

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

10:02 a.m. (ET) April 15, 2025 Teleconference (Zoom)

A. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME (Chair lacocca)

Called to order at 10:02 a.m. Executive Director Bullard chaired the meeting in the absence of an appointed Chair.

Roll call	
	Chair – VACANT
	KDVA – Commissioner LTC (R) Whitney Allen (proxy Juan Renaud)
Χ	Executive Director – BG (R) Bullard
Χ	TAG KDMA – MG Lamberton (proxy BG Steve King)
Χ	CED – Secretary Noel (proxy Jon Wertzler)
Χ	Lori Harper
Χ	Kelli Pendleton
	Heather French Henry
Χ	COL (R) Shontelle Adams

Staff/Guests: Stacey Shane/Dallas Kratzer (KCMA); Corey Ann Jackson (DMA)

B. OLD BUSINESS

Acceptance of Minutes – February 11, 2025.

C. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE (Steve Bullard)

Executive Director Bullard referred all present to his draft working document covering in detail current activities of the commission and said he would quickly discuss the major talking point updates. The draft working document on current activities was emailed to all participants a week prior to the meeting.

Topics he covered, focusing on updates to his previously emailed quarterly issues tracking document, included:

- Boards & Commissions is comfortable with the current make-up of the board and is in no rush to consider a chair appointee
- Capitol closure on track for June 2025
 - KCMA staff will move to the State Office Building, second floor
 - Closure will be approximately for four years, give or take a year, with intent to rework stabilization, plumbing and wiring for long-term safety
- Continuing service as State Advisors Co-Chair for the national Association of Defense Communities
 - New co-chair appointed this month in Bullard's Colorado counterpart, Keith Klaehn

- Continuing evaluation of new DOD policies and intent
- Kentucky is well insulated against BRAC-type cuts with solid mission bases at Fort Campbell, Fort Knox and the Kentucky National Guard
 - Still evaluating potential impact on DOD civilian workforce in Kentucky at this point nothing alarming other than the accelerated Blue Grass Army Depot Chemical Weapons cleanup drawndown
- ADC is taking great interest in the challenge military communities face from "Foreign Adversary" activities, such as the Chinese buying up land around military installations (thus far less of an issue in Kentucky than other states)
 - ADC is now partnering with two organizations to become more effective in this area – the America First Policy Institute and an organization called "State Shield," which is focused on monitoring and reporting on Foreign Adversary activities
- Discussed DOD notification to Blue Grass Army Depot leadership in late March they intend to advance the final closure of the chemical weapons remediation process from August 2027 to January 2026
 - Final reduction in force (over 100 personnel) is now scheduled for September 6,
 2025
 - Intent is to leave a "small staff" (not specified) to complete final closure activities
 - According to the commanding officer of the Blue Grass Chemical Activity organization at Blue Grass Army Depot, the international Organisation (sic) for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention with 196 member nations, has now officially designated the chemical weapons eradication program as "complete," permitting final closure advancement
 - DOD, in their drive to reduce costs, sees this as their opportunity to accelerate the program closure
 - We are working with Sen. McConnell's staff and the Blue Grass Army Depot/Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission (CAC)/Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board (CDCAB), is trying to get answers to why the "surety" items can be accelerated, stressing there is, from the committees' perspective, physically no way all the chemical weapons can be removed, with required cleaning, from the chemical weapons storage igloos in that time frame
 - There doesn't seem to be any Army pushback against this decision; however, he
 wants to find out how these conclusions were reached and whether any concerns
 need to be stressed
 - Stephanie Nelson from Sen. McConnell's office inquired as to how they could assist
 - We want to know how the Army determined it is possible to 100 percent remediate the BGAD chemical weapons site to international treaty standards on this accelerated timeframe and how they assure the community the mission can be brought to its intended end-state safely and completely, with no on-going risk?
- Discussed the effort to work with Rep. Steve Bratcher on reallocating the 2024 state legislature funding of \$200K (\$100K per year) for Kentucky Air National working dogs to Kentucky Emergency Management
 - Emergency Management can use these dogs to support their Urban Search & Rescue Team program

