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THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF OHIO
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Held: Saturday, April 1, 2023.

Location: Department Headquarters
60 Big Run Road
Delaware, Ohio 43015-8007

*DRAGON REPORTING SERVICE
Cincinnati, Ohio
(513) 600-6151*

I N D E X

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2 Saturday, April 1, 2023.

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1 Saturday, December 3, 2022.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: I'd like to call this
3 DEC meeting to order.

4 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

5 Salute the colors. One, two.

6 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

7 At this time, Chaplain Fast, --

8 Uncover.

9 -- could you give us the invocation?

10 CHAPLAIN FAST: Heavenly Father, our
11 guidance sustainer, for God and country we pray
12 for our daily guidance in the uncertainties that
13 life presents.

14 Job asked, "Whence then cometh wisdom?
15 And where is the place of our understanding?"

16 And The Lord, You answered, "How you have
17 counseled the one who has no wisdom, and how
18 abundantly you have provided sound wisdom and
19 helpful insight."

20 We are admonished by Your word in James,
21 that if anyone is deficient in wisdom they
22 should ask God, who gives to all generously,
23 without reprimand, and it will be given to him.

24 We received Your promised wisdom to all
25 who would ask of You. And we ask for Your

1 wisdom in the matters we face today, not only
2 in our personal lives, but also in our
3 administration pertaining to The American
4 Legion Department of Ohio.

5 Let Your blessings and wisdom rest on our
6 Commander and the leadership staff in the
7 Department of Ohio. Let us find grace and
8 peace as you guide us, continuing the integrity
9 of our service to The American Legion in all
10 wisdom and knowledge.

11 By Your grace, Lord, guide our leadership
12 teams so the state and Districts and Posts
13 experience a great influx of peace and
14 brotherhood for the betterment of The American
15 Legion, the State of Ohio, and the United
16 States of America.

17 We pray this morning for all those in
18 leadership positions across this great nation,
19 but let their understanding be open to Your
20 truth and Your way, that we may prosper and
21 live our lives in peace.

22 Hear our prayer, oh Lord. We ask these
23 things in the name of the Father, and the Son,
24 and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

25 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: Remain uncovered.

2 Now, 1st Vice Rue, will you lead us in the
3 Pledge of Allegiance.

4 . . . PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BY ASSEMBLY . . .

5 Recover.

6 2nd Vice Whatley, will you lead us in the
7 Preamble of The American Legion.

8 . . . PREAMBLE BY ASSEMBLY . . .

9 All right. Now 1st Vice Rue will lead us
10 in the POW/MIA recognition.

11 1VC RUE: Resolution 288, adopted at the
12 67th National Convention, calls for designating
13 an empty chair placed at all official meetings of
14 The American Legion as a physical symbol of the
15 thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted
16 for from all wars and conflicts involving the
17 United States of America.

18 This is a reminder for all of us to spare
19 no effort to secure the release of any American
20 prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of
21 the remains of those who died bravely in
22 defense of liberty, and a full accounting of
23 those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to
24 this vital endeavor.

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: You may be seated.

1 Good morning, everyone.

2 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, I would like
4 to ask Adjutant Robinson to conduct a roll call
5 of probably, I think, some of the best officers
6 in the United States.

7 . . . ROLL CALL CONDUCTED . . .

8 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Commander, your officers
9 are present. You also have your Judge Advocate
10 and Historian, Sergeant-at-Arms, Parliamentarian,
11 and myself who are all present.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Outstanding,
13 outstanding.

14 There will be a change to the agenda,
15 because we have several guests here and a
16 couple of them would like to speak.

17 That being said, if you look on your
18 agenda, after me and my half-an-hour soliloquy,
19 we will be suspending everyone all the way down
20 to No. 21.

21 What we will do, we will make adjustments
22 throughout the day.

23 We, again, we have some guests here, which
24 our Sergeant-at-Arms is going to read off to
25 us. And we will be making adjustments to our

1 schedule throughout the day.

2 Again, ladies and gentlemen, I do not want
3 to make this a four or five-hour meeting.

4 (Applause).

5 My goal is to have us, and let me repeat
6 this, take care of business, but at the same
7 time have some fun. But at the same time,
8 don't be here until 0-dark-30 in the morning.

9 All right.

10 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: I hate to do this,
11 but a postponed agenda must be seconded and moved
12 by a 75 percent vote.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: A seconded agenda must
14 be --

15 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: You must have a
16 motion for the agenda change, a second to the
17 agenda, and a two-thirds vote. So you have to
18 have a greater than two-thirds vote.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

20 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Since you just
21 announced it, if you could have a motion on the
22 floor and a second, then you could ask for
23 unanimous consent. If nobody says no, then it
24 passes.

25 1VC RUE: Jason Rue, Department 1st Vice, so

1 moves.

2 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Second.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: Seconded by Joyce
4 Hannum, 9th District. All right.

5 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: My job is done.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Does anybody got any
7 problems with this?

8 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Can I get an
10 all in favor of adjusting the agenda, the usual
11 sign of aye?

12 FROM THE FLOOR: Aye.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor?

14 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Because if
16 you were, we were going to step outside real
17 quick.

18 All right, Sergeant-at-Arms Petrochello,
19 could you read off the list of our guests,
20 please.

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS PETROCHELLO: Past
22 Department Commander Roger Friend; Stan Oren,
23 Past District Commander, No. 1; Robert Mason, 2nd
24 Vice Commander, 5th District; Robert White, Past
25 District Commander, No. 13; Bob Mitchell,

1 Advocate for Herb Bechtel, is a guest; Jodi
2 Prater is a guest; Doug Russell, Assistant
3 Department Judge Advocate; Steve Honigfort, SAL
4 Past Detachment Commander; Holly Lewis, Gifts for
5 the Yanks Chairman; Nancy Higgins, guest, Vice
6 Commander, 12th District; Mel Cantrell, guest,
7 Post 79 Commander; Carla Loudermilk and John
8 Loudermilk, again they're guests from Post 85;
9 Harold Marotto, 2nd Vice Commander, 10th
10 District; Robert Schmitt, Past Department
11 Commander; Bob Klostermeier, Past Department
12 Commander; Carol Robinson, who is the National
13 Chaplin; Maria Frame, Auxiliary Department
14 Secretary; Cindy Masowick, Auxiliary Department
15 President; and we have Ken Hilton, who is the
16 National Vice Commander.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, let's give
18 these folks a round of applause, please.

19 (Applause).

20 I also want to thank those smiling folks
21 in the back, the staff. Thank you for being
22 here with us this morning.

23 Give them a round of applause, please.

24 (Applause).

25 All right, at this time, if we could have

1 current Department President of the Auxiliary
2 of the Department of Ohio, Cindy Masowick, who
3 will come to bring us a few words.

4 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT MASOWICK: Good morning,
5 everybody.

6 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning.

7 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT MASOWICK: If you don't
8 know me, I'm Cindy Masowick. And I am the
9 Department President. Today I asked if we could
10 come.

11 And I would like to introduce you to our
12 new Department Secretary, Maria Frame.

13 (Applause).

14 And just to let you know, she is an Air
15 Force veteran. So she is one of you guys
16 today.

17 Do you want to say a couple of words?

18 AUXILIARY SECRETARY FRAME: I don't know.

19 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT MASOWICK: And she's not
20 shy. So don't let her think she is.

21 AUXILIARY SECRETARY FRAME: I just thank you
22 for welcoming me. And I'm looking forward to
23 working with you all and the Auxiliary, and
24 helping them get back on their feet, where they
25 need to be.

1 And if anybody has questions for us, of
2 course you can reach out to me directly. Like
3 she said, I'm not shy. And I'm not a quiet
4 person. I'm a little outspoken. So that kind
5 of precedes me a little bit.

6 But, yeah, anything you guys need, just
7 let us know. And I'm hoping to help the
8 Auxiliary get to where they need to be and
9 beyond.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause).

12 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT MASOWICK: Thank you,
13 Maria.

14 Today, we also asked to be here --

15 During my travels so far this year, we
16 have come up with some different situations and
17 issues that we have District Commanders, as
18 well as our Post Commanders, trying to kick out
19 Auxiliary members. You guys can't do that.

20 So we're here today with Carol T.
21 Robinson, who is our Constitution and Bylaws
22 Chairman. She's going to explain some things
23 that you can do and you can't do. So welcome
24 Carol.

25 (Applause).

1 CHAIRMAN ROBINSON: Hello.

2 Hi, Mr. Robinson.

3 First of all, I would like to say thank
4 you to all of you for your service. Because
5 without you, I wouldn't be here, we wouldn't --
6 well, not you -- but we wouldn't be here. The
7 Auxiliary wouldn't be here.

8 Second of all, I'd like to thank the
9 Commander, Charles, for letting us come and
10 speak to you today.

11 Now, I'm sure that you all know the
12 history of the Auxiliary. We were founded in
13 1919, and all of that. We were originally
14 organized to assist The American Legion.

15 The Auxiliary has achieved its own unique
16 identity, while working side by side with the
17 veterans who belong to The American Legion.
18 Like The Legion, the Auxiliary's interests have
19 broadened to encompass the entire community.
20 The American Legion Auxiliary is a separate
21 entity from The American Legion, but it shares
22 the same values.

23 Originally, the Auxiliary was the women's
24 only patriotic organization and all of that.
25 Because, back in the day, these women came

1 together and they said we've got to help the
2 people that were at home from World War I,
3 we've got to do this, we've got to -- well, you
4 know, we're kind of bossy and kind of take
5 over. We want to help people. Okay?

6 But, however, in 2019, the eligibility
7 requirements changed. Where it said "wives,"
8 it's changed to "male and female spouses," --
9 Okay? You got that? -- "male and female
10 spouses of members of The American Legion in
11 good standing, or a female veteran in their own
12 right."

13 The relationship between the two
14 organizations is one of cooperation, rather
15 than regulations. The American Legion Posts
16 and The American Legion Auxiliary are related
17 but independent organizations. Okay? You got
18 that?

19 The reason I want you to understand that
20 is because you need to take that back to your
21 Commanders in your Districts, because we're
22 getting a lot of feedback of how the Commanders
23 want to control the Auxiliary. They cannot do
24 that.

25 Years ago, when this question came up,

1 because this has happened before, the National
2 Judge Advocate of The American Legion issued
3 the following ruling: "It is crystal clear
4 that The American Legion Post has no authority
5 to control the Unit related to it. Therefore,
6 the Post may not revoke, nor threaten
7 revocation, of the Unit's charter." They can't
8 do that. Okay?

9 They cannot tell them how to run their
10 business or how to take care of their elections
11 and who can run for office. They cannot ask to
12 see the Unit's treasury. "How much money do
13 you have? We need to know that." That's a
14 no-no. They cannot do that.

15 The Unit should regard its connection with
16 the Post as a distinct honor. There's respect
17 on both sides, the Unit, the Post. Let's go
18 back to grassroots and show that respect. It
19 should strive unseasonably to carry out the
20 National Constitution pledge to participate in
21 and contribute to the accomplishment of the
22 aims and purposes of The American Legion.

23 So that's what I wanted to share with you
24 today. So hopefully we can go back home and
25 you can talk to your Commanders in your

1 District and say, hey, this is what I learned
2 today. If not, go ahead, go on-line and read
3 it. It's there.

4 We Auxiliary members are here to help The
5 Legion, but we're not there to be your
6 housekeeper. We are not there to do the things
7 that some people think are women's duties.
8 Okay? We have our own business to take care of
9 to, but we are here to support The American
10 Legion.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause).

