MINUTES OF THE 2015 COAST GUARD MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ANNUAL MEETING CONVENED APRIL 29, 2015, AT 4200 WILSON BLVD., ARLINGTON, VA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: (7)

Officers of the Corporation:

CWO (Ret.) John C. Baker, Vice President
Ms. Shay Cook, Treasurer
Mr. Barry M. Boisvere, Secretary

Members of the Board of Control:

LT James A. Crockett
PO1 Anika Doehl
PO1 Brent M. Ruggles

Call to Order:

CWO John Baker called the meeting to order at 0921 and welcomed those attending.

Vice President’s Remarks:

CWO Baker gave a brief overview of CGMA activities. He noted that on an average workday, CGMA provides more than $16,000 in assistance to 13 recipients. One in 14 active duty members, 1 in 23 civilian employees and 1 in 51 Reserve members received some type of loan or grant from CGMA in 2014. Approximately 71% of all assistance went to individuals in pay grades E-6/GS-7 and below. He noted that CGMA serves as a vital financial safety net, promotes financial stability and general well-being, and ultimately enhances operational readiness. CGMA clients include active duty, retirees, SELRES, retirement-eligible members of the IRR, permanent and term civilian employees, Auxiliary members, PHS officers serving with the Coast Guard, their spouses and dependent children. He made special reference to the diligent day-in and day-out efforts of hundreds of dedicated volunteer representatives at field units, members of the Board of Control and the CGMA staff. And he stated that CGMA remains strong and healthy and is prepared to meet whatever challenges the future holds.

Committee Reports:

Audit Committee

CDR Beth Naff gave the Audit Committee report. In January the firm of Murray, Jonson, White & Associates conducted an audit at CGMA-HQ. The final report was issued and presented to the Audit Committee, and the Audit Committee presented the following findings to the Board of Control. It was the opinion of the firm that the financial statements presented fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, as of December 31, 2014 and 2013.
MINUTES OF THE 2015 COAST GUARD MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ANNUAL MEETING CONVENED APRIL 29, 2015, AT 4200 WILSON BLVD., ARLINGTON, VA

She noted that the auditors were very pleased with the responsiveness and professionalism of CGMA staff during the audit. The audit team encountered no difficulties with the records or staff, and there were no required corrections or further testing. The risk for CGMA’s reserves is low, as the company portfolio is diversified and held in high quality institutions, all in compliance with CGMA’s current investment policy. The audit team also conducted testing this year to confirm CGMA Representatives are receiving the proper applications and paperwork before issuing assistance. Every site selected passed with flying colors. The auditors were able to complete the audit and all corresponding reports in February, a fast turnaround due to Coast Guard Mutual Assistance’s organized management.

Excerpts from the audited financial report will be published in the 2014 Annual Report and anyone wishing to obtain the complete audit report may do so by contacting the CGMA Director of Finance.

Management Committee

CDR Naff also gave the Management Committee report, on behalf of the committee chair, LCDR Brandy Parker. She noted that the Committee developed an Action Plan to address goals presented in the approved 2014 Strategic Plan. Pursuant to those goals, a number of proposals were subsequently approved by the Board of Control and ordered implemented.

Several goals were focused on increasing or enhancing assistance available to the Coast Guard community. The maximum annual SEG amount was increased from $250 to $350 and the SEG program was expanded to include graduate students. A new loan program was implemented to help fund the purchase and training of a service animal to assist a disabled family member. Allowable assistance was broadened to include loans to help with the cost of emergency pet expenses such as large unexpected veterinary bills or temporary lodging fees while moving or during an emergency evacuation.

Another strategic goal was to improve communications and outreach by making CGMA information accessible by mobile phones and other devices. The Website has now been modified to be compatible with mobile devices. She noted that CGMA is also on Facebook.

The Management Committee continues to work with the other committees and CGMA staff to explore and support new initiatives to meet the needs of its customers.

Strategic Planning Committee

Petty Officer Brent Ruggles gave the Strategic Planning Committee report. The Strategic Planning Committee conducts an annual review of the Strategic Plan and recommends strategic goals for the coming year. Once approved by the Board, the Management Committee develops a Strategic Action Plan to accomplish as many of the goals as can be completed by year’s end.
MINUTES OF THE 2015 COAST GUARD MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ANNUAL MEETING
CONVENED APRIL 29, 2015, AT 4200 WILSON BLVD., ARLINGTON, VA

New goals for 2015 include:

SG1: Expand or Create Programs to Meet Our Client/Customer Needs

1. Expand Respite Care to meet evolving client/customer needs (carried from last year)
2. Expand and enhance the Quick Loan program (carried from last year)
3. Explore grant/loan program for special needs children (recently implemented)
4. Explore removal of the Home Study Adoption Grant cap of $1,000
5. Explore funding of Tutor Services via Tutor.Com

