

**ARMY ENGINEER SPOUSES’ CLUB**

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

5 June 2019

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Kimberly Gibbs, Launa Klimowicz-Brown, Bette, Meuleners,

Basia Kent, Jackie Caldwell, Priscilla Noah, Connie Semonite, Susan Wright, Deborah Kalisz Weir, Michelle Funkhouser, Cathy Hansen, Terri Stevens. **Per Zoom**: Wendy Owen, Vanessa Joly, Sheila Kelly, Kimberly Sheaffer-Oborski.

**CALL TO ORDER** at **1039**.

***HONORARY PRESIDENT:*** Connie Semonite

1. Connie welcomed all Board members present and via Zoom.
2. Connie thanked all outgoing board members for their time and service to AESC and presented gift of a gold heart shaped dish with engineer castle emblem on behalf of Kim Houston and herself.
3. All board members present introduced themselves, noted their role within AESC, their unit affiliation and an interesting fact.

***PRESIDENT***: Christy Cramer Preston

1. Message from Christy: This year has been amazing. I’m very proud of each Board member and what we have accomplished this year. The AESC is the best organization that I have ever been a part of and with Launa at the helm this upcoming year will only get better. Thank you for your support. Thank you for bringing your “A” game to every meeting. I appreciate and I’m in awe of each of you. Thank you, Connie and Kim. Your guidance means so much to me. This organization flourishes because of you. Your dedication to Engineer Spouses is fierce and powerful.

***VICE*** ***PRESIDENT***: Lois Cook

1. In May, we cancelled the tours of Hillside Estate and the walking tour of Georgetown due to lack of interest/RSVP.
2. The social group met for a Luau at the home of Michelle Tyler.
3. In June, we plan to explore food and shopping at Union Market in DC (not to be confused with Union Station). Deborah Kalisz Weir stated that this is awesome. It’s in DTDC - NE, close to HQ with good parking, and is similar to a warehouse, indoor food truck experience.
4. The boat tour scheduling is still in progress, but price will be high for a small group. More info will be sent through circulation.

***SECRETARY***: Kim Gibbs

1. June agenda sent to Board. No changes were noted to content. The time of adjournment was listed as 1430.
2. Motion was made to approve minutes with the 1430 time included by Cathy Hansen, seconded by Priscilla and minutes were approved unanimously by Board members present.
3. Moving forward, Kim will complete June minutes and send to Board for approval and continue to remain in contact with AESC Board over the summer and assist as needed.

***TREASURER***: Kimberly Sheaffer-Oborski

1. Reconciliation:

Account Balances (as of May 31, 2019):

* BB&T Statement, $19,401.75 (outstanding Checks: $270.00 The Fairfax, $295.00 Lighthouse Woodworking, $13.60 Sheila Kelly)
* Register and General Ledger, $18,823.15
* PayPal, $159.47 ($109.47 of W&M sales to process, $50.00 stays in account at all times)
* Petty Cash, $0
* Credit Card, $14.99 (Zoom fee for June meeting)

Memberships:

* To date, we have 10 2019/2020 Memberships

Misc.:

* Please submit all 2018/2019 expenses ASAP
* We will be scrubbing the PayPal access and password for everyone. Be on the lookout for an email confirming PayPal information for 2019/2020. Let Kimberly know if you need access for your role.

1. Moving forward, Kimberly will process PayPal transactions for deposit to bank account.
2. Kimberly will continue to train incoming treasurer and create 2019/2020 Budget with Basia Kent. Completion of new Budget is anticipated next week/Mid-June.
3. Kim Gibbs will provide Knollwood POC and address to mail $603.00 Knollwood Bake Sale check.
4. Kimberly had a question regarding members sending in payments for multi-year memberships: how do we handle this and keep track with membership and financial records?