13 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT MASOWICK: Thank you,
14 Carol T.

15 So if you have any questions for us, don't
16 hesitate to call. But remember that if you
17 have a canteen problem with an Auxiliary
18 member, then it stays in the canteen. You
19 can't bar her. You can bar her from the Post.
20 You can escort her into her meetings and out of
21 her meetings. But you can't bar her from
22 attending her meetings.

23 One of the questions that come up also is
24 we get a phone call from a Commander, "We need
25 to get a new Auxiliary President. This one's

1 been in there. Nobody wants to come in because
2 she's there. You just need to do something."

3 No, we just don't need to do something.
4 You need to corral up and get some members to
5 go in and run against that person. We can't
6 just come in there and tell an Auxiliary
7 member, hey, they don't want you to be
8 president anymore, you have to find a new one.
9 We can't do that.

10 You guys need to corral up or tell your
11 Auxiliary members. If you want her out, then
12 you have to find a way to get her out.
13 Otherwise, she's going to be in there another
14 year, and a year, and a year.

15 But thank you for having us today. If you
16 have any questions, you can get ahold of us at
17 the office, or Carol T's. So you can always
18 call us and we'll get it out.

19 Yes.

20 11TH DISTRICT CMDR WAINWRIGHT: District 11
21 Commander Wainwright.

22 I just wanted to say, Carol, it's good to
23 see you.

24 My mother right now probably is turning
25 over in her grave and is happy the way things

1 are going. You know, in my family, my mother
2 was a Department Auxiliary Secretary for 17
3 years and my daughter 10 years. And so it's
4 been as big a part of my life as The Legion
5 has.

6 But anyway, it's so great to hear that you
7 guys are headed in the right direction. And
8 you've got a great staff there with you, so I'm
9 sure they can do it.

10 Also, my mother can't help you, but my
11 daughter, who was a captain and was in that
12 position that you're taking for ten years, she
13 knows how great the Auxiliary can be. So give
14 her a call if you need anything. Carol can
15 give you her number.

16 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT MASOWICK: Thank you.

17 You guys have a good day and have a good
18 conference, and thank you for letting us come.

19 (Applause).

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: I had the privilege last
21 week of sitting next to both those ladies at the
22 poppy celebration. And we had a great time. We
23 had a great time.

24 And if you get an opportunity to go to
25 that, please do. It's rewarding and it also

1 gives young folks a good opportunity to see
2 what we do and who we are so.

3 All right, back to business. Next up,
4 membership, Jason Rue, 1st Vice.

5 1VC RUE: Good morning, everyone.

6 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning.

7 1VC RUE: So, as a department, we are
8 currently sitting in 42nd place. As you can see,
9 that still leaves a lot of work to do. We are
10 only at 84, just over 84-and-a-half percent. So
11 we've got to get out there and start working our
12 membership a little better.

13 Of course the 9th District has done a
14 phenomenal job, evidently.

15 But the National Commander has put out
16 there retention, retention, retention. Well,
17 if you can get 90 percent retention, you will
18 hit your quota. And we're not even close to
19 90 percent on some of our Districts. So we've
20 got to hit that a little bit harder.

21 So we had our meeting March 11th, for
22 membership and Post Activities.

23 You all had the awards manual put in front
24 of you that we worked on for 2024.

25 With that, the changes that were made were

1 the Post Quota Awards were changed from a
2 September 4th turn-in, or the September turn-in
3 being \$4,000; the November turn-in a \$6,000
4 pool; the January turn-in, \$6,000 pool; and
5 March a \$3,000 pool. That motion was carried
6 and passed.

7 And anytime Post Awards will read, in any
8 combination, three new members or three expired
9 members or three 888 transfers, for a total of
10 six members into the Post. That motion was
11 made and passed.

12 For the Brown Jug, all Districts must
13 reach 75 percent to be awarded. That motion
14 was made and passed also, which is a change,
15 because before it was 70, 75 and 80, depending
16 on your size. Now they're all 75 percent.

17 We added a Brad Teis Award with Race to
18 the Top. We voted to remove the Posts champ
19 pin from the manual.

20 And that is all of my minutes, Commander.

21 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 1st Vice,
22 4th District.

23 Page 3 needs to be changed. It still has
24 5,000 on those.

25 And also, page 7, all the percentages need

1 to be changed to be 75. One has 70, one has
2 75, and the other one has 80.

3 1VC RUE: Any other things you see according
4 to this?

5 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Not so far I
6 don't.

7 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: I thought I changed
8 those.

9 1VC RUE: Well, you changed everything
10 except for -- well you changed that but it went
11 to 85. It's probably a mistype.

12 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: And we don't have
13 the dates for National yet.

14 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yeah.

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a motion to
16 approve the membership minutes with the manual?

17 14TH DISTRICT 1VC McCLAIN: Sharon McClain,
18 District 14, I approve the changes and the
19 minutes.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a second?

21 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 4th
22 District, seconds.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: Any discussion?

24 FROM THE FLOOR: That is with the changes?

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct, with the

1 changes. You were correct though.

2 Any discussion?

3 Yes, ma'am.

4 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
5 District.

6 Any of you have the Commander's patch?

7 You can only have so many patches on your hat.

8 Can they go back to the pins, like this one

9 (indicating)? Those fit on the hat and are

10 easier for people to wear, rather than the

11 patches. I don't know what those cost or what

12 reason they switched, but the pins are much

13 easier to wear.

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay. We can give them

15 a choice. Give them a choice, either the pin or

16 the patch. That will work. That will work. I

17 know I would have like nine of them. But, yeah,

18 I would.

19 Any more discussion?

20 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: We can make that a

22 choice.

23 All right, seeing there's none, all in

24 favor use the sign of aye.

25 FROM THE FLOOR: Aye.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

2 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, motion
4 passes.

5 Sharon, I still promise to pull security
6 for you the rest of the day too.

7 14TH DISTRICT 1VC McCLAIN: All right, thank
8 you.

9 1VC RUE: By the way, she was standing up
10 when she made the motion.

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: She was.

12 1VC RUE: One thing I will point out is the
13 Districts are not set in stone. There's still a
14 possibility for a change or two for what category
15 they fall into, based on how membership winds up
16 this year. So that's also a change to be made
17 later.

18 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: That will go off the May
19 31st.

20 1VC RUE: May 31st.

21 So we have a Gold Brigade New Member
22 Recruiter Award to hand out today.

23 The following member in the Department of
24 Ohio qualifies for the Gold Brigade Award for
25 enrolling 50 or more new members into The

1 American Legion by the May target date. This
2 is his first time. And I'd like to have Shane
3 Eaton stand up and come forward.

4 (Applause).

5 Is there anything you'd like to say,
6 Shane?

7 6TH DISTRICT 1VC EATON: Sure.

8 We put an importance on membership.
9 Membership is the lifeblood of The Legion.

10 You know, none of us are getting any
11 younger. So it's important we get out there
12 and reach the younger veterans and let them
13 know what their membership brings to the
14 Legion.

15 Like for me, you might pay \$50, or \$30.
16 That goes to your Post programs. But the most
17 important thing for me, and I tell younger
18 veterans, is it gives you a voice.

19 You know, The Legion has 2.9 million
20 members. And we're a congressionally-chartered
21 organization. So when you add to that, you
22 have 2.9 million other people behind you saying
23 that this needs to be pushed in Congress. And
24 that's constituents. And Congress seems to
25 listen to that. So that's important.

1 The important part is not the money. It's
2 your voice. And they seem to respond to that a
3 lot better than you just saying I need 50
4 bucks. I need your voice. That's what's
5 important.

6 And that's all I got, sir.

7 (Applause).

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you, Shane.
9 Congratulations.

10 1VC RUE: Legionnaire of the Year Award.
11 This award is to highlight the efforts and
12 contributions of a Legionnaire that reflects
13 participation and involvement within the Post,
14 District, Department and National programs. This
15 will be awarded at Department Convention.

16 I don't think he's here, but the
17 Legionnaire of the Year this year, which will
18 be presented at Department Convention, is Ron
19 Dull.

20 (Applause).

21 Before moving on and allowing Charles back
22 up here, 9th District, please stand up.

23 This is our first and only quota District
24 this year. Give them a hand.

25 (Applause).

1 If you have questions on how to do it,
2 talk to these guys. They're obviously getting
3 it done right.

4 But they're also the only one that we had
5 qualify for Race to the Top. So good luck.

6 (Applause).

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty.

8 Okay, next we'll have 2nd Vice Whatley
9 with Post Activities.

10 And we'll have Mr. Woods on deck right
11 after.

12 2VC WHATLEY: Thank you, Commander.

13 Good morning, everybody.

14 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning.

15 2VC WHATLEY: I promise you I won't take
16 more than 15 minutes to go through -- no, just
17 joking.

18 The upcoming activities that we have on
19 schedule is April the 14th through the 16th,
20 which is the pool tournament in Zanesville,
21 Ohio. Post 29 is the sponsor.

22 Also, July 29 through the 30th, 2023, is
23 the golf outing, in Dayton, Ohio again.

24 We are looking for other Districts or
25 Posts to sponsor these activities. The bowling

1 and the golf activity should move around the
2 entire state, to different cities, to give the
3 other comrades a chance to participate in these
4 activities. This is one of our largest
5 activities that the Department puts on.

6 The commissioners will do the work for
7 you. All you have to do is contact them. They
8 will take over, do the work, and tell you what
9 you need to do.

10 That concludes what I have to say.

11 Comrade Hunter, it's on you now.

12 Thank you.

13 COORDINATOR WOODS: I'm happy to say that
14 I'll probably have the shortest report of the day
15 for all of you.

16 Bowling was held at Poelking Lanes in
17 Dayton, Ohio. The hosting Post was 598.
18 Attendance was about 282. Total teams, 68
19 teams total, 142 doubles. And then we were
20 able to present \$3,000 earned back to that Post
21 598. AJ Whatley is the one that presented that
22 money to them at their regularly scheduled
23 meeting.

24 Currently, we have not identified the
25 winners. We're still working through handicaps

1 and scores. As soon as we get through all
2 that, we'll release the winners for everybody
3 to have the knowledge of.

4 And then we're currently looking to host
5 the next year's bowling tournament at Post 72,
6 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

7 We're also trying to look to get ahead.
8 So if you guys have any Posts that would be
9 interested in hosting for 2025, please let us
10 know.

11 I have nothing more to report.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. I happened
13 to be at the bowling tournament with AJ and
14 Mr. Woods. And I see he's wearing those nice
15 shoes that I saw him wearing while I was there
16 also. Gray is his color.

17 All right, next, Children and Youth,
18 Mr. Andy Adkins.

19 CHAIRMAN ADKINS: Well, we had our meeting
20 on March 11th. I think it was a long-awaited
21 meeting for a lot of guys because we had a vote
22 to take there. It was very important one, as far
23 as I was concerned.

24 We had 13 members that were present and
25 one member that was excused.

1 We had a couple of guests. Christie White
2 was there also. So we appreciated that.

3 And the reading of the minutes were done
4 and approved.

5 Our first order of business was our teen
6 suicide pamphlet. Now we've been working on
7 this for three years. It goes back and forth.
8 And I actually have a copy of one. So you all
9 should have that, I think.

10 But there were some changes made to the
11 one that we did because we had people there
12 that did not like -- well, let's see, the
13 commission discussed firearms being or not
14 being the leading cause of teen suicides.
15 There was a little argument about that. And as
16 far as I knew, the information they got was
17 from National. But they decided that we would
18 remove that if it was going to cause a problem.

