

## OPAG Minutes 08/01/2018

Mission: Represent and advocate for the professional discipline of optometry and its Commissioned officers, civil servants, contract and tribal optometrists serving within the Public Health Service and affiliated services.

### OPAG Voting members

Present:

- CDR Robert Chelberg (Chair)
- CDR Christopher Cordes
- CDR Nima Desai
- CDR Robert Kesead
- CDR Craig Rennard
- CDR Patrick Britton
- LCDR Laura Alexander
- LT Jill Thompson
- LT Albert Licup

### Liaisons/Co-Chairs

CAPT Dawn Clary  
LT Emily Mathiak

### Guest

Regina Sullivan

### Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes from 06/13/18:

1<sup>st</sup> Motion: CDR Patrick Britton

2<sup>nd</sup> Motion: LT Albert Licup

All in favor; Minutes approved.

### Subcommittee Chair Reports

1. **Administrative Management:** CDR Christopher Cordes  
No report.
2. **Awards:** LCDR Laura Alexander  
No report.
3. **Communications:** LT Jill Thompson/LT Emily Mathiak  
CP2G materials are all available on HSPAC website so access to max.gov is not necessary for OD's without .gov email addresses to navigate the next promotion cycle. Still have not been put back on the HSPAC Communications Subcommittee emails.

Received the challenge coins but still need an order form and information to processing requests. Will contact Laura DeWitt for more information but Rob and Sarah but offered to share resources as well.

4. **Data & Evaluations:** LT Albert Licup  
No report but trying to connect with HSPAC subcommittee.
5. **Policy:** CDR Craig Rennard  
No report.
6. **Recruitment (Ad Hoc):** CDR Sarah Stienbarger (via email)  
KG in WA will be attending OBC soon. Regina Sullivan will be attending OBC in August and working for the CDC so will be OPAG's CDC liaison moving forward. PJ and MM have applied to the CC and OPAG graded their application packages, which are currently on the CPO's desk. WT & AT have quit the application process and AS failed medical clearance. Unsure what to tell potential applicants with the current talks of reducing numbers in the CC. Currently, there are only about 50 PHS OD's and there are more retiring than being commissioned.
7. **Stakeholder & Community Engagement:** CDR Patrick Britton  
No report.
8. **Technical Readiness:** CDR Robert Kesead/CAPT Larry Zobel  
Answered a questionnaire that was distributed and submitted it back to the PAC committee but no feedback has been received.
9. **Training, Education & Mentorship:** CDR Nima Desai  
No report.

### **Stakeholder Engagement Reports**

**Chief Clinical Consultant:** CAPT Dawn Clary  
No report.

**AFOS:** CDR Christopher Cordes  
No report.

### **Discussion Topics**

In reviewing 2018 promotion results, OD's needing to focus in increasing visibility and deployment opportunities. This is the second year (first was in 2014) that no OD's received a temporary promotion. A letter stating concerns regarding this fact is being sent to HSPAC leadership. There's discussion about having a CV review offered this fall for OD's that are eligible for promotion to make sure that we're all representing ourselves to the best of our ability and listing everything that we do on a daily basis.

The voting member recruitment process is starting here in August and Rob will be forwarding Jill an email that will be distributed to solicit applicants. There are 4 positions that are needing to be filled. Please be thinking of individuals that you can encourage to apply, especially Junior Officers.

There were 3 articles written and submitted for consideration to be published in the next HSPAC newsletter, 2 of which will be selected.

CDR Chelberg recently attended the NDMS Summit in Atlanta. While attending the conference, had a chance to speak with CDR Horsch, who is in charge of coordinating RAMs, and discussed how many officers are unable to attend RAMs because they're required to pay for their own travel expenses. Participation in RAMs has been strictly voluntary because of this and often based on location/proximity to the RAM missions. CRD Horsch is aware of the burden created by the lack of funding and the challenge, therefore, in recruiting optometrists. He is committed to finding funding for optometrists because our role is important to the missions. The NDMS Summit is another great way for officers to get involved. RedDOG/USPHS paid for officers to attend the training. This was the first time USPHS officers were invited and there were 468 who attended, most of which belonged to RDF or other elevated deployment teams. Only 32 of those officers were Tier 3 officers. As optometrists, we're usually Tier 3 assets because of optometry being our primary deployment role. There isn't a lot of deployment opportunity unless we specifically say we want to be a logistics officer for example.

There was an email distributed by HSPAC regarding a push-up fitness challenge during the month of August. Please consider taking part of this as an easy way that OPAG can be involved in PAC activities. There's no specific number that you need to complete and just need to self-report weekly through the link in the email.

The new BMI/weight standards are effective October 1. No guidance has been received yet as far as how guidelines will be implemented, how officers who are over the BMI guidelines go about getting taped, what disciplinary or corrective actions may be taken. Nobody knows at this time who or how the reporting will be done either. A potential government shutdown could possibly complicate this process as well.

Meeting adjourned

### **Upcoming OPAG meetings**

October 3, 2018

December 5, 2018

All meetings are:

8:00 AM Alaska

9:00 AM Pacific

10:00 AM Mountain

11:00 AM Central

12:00 PM Eastern

**Call in number for October 3, 2018 OPAG meeting: 1(877)267-1577**

**Meeting number 996 574 829**