* Issues noted of different forms of payment (check and PayPal) so this is difficult to consistently track.
* Also, issue of record of payment being lost in the budget and logistics of keeping track of this year to year.
* Cathy suggested that if multiple years are paid considered a donation.
* Board agreed that paying for 1-2 years of membership is fine, beyond that money will be refunded. This aligns with current practice.
* PayPal will be set up to do membership for $25.00 for 2019-2020 when placed in cart. Laura Putnam will coordinate membership piece with PayPal changes. Basia Kent will contact Laura with changes and work with her.
* Deborah suggests making a clear statement on form that this is a single year membership. Jackie will work membership form with this statement.

***AEMA CHAIRPERSON*:**  Kara Anderson

1. Kara sent AEMA award packets to winners not attending luncheon.
2. She requested GKM funding and monies received for one new award and four previous awardees and sent GKM packets, letters and checks.

Kara forwarded mailed membership information to Jackie, Laura, Sheila and Kimberly and sent membership checks to Kimberly.

1. Kara checked the mailbox.
2. She spoke with Kay Burlin, our Fairfax resident liaison regarding the luncheon and room change. Kay said she was upset with the room change and lack of accommodation. Kay reached out to Joe DeCola, the executive director to discuss the situation. Joe assured Kay we would not have any issues in the future.
3. Moving forward, Kara is finalizing all expense and will continue working on finance records.

***CIRCULATION***: Sheila Kelly

1. Sheila is tracking memberships and as brand-new members join send them the latest Castle Gram and information.
2. Sheila emailed and mailed May and June/July Castle Gram. She feels it has been cost effective to purchase printer ink and paper. She started printing the CG in December, and although more work for her, she doesn’t mind.
3. FROM Sept – Nov the cost of stamps & copies = $107.54 FROM Dec- June the cost of ink & paper (1000 sheets) and postage $27.41 + $33.72= $61.13
4. In December, Sheila also went from mailing 5 copies to mailing 6 copies. Totals should be confirmed w/treasurer. Sheila has purchased one pack of 500 paper and printed, double sided about 130 pages a month. Ink was purchased in bulk and Sheila will keep track of this as she prints the CastleGram in color.
5. Sheila forwarded all relevant emails to appropriate board members.
6. Sheila mailed receipt for reimbursement for postage to Treasurer.
7. Sheila sent message to Board: Thank you everyone for another fabulous year, I LOVE serving on this board and awarded the opportunity to meet so many wonderful ladies! Miss seeing all of you in person. Come visit sunny Florida, our door is always open!
8. Emails Sent:
   * 4/30 Knollwood bakes sale & board meeting (All)
   * 5/2 approval needed 2019-2020 executive board elected officers (Board)
   * 5/3 May Castle Gram (All)
   * 5/9 Ballot voting Executive Board 2019-2020 (All)
   * 5/19 May social (Local)
   * 5/21 Voting results 2019-2020 election (All)
   * 5/27 DCA Honor flight info (Local)
   * 6/1 June/July Castle Gram (All)
   * 6/3 DCA Honor Flight info (Local)
   * 6/4 Board meeting info/lunch (Local)

***WEBMASTER:*** Terri Stevens

1. Terri added photos from AEMA Luncheon to Events page.
2. She added photos from December Cookie Exchange to Events page.
3. Terri added upcoming June events - Union Market Tour and Boat Tour/Sailing.
4. Terri added April Board meeting notes.
5. She attended May board meeting and Knollwood bake sale.
6. She added May and June CastleGrams.
7. Terri added Castle Ball information.
8. **Interesting Website Statistics for May 2019: www.armyengineerspouses.com:**
   * Average visits per day: 55
   * Average page views per visitor: 2.9
   * Top referring sites: *www.google.com* and *search.militaryshholar.org*
   * Most visited pages:
9. *Home page*
10. *AEMA*
11. *Membership*
12. *Events*
13. If any Board member would like an AESC role email, please contact Terri for set up and linking to your personal email.
14. Board discussed a better name/title for “circulation”. Thoughts were that it sounds impersonal and autogenerated, often leading to spam folder. Suggestions for changes included “AESC: News Updates”, “Army Engineer Spouses Club”, “Army Engineer Spouses” and Army Engineer Spouses @AESC.com”.
15. Deborah suggested we look at targeted population to see what would catch their interest.
16. Terri will send test emails and work with Susan to find an email address for circulation that does not end up in spam folders.