19 So, "adolescent males are much more likely
20 to use firearms to commit suicide," that was
21 removed, as well as compared to firearms on
22 page 4, scratch out all the numbers in
23 paragraphs that relate to that. So we took a
24 lot of the gun stuff out.

25 The only thing we didn't change in that

1 part, "enforcement of firearms laws and
2 education" was added after that. So that was
3 changed.

4 Beyond that, it's pretty much as it was
5 printed up.

6 Now we had money in there to get these
7 done. The committee is waiting for it to be
8 approved at today's meeting, if these minutes
9 are approved.

10 So we've worked pretty hard on this. It's
11 been three years. And I'm really excited that
12 we're getting this done this year because, I
13 don't know, a lot of you might remember that
14 Brad included this in his acceptance speech as
15 Commander, that he wanted to get this done.
16 And so I'm proud that, in this year that was
17 supposed to be his, that we got it done.

18 Okay, so the student flag education. We
19 have a resolution in, which will be read later.
20 And we'll approve that later, but we're still
21 pushing on that flag education. We put in a
22 resolution. We have a resolution ready to
23 submit today that would make that a statewide
24 requirement so everyone can be part of it.

25 Okay, the T-shirts. The T-shirts are

1 moving fairly well. Our problem was a lot of
2 people couldn't afford to take them. The
3 requirement was that if you took any T-shirts
4 from the Department you had to pay for them
5 first. A lot of people just couldn't afford
6 that. You know, you take home several and
7 you're going to be in the hole pretty far.

8 I mean, I was fortunate. I had just won
9 some money. So I used my money for that. But
10 I bought 700-and-some dollars worth.

11 But not everybody could afford to do that,
12 so they didn't go as well.

13 But at this meeting here, we said what we
14 had left, 21 small, 11 medium, 22 large, 16
15 extra large, 24 extra extra large. Okay, I
16 know a lot of these are going to be sold. I
17 have a run going on and they're making that
18 their shirts that they're going to wear. It's
19 a big run that we have from the Riders.

20 And then Jose was there at the meeting.
21 And he's part of our, a very intricate part of
22 our committee, and he said that it would be
23 okay for the commission to take some shirts and
24 sign for them, and then we could send the money
25 into Department as soon as they get them sold,

1 since he is on the Finance Committee and the
2 Finance Committee is almost paid off with what
3 we owe them. So that was a big move, because I
4 know a lot of shirts were taken.

5 The Child Welfare Worker of the Year
6 Packet was changed a little, and the receipt of
7 the award with their name and year inscribed on
8 it; also to add the full hyperlink for the
9 website instead of just "OhioLegion.com."
10 Also, to change the word "prerogative" to
11 "discretion," and bold underline September
12 15th, the deadline date. So you all should
13 have a copy of that.

14 For the Good of The Legion, the commission
15 was reminded that the checks sent to Department
16 that are made out to Child Welfare will go to
17 National. If the checks are made out to
18 American Legion Department of Ohio, with
19 "Children and Youth" in the memo line, then it
20 will stay in Ohio and get donated to whatever
21 project that we are sponsoring that year. So
22 that's an important reminder for everyone. If
23 you're wanting the money to stay in Ohio, you
24 need to mark it that way. Just make the check
25 out to American Legion Department of Ohio, and

1 then in the memo line put "Children and Youth,"
2 and it will stay here with our project, which
3 course our project this year was the Children
4 and Youth suicide prevention.

5 So the commission thanked everyone for
6 being so involved in this meeting. We got a
7 lot done. And I'm proud of them for what
8 they've done.

9 And the meeting was adjourned at 1:25.

10 The resolution will be presented later,
11 but I think we can vote on the minutes now.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN ADKINS: Okay.

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, thank you. Thank
15 you, Andy.

16 Can I get a motion to accept?

17 6TH DISTRICT 1VC EATON: Shane Eaton, 1st
18 Vice, 6th District, makes a motion to accept.

19 6TH DISTRICT CMDR COX, JR.: Gary Cox, Jr.,
20 Commander, 6th District, seconds.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty. We have a
22 motion and a second.

23 Any discussion?

24 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, seeing

1 there's none, all in favor of accepting the
2 Children and Youth report, the usual sign of aye.

3 FROM THE FLOOR: Aye.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

5 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, thank you,
7 Andy. The motion passes. Thank you.

8 Holly, would you like to come forth and
9 give the Media, Marketing and Communication
10 report?

11 COMMISSION MEMBER LEWIS: All right, I am
12 not Chris Emmons. So, Chris asked me to give the
13 Media, Marketing and Communications Commission
14 Report. He's umpiring a game today.

15 We did meet on March 11th.

16 The fall 2022 Ohio Legion News cost
17 summary is as follows: The net cost was
18 \$31,213, of which we distributed approximately
19 80,000 papers. So it's about 39 cents per
20 paper right now. That puts us nine cents per
21 paper, or \$7,240, over the constitution and
22 bylaw budget of \$1.20 per active member.

23 All of this is because of postage, my
24 friends. All right? We're paying almost
25 80 percent of the cost is postage. So, please,

1 we are presenting our resolution later to
2 change one word in the constitution and bylaws
3 from "mail" to "distribute." The committee is
4 severely limited in what we can do to bring
5 these costs down because of that word in the
6 constitution and bylaws. So please, please.

7 We also, the digital-only review
8 distribution is currently at 2,488 members.
9 Only 17 new participants from summer to fall.
10 So, please, if you can, push it at your Posts
11 in your District for people to sign up for the
12 digital only. All they have to do is go to the
13 home page and they click a little thing on the
14 right-hand side that will sign them up. It's
15 super easy.

16 And that is the report.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: Before we request for a
18 motion to accept your Media, Marketing Report,
19 could you do Gifts for the Yanks also?

20 COMMISSION MEMBER LEWIS: Sure.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, thank you.

22 COMMISSION MEMBER LEWIS: Absolutely. I was
23 going to ask you if you wanted me to do that.

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: Sure do. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: So we met March 11th, at

1 2:00 o'clock, in Department Headquarters. Oh,
2 I'm sorry, wrong one. There we go.

3 We actually met December 12th, at
4 Department Headquarters. We had a lot of
5 people who were present. There were some
6 people excused.

7 We basically decided this year to
8 distribute gift cards instead of doing all of
9 the gift selections. And we were having a
10 really hard time finding things within the
11 price range that were made in the U.S., all
12 kinds of things. And not only that, but the VA
13 facilities actually asked us to do gift cards
14 because they didn't have a place to store all
15 of these gifts. Right? And they thought it
16 was a much more equitable gift to give someone
17 a gift card because it makes no difference if
18 you're a female veteran or a male veteran.

19 Okay?

20 So, we did purchase gift cards that we
21 distributed to all of the facilities. Those
22 went over extremely well.

23 I was able to attend the one in Cleveland
24 and the recipients were so happy. They were
25 like, "What? You're giving us money? This is

1 awesome." Right? That way they could use it
2 wherever they saw fit.

3 In terms of donations, we had not really
4 sent out a letter anytime in the past couple of
5 years to ask for donations. So this year I
6 wrote a letter that we not only e-mailed out,
7 but we included in this mailing that just went
8 out. And the donations are flooding in. So I
9 am so happy about that, I have to tell you. So
10 I think we're on track to make our donation
11 goals this year.

12 And if anybody has any feedback about the
13 gift card thing, I would love to hear it.
14 Okay? Because we were able to cash in the
15 extra gift cards that we had so that we can use
16 them next year. So we can use the money again.

17 Any questions?

18 Yeah, Kevin.

19 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Kevin Motter, 1st
20 District Commander.

21 I thought we were supposed to get reports
22 every month on the amounts of money for the
23 Gifts for Yanks.

24 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Uh-huh.

25 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: My chairman

1 hasn't seen a report since December.

2 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: One was just sent out two
3 weeks ago. So if he hasn't seen one, he probably
4 needs to get his e-mail corrected.

5 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Is that going to
6 just the chairmen of the committee in the
7 Districts?

8 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Yes, uh-huh.

9 Yeah, one was just sent out.

10 Now I will tell you, with the new --
11 What's Kathy's role, finance officer? Finance
12 whatever she is.

13 So Scott is transitioning that over so
14 that we can have more clarity in the books
15 about those donations and have an easier
16 reporting system. But we did send one out
17 about two weeks ago. Okay?

18 Any other questions?

19 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

20 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Okay.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: Before we make a request
22 for a motion for Gifts for the Yanks, Holly, I
23 did visit the Cleveland VA. And they were
24 ecstatic over those gift cards.

25 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Uh-huh.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: I was told that some of
2 the stuff that we had given them in years past
3 ended up in waste receptacles right after we gave
4 it to them.

5 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Yep.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: So by giving the gift
7 cards, it serves two purposes: It allows them to
8 get what they want and, by the same token, saves
9 us time and effort by giving them some things
10 that they don't want.

11 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: It was much easier
12 logistically, too. Right? Like we didn't have
13 to have all of the boxes. We didn't have to have
14 packing days. We didn't have to have trucks to
15 move stuff around. I mean it was way, way
16 simpler logistically, too.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

18 Yes, sir.

19 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Kevin Motter, 1st
20 District Commander. Commander, 14th District
21 Commander.

22 Can we get a copy of that report? Because
23 I'm hearing things from my Posts in my District
24 that they're not getting credit for their
25 donations. If I had something that I could go

1 to so I could answer their questions --

2 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Sure. Yeah, I think we can
3 send it to the DEC.

4 Right, Scott?

5 We can send the report. Yeah, we can just
6 cc you on it. Yeah.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Perfect.

8 All right, can I get a motion to accept
9 the Gifts for the Yanks report?

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: It's info only.

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: It is?

12 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Yeah, it's info only.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, all right.

14 Any more questions?

15 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: Yeah, this one is info
16 only, because we have the resolutions later.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, thank you.

18 All right, any more questions?

19 Yes, sir.

20 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: We have a
21 donation, Commander.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty.

23 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: John Life, 14th
24 District.

25 Commander, I have a \$100 donation from the

1 14th District to the Gifts for Yanks.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, very good.

3 Very good.

4 Next up is the Legislative Commission,

5 Mr. LaVoy.

6 CHAIRMAN LAVOY: Good morning, everyone.

7 I'm going to keep this quite short, simply
8 because I don't want to steal Scott's thunder,
9 who's going to follow me, on what the real meat
10 of our discussions during our Legislative
11 Commission were.

12 The commission met, with the other
13 committees there, on March 11th. We nearly ran
14 two hours and butted up against Chris Emmons
15 and Holly's meeting immediately following. We
16 finished one minute before them.

17 And then, due to the fact that we had so
18 much discussion going on, we reconvened on the
19 25th, and then went again, virtually, and
20 nearly went another hour and a half.

21 So we covered a lot of House and Senate
22 bills that are going on that affect us as
23 veterans. So Scott will speak to those more in
24 depth.

25 One of the things that I do want to

1 discuss, or at least pass on to you, is our
2 recommendation from the commission for our
3 Legislator of the Year at the state level is
4 going to be Tracy Richardson. She represents
5 the 86th District. She is a West Point
6 graduate and a Desert Storm/Desert Shield
7 veteran.

8 For the Federal Legislator of the Year,
9 it's going to be Congressman David Joyce. He
10 was recommended by Joyce Hannum. And he's
11 received his Juris Doctorate from the
12 University of Dayton. He's a life-long Ohioan.
13 And he's a former county prosecutor. And he
14 represents the 14th District.

