



Quarterly Meeting of the USCG CWOA



Quarterly General Meeting of the CWOA: San Juan, PR

- Call to order: - President Christian Westerdahl
- Discussion of Old Business:
 - Time given to Secretary Rodne Clark for discussion of previous minutes.
 - Approval of the minutes: Minutes for the Annual Meeting have been posted on the CWOA website for the Annual Meeting to include a separation of documents for the Annual Meeting held in May of 2023. Additionally, work is being done to complete the minutes for the quarterly meeting held in September in Boston as well as the minutes for the Special Meeting held in November.
 - James Pulse motioned to accept the minutes as presented for the Annual Meeting. Motion was seconded by Bill Iozzino (Izzy). With no discussion, a call for a vote by Pres. Westerdahl was made. The AYE's had the vote, and the motion passed and was accepted.
 - No additional old business to discuss. Time was returned to Pres. Westerdahl.
- New Business: Pres. Westerdahl
 - A check in the amount of \$500 was presented to the San Juan Chapter of the CWOA for their involvement in planning and holding the Quarterly Meeting of the CWOA.
 - Discussion of the upcoming FY24 Appointments and Promotions for CWOs throughout the USCG. The lists have been dramatically less than in past years. Discussions with OPM regarding the smaller numbers of CWOs being made are a direct result of the USCG being over 3500 enlisted members below current staffing needs. As a result, the making of new CWOs as well as the promotions of current CWOs have decreased in the past year. OPM has decreased percentages of personnel being appointed to CWO as a result of these shortfalls.
 - Izzy questioned whether the percentage of decrease was also affecting ascension programs like OCS and DCO equally. Mike Little responded that the Association is in discussions with OPM, and the CG Academy staff and we do not have the actual numbers to say whether those numbers are similar however, the CG in general is looking and using OCS and DCO programs as recruiting tools to bring more officers into the CG and not necessarily recruiting from AD Enlisted memberships. However, based on the current numbers and decreases in OCS convenings it appears as though those numbers are similar, percentagewise, as those being given the opportunities for appointment to CWO from the current AD population.
 - Randy Reed confirmed that there are ongoing issues and concerns with the challenges being faced by CWOs & the CWOA as it pertains to recruiting and promotions. He challenged the members of the Association to remain vigilant regarding the long-term issue that face the CWOs and work with their commands to stay positive and effective in the roles that CWOs currently fill.

- Jenn Thompson asked whether there was a direct track for the new Talent Acquisition (TA) Rating that was being established, as there has not been much apparent discussion since the establishment of the rating. Mark Cortor and others discussed that often there is no direct track for some CWO specialties. Referencing past rates like RM, ST, FT, and others that were included in other CWO specialties to include Gunner, BOSN, ENG, and others. However, it is important to note that it is imperative that all AD enlisted members have a track to achieve their goal of becoming a CWO if that is their career goal.
- Pres. Westerdahl discussed the establishment of a Recruiting Committee to look specifically at the question of ensuring that EPM/OPM are looking at that specific question of CWO progression and ascension programs. And to ensure that the CWOA and AD CWOs have a voice when it comes to recruiting from the AD enlisted population.
- Pres. Westerdahl discussed the establishment of a professional OER Forum and Training program being spearheaded at the CG Academy by CDR Justin Vandenneuvel who is the PCO/PXO School Chief at the CG Academy. He is creating a training and community forum specifically for members of the CWOA where he will hold two trainings per year to discuss the importance and provide critical insight into the development of member's OERs.
- Legislative Update: - Aniela Z.
 - The National Defense Authorization Act is complete, authorizing a 5.2% increase in pay for our military members. This act also includes an update for the calculation of BAH rates. Primarily this affects our junior enlisted members however there are changes across the board. She also mentioned a study that was included in the Act that is looking at the impact and efficacy of BAH on military families. The Act has yet to be approved by congress and will be addressed when they come back into session in January. There are a lot of updates to the DHS budget that are also included in this act and our Legislative Committee continues to work with the Congressional appointees to ensure the visibility of the CG and our needs. There is also discussion to separate the needs of the CG from the other departments of the DHS to ensure that we can focus on funding and individual needs of the CG and its members more succinctly.
- Open Discussion: Pres. Westerdahl
 - James Pulse made a motion that the current financial audit be expanded to include an administrative audit to be completed prior to 31 March 2024, Izzy seconded the motion.
 - Discussion: Reasoning is that an administrative audit has never been done by the Association. This would benefit the Association and BOD ensuring that our documentation complies and is in alignment to our Articles of Incorporation as well as our By-Laws.
 - Izzy mentioned that this sounds much like our previous discussion of establishing a Governance Committee.
 - Pres. Westerdahl, mentioned that there was the establishment of the Chapter Support Committee that is working with the Association and its chapters to ensure that all of the by-laws and associated policies, procedures, and other issues are following our guidelines and being standardized to be in better compliance with the Articles of Incorporation that are established by the Association.

- Izzy made a motion to Amend the current motion to form the Governance Committee to address this issue at the next Annual meeting. Randy Reed seconded the motion to amend.
 - Open Discussion: (Continued)
 - Pres. Westerdahl called for a vote to approve the amended motion. Majority voted in approval of the motion with one Nay vote from James Pulse. The motion to amend passed.
 - President opened the discussion on the amended motion. James Pulse mentioned that the new motion defeated the purpose of the original motion and that he would recommend a no vote when it came time to vote. No other pertinent items were discussed and there was a call to vote. Vote was called and the Nays had the vote and the amended motion to create a committee at the Annual Meeting was not passed.
 - Closing Remarks: Pres. Westerdahl
 - Thank you to all who were in attendance and particularly for Chapter San Juan, PR and their efforts to ensure there was a successful meeting held at their command. See you all in March at the next Quarterly meeting being held at Chapter LA/LB.
 - Zoom Session Closed
 - Open Discussion with Chapter San Juan following the general quarterly meeting:
 - Overall, there is a feeling that Morale is down across the AD Personnel in San Juan, PR.
 - There appear to be a lot of issues with OHA and how it is being divided across the island. This affect not only the AD members but also their families and feels more restrictive than functional for the personnel being assigned to PR.
 - There was discussion about the current command climate that is affecting moral, workplace desirability, and other elements of working in PR.
 - The individual command assigned to PR are struggling due to the difficulties in getting appointments, the language barriers that exist, and the appearance of possible discriminatory behaviors for non-Spanish speaking members.
 - Like many other units throughout the CG, Housing continues to play a huge part of the issues facing CG families and members throughout PR. There is mold in the buildings, facilities maintenance is poor, and there is currently no janitorial service being contracted for on the base.
 - One of the largest issues the chapter is seeing is that the Sector Gold Badge does not appear to be supporting the mess and has recently excluded the CWOs from contact with the mess by removing all CWOs from the mess invites.
 - Better methods need to be employed by EPM when assigning members to PR. Overseas screenings need to be more complete so that the members being assigned have a better chance of being successful.
 - Motion was made to adjourn the meeting and the motion carried.