

**FORT GEORGE G. MEADE COUNCIL'S REPORT**

1. The one hundred and tenth (110) meeting of the Fort George G. Meade Retiree Council was held at Bldg 2234 Huber Road, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland at 9:10a.m., 6 December 2008. In accordance with AR 600-8-7, this report of the meeting is submitted:

a. The following members were present:

COL Bert L. Rice, USA Ret (Chairman)  
SGM Kenneth L. McCall Sr., USA Ret (Co-Chairman)  
COL Erwin Burtnick, USA Ret  
LTC Jeanette Hammond, USA Ret  
CW3 Gregory Crites, USN Ret  
SGM J. Paul Funk, USA Ret  
SGM James Gilbert, USA Ret  
1SG Richard Gillman, USAR Ret  
SFC Robert Caswell, USA Ret  
SFC Carlo Deporto, USA Ret  
MSGT Charles Plummer, USAF Ret  
SFC James Wafer, USA Ret  
SSG Walter B. Hollman, Sr., USA Ret  
Mrs. Cecille Morse  
Mrs. Catherine Eckford

2. The meeting was called to order with a welcome from COL Rice. The invocation was given by SFC DePorto, followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:** COL Rice reviewed, with the council, the minutes of the 27 September 2008 meeting and acceptance of same was unanimous. COL Rice then introduced the following guest:

a. Mr. Vincent James, PX Manager, who shared the following comments:

(1) Thanked the military retiree community for their support. Even with the slumping economy, sales are 4% ahead of last year.

(2) Comparative pricing remains competitive as well as the price challenging program.

(3) December 2008 will find their automotive service program being privatized which will offer many advantages to include "full auto service" and eliminate the problems that have been experienced over the past several years.

(4) The new General Manager is on board (Mr. Jose Mendez).

- (5) Issued gift bags to all in attendance.
- (6) Accepted questions/comments from attendees.

SGM Gilbert - Is the PX short cashiers? No. Holiday scheduling in effect and peak shopping hours are being addressed.

Mrs. Eckford - Are all computers on sale? Yes.

LTC Hammond - Addressed concerns relative to a recent PX sale. Mr. James provided remarks and corrective action taken.

**b.** Ms. Mary Williams (Commissary Manager) and Mr. Frank Macias (Assistant) discussed the following:

- (1) Thanked the military retiree community for their support, sales increased.
- (2) Cashiers are needed.
- (3) Addressed the Student Hire Scholarship and the DECA tuition assistance programs.
- (4) Increasing theft problem and drug of choice concern.
- (5) Holiday closing schedule - Christmas, 2days; New Years, 1 day.
- (6) Accepted questions and comments from attendees:

MSgt Plummer - expressed concerns relative to the inappropriate dress of baggers. Mr. Macias stated that he was aware of an incident where customers were offended by baggers dress and that a dress code for them is in effect. VOL Rice is to address this concern as well.

CW3 Crites - Expressed concerns relative to grocery cart maintenance. He suggested that ribbons or tags be made available to customers to attach to the carts earmarking them for repair. (Ms Williams to take under advisement.)

**c.** SFC (USA Ret) Anthony Barber, Chief, MPD attended meeting for COL (USA Ret) Cullen, Director, Human Resources, and mentioned ID cards. He stated that those needing ID cards should go on-line to schedule an appointment for same. Those arriving without an appointment may have a two-hour wait.

**4. RSO REMARKS:** Mr. Ashley remarked on the following:

- a. The success of our last Retiree Activity Day (RAD) and attendance exceeded 300.
- b. The 2009 RAD is scheduled for 9 October and will be held at the Fort Meade Pavilion.

c. The State of Maine's Christmas Wreath project that includes placement on the graves of veterans at different Veterans Cemeteries through out the world.

d. Items for the on-line newsletter are due by 31 December 2008.

e. SGM Funk questioned why RAD 2009 could not be held at Kimbrough. (On-going construction prevents same).

**5. OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**6. NEW BUSINESS:**

a. COL Rice addressed the Council as to sponsoring another Surviving Spouse Symposium. After extensive discussion it was determined that we should have one during May 2009. Mrs. Morse with others will coordinate same.

b. SGM Gilbert remarked on the letter that he received from his dentist that the doctor will no longer participate in the (Tricare) Retiree Delta Dental program. After discussion he stated that he would keep the Council informed on this issue.

c. COL Rice remarked on several issues pertaining to the VA.

d. COL Rice thanked the PX and Commissary for their outstanding support of the RAD. He also thanked Mrs. Morse and Mrs. Eckford for the pastries they prepared for today's meeting.

**7. APG UPDATE:** No remarks, no representatives appointed to date.

**8. WESTERN MARYLAND UPDATE:** Representative not present.

**9. KIMBROUGH ADVISORY COUNCIL:** Mrs. Morse attended and reported on the Medicare Tricare means testing issue that pertains to IRS. More to follow.

**10. FORT MEADE COMMISSARY COUNCIL:** SGM Funk and Mrs. Eckford offered kudos for the support rendered and their expeditious addressing of concerns.

**11. ARMY FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD:** Mrs. Morse reported that the AFAP will be a 2-day event and COL rice provided additional information.

**12. CO-CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:** SGM McCall remarked on the following:

a. He is representing the Retiree Council at the newly created Fort Meade Community Council that will be meeting quarterly to inform the community as to what is going on at Fort Meade and to address concerns that the organizations may have.

b. The approved opening of a VA clinic at Fort Meade and the telephone interview he had with the SOUNDOFF relative to same.

c. Provided handouts and explanation of the following:  
(1) Presidential order that allows direct hiring of military spouses.

(2) The Post 9/11 GI Bill.

(3) Article from US Senator Cardin relative to restoring confidence in the US economy.

(4) Article from the Comptroller of Maryland relative to Military Retirement Income.

(5) Opening of 31 new VA Outpatient Clinics.

d. Council Meeting Schedule:

Saturday, 7 March 2009 - Plan for Retiree Benefits Symposium.

Saturday, 6 June 2009 - Plan for RAD 2009 and Council's participation.

Saturday, 12 September 2009 - Finalize RAD plans and Council's participation.

Saturday, 5 December 2009, review RAD 2009 activity.

### **13. GOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION:**

a. LTC Hammond reported on the Military Appreciation Day at her church and she was amongst those being recognized.

b. The PX and Commissary issued additional gifts.

**14.** The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m. with a reminder that the next meeting would be held at bldg 2234 Huber Road, Fort Meade at 9 a.m., 7 March 2009.

BERT L. RICE  
COL, USA Ret  
Chairman, Fort Meade  
Retiree Council

KENNETH L. MCCALL, SR.  
SGM, USA Ret  
Co-Chairman, Fort Meade  
Retiree Council