15 These, of course, were mailed out,
16 e-mailed out, and there's copies here at the
17 meeting. Does anybody have any questions
18 before I'm followed by Scott?

19 Yes, sir.

20 NEC MASOWICK: He's not from the 14th
21 District.

22 CHAIRMAN LAVOY: The 14th Congressional.

23 NEC MASOWICK: Oh, Congressional, I didn't
24 hear that.

25 CHAIRMAN LAVOY: Apologies, yes. I might

1 have left that out.

2 Pending your questions, sir, that's all I
3 have.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty.

5 CHAIRMAN LAVOY: Thank you.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you, Ken.

7 COORDINATOR PALIDER: As Ken said, we had
8 two very hectic meetings for the Legislative
9 Commission.

10 And it was surrounded by, if you can
11 remember the last DEC meeting, a bill that Past
12 Department Commander Jean Wilson brought up
13 about the county veterans service commissions.
14 It has been reintroduced and renumbered. It's
15 House Bill 69.

16 So the commission deliberated and we made
17 a standpoint that we would be an interested
18 party only on the bill. And we have
19 recommendations for the bill because we want it
20 to be the best form of legislation that it
21 possibly can be, since it impacts so many
22 veterans.

23 In its current form, the bill states that
24 two county veterans service commissioners must
25 be post-9/11 veterans, one being appointed by

1 the Court of Common Pleas judge and another one
2 being elected by the county Board of
3 Commissioners.

4 So what we have recommended is that it
5 shall be one post-9/11 veteran, and that they
6 would only be appointed by the county Court of
7 Common Pleas. We don't think that the county
8 commissioners should have a say in this at all.
9 They're duly elected. They have their own
10 political agendas. The county veterans
11 services are nonpolitical and should stay that
12 way. And then that it only be that the county
13 Court of Common Pleas judge that takes these
14 recommendations.

15 We also did have some, not recommendations
16 legislation-wise, but maybe for county veterans
17 service commissions getting the message out to
18 Posts more. We feel like there is a lack of
19 communication as to why so many people have had
20 issues being appointed to the county veterans
21 service commission, that it's because they
22 don't know that there's an opening and people
23 kind of keep it as their buddy-buddy kind of
24 issue. So our recommendation is that there is
25 more of a, say a state database, to reach out

1 to all of the Posts directly so there is no
2 communication issues.

3 And now, moving on from that, that was in
4 our meetings, I'll let you know what I've been
5 up to in the statehouse this past week.

6 I've given three separate testimonies in
7 the statehouse on behalf of The American
8 Legion.

9 The first one I gave was written-only
10 testimony for House Bill 33. That is the state
11 appropriation budget.

12 For those of you who don't know, the state
13 gives us a certain amount of money to run our
14 DSOs. Last year it was \$400,000.

15 This year, I cited inflation and the
16 implementation of the PACT Act, since the PACT
17 Act will cause, it is thought that the PACT Act
18 will cause a backlog of over 450,000 claims by
19 October of this year, so not even a full
20 calendar year, there will be over 450,000
21 claims, so we cited that, as well as the impact
22 of inflation on the dollar. So I asked for a
23 ten percent increase to our budget, per the
24 recommendation. ODVS gave me the
25 recommendation.

1 It turns out the VFW came in and asked for
2 another \$100,000, to take their donation to a
3 half a million dollars.

4 It's important to note that all the
5 veterans service organizations get the same
6 amount from the state.

7 So right now it's looking as if we will
8 get a raise. I'm hoping it's at least ten
9 percent.

10 But Tracy Richardson, who is our State
11 Legislator of the Year recommendation, speaking
12 with the VFW, wants to get them that extra
13 \$100,000. So it might look really good.

14 I'd also like to note that Tracy
15 Richardson is a member of The American Legion
16 in Marysville, Post 79, I believe. Yeah, she
17 is at No. 79.

18 So, yeah, I gave that written testimony
19 only.

20 Then on this past Tuesday I gave in-person
21 testimony to the House Government Oversight
22 Committee on House Bill 87.

23 House Bill 87 prohibits the state and its
24 political subdivisions from purchasing U.S. or
25 Ohio flags that are not made in the United

1 States. This is in line with National
2 Resolution 293, that passed in 2016, in
3 Cincinnati.

4 So, seeing that the state is looking to do
5 this, finally, when states like Massachusetts
6 did it 12 years ago, it's good. So I gave
7 proponent testimony, urging them to make sure
8 we buy American flags that are made in America.

9 And then lastly, I gave opposition
10 testimony on Wednesday, in front of the Senate
11 Insurance Committee, on Senate Bill 63. That
12 is the asbestos bill that we've been talking
13 about for probably the last year.

14 Given the information I gave to them and
15 stating that the current language and
16 expectations are so taxing and burdensome on
17 veterans in the state, since even though
18 veterans only take up only seven percent of the
19 U.S. population, they take up 30 percent of
20 asbestos-related claims in the country, you
21 can't tell me that veterans aren't exposed to
22 asbestos or impacted by asbestos legislation
23 more than any other group.

24 So we gave opposition testimony from the
25 Resolution 23-01, we passed earlier this year.

1 And I cited all the numerous issues.

2 And I believe the committee took what I
3 said to heart. Because when proponents came up
4 after me to give testimony, they kind of
5 quizzed them on what I said.

6 So I'm hoping the language is amended in
7 that bill so that everybody can make sure
8 veterans, who are disqualified from VA care
9 since you need 50 percent of your lifetime
10 asbestos exposure to qualify for VA care, we're
11 hoping that they will be taken care of in the
12 private system if they cannot get VA
13 healthcare.

14 That's the big ones.

15 A couple of other ones I just want to let
16 everybody know about, that I get a couple calls
17 about.

18 House Bill 90, which is Disabled Veterans
19 Homestead Property Tax Exception, there is
20 about four different versions introduced by
21 four different individuals in the House and
22 Senate on this. So the homestead tax exception
23 is definitely out there for 100 percent
24 disabled vets. None of them have had any
25 proponent or opposition testimony yet, just

1 introductory testimony.

2 There's House Bill 53, which is a tax
3 credit for hiring veterans, service members or
4 their spouses in the state. So that's looking
5 towards our veterans employment and education.

6 And then one last one, Senate Bill 64 is
7 the National Guard Scholarship. This falls in
8 line with what came out of the Washington
9 Conference, trying to get National Guard
10 members their education benefits bettered. So
11 the state is actually doing something that
12 we've been pushing in Congress. So that's
13 something to look out for. So members of the
14 National Guard can go to get their Master's
15 degree and get education benefits is the push
16 for that.

17 That is all the legislation I had.

18 If you want me to do the VA&R report, I
19 can do the VA&R report too.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, I do.

21 But I do have one question before you go
22 into VA&R.

23 The State of Ohio budget is bi-annual; am
24 I correct?

25 COORDINATOR PALIDER: Yes.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: So any raise in funds
2 for the Veterans Service Officers would not
3 happen until 2024; is that correct?

4 COORDINATOR PALIDER: We would get the
5 money, yeah, not until next summer.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

7 COORDINATOR PALIDER: That's how it happened
8 this past time around. We only got \$400,000. I
9 say, "Only \$400,000." We got \$400,000 around
10 July or August of this past year.

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yeah.

12 Okay, if you could do VA&R, that would be
13 great.

14 COORDINATOR PALIDER: Okay, yeah.

15 So VA&R, we met at 4:00 PM, in the
16 library, on March 11th. We had a quorum.

17 We discussed, from the Districts, a lot of
18 the VAs are starting to open up again from
19 COVID. There's a rumor that President Biden,
20 on May 13th, will declare COVID to be over, so
21 the VA can open back up to volunteers and our
22 VAVS reps.

23 That lead us on to a discussion on
24 bringing back the VA&R Awards for Mid-Winter
25 Conferences, starting this upcoming January

1 2024. We have to get together a list of all
2 the awards again. Since we haven't done those
3 since I've been here, I would have to come up
4 to speed on those. David Cook was nice enough
5 to send me those after the meeting. So we'll
6 be discussing those next time.

7 We did a lot of conversation on the
8 Washington Conference, since there's so much
9 legislation from Washington Conference that is
10 related to VA&R.

11 So, obviously, there's PACT Act
12 implementation that we're working on.

13 There is the Major Richard Star Act, which
14 is in the Senate and House right now. And
15 that's a major supported piece of legislation
16 from Legion National. That is for concurrent
17 receipt, as well as VA medical recruitment and
18 retention for employees.

19 That issue definitely impacts Ohio a lot.
20 Looking at the Chillicothe VA as a prime
21 example, we're really struggling to recruit
22 workers down there. We're really struggling to
23 keep them down there since the industry has
24 gone away from Chillicothe. So the
25 infrastructure down there is not exactly great

1 either.

2 Another bit of information that we talked
3 about, Wade Park is looking for donations on
4 their Facebook page, asking for underwear,
5 socks, toothbrushes and hair products, if you
6 want to donate to Wade Park.

7 And another important piece of information
8 that came out of the 14th District is
9 April 15th, at 11:30 AM, at Post 566, in Akron,
10 they're having a veterans outreach event with
11 DSOs, county veterans service officers, all to
12 help with VA claims.

13 It's important to know the VA budget gives
14 money to facilities and CBOCs that have a large
15 increase in registered VA patients. So if you
16 get more people to register for your VA system
17 in your area, your VA that you go to might get
18 more funding to improve itself. So it's always
19 nice to make sure you encourage people to use
20 the VA healthcare system.

21 And one of the last things we touched upon
22 was Veteran Treatment Court funding. There was
23 a request that we check from Department if we
24 had money for Veterans Treatment Court. That
25 was in 2017.

1 I believe we don't have any more money
2 regarding Veterans Treatment Court. I believe
3 that was a Commander's project and it wasn't a
4 self-sustaining project. And given the
5 Department's financial situation, it's not
6 recommended we keep doing that. We don't have
7 the money coming in, so we can't keep giving
8 the money out.

9 So, yeah, with the Veterans Treatment
10 Court, I found that information out. I didn't
11 have it at the time, but, yeah, Veterans
12 Treatment Court was a Commander's project.
13 It's not a permanent project of The American
14 Legion. If we want to look into funding that
15 some way, we can try. But I wouldn't recommend
16 it.

17 And that's pretty much all I had. That's
18 all I have.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, thank you.

20 Any questions?

21 Yes.

22 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
23 District.

24 It's hard to find a Veterans Treatment
25 Court. Can they go through the Veterans

1 Service Commission, rather than giving money
2 back to the counties every year?

3 COORDINATOR PALIDER: I don't know about it,
4 because that's technically state funding. I
5 don't know if they can go through that. I would
6 have to do some more research on that and get
7 back to you. So I'd say let me do some research
8 and I can see what I can find out about it.

9 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: The money is
10 there, and we have to give it back. I'd rather
11 they keep it for something like this. You know?

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Through the Chair, PDC
13 Schmitt.

14 PDC SCHMITT: Yes, sir, Commander, PDC
15 Schmitt.

16 Commander, the Veterans Treatment Court
17 was my project.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

19 PDC SCHMITT: What happened to all the money
20 that was put in there? There was thousands,
21 supposed to be thousands in there. Have you
22 issued money out?

23 COORDINATOR PALIDER: No, I have not done
24 anything with Veterans Treatment Courts since I
25 started here. No one has requested any money,

1 whatsoever.

2 PDC SCHMITT: To my knowledge, none of the
3 money has been issued.

4 But when I see somebody, in fact, I just
5 told Lucas County about our Veterans Treatment
6 Court, that money is available if the court
7 would put in for it, a request.