***NEWSLETTER/CASTLEGRAM:*** Susan Wright

1. Susan researched and wrote articles, edited incoming updates from Europe and JED districts. Pulled items from Honolulu, Far East (Korea) and Keepers of the Castle (Fort Leonard Wood, MO) on Facebook.
2. She reached out all incoming 2019-2020 Executive Board members to submit a small introduction biography for the CG with a picture. Launa and Kim sent their bio. Great job, thank you very much for sending one for the CG.
3. Susan emailed the CG media team about possible survey we can send out to members about what they would like to see in the upcoming membership year:

*Hi ladies,*

*I have been searching the internet for survey questions to ask our members what they would like to see in next year’s CG. Feel free to add or remove questions.*

*Below is a sample I pulled off the internet. You can substitute newsletter for Facebook or website.*

*The more members we can get the more scholarship money we can raise!*

*Do you think it would be a good idea to steer traffic to Facebook, CG and website with circulation reminders of current items? So, we are all connected as one big info go to?*

*Terri, I think Weebly has a survey form we can use similar to this... LINK:* [*https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/cflnetworknewsevaluation*](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/cflnetworknewsevaluation)

*Questions off the top of my head*

*1. What events or tours would you like to attend as a group*

*2. What type of content would you like to see on our Facebook page, website and Castle Gram?*

*3. What type of products would you like available for purchase in the Castle Boutique*

*4.What features would you like to see in the CG? Spouse Highlights, Chit-Chat column, Corp of Engineer events, Spouse job highlights, Travel info for Military families. Tricare updates, Military family concerns/current issues...*

*5. Spouse support to write up regular columns?*

*6. Interest in other Engineer Districts?*

1. Susan asked the Board to review potential AESC survey questions and give her feedback:

***SAMPLE:***

[***http://www.surveyshare.com/templates/newslettersatisfaction.html***](http://www.surveyshare.com/templates/newslettersatisfaction.html)

1. ***What is your level of interest in the association's newsletter?***
2. ***How important to you is the regular newsletter sent by the association?***
3. ***How satisfied are you with the layout of the newsletter?***
4. ***How satisfied are you with the quality of the writing?***
5. ***How satisfied are you with the overall content?***
6. ***How satisfied are you with the timeliness of the information presented in the newsletter?***
7. ***How satisfied are you with the practicality and helpfulness of the information presented in the newsletter?***
8. ***How satisfied are you with your ability to submit information or articles for inclusion in the newsletter?***
9. ***How much do you agree or disagree that the issues covered are important to association members?***
10. ***Do you feel the newsletter effectively provides information important to the overall needs of the members?***
11. ***What, if any, information or sections would you like to see included in the newsletter in the future?***
12. ***What, if any, sections do you think should be removed from the newsletter?***
13. ***Overall, how satisfied are you with the regular newsletter?***
14. Moving forward, Susan hopes to get names of incoming commander spouses, and contact them to see if they have an active spouse club and would like to contribute an article once a month to the CG. Rachel Baker from Weisbaden (Europe District) and Benef Verell of the Japan District (JED) will continue contributing the spouse activities.
15. Susan would also like to add a Historian section; she is partnering with Michelle Tyler on this.
16. Susan would like to have copies available for the Castle Boutique table and publish a schedule of when the Castle Boutique would be set up.
17. Board discussed etiquette section for upcoming Castle Ball August 2 and other events. Suggestions were made to feature dresses or stores so spouses could visualize attire; Deborah reminded us that we should be cautious about who/what resources AESC supports, so there is no conflict of interest.
18. Connie suggested using the new Army Spouse Handbook as a reference and featuring this book in the Castle Boutique. She also reminded us when discussing appearances, ensure advice is positively stated.
19. Jackie remarked that Susan does a phenomenal job with our newsletter. Board agreed that the CastleGram is incredibly well done.
20. This discussion led to Twitter Page for AESC. Most Board members did not know we had one! Launa will research this further.