- Brigadier General (Retired) Steve King, Chief of Staff of the Kentucky National Guard, gave a quick Kentucky National Guard update, stressing continuity in force structure overall with a DOD effort to make the infantry leaner in personnel and equipment while retaining their same level of capabilities
 - BG King noted that the 138th Field Artillery Brigade has completed its transition to an Operational Fires Brigade supporting U.S. Army V Corps at Fort Knox
 - The Kentucky National Guard Teen Council is also supporting the Governor's Month of the Military Child Team Kentucky Update on April 17
 - K-12 students from Fort Campbell and Fort Knox will also participate
- Commissioner Kelli Pendleton weighed in from her new home in Utah, saying she is now involved in many similar activities for her community, including monitoring the status of the civilian workforce at Hill Air Force Base
- Fort Knox continues to monitor the impact of DOD cuts and early retirements on their civilian workforce, and supported a Kentucky Transportation Cabinet/Fort Knox REAL ID press conference March 12 at the main gate to the Fort Knox installation
 - Bullard noted that Brenda Weatherington, our invaluable contact with Fort Knox in many areas, is taking the early retirement option and will be sorely missed
- Citizens for Fort Campbell completed a successful visit to Capitol Hill March 5-7, 2025, advocating for Fort Campbell priorities, including:
 - #1 Moving forward from FY2027 to FY2026 the \$32M appropriation for the new Air Traffic Control Tower construction (life safety issue)
 - #2 Permanent Party Barracks Construction (FY26-27-28)
 - Child Development Centers (design funding has been allocated)
 - Hangars for Future Vertical Lift aircraft (Future Long Range Assault Aircraft)
 - Bullard noted he missed the trip because his flight was weather cancelled; however, the team never missed a beat in completing appointments with all members of the Congressional delegation
- First Lady Britainy Beshear will visit to Fort Campbell in honor of the Month of the Military Child and Purple Up! Day
 - This includes the First Lady rolling the honorary "First Ball" for Fort Campbell Military Kids Bowling Night at 5 pm (CT) at the Hopkinsville bowling alley
- KCMA continues working with new Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) Southeast
 Region Director Samatha "Sam" Sliney to promote DOD-endorsed legislative initiatives
 - Working with the Interim Joint Committee on Veterans, Military Affairs & Public Protection on potential interim session hearing dates and related meetings
 - Goals include Concurrent Juvenile Jurisdiction, military child care support initiatives and occupational licensing compacts
- Referencing his military/veterans state legislation tracker for 2025, Bullard briefed the outcome of the 2025 General Assembly, which saw a small number of bills actually passed as the legislature is entirely focused on bringing the state to zero income tax by 2032
 - KCMA's top priority bill, HB 303 Heroes to Healers (Council on Post-Secondary Education – KCTCS – Kentucky Board of Nursing), passed easily and will be celebrated on July 28 in Lexington
 - Governor Beshear is the invited speaker with a potential bill signing ceremony