8 And when we did see some back when
9 Jermaine was here, we advised them that there
10 was going to be monies that they could apply
11 for.

12 This needs to be known out there. We sent
13 letters out to Veterans Treatment Courts all
14 across the state. At the time there was only
15 21 of them. I don't know how many there are
16 now.

17 But if none of that money has been spent,
18 I want to know where that money is at. I
19 turned in money to it last year and the year
20 before, and plus all the money that was put in
21 originally.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: I believe, and we'll
23 have to check, Bob, I saw it on the balance
24 sheet. It's not on the P&L. So it's on the
25 balance sheet. But I can't tell you how much it

1 is.

2 PDC SCHMITT: I think we put \$10,000 into
3 that.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

5 So I think it's on the balance sheet.
6 We'll have to get back with you.

7 But I think, Harold, we can confab on
8 that. Because we review it often.

9 But I think it's on the balance sheet.
10 It's not in the P&L.

11 PDC SCHMITT: Yeah, before anything is done
12 with that, we need check into that and then let
13 them know the money is there.

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: I don't want to
15 misspeak. I don't want to put my foot in my
16 mouth. But I believe there's money there, Bob.
17 But from the staff's perspective, they would not
18 see that on the financials. But we have. We
19 have.

20 PDC SCHMITT: I'll hold you to that.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: You got me. You got me.

22 I believe, and Harold, you can tell me if
23 I'm wrong, but I believe it's there. We just
24 don't have the number right in front of us.

25 PDC SCHMITT: Okay.

1 TREASURER SAVAGE: I believe it's listed as
2 a liability.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct. Yes, I think
4 it is.

5 But again, I don't want to tell you the
6 wrong thing, Bob, but I believe it is. As a
7 matter of fact, if I say I know it is, I may
8 put my foot in my mouth. But I believe it is.
9 I believe it is.

10 All right? You're all done?

11 COORDINATOR PALIDER: No, I've got --

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, get out.

13 Al, you're next.

14 CHAIRMAN BUXTON: Good morning.

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

16 CHAIRMAN BUXTON: The National Security
17 Standing Commission met March 11th, 10:00 AM, at
18 Department Headquarters. Fourteen (sic)
19 Districts were present. One District did not
20 have their representation. Guests was Ken
21 Schutz, from the 2nd, and Scott Palider from
22 Department.

23 We had opening remarks from each one of
24 the Districts.

25 District 6 discussed train derailments in

1 Ohio. There was 18 (sic). That's not right.
2 But anyway, we discussed the train derailments.

3 And then they discussed the POW/MIAS.
4 There's 18 from World War II and 14 from Korea
5 that was returned.

6 The 14th District passed around his
7 quarterly commission reports that he always
8 gives us.

9 The 8th District's meeting information
10 will be shared in its District newsletter.

11 The 12th District discussed the East
12 Palestine and Ukraine assistance.

13 Pin disbursement and monies collected.
14 The new pin is coming up. We reordered the new
15 pin. So if anybody don't have the POW/MIA pin,
16 see one of us. We'll get them.

17 Yeah, see Joyce. She's the seller of the
18 pins.

19 New business.

20 Of-the-year awards reminder, they're due
21 by September the 15th, in to Department.

22 We talked about increasing POW/MIA
23 recognition. We want to encourage cities to
24 have their chairs and tables or local buildings
25 to increase recognition.

1 East Palestine needs help. They do not
2 qualify for the NEF, but they do need help,
3 cleaning supplies and water. Local Posts 31
4 and 290 are coming together to help the
5 community.

6 Advocate the 118th Congressional
7 Priorities to your congress members and report
8 to National. No. 1 is to pay the Coast Guard;
9 then protect national defense spending;
10 naturalization for military personnel who are
11 immigrants; support the Afghan Allies
12 Protection Act; keep assisting Ukraine; military
13 quality of life; -- if we fix these issues, we
14 may see improvements in recruitment -- and the
15 GI Bill Parity for National Guard and
16 Reservists.

17 Richard Wright, 13th District, an E2 in
18 his District needs compensation for his work as
19 a member of the drone squadron. This comes
20 from the Ohio Military Reserve. They get
21 deployed once a month, on a weekend, and
22 deployed two weeks out of the year. New
23 members go through boot camp. When they
24 deploy, they do not get compensated for mileage
25 or meals, even though they are called up on

1 orders. This is a drone unit who must buy
2 their own civilian-grade drones out of pocket.
3 Looking for a resolution to encourage the state
4 to fund their travel expenses.

5 Hannum, 9th District, made a motion to
6 table discussion to research the issue more
7 until the first meeting in '23-'24. Seconded
8 by Eaton. Motion carried.

9 Joyce Hannum, 9th District, would like a
10 member from her District to come and speak to
11 the commission about alternative energy for
12 saving Posts money. It's
13 replenishwaterpower.com.

14 There's a resolution, which will be read
15 later, National Civilian Life Saver of the Year
16 Award. Kennedy, of the 1st District, made a
17 motion to accept the resolution and send the
18 resolution, Department Award Packet, and past
19 winner packet, to National and other Department
20 Adjutants, encouraging them to create a
21 Civilian Life Saver Award in their Districts.
22 Second by Russell. Motion Carried.

23 There were several things mentioned under
24 the good of The Legion.

25 That being said, the meeting was adjourned

1 in one hour.

2 I think this is information only until the
3 resolution is read, Commander.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Thank you,
5 Al. Thank you.

6 Mr. Genochio.

7 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: All right, good
8 morning, all. I'm here to give the DSO report.

9 So the DSO team, we just completed our
10 semi-annual Bergmann and Moore training. It
11 was done virtually this year by us, from
12 Washington D.C. So all eight of our DSOs have
13 just received that training.

14 There's a new rule that came into effect,
15 or is coming into effect. It's a DOD rule. So
16 it's from the Department of Defense. Your 100
17 percent permanent and total ID cards, they're
18 issued if you're 100 percent P&T, you get the
19 card. Those will expire on August 1st. So,
20 regardless of what your card says, you'll need
21 to obtain a new commissary letter and schedule
22 an appointment through your rapids locators and
23 get a new card. They've switched from your old
24 retiree cards to a new CatCard-type deal.

25 So if you are a military retiree, there's

1 no worries. Your card will stay in effect
2 until it expires on your 65th birthday, when
3 Medicare kicks in.

4 Just a little bit of news from our
5 offices.

6 The Cleveland Regional Office is back open
7 at full business. We did move from room 929 to
8 1259 of the Federal Building. All restrictions
9 at the Federal Building have been lifted. So
10 you can come and go as you please.

11 We still, you know, advise you to try to
12 get an appointment with the service officer so
13 you know they're there and you're not
14 conflicting with a BVA hearing. They're being
15 conducted virtually.

16 At our Columbus VA Medical Center, we have
17 Gabe Keogler. He is fully accredited. He is
18 up and running, a full suite of access to his
19 VA site. So he is there Monday through Friday
20 now. He was twilighting here and at the
21 hospital, but he is at the hospital full time
22 now. So you can let your people know in the
23 Columbus area that we have that representation.

24 Cincinnati, they are actually looking at
25 putting in a veteran access window. So those

1 of you that go to the Cincinnati VA Medical
2 Center know that it's appointment only. That's
3 an implementation of the hospital. They're
4 talking about putting in a window with a VA
5 employee, to where you can check in, talk with
6 them, and then they get quicker access to the
7 DSOs that are there, or the other Veterans
8 Service Officers, including The American
9 Legion.

10 Dayton, there's no change in Dayton.
11 They're open to the public. Like I said, they
12 have a representative at the window that was
13 hired by the VA that will get you in to the
14 DSOs on a walk-in basis.

15 So just a couple of our quick numbers.

16 There's no data right now to present to
17 you for 2023. We just don't have any BVA wins
18 to report.

19 For 2022, we have a 92 percent success
20 rate, and have secured over \$2,297,000 for our
21 veterans.

22 For 2021, we have a 92 percent success
23 rate, with \$2.9 million dollars in awards.

24 In 2020, we had an 83 percent success
25 rate, with 2.3 million.

1 And total, from 2017 to present, we've
2 secured an 84 percent success rate, with 18.2
3 million secured, just from the BVA to our
4 veterans.

5 September 16th will be our annual Post
6 Service Officers' School. That will be here,
7 from 08:00 to 16:30. Currently we have 12
8 signed up to attend that course.

9 Anybody that wants to attend, they just
10 need to send me an e-mail at my
11 genochio@ohiolegion, and I'll get them
12 registered for the class.

13 As far as the DSO portion, is there any
14 questions regarding DSOs or VA benefits?

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

16 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: Do you want me to go
17 ahead and hit the ALR?

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Go right ahead, good
19 sir.

20 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: Thank you, Commander.

21 So, for the ALR, the American Legion
22 Riders, we have the Legacy Ride, which is
23 scheduled. Registrations will begin at
24 Columbiana Post 290, on Wednesday, July 12th.
25 The Legacy Run itself will kickoff from that

1 Post, Columbiana, on the morning of the 13th,
2 at 08:00, will be kickstands up and we'll be
3 riding out.

4 From there we will be going to Logan Post
5 78, for our first overnight stay. We'll be
6 also doing a stop at Post 52, in, I say
7 Bellaire, I don't know if that's pronounced
8 right. But we'll be stopping there and hitting
9 various other Posts along the route. So we'll
10 end up in Logan that night.

11 On the morning of the 14th, we'll depart
12 Logan. And we'll do a lunch stop which is to
13 be determined. And we'll arrive at Kettering
14 Post 598. That's where we'll link up with the
15 POMP, which stands for "Ride on Military
16 Pride." So they'll be doing events there.

17 The next morning we will wake up and there
18 will be rides leaving out of Kettering 598 to
19 various locations to raise awareness for the
20 Legacy.

21 We'll return back to Kettering 598 that
22 evening of the 15th, and join again with the
23 ROMP.

24 And then on the 16th we will depart
25 Kettering. Brunch will be at Celina Post 210.

1 We'll do a visit at the tank plant, and a visit
2 at the Veterans Freedom Flag Monument, and
3 eventually the ride will end here at
4 Department, where we'll do our check
5 presentation to the Commander.

6 Any questions pertaining to The American
7 Legion Riders?

8 Yes, sir.

9 FROM THE FLOOR: The lunch break will be at
10 Post 23, in Portsmouth.

11 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: Perfect. I didn't
12 get that update. So there you go, Post 23, that
13 will be our lunch break on the 15th.

14 So, thank you, sir.

15 Any other questions?

16 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

17 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: Commander, that
18 concludes my reports.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, outstanding.
20 Outstanding.

21 At this time I'd like to bring forward our
22 Judge Advocate, Mr. Doug Whitney. Thank you.

23 JUGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: Thank you,
24 Commander.

25 Good morning.

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

2 JUGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: First, I concur
3 exactly with what Carol Robinson told you about
4 the relationship of your Post and the Auxiliary
5 Unit. However, as I'll explain, there is one
6 exception to that, or maybe two.

7 Our Legion Posts have two separate sources
8 of legal existence. One is the charter granted
9 by the nationally-incorporated American Legion.
10 That is the basis of your organization as a
11 Post. But you also have a separate state legal
12 status as a nonprofit Ohio corporation. It's
13 really important that all of your documents are
14 consistent with both organizations.

15 And so if what I see in articles of
16 incorporation that list the purpose of that
17 Ohio nonprofit corporation, if that's not
18 consistent with what's in the Preamble to our
19 American Legion Constitution and Bylaws
20 changes, then we have a conflict.