***NOMINATIONS***: Vanessa Joly and Bette Meuleners

* 1. The AESC finalized slate of officers.

Elected Officers:

* President: Launa Brown
* Vice-president: Mary Alice Jakso
* Secretary: Kim Gibbs
* Treasurer: Basia Kent
* AEMA Chairperson: Laura Putnam
  1. Thank you to Christy, Bette, and Roz for your help and guidance with this process.
  2. Bette would like to thank Vanessa Joly for all her hard work filling the slate for the Executive Board for 2019-2020.  She did a wonderful job.
  3. Bette would also like to thank those who have volunteered to be on the Executive Board for 2019-2020.  We all really appreciate your willingness to work on behalf of AESC for the upcoming year!
  4. Moving forward, help is needed to fill vacant positions on the appointed board:
* Parliamentarian: VACANT
* Membership: Jackie Caldwell (Laura will continue to assist)
* Hospitality/Reservations: VACANT
* Castle-Gram: Susan Wright
* Webmaster: Terri Stevens
* Publicity/Facebook: Carolyn Hudson
* Historian: Michelle Tyler
* Circulation: Sheila Kelly
* Corresponding Secretary: Shannon Luzzatto
* Ways and Means: VACANT
* Services and Welfare: VACANT
* Fairfax Liaison: Kay Burlin
* Knollwood Liaison: Ann Kem
* Knollwood Bake Sale: Priscilla Noah
* Nominations: Vanessa Joly
* Nominations Emeritus: Bette Meuleners
* Scholarship: Kara Anderson

Honorary Board Members:

* Honorary President: Connie Semonite
* Honorary Vice-president: Kim Houston
* SES Spouse Advisor: Jackie Caldwell
  1. Launa is reaching out to Kim Farnsworth, Blythe Hoggenbloom, Betsy Rayfield and Holly Shearer to fill vacant positions.
  2. Jackie Caldwell will ensure Michelle Tyler is listed as Historian in RedBook.

***HOSPITALITY/ RESERVATIONS*:** Michelle Funkhouser and Deborah Kalisz Wehr

1. Michelle and Deborah revised and completed After Action Reports and SOPs.
2. They updated passwords in Avery and AFIT accounts.
3. They deleted old emails in all Hospitality/Reservations accounts
4. Moving forward, Michelle and Deborah are available to answer questions/concerns from incoming board members. Deborah is PCSing to the Midwest, so she is a good out of area resource for confidentiality.
5. Michelle and Deborah advised to begin Cocktail Party invitation process by early August, as there are many layers of checks and planning to this event, which is scheduled for September 14.
6. Michelle with facilitate email start with Launa.
7. Invitations will need to be elevated to senior level with legal approval of wording. Protocol will help with emails and advice. The SGS will send out invitations “forwarding on behalf of AESC”; must not come from protocol. Invitations must not say “fundraiser” or mention any donations or price to attend; “social reception” or “welcome social kickoff” has been approved in past.
8. Board discussed changing “cocktail party” wording but decided to keep wording as it elevates the event beyond a social gathering.
9. A copy of last year’s invitation was passed to group; Board agreed to use similar wording on invitation, continue to call event a “cocktail party” and add Semonite’s street address for GPS use.
10. Susan will research how long this event has taken place in old CastleGram files and consult with Roz Riley. Board members present could recall cocktail party in 2013, 2012, 2005, 2006. Plans are to add “\_\_th Annual Cocktail Party” to invitation for a sense of tradition.

