**FORT STEWART RETIRED SOLDIER ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

**2 August 2024**

Conducted via On-Site Semi-Annual Retired Council Meeting at Patrick Space Force Base Command Conference Room Building 401 on 2 August 2024

**Council Members in Attendance**

COL (R) Kin La Fate – Co-Chair CSM (R) Divina Bobb LTC (R) Blair Craig

COL (R) Kevin Milton CW5 (R) Bob Letendre CSM (R) Leon Caffie

CSM (R) Mike Balch COL (R) Sam Lauricella LTC (R) Donald Hansen

LTC (R) Karen Nigara CSM (R) Edward Shelton COL (R) Jim Papritan (Emeritus)

CW5(R) Edna Frazier SGM (R) Debra Hill

1SG (R) Larry McDaniel SFC (R) Karen Bell

**Ft. Stewart-HAAF RSO Team**

COL Marc Austin, Fort Stewart Garrison Commander

CSM Ely Capindo, Fort Steward Garrison Command Sergeant Major

Mr. Tom Allmon, Director Human Resources

Mr. David Southerland, Fort Stewart/ HAAF MPD Chief

Ms. Julie Lovelady, Fort Stewart/HAAF Assistant Installation RSO

Mr. Ernest Smith, Tampa RSO Staff

* Space Wing Mission Briefing
  + The Space Wing Mission team provided an excellent Mission briefing. The briefing extended into what services they currently provided to retirees and plan services pending approval of an MOA with Orlando VA Health Center. On a bigger picture—the team discussed their mission growth and expansion of their command team to meet their aggressive space missions.
* COL Marc Austin, Fort Stewart Garrison Commander Brief
  + COL Austin outlined several of FS/HAAF’s 180 services to support a community of 118,000 Soldiers, Families, Civilians and Retirees. Next, the command’s power projection and importance to meet the Army’s goals was discussed along with the economic impact to the community. Last, partnering with the community to assist soldiers’ transition from the Army back into the civilian labor market. Also noted were MWR initiatives by the Command to focus on soldiers and their families during their down-time.
* Mr. David Southerland, Chief Military Personnel Division
  + Discussed the 2024 RAD Customer Feedback & 2025 Way Ahead
  + Key Discussion Points:
    - Return to UCF Student Union for 2025 in progress with Mr. Mike Kepner for 22 March 2025
    - Marketing must focus on digital outreach to the greatest possibility to reduce cost of mailing and printing
    - DFAS to add 2025 RAD Flyer to the LES is conditional—still in a working progress
    - Briefings will have time limits 15-20 minutes max
    - Local briefings were a positively noted by our audience but some briefers like the (Legislative & Florida Attorney General Briefing) will reflect changes for our next RAD.
    - Areas of improvement: Add Issue ID Cards, Parking, Signage, Shuttles, Briefing Font size, Add Reserve Component Briefings, and add Survival Benefits Briefing (Pat Green as a possibility speaker).
    - Coordinate with Orlando VA Health Center to set up a booth to issue ID cards in conjunction with our Fort Stewart’s ID card operations
* DFAC Lunch located across from Building 401
  + Great facility and very accommodating to our group—recommended for future use to support our annual meetings at Patrick Space Force Base
* CSA Retires Soldiers Council Issue Development
  + All CSA nomination packets are due NLT 15 September 2024
  + All Issue papers are due on 3 September 2024
  + Kevin Milton’s Team is working a paper to address concerns about the AFEES/Commissary check out proceedures—In the Commissary our retirement cards don’t function until a person personally logs us in the system// The problem seems to be effecting all retirees. Last issue, Milton’s team will address vocational Education benefits provided by VA.
  + Sam Lauricella’s team volunteered to develop an Issue Paper outlining alternate communications to effectively reach out to soldiers as they exit the Army. The logic—since most soldiers use their “Cell Phones” for the majority of their business transactions; the Army should be flexible to add Cell Phone numbers to their database to meet our goals to help reach our intended audience in the form of TEXT notifications. In short, Emails addresses are becoming antiquated therefore; we must look for more modern approaches to effectively coordinate with our youthful soldiers as they transition back as civilians.
  + Key Note: Once a team generates a topic/Issue Paper, they’ll continue to work that topic/Issue to ground but can coordinate for assistance from other groups.
* The next Virtual Retired Soldier Council meeting will be on 13 September 2024 @1400

Kinard J. La Fate

DEE BOBB KINARD J. LAFATE

CSM (R), USA COL (R), USA

Co-Chair, Ft Stewart Retiree Council Co-Chair, Ft Stewart Retiree Council