21 If your articles of incorporation includes
22 membership criteria which is not consistent
23 with the legal act, then, under Ohio,
24 technically, you still can't let people be
25 members of your Post, until you bring those

1 articles of incorporation consistent with the
2 National American Legion policy.

3 The two documents must agree. And so
4 that's one of the things that's very important
5 in looking at both your constitution and
6 bylaws, and in looking at your articles of
7 incorporation.

8 Secondly, your registered agent. There
9 are still Posts out there that have a
10 registered agent that was an Adjutant that
11 passed away decades ago. It is a crime,
12 subject to a fine, to fail to keep your
13 registered agent updated with the Ohio
14 Secretary of State. Make sure that your Posts
15 have their registered agents current.

16 Now that brings me to the relationship
17 with the Auxiliary. It is a separate and
18 independent organization. And so the Post
19 cannot control the membership, the officers,
20 the programs of the Auxiliary.

21 However, the Post is the licensed Ohio
22 state organization having, if it has a liquor
23 license and a charitable gaming permit, only
24 the Post can control those and control access
25 to that alcohol service and charitable gaming.

1 So that is an exception.

2 So if you have an Auxiliary member that,
3 for one reason or another, a Post feels should
4 not have access to those non-Legion programs,
5 but which many Posts have, the Post can control
6 that. It's certainly best that you do that in
7 coordination with the membership of the
8 Auxiliary.

9 But, legally, only the licensed
10 organization of the State of Ohio can control
11 access to alcohol service and charitable
12 gaming.

13 We continue to --

14 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Question.

15 JUGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: Yes.

16 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Maybe someone else
17 knows this, but at one time, if I'm the Adjutant
18 of my Post, the Auxiliary comes to me to verify a
19 DD-214. I think The Legion still has to verify
20 that there is a valid DD-214 connection to this.
21 That hasn't changed. So there is that connection
22 in their bylaws, unless they've changed it.

23 So that's the one connection that I know
24 where we have a yea or a nay on a member.

25 JUGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: Yes.

1 But continue to be looking at your
2 constitution and bylaws changes as they come
3 in. Everyone certainly should be consistent
4 with the preamble changes and The Legion
5 membership changes.

6 Just one thing there. They should not be
7 sent directly to Doug Russell, who is doing
8 nearly all of the work on those, or to myself.
9 They need to go to Tamar here at Department
10 Headquarters, because she's the one that keeps
11 track of that. She will then get them to us
12 for our review.

13 It's probably better that you send them up
14 for approval before your Post votes on those
15 amendments, that way you can tell the Post that
16 it's already been reviewed by the Judge
17 Advocate and approved, or you have made any
18 changes that are required. It's not clear in
19 our constitution and bylaws that that takes
20 place, but that's my suggestion, that you get
21 us to review them before your Post votes on
22 them.

23 Your Post Inspection Form, you're going to
24 deal with that a little bit later. There are
25 some things in there that you need to do with

1 regard to The American Legion Riders and the
2 Sons of The American Legion. The Post
3 Executive Committee has to approve the officers
4 of both of those organizations, and has to
5 approve the constitution and bylaws of both of
6 those organizations. It has to receive a
7 quarterly financial report from each of those
8 organizations. Those are National requirements
9 and that ought to be a part of your Post
10 inspection.

11 I think that covers everything that I
12 needed to talk with you about.

13 Are there any questions?

14 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

15 JUGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: If not, thank you,
16 Commander.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you. Thank you,
18 Doug, for informing us on ways to keep us out of
19 jail. So that is important. That is important.

20 Alrighty, we are probably, in about five
21 minutes, we're going to break for lunch. But
22 till then, if we can have the Department
23 Adjutant go over Sons of The American Legion
24 and Internal Affairs.

25 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Morning

1 everybody.

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Morning.

3 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: All right, the Sons met
4 January 20th, 2023, at Mid-Winter Conference.

5 They went through and made their National
6 appointments, then the following donations were
7 made from Future Projects: The NEF was 1500;
8 CWF was 2500; BCF was 1,000; Buddy Check '22
9 was 1,098.12; for a grand total of \$6,098.12.

10 Steve Honigfort was resolution endorsed
11 for National Vice Commander.

12 Congratulations, Steve.

13 The following charter, Squadron charter,
14 actions were accepted: Squadron 526, District
15 3, Fairborn, Post closed, Squadron closed;
16 Squadron 430, District 12, Bexley Post, is
17 closing; Squadron 420, District 8 Murray City,
18 voluntary surrender; Squadron 171, District 12,
19 Westerville, charter application is approved
20 and has been given to them; Post 499, District
21 10, West Salem, looking to open a Squadron.

22 Commander, that's the report for the SAL.

23 All right, the IA met Saturday,
24 March 11th, 2023. Our primary focus was to go
25 over the Post Inspection Forms.

1 The recommended changes were: To make the
2 due date from March to February 1st. Line 9 of
3 the form is changed to "Total Post Dues,"
4 because it was kind of confusing the way they
5 had it marked before. Line 12 should have the
6 buddy check program added to the line. Line
7 13, "A definite membership effort is
8 maintained, is not maintained." Line 14, "Post
9 has a Legion Riders Chapter, yes or no." Line
10 15, "Post has an SAL? If yes, indicate all
11 forms that have been turned in for the current
12 year." Line 16, "Does the Post have an
13 Auxiliary Unit?" Line 17, "Post has a canteen,
14 yes or no? What hours and days are they open?
15 Does the Post have a gaming license?"

16 And then that was pretty much all we went
17 over and we ended our meeting.

18 Commander, we do need to make a motion to
19 accept the proposed changes to the Post
20 Inspections.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a --

22 4TH DISTRICT CMDR PERRY: Perry, 4th
23 District, I make a motion to accept.

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: We've got a motion.

25 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 2nd (sic)

1 District, seconds.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, we have a
3 motion and a second.

4 Any discussion?

5 Yes, ma'am.

6 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: What's the point
7 of moving up the -- I'm sorry, Joyce Hannum, 9th
8 district.

9 What's the point of moving it up? I have
10 about ten Posts that all meet on the same day,
11 same month. We can't be at all of them all of
12 the time. And the reason why we got membership
13 is because we visit the Posts and sit for their
14 meetings. We don't just go fill out a form
15 with the Commander. We sit in the meeting and
16 share information. There's no way to do it in
17 time. And I don't know about the Districts
18 with a lot of Posts. That's a lot to go
19 through, even with people helping you. I mean,
20 the move-up date doesn't make any sense. It
21 really serves no purpose.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

23 Any more discussion?

24 Yes, sir.

25 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: John Life, 14th

1 District Commander.

2 I just want to know, is this what's being
3 posted online?

4 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

5 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: Because I had
6 noticed, I do most of my Post inspections online,
7 there is a difference in what is online and what
8 is being handed out.

9 Also, I've noticed there's some issues
10 online. Can we get that fixed? Because I've
11 done like two different Post inspections twice,
12 because I did online and somehow it
13 disappeared. So I just started screen-shoting
14 every time I do one. And of course that's a
15 lot of screen-shoting.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: Any more discussion?

17 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Was there an
18 answer to the question?

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: For?

20 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Why was it moved
21 up?

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

23 Can you go ahead and answer that.

24 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Why did we move it up?

25 I can't remember.

1 The reason to move it up was the National
2 turn-in date is March 31st. April 1st for the
3 Post inspection Forms to be 100 percent
4 turn-in. So moving it up a month was to force
5 compliance to try to meet the National target
6 date.

7 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
8 District.

9 I understand that. But after all these
10 years, I mean I've been around here 23 years
11 now, and this is the first time that we've
12 moved it up because you guys can't get it there
13 in time. I mean --

14 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: It's not us that can't
15 get it, it's that the Districts that aren't
16 getting them to us in time.

17 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Moving it up is
18 not going to help one bit at all. It's not going
19 to make me be able to work faster. It's just
20 not.

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: That was the proposed
22 change. It's up to you guys as to whether you
23 approve it or not.

24 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Chapman, Alternate
25 NEC.

1 We had this discussion at the last DEC.
2 We had a lengthy discussion on this.

3 There's really no incentive to move that
4 up a month. They have a hard enough time
5 getting them in now by December 31st. That's
6 something that should be on the District
7 Commanders to meet that March 31st deadline.

8 Like I said at the last meeting, there
9 used to be an incentive here at Department for
10 a consolidated report, an inspection report,
11 and there was one other report in there. And
12 if those were turned in by a certain date, then
13 you got a \$100 bonus from Department. That,
14 somewhere along the line, has gone away.
15 Probably a budget cut. Because for some reason
16 we think budget cuts should be from the members
17 only.

18 But no, it's not going to help by moving
19 that forward. Because if the Districts aren't
20 getting it done now, they're not going to get
21 it done if you take 30 days away from them.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Any more discussion?

23 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

24 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: And to answer your
25 question, John Life, yes, it will be updated and

1 we will go back through to look at the form to
2 see if there's issues with that form online.

3 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Commander, point
4 of order.

5 They're trying to approve the entire
6 change; right?

7 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

8 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: All right. So,
9 just if I may, Commander?

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, because I think I
11 know where you're going. Go right ahead.

12 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So if you do not
13 like the early date and you vote no on this, then
14 the entire change is canceled.

15 So at this point, Commander, it might be
16 appropriate for you to request an amendment to
17 this motion that the date not be changed.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

19 All right, I am requesting -- well,
20 someone has to make a motion; correct?

21 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Someone has to
22 make a motion to amend this --

23 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Don't they have
24 to amend their motion?

25 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: You're making a

1 motion to amend their request to move the date
2 up.

3 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: I think somebody
4 else made a motion.

5 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Yes, their motion
6 is on the floor for discussion. So now you're
7 making a motion to amend. If the amend passes,
8 then we go back to the overall. Because there's
9 more than just one change.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

11 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: If I may?

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Go right ahead.

13 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: The original
14 motion is to accept what the Adjutant is putting
15 forward. That's in discussion, appropriately.

16 Now there's an issue on moving up the
17 date. So if a motion is put forward that the
18 date not be moved up, that it remain what it is
19 now, --

20 What is it now?

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: March 31st.

22 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: -- that March 31st
23 is the date and that date remain the same, and
24 there is a second to that, you could discuss that
25 and vote on that amendment. If the amendment

1 passes, then we go back to the original motion,
2 with the change, to approve the entire form.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

4 Yes, yes.

5 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum,
6 Commander, 9th District, would like to make a
7 motion that we keep the date the same and not
8 move it up.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

10 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Harold Landis,
11 second.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, we have a
13 motion and a second for the amendment to leave
14 the date being the same.

15 Any discussion?

16 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: Any discussion?

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, seeing
20 there's none, all in favor of amending --

21 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: The amendment.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All in favor of the
23 amendment, the usual the sign of aye.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

1 FROM THE FLOOR: No.

2 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So the date is
3 changed. Now you're back to the discussion of
4 the entire form, the approval of the form.

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: And the amendment is
6 included in the entire --

7 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Now it's amended.

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty. Okay.

9 All right, gentlemen, ladies, all right,
10 so now we will vote on the changes in the Post
11 Inspection Form. We have a motion and a
12 second. With the amendment, the date will
13 remain the same.

14 All right, all in favor of the changes in
15 the Post Inspection Form, with the amendment,
16 the usual sign of aye.

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

19 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, motion
21 passes. Alrighty.