***WELFARE/SERVICES***: Cathy Hansen

1. Cathy delivered April meal to Ft Belvoir Fisher House.
2. She forwarded DCA monthly Honor Flights (x2) info to Website, Face Book page, and sent weekly Honor Flight info to Circulation, though no interest shown.
3. Fisher House meals at Ft. Belvoir completed until new Board year begins.
4. Yankee Candle fundraiser brought no additional sales. Cathy will close out this season’s fundraiser in June.
5. As Cathy is moving soon, she would like to transfer information to a replacement as soon as a new board member is found.

***KNOLLWOOD BAKE SALE***: Priscilla Noah

* + 1. Bake Sale completed May 1 at Knollwood. Check from AESC presented to Knollwood from prior fundraisers. Bake Sale check is still pending presentation. Kim will provide POC and address for Kimberly to mail check.
    2. Priscilla noted that AESC was treated very well by Knollwood staff. Administrators gave a tour of the grounds and house and provided a tray of cookies with meal. Ann Kem took group on a tour of her apartment at Knollwood.

***MEMBERSHIP***: Jackie Caldwell and Laura Putnam

* 1. Jackie updated Board that we have received 10 new memberships already

for 2019-2020, and that Priscilla Noah was the first member of the new year.

* 1. The 2019-2020 goal is to have more than 200 members, with membership supporting AEMA and Red Book production.
  2. 2019-202 Membership officially begins July 1; must be a member no later than October 31 to be included in Red Book, though membership is open year-round.
  3. Red Book plans are to publish mid-November and have mailed by the end of November. Each member receives a Red Book and can purchase additional books for $5.00 each.
  4. Discussed having an electronic Red Book version available as well and will finalize this in summer work session.
  5. Laura will continue assisting membership with excel and PayPal.
  6. If there are no changes to membership for, members may write in “no changes” on form or in PayPal comments
  7. Changes to membership form discussed include following and will be further discussed at summer work session:

1. Option for electronic only and/or hard copy of Red Book
2. Clarification of annual/yearly membership on form to assist treasurer and membership record keeping.
3. Addition of an opt out statement for photography use on social media. Wording to include a yes/no option so intent will be clear. Wording that it is that person’s responsibility to inform photographer at event if you do not want photo used, as this is nearly impossible to control at large events.
4. Terri will add disclaimer to website and ensure no one is “tagged” in photos.

***HISTORIAN/FACEBOOK:*** Michelle Tyler

* 1. Michelle hosted spouses’ social group.
  2. Michelle requests that anyone who has pictures from this board year and has not shared them with her, please do. For those who have, she appreciates your support.
  3. A huge shout-out to Michelle Funkhouser for sharing her incredible photography skills with the Club this year and making the images available via drop box!
  4. Michelle would like to than the board members who supported her desire to serve despite my taking on a full-time job one month into the board year, and for those supportive of my continuing in the role of Historian for 2019-20. She is optimistic the ‘learning curve’ of her job is over and she will be able to take advantage of more of the planned daytime activities and attend more board meetings this coming year.
  5. Michelle wishes all members a safe and healthy summer and looks forward to seeing you in August!
  6. Her goal for June and July is to find 8-10 fun historical snippets/stories about the Club and/or USACE to provide to the Castle Gram editor to use as needed through the 2019-20 board year.

***FACEBOOK/PUBLICITY:*** Carolyn Hudson

1. Carolyn posted items on Facebook, including Castle Gram Reminders, created events, posted reminders immediately prior to events, and posted pictures of events after they occurred.
2. Carolyn answered messages as they were received