SG2: Improve Communication and Outreach

1. Explore the possibility of conducting a new Assessment Survey of CGMA clients/customers
2. Leverage and utilize media networks
   2a. Consult with social media experts
   2b. Develop a plan to implement lessons learned from expert consultation

SG3: Sustain Long Term Organizational Health

1. Plan for future replacement of the CGMA client/customer database and accounting system
2. Plan to find alternative facilities for CGMA-HQ in the event the Coast Guard decides not to continue to provide space, furniture, utilities or equipment within a Coast Guard owned or leased building

Petty Officer Ruggles remarked that the strategic planning committee is the place for new ideas and welcomes any ideas whether they are from members of the board, the staff, or from our clients. It is through a healthy planning process that CGMA can continue to grow and remain strong to help all members of the U. S. Coast Guard.

Education Committee

LT James Crockett gave the Education Committee report on behalf of the Committee chair, CWO Paul Reck. He noted that CGMA has three education assistance programs currently in place. The Education Committee reviews these programs and recommends changes when appropriate. He reported that the Board of Control approved a number of Education Program changes proposed recently by the committee. The maximum Education Loan amount was raised from $2,000 to $3,000; and, clients no longer need to repay an existing Education Loan before obtaining another. CGMA issued 120 education loans in 2014 totaling over to $183,000. The maximum dollar amount for the Supplemental Education Grant (SEG) was increased from $250 to $350 per client per calendar year, and SEG eligibility was broadened to cover expenses for Graduate as well as undergraduate degree programs. Last year, CGMA provided over 2,000 SEG's totaling more than $377,000. Under the third program, CGMA offers to reimburse the amount of the loan origination fee on Stafford federal student loans and the Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students. CGMA provided more than $20,000 in such reimbursements in
2014. The Education Committee continues to look at ways to adjust CGMA’s education assistance programs to best meet the financial needs of Coast Guard families.

Mutual Assistance Committee

Mr. Frank Tatu gave the Mutual Assistance Committee report. Assistance requests are forwarded for Board consideration when they exceed $6,000, or when the request is contentious, precedent setting, or deviates from CGMA policy. Mr. Tatu stated that the Committee reviewed 10 such loan and grant requests last year. Assistance was provided in 7 cases. Two requests were disapproved. And in one case, a client’s circumstances improved and he withdrew his request prior the Board’s decision.

Finance Committee

Mrs. Shay Cook gave the Finance Committee report. She reported that CGMA received $2.15 million in contributions, which allowed it to easily provide $3.25 million in loans and grants to over 3,900 clients in 2014. The investment portfolio reflected $25.1M at the end of 2014. These investment funds remain in place to help those in need when demand exceeds what is in the operating account. The portfolio holdings also give CGMA the ability to expand current loans and programs to further help the Coast Guard community. One of CGMA’s most popular programs, the layette program, saw distribution of 25% more packages than in 2013, representing $40,000 in baby supplies and educational parenting material sent to 570 Coast Guard families. CGMA also supported the Coast Guard community by funding the financial planning portion of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) seminars for Coast Guard members approaching retirement. Last year, CGMA provided 31 financial trainings around the country. Going forward, CGMA is in an excellent financial position to address the future needs of its clients and expand programs to accommodate the ever changing lives of the Coast Guard family.

Executive Director’s Report:

Mr. Barry Boisvere introduced the CGMA Headquarters staff and presented the Executive Director’s Report. He noted that CGMA Representatives received over 1,800 loan requests in 2014 and disapproved only seven. CGMA Headquarters received 215 loan and grant requests and disapproved 21. The Board of Control received 10 requests, approved seven and disapproved two. One was withdrawn by the client. CGMA Headquarters is always available to CGMA Representatives, the other military aid societies and the Red Cross, both during the normal work day and afterhours. CGMA Staff provides quick turn-around on assistance requests, typically responding within an hour or so. In the rare instances where a request must be disapproved, more time is given to ensure that is the right response. Mr. Boisvere also reported that CGMA is taking steps to replace its aging accounting system and is preparing to change location in conjunction with the National Capital Region consolidation effort. He also noted that April is CGMA month and that the Annual Campaign was about to wrap up. The 2014 Campaign brought in cash and allotment/payroll deduction pledges totaling just under $2,000,000. Allotments from the active duty and retired military community are the Life Blood of CGMA, accounting for over $1.6 million annually.
MINUTES OF THE 2015 COAST GUARD MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ANNUAL MEETING
CONVENED APRIL 29, 2015, AT 4200 WILSON BLVD., ARLINGTON, VA

Closing Remarks:

CWO Baker thanked those attending and invited questions and comments.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 0953.

Submitted by: R. C. WOLF
Director of Administration

B. M. Boisvera
Secretary