22 Okay. All right, ladies and gentlemen,
23 lunch is here.

24 But before we partake in the vittles, two
25 things that I want to do is, basically, the

1 agenda going forward, once we come out of
2 lunch, we will have the Treasurer, the NEC, the
3 Alternate NEC, and then we will go into Post
4 charters and revocations. Okay?

5 All right. So, with that being said, let
6 us recess for lunch.

7 FROM THE FLOOR: How long?

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Let's do 20 minutes, if
9 that's okay. Twenty minutes.

10 Now let me state this: A Legion 20
11 minutes is not a normal 20 minutes. So let's
12 say 20 minutes. All right? And we know it's
13 not a regular 20 minutes.

14 All right, colors being in place, hand
15 salute. One, two.

16 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

17 All right, let's break for lunch.

18 (THEREUPON, THE PROCEEDINGS STOOD IN
19 RECESS).

20 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

21 Colors being in place, hand salute. One,
22 two.

23 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

24 You may be seated.

25 Alrighty, let us get back to our agenda.

1 We have our esteemed -- a man who needs no
2 induction, our Treasurer, Harold Savage.

3 TREASURER SAVAGE: Okay, you have three
4 finance reports first out there. We'll go
5 through them real quick here. Because I only
6 five minutes, according to Charles.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: That's right.

8 TREASURER SAVAGE: Okay, the first one I'm
9 going to go over is the Department investment
10 portfolio. Okay, this shows our investments for
11 a year and where we are by month.

12 And it's been up and down. As you can
13 see, we had four months we had losses, five
14 months we had increases. But the net value, as
15 it stands as of February, is \$277,291.16.

16 Are there any questions on that?

17 FROM THE FLOOR: Can we get a better broker?

18 THREASURER SAVAGE: Oh, not better, no. No
19 way. No better than this one. We've got the
20 best there is.

21 FROM THE FLOOR: They all say that.

22 THREASURER SAVAGE: Well, he's made us a lot
23 of money. Last year, not too much. But just in
24 this year alone, just to come up that much is a
25 great deal.

1 Okay, now on the next one we look at the
2 bank statement monthly activity report. This
3 is just for the general fund. And basically,
4 it just gives the beginning and ending balance,
5 and how much we took in, how much we deposited,
6 and how much we paid out.

7 This is like a cash flow. It kind of
8 gives us some idea how much goes in and out.
9 Because some of it is seasonal, some is based
10 on the things that we had during that month,
11 and when the big bucks are coming in at the
12 beginning of the year for membership. It kind
13 of helps us look at what may be coming up, like
14 we just had here recently, which we didn't know
15 about it.

16 I had talked to the broker about it to
17 make sure we had reserve funds available in a
18 money market account that were readily
19 accessible. But because we didn't know about
20 it until March 14th, and it happened in
21 January, it was hard to be proactive. So it
22 kind of hit us pretty suddenly. So we had to
23 take action, you know, to keep paying our
24 bills.

25 This is basically something we can compare

1 from year to year. And if there is a trend, we
2 can see pretty much what we can expect, to
3 react on it before things get like they did
4 this last time.

5 Is there any questions on that one?

6 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

7 TREASURER SAVAGE: Now, the Statement of
8 Activities. As you can see, this goes through
9 January 23rd. This was the one we got on
10 March 14th. So it was like two months, almost
11 two months old by the time we got it. That kind
12 of hinders us a little bit in how we react.

13 I did change the format a little bit, so
14 you could actually read it. It's big enough
15 print you can actually see a lot of this stuff.

16 So, the only thing on here that really
17 bugs me, and I know Charles had talked about
18 it, is the membership. It just doesn't add up.

19 The bottom of the first page, where it
20 says "Membership" and "Membership Dues,"
21 \$630,000, well, when our accountants, our CPA,
22 told me that they add the whole 27.50, or
23 whatever they get, you know, what they get from
24 them, in there, and then they back out the
25 National dues part, that doesn't make sense.

1 Because National's dues part is like twice as
2 much as what we get, and yet it's one-third
3 here. And it shows 411 for the year. And
4 basically the 60,000, that's backing out the
5 888s and the PUFLs and stuff, where basically
6 about \$60,000 should be showing there, times
7 nine, or 60,000 members times nine, that's, you
8 know, right there is \$540,000. And it's
9 showing 411.

10 So, some of that, I think Charles has said
11 that he felt that some of that was not coming
12 back from National in time. They were holding
13 some of our money.

14 It's something we have to look into. It's
15 not going to be easy.

16 But, like I said, we're working. We've
17 made a lot of strides. We've got a new fiscal
18 officer. She's training. Thanks to you guys
19 for supporting us on that. But right now, you
20 know, it's still a work in progress.

21 Charles and I have been working on this
22 for four years. It was a real pain. You
23 should have seen it before we started. Wow.
24 And believe it or not, we've made a lot of
25 headway. But we still got a long way to go.

1 So is there any questions right now that
2 anybody has that we can answer?

3 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

4 TREASURER SAVAGE: Wow, that's great.

5 We're trying to be as transparent as we
6 can. But, unfortunately, some of the stuff
7 isn't transparent with us. But we're changing.
8 We're trying to change all that. And we're
9 working on it.

10 So if there's no questions --

11 NEC MASOWICK: No questions.

12 TREASURER SAVAGE: Good.

13 Was that five minutes?

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: That was quick enough.

15 And again, I'd like to thank Harold. I'd
16 also like to thank the staff also, Becky.

17 We have come a long way, as far as the
18 financial reporting. I mean a long way. I can
19 remember four years ago, where we dumped the GL
20 and spent two months just digging through it.
21 So we've come a long way.

22 And I just want to thank everyone who has
23 been involved in this. This is a lot easier to
24 read. And going forward, it will be a lot
25 easier to prepare a budget for the Department

1 of Ohio.

2 All right, the minutes from the Finance
3 Committee's last meeting was sent out. The
4 last two meetings were sent out, e-mailed. We
5 do need to vote for approval for those two
6 minutes.

7 Can I get a motion?

8 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 4th
9 District 1st Vice, so moves.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, a motion by
11 Buxton.

12 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: Second. 1st
13 Vice, 10th District, Wes Crothers.

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty.

15 Any discussion?

16 Yes, ma'am.

17 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
18 District.

19 Can we get these a little bit earlier?
20 Because we have to get all of the committee
21 minutes, the meetings. It's hard to read them
22 all. And I'm not going to print out 300 pages.
23 And it's hard to read them on the computer.
24 Can we get them at least two weeks prior to
25 when we vote on them?

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: We will earnestly work
2 on that, Joyce.

3 I know the one meeting we just had. The
4 one meeting, the Finance Committee just had.
5 But we will.

6 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We try to send them out
7 as soon as we get them done.

8 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Well who's not
9 doing it?

10 I mean, the committee meetings we had two
11 weeks ago, they should have been done pretty
12 much right afterwards.

13 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yeah, but they weren't.
14 They should have been mailed to you, or e-mailed
15 to you, shortly, within a week afterwards.

16 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Which only gives
17 us a week here.

18 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Well, do we need to
19 increase our timeframe from standing commissions
20 to DEC, so there is time for --

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: Well, let's do this.
22 Let's make this policy. The minutes from the
23 meeting should go out no less than two weeks
24 after the meeting is held. It should not go out
25 more than two weeks after the meeting is held.

1 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: The meeting
2 was two weeks ago.

3 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Well, it takes us,
4 sometimes, depending on what's going on, it takes
5 time to get them done.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Anything less than two
7 weeks would be kind of difficult.

8 Let's do this. Let's just make a point
9 that we will continue to work on getting those
10 out as quickly as possible.

11 Yes, sir.

12 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Landis, 1st
13 District.

14 Are we voting on the entire minutes of
15 that meeting, including the Finance Committee
16 asking for an increase in the dues?

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: No. That's a resolution
18 that's on the table. That's a resolution that's
19 on the table. We are just voting on the minutes.

20 There is a resolution that is on the table
21 for a dues increase. That is not included in
22 that report because, out of that committee, a
23 resolution came out to vote for an increase in
24 dues.

25 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Okay.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

2 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Do you have the
3 dates of the two minutes? Because all they're
4 hearing is "Finance Committee minutes."

5 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: They have the copies of
6 the Finance Committee minutes.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS:

8 The 7th of February and the 14th of March.

9 1VC RUE: There were set-asides.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, but I think we
11 voted on that.

12 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Set-asides at the
13 Finance Committee meeting?

14 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No. It was the
15 emergency DEC.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: But we did two town
17 halls and then we e-mail voted that, I believe.
18 That was my impression.

19 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: That was the set-aside.

20 1VC RUE: But there were more set-asides.

21 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: That was the last
22 DEC.

23 1VC RUE: And we never finished it.

24 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: I think they were
25 tabled at that time, weren't they?

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes. Yes, they were.
2 Because we had some programming issues and all
3 that got tabled. So --

4 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Just to clarify, a
5 set-aside is pulled aside from a vote on a
6 report. And then it's supposed to be handled
7 immediately at that meeting. So a set-aside is
8 not something that rolls forward as old business.

9 Then, if you table something, you're
10 tabling that on the table and it has to come
11 off the table at that meeting. If it didn't,
12 it drops on the floor. And then it's new
13 motion, with discussion, at the next meeting.

14 So I'm confused as to what happened in all
15 of these meetings. Is there something that
16 goes forward here?

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: No.

18 1VC RUE: There was a problem with the
19 connectability on the platform.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

21 1VC RUE: So the meeting got cut short.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

23 And we tabled those items because we
24 couldn't talk, so to speak. The communication
25 was bad.

1 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So those items
2 were moved to another meeting?

3 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: To this meeting.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

5 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: They're here now?

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

7 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

8 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: And are they in
9 the agenda?

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: They are under the
11 Finance Committee meeting minutes.

12 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Which is what they
13 ought to have?

14 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

16 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So nothing is out
17 there?

18 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No.

19 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Okay, that's all.
20 I'm just clarifying.

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yep.

22 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Because the words
23 have to be specific when you're talking about --

24 NEC MASOWICK: That's your job. You just
25 keep doing it.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty. We have a
2 motion and a second for --

3 Harold, could you give me those dates
4 again?

5 THREASURER SAVAGE: The 7th of February and
6 the 14th of March.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

8 -- for minutes from the 7th of February
9 and then the 14th of March. I believe we have
10 a motion and a second.

11 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Any
13 discussion?

14 Yes, sir.

15 4TH DISTRICT CMDR PERRY: Jerry Perry, 4th
16 District.

17 In looking down through the Statement of
18 Activities, is it true that we paid for the
19 Detachment's travel?

20 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: No.

22 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: It comes out of their
23 funds.

24 4TH DISTRICT CMDR PERRY: If it comes out of
25 their funds, then why are they reporting it on

1 our funds as a total of \$6,619.56?

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: No, that comes out of
3 their funds. It's in the wrong --

4 TREASURER SAVAGE: That's one of the things
5 we're working on.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes. We'll get that
7 straightened out.

8 All right, is this any discussion, any
9 more discussion?

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, seeing
12 there's none, all in favor of accepting the
13 Finance reports for February 7th and March 14th,
14 the usual sign of aye.

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, that motion
19 passes.

20 NEC Masowick.

21 NEC MASOWICK: Guardians 9, Seattle 4.

22 Spring meetings are coming. And we have
23 ten people going to the spring meetings other
24 than me and Chappy. So that will make 12.