***PARLIAMENTARIAN***: Roz Riley

1. Roz participated in Knollwood Bake Sale on 1 May.
2. She attended AESC Board meeting which followed Bake Sale at Knollwood.
3. Roz responded to emails (AEMA Memorium; Nominations Slate Vacancies).
4. She communicated with Nominations to review eligible candidates for vacant board positions.
5. All elected board positions were filled, thanks to the diligent work of Nominations (Bette Meuleners and Vanessa Joly) and healthy support from Circulation (Shelia Kelly) and the proposed Executive Board ballot was approved by virtual vote from the AESC Board on 2 May 2019.
6. The ballot for Executive Board Slate was developed (one for CastleGram publishing and one for Circulation to email out to general membership). Voting was open from Sunday, 12 May to Saturday, 18 May and monitored by email/U.S. mail for votes; Roz acted as voting teller.
7. Roz provided President and Advisors with the results of the election prior to President releasing results to Board and general membership.
8. ELECTION RESULTS:
   * There were NO Nay votes.
   * The Slate presented was unanimously accepted by the General Membership.
   * AESC 2019-2020 EXECUTIVE BOARD:

President - Launa Klimowicz-Brown

Vice-President- Mary Alice Jakso

Secretary - Kimberly Gibbs

Treasurer - Basia Kent

AEMA Chairman - Laura Putnam

1. Evaluation of Virtual Voting Process 2019:

* By email (to [vote@armyengineerspouses.com](mailto:vote@armyengineerspouses.com) or to my personal email) and by mail in ballot that was printed in the CastleGram.
* Vote breakdown is as follows:

1. Five email AYE votes sent in reply to AESC Circulation's Announcement of the Ballot (4/5 were sent **prior to** the opening of the voting window)

2. Six email AYE votes sent to "[vote@armyengineerspouses.com](mailto:vote@armyengineerspouses.com)" through HostMonster webmail (5 were same individuals that voted in reply to circulation email with 4/5 voting **prior to** open window; 2 were members not previously submitting vote as mentioned with 2/2 submitting vote **prior to** open window)

3. One AYE vote (postmarked 04May19) on ballot printed from CastleGram and mailed to Parliamentarian. Received prior to the deadline date.

4. No responses were sent to my personal email.

5. Judging from the above information, this process was confusing to some of the membership.

6. Action needed for next year's virtual voting:

* Choose to change the process to require an AYE vote for consensus
* OR Choose to better define the need for only NAY votes to respond.
* Document potential changes to Charter and Bylaws as previously identified by current board members during this past board year.

1. Roz is preparing Parliamentarian files and Binder for transition to the next Parliamentarian.
2. Roz will be available to incoming Parliamentarian and new President.
3. Roz plans to attend work session this summer. She notes considering a revision to our bylaws when we review/revise them this summer, specifically one which addresses vacancies on the slate after 30 April (Charter and Bylaw deadline for Board Slate).

***CASTLE BOUTIQUE:*** Sally Beck

1. Per Susan, traditional times for having boutique open for sales is during PCC week and Leaders Emeritus. PCC week is the third week in June, spouse’s day is June 20.
2. Organizational Day is June 21, the Board has approval to sell items there in our lunch area.
3. Launa will work with Connie on arranging both dates.
4. Sally Beck will be moving all boutique items to Connie’s home soon.

***CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:*** Shannon Luzzatto

1. Shannon plans to continue correspondence as indicated.
2. Noted by Board that condolence cards were needed for Nancy Graves, 1. of LTG Graves and Joyce, wife of MG George
3. Kim Gibbs will ensure Shannon has information to send cards.

***ADDITIONAL NOTES:***

* 1. On behalf of the AESC Board, Deborah presented Connie with a gift of an outdoor flower box for her support and guidance throughout the year. The board recognizes that Connie chooses to give so much of herself to Engineer Spouses and we are privileged to work with her.
  2. Connie thanked Board and welcomed everyone to the luncheon following the Board meeting.
  3. The AESC Board Summer Work Session is planned for July 11, 2019 from 10:00am to 3:00pm at The Fairfax. Launa will coordinate site and send further communication.

**TIME OF ADJOURNMENT:** Terri motioned to adjourn meeting, Priscilla seconded motion and Board unanimously approved meeting adjournment at **1259.**