calendar was reviewed and motion made and carried to set May of 2010 as best timeframe. Army Navy Club provided excellent venue for 2009 event. **AI** - GE, as member, will contact the Club and check for dates. BOG members will also seek out FAOs living in the National Capital Region who might be interested in volunteering to participate in the dinner committee. We also need an energetic FAO to take the lead of this committee.

FAOA Briefing: BOG reviewed current FAOA briefing and agreed likely adequate for now but needs updating. GE will use in upcoming trip to Germany to promote the organization. However, as with previous discussions, BOG needs to seriously consider the FAOA "brand" and how the FAOA should be consistently presented.

Sponsorship: MF stated there are a number of different types of memberships (corporate, organization, academic, military) and means (event specific, awards, journal, etc...) and levels (i.e. gold, silver, bronze). Corporations will typically provide the main source of funds. Organizations, academic institutions and military units provide more visibility and synergy. Discussion/brainstorming followed on the many possibilities and whether the FAOA is ready to move forward on seeking sponsors. KM



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suggested BOG consider enlisting a sponsor the jumpstart the professionalization of the Journal as the main source of legitimacy for the FAOA.

Outreach: RI pointed out the need to reach out to like-minded organizations to develop reciprocal relationships. The BOG's diverse experiences provide opportunities to pursue such paths. Motion made and carried for various members to begin discussions on what we can do. **AI** - BOG to explore the following: NMIA - Ferguson; Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired (DACOR) - Espinas; AFIO - Raiklin; DIA Alum & NDIC - Marisa; DoS and DISAM - Coyt.

KM suggested that if there is an OSD FAO office, perhaps FAOA should propose a distro list for the Journal and seek that office's support and handling of the distribution of the Journal.

Other Business: VM suggested that, although many good ideas and COA were discussed, the BOG needs to establish a proper focus through a vision/mission statement to help set the priorities. GE agreed and asked VM to assist the BOG in establishing this.

GE suggested the BOG cannot afford to let the cancelled luncheon languish. BOG agreed the luncheon should be rescheduled ASAP, before Thanksgiving holiday. Motion made and carried to shoot for 19th or 20th of November. **AI** - GE will contact club to check the availability and MB will contact RADM Lemmons' office to check his availability. If he is not available, GE will check with Ralph Peters as alternate.

BOG meetings will take place on a quarterly basis. General consensus is a great deal can be accomplished via email and quarterly meetings will likely be sufficient, usually in conjunction with the luncheon. Motion made and carried to plan for the next BOG meeting to follow the rescheduled luncheon.

Meeting closed at 2152.