- The Dietician Occupational Licensure Compact (HB 70), passed the House 91-0; however, like many other bills, the legislature simply ran out of time to consider full passage as leadership kept the number of bills considered down this session
- KCMA is well positioned for 2026, Bullard said, with interim priorities to include Concurrent Juvenile Jurisdiction, military child care provider licensing, DODpriority occupational licensing compacts and possibly a Collegiate Purple Star School Program (Council on Post-Secondary Education)
 - In addition, DSLO and the Council of State Governments have created a new DOD priority, the Interstate Compact for School Psychologists (https://schoolpsychcompact.org/), which will be evaluated by the Kentucky Department of Education over the interim
- The legislature, at the request of new State Representative Adam Moore, agreed to the formation of a new Kentucky General Assembly "Veterans Caucus"
 - Bullard noted that Rep. Moore sponsored a "veterans' entrepreneurship" legislation (HB 505), which failed to gain traction, noting the complication of both a fiscal note requirement and a democrat sponsor
- Bullard also reviewed veterans-related legislation, with the main success story the
 passage of a bill allowing all honorably-serving National Guard members and their
 families, including those who did not achieve official VA "veteran" status, burial in
 Kentucky state veterans cemeteries
 - All veterans bills with a fiscal impact failed and will continue to face tough sledding in sessions ahead, Bullard stressed
 - He also briefed the failure of the veterans' "claim shark" bill attempting to limit the
 profit made off veterans by for-profit organizations doing VA disability advocacy
 work, stressing the "way ahead" is to come to an agreement with Rep. Matt Koch
 over the interim
 - Rep. Koch's HB 762 competed with the JECVO-endorsed SB 198 (Sen. David Yates), complicating the waters considerably
- Bullard briefed the ongoing status of both the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) and Purple Star Schools in Kentucky
 - Both are in excellent shape, with 133 schools now participating in Purple Star and Spring cycle program inductions are underway
- Bullard also briefed the Governor's Month of the Military Child (April) proclamation, shared with Kentucky military installations, and connecting the Kentucky Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) with the Kentucky Division of Surplus Properties in an effort to help them resource a 75-acre Veterans Park and Recreation Area in Leitchfield

D. OLDCC GRANT UPDATE (Dr. Dallas Kratzer)

- Dr. Kratzer updated the ExCom on the latest activities related to our Kentucky COMPETES grant with the University of Louisville through the DOD Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC)
 - The grant program has been very successful as it enters its final phase, with the extended grant period ending May 31, 2025
 - The team has completed a wealth of research products, available at https://louisville.edu/education/departments/eleod/skills/kycompetes/products
 - White Paper on challenges facing the Kentucky Defense Industrial Base
 - Logistics and Supply Chain Analysis

- Futures Analysis
- Interview Analysis
- The Economic Impact of DIBs and their DOD Contracts on Kentucky's Economy
- Project Asset Map and Organizational Listing
- Executive Summary
- DIB Qualitative Data Results
- The team is reaching out to the Cabinet for Economic Development and other prospective partners on applying for a follow-on OLDCC grant to support Kentucky's Defense Industrial Base in compliance with the DOD-mandated Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) program

E. NEW BUSINESS (Bullard)

- Dr. Kratzer noted that the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce has announced its third cohort of its Kentucky Military Hiring Academy, a unique educational experience designed specifically for employers who are committed to building strong, sustainable veteran and military spouse hiring initiatives
 - The two-day program will be held in person at Fort Knox, Kentucky, on June 2 to 3, 2025 and is intended to provide participating employers with:
 - A deeper understanding of military talent, culture, career pathways, and transferable skills
 - Insight into the unique strengths and needs of transitioning service members, veterans, and military spouses
 - Practical strategies and tools to effectively recruit, hire, and retain military-connected talent
 - An additional third day is be offered to Military Hiring Academy employers on June 4 at Fort Campbell for their Summer Job Fair
 - Registration is now open at https://kychamber.wufoo.com/forms/ky-chamber-foundation-military-hiring-academy-zwnk3s81q4st3f/!
- Dr. Kratzer briefed an update by the Kentucky Department of Education to the Military Transition into Teaching in Kentucky program
 - Originally signed by then-Governor Matt Bevin, the order is updated to promote the Kentucky Veterans to Educators program
 - Pathway to certification for military veterans with an honorable discharge or a member of the National Guard or Army Reserves with at least six years of eligible military service who have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in an academic content area or meet PRAXIS requirements and a GPA of at least 2.75

F. OPEN DISCUSSION (Bullard)

None

G. NEXT MEETINGS

The next executive committee meeting will be held virtually (Zoom) on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. (ET).

H. ADJOURN

Adjourned at 10:58 a.m.