25 Vernon Hall, Americanism Commission; Darell

1 Bishop, Americanism Commission; Glenn Hickman,
2 Emblem Committee; Carl Swisher, Internal
3 Affairs Commission; Jason Rue, Americanism
4 Commission; Roy Terry, Media Communications;
5 Bob Klostermeier, Americanism Council; Jean
6 Wilson, Americanism Council; Joe Law,
7 Americanism Council; Media Communications,
8 Holly Lewis.

9 That is all the committee meetings that
10 are going to meet there. And stating that, and
11 Chappy and I are 12, now, counting the
12 Auxiliary, or I mean the SAL that's going to be
13 there -- and the reason I'm bringing that up,
14 at the spring meetings, we're going to be
15 putting our time in for the National
16 Convention. That meeting is going to be from
17 8:30 to 9:30, on Monday, May 8th. Anybody from
18 the Department of Ohio who is there needs to be
19 at that meeting. The more people we get there,
20 the better off we are.

21 We've got a lot of time, we've got a lot
22 of money into this thing. We need to get this
23 passed. We can't let Oklahoma -- or is it
24 Kansas City? We can't let them Okies out there
25 beat us; right?

1 So just keep that in mind. Write that
2 down, 8:30 to 9:30, Monday, May 8th.

3 I had a chance to go to Washington D.C.
4 and got to meet J.D. Vance. His particular
5 area of interest is going to be on banking and
6 he'll be on the committee of aging. So that's
7 his interest. That's where he's going.

8 We met with Sherrod Brown. He,
9 unfortunately, couldn't be with us. He had two
10 other committee meetings. But we brought to
11 him the fact that Camp Lejeune, they need to
12 cap that money that's going to the lawyers so
13 they don't rip us off and misjudge people.

14 So we let those folks on Capital Hill know
15 how we stood on things.

16 Scott, you did a great job with us up
17 there. Thank you. That was an excellent job
18 you did up there.

19 We broke in Mike. He didn't have no ride.
20 So we didn't have nobody chasing us. He did
21 good.

22 I think he was the last one on the hill;
23 right? You walked on it?

24 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.

25 NEC MASOWICK: Did you walk?

1 FROM THE FLOOR: I did.

2 NEC MASOWICK: Good for you.

3 And the second part being to this is we
4 have Kenny Hylton here with us. It's not Kenny
5 Stillman. Kenny Stillman is my next-door
6 neighbor. It's Kenny Hylton.

7 Now we traveled with him the last couple
8 of days. He's a great guy. I'd almost give
9 him an honorary buckeye status, but I'm not.

10 You're not there yet.

11 So let me read his biography.

12 And Kenny, if you would, just give us a
13 few words of wisdom here.

14 Kenny C. Hylton was elected as a National
15 Vice Commander of the nation's largest veterans
16 organization during The American Legion
17 National Convention in Milwaukee on
18 September 1st, 2022.

19 Hylton is a life member of St. Joseph Post
20 464, in St. Leon, Indiana. He has been a
21 Legionnaire since 1975.

22 He is eligible for membership in The
23 American Legion through his service in the U.S.
24 Army from 1970 to 1973. He served with the
25 301st Army Security Agency Battalion, attached

1 to the 82nd Airborne Division at Ft. Bragg, and
2 later transferred to the 4th Infantry Division
3 at Ft. Carson, Colorado.

4 After serving in the military, he worked
5 for the U.S. Postal Service from 1973 through
6 2006.

7 Kenny has held many offices and
8 chairmanships at the Post and District level.
9 He is a dual member of the Sons of The American
10 Legion Squadron 464. At the Department state
11 level, he served as the Commander of the
12 Department of Indiana in 2014. He was
13 appointed as an Indiana Commissioner of Veteran
14 Affairs by then governor Mike Pence,
15 representing The American Legion for five
16 years. Hylton has served as a County Veterans
17 Service Officer for Ripley County, Indiana
18 since 2007, raising awareness of veterans
19 services in local areas. He is nationally
20 accredited with The American Legion to serve
21 all veterans and families.

22 Kenny Hylton has been married to his wife,
23 Carol, for 42 years. They have three children,
24 seven grandchildren, and five
25 great-grandchildren.

1 Kenny Hylton is one of five National
2 Commanders.

3 With that said, would you please give
4 Kenny Hylton applause.

5 (Applause).

6 NTL VICE CMDR HYLTON: Thank you, Steve. I
7 appreciate it.

8 NEC MASOWICK: Well thank you.

9 NTL VICE CMDR HYLTON: I want to thank the
10 Department of Ohio for allowing to have Steve and
11 Chappy chaperone me around the area and so forth.
12 I know I would get lost if I had to get out there
13 and try to do this myself. Because every time I
14 get into Columbus, especially if I'm going to
15 Washington D.C., I get fouled up on the highway.
16 Thank God for GPS, though. That really helps a
17 lot.

18 I also want to thank our present
19 Department President Cindy. She was here with
20 us last night. She may still be here this
21 afternoon, I'm not sure. But I think she had
22 some things to do.

23 Also, Adjutant JD, thanks for your help.
24 I also want to thank you for the opportunity
25 from Ohio.

1 As a matter of fact, you were talking
2 about being a buckeye, I actually spent 14
3 years being a buckeye, from age six until I
4 went in the service. That was over in Warren
5 County. I was in Lebanon. I spent a few years
6 there. And then I went from there to
7 Springboro. That's where I graduated out of
8 high school. And I get a chance to get to
9 through Springboro every once in a while. But
10 I really enjoyed that.

11 Also, I want to congratulate Shane Eaton
12 there for his award that he got for membership.

13 And it's great to see the younger
14 generation here. You have several young
15 generation veterans that really is going to be
16 our future. But we're really going to have to
17 work real hard on that, because I understand
18 there's a lot of our younger generation who
19 don't want to get involved with meetings and so
20 forth. So we're going to have to figure out a
21 way to fit what they want.

22 Also, I want to thank Post 144, Post 532,
23 Post 1, and Post 164, for their involvement and
24 their help in showing me a good time here
25 yesterday.

1 But everywhere I went, I was well
2 received. And I really appreciate that.

3 I'm also here to bring greetings from the
4 National Commander, Jim Troiola, who wishes
5 that his schedule would have been able to
6 permit him as well. Commander Troiola also
7 would like to extend his gratitude in the role
8 of your significant accomplishments during the
9 last few months, accomplishments that would not
10 have happened without the support of The
11 American Legion members and the Departments
12 throughout the world.

13 During the close of the Congress,
14 legislation was passed designating National
15 Buddy Week. And National Buddy Week can be
16 whenever you choose to have your Buddy Week.
17 And usually you want to do that probably
18 earlier in the year and in the middle of
19 winter.

20 But the Department of Veterans Affairs is
21 now directed to conduct educational and
22 outreach events which emphasize peer wellness
23 checks for veterans. The American Legion has
24 been scheduling buddy checks for the past four
25 years and we're calling on the VA to do the

1 same, as part of our effort to destigmatize the
2 very step that it takes for a veteran to ask
3 for help. Veterans value strength and courage.
4 And that's really what mental wellness
5 provides.

6 Estimates of veterans suicide vary widely.
7 Some of the numbers do not include active
8 members. Some suicides are under counted as
9 accidents and addiction related.

10 As far as The American Legion is
11 concerned, the most important number to
12 remember is one, as in "Be the one." Be the
13 one to reach out to that veteran who may be
14 struggling. Be the one to encourage the
15 veteran to seek help. Be the one to follow up
16 with that veteran to let him know, him or her,
17 that they are not forgotten. Be the one to
18 convince that veteran that life is worth living
19 and that suicide is absolutely not an option.
20 In other words, be the one to save one.

21 Very few of us are professional
22 therapists, which is why we welcome the
23 announcement of that this year. Any veteran
24 suicide crosses can be seen at any VA or non-VA
25 care facility free of charge. The veteran does

1 not even have to be enrolled in the VA system
2 for this benefit. It includes up to 30 days
3 inpatient or 90 days outpatient care at any VA
4 or non-VA facility.

5 Always remember to share the new crisis
6 line, 988, with any veteran that you think that
7 may be in crisis. Even if they are not in a
8 crisis, please share it anyway. Publish it in
9 your Post newsletters, social media or other
10 announcements. We need to ensure that 988 is
11 as widely known as 911. In fact, a 988 call
12 today can help prevent a 911 call tomorrow.

13 The Congress has passed some significant
14 legislation that will impact millions of
15 veterans in the coming year. The PACT Act is a
16 reminder that some of the sacrifices that we
17 made in the military do not stop when we leave
18 the service. Toxic exposures can kill slowly.
19 We still are losing Vietnam veterans due to the
20 sickness related to the Agent Orange exposures.
21 That same goes for the atomic veterans. Those
22 who drank the water at Camp Lejeune for
23 decades. Nobody has the ability to change the
24 past, but landmark legislation like the PACT
25 Act is making life better for generations of

1 veterans who were exposed to the burn pits and
2 other poisons of the war.

3 We are calling on the current Congress to
4 pass the Afghan Adjustment Act, so that the
5 allies who stood shoulder to shoulder with us
6 during the fights against terrorists will know
7 that their sacrifice has not been forgotten.
8 These translators and other Afghan allies
9 helped to save American lives. They deserve
10 refuge from the brutal Taliban regime. They
11 deserve safety and a path to residency into the
12 United States.

13 As veterans, The American Legion stands
14 that if we turn our backs on our wartime
15 allies, we will fail to gain needed support
16 during future combat deployments. Please
17 encourage your Congressional representative to
18 support this important legislation.

19 During my Department visits and Post
20 visits, I'm often asked why our organization
21 does not have a national advertising campaign.
22 The truth is that The American Legion does have
23 a national advertising campaign. Some of you
24 may have heard of it already. It is through
25 one of the most respected names in auto racing,

1 the Chip Ganassi team. We receive national
2 exposure every week for the entire racing
3 season on television, newspapers, online, and
4 on the radio. Millions of racing fans know who
5 we are and they are hearing the "Be the one"
6 message.

7 Like any other advertising campaign, our
8 messaging does have a cost. But how can you
9 put a price on saving lives of American
10 veterans?

11 Your membership dues also allows us to
12 operate the most powerful veterans organization
13 in the country. But it is your generosity that
14 enables us to give back to our communities
15 through our outstanding programs.

16 What makes American Legion Charities
17 unique is their efficiency. Salaries and
18 overhead come from operating budgets, not
19 donations.

20 The Veterans and Children's Foundation is
21 the program that our National Commander has
22 chosen for his preferred program for the year,
23 due to its impact on veterans and the children
24 in need. That's two of our four founding
25 pillars just in one title, Veterans and

1 Children's Foundation.

2 Your donations provide temporary financial
3 assistance for needy children. These grants do
4 not need to be paid back and make a difference
5 for military and veterans' families that are
6 struggling.

7 The foundation also provides training to
8 service officers so that they can better assist
9 our veterans in obtaining benefits that they
10 have earned.

11 Commander Troiola is hoping to raise \$2
12 million for his Veterans and Children's
13 Foundation.

14 It is also easy to donate and support this
15 great program. You can leave a check with me,
16 but I would suggest that you just go on
17 legion.org and hit the donate button up on the
18 top-right corner and do your contributions
19 right there. But just select Veterans and
20 Children's Foundation.

21 Another great program of our American
22 Legion, Legacy Scholarship. More than
23 \$1.32 million was raised on our 2022 Legacy
24 Run. I'm thinking that our 2023 run to
25 Charlotte will be even better yet.

1 The American Legion is the most effective
2 veterans organization for many reasons, but a
3 major factor is our size. There is strength in
4 numbers, as we've been hearing this afternoon.
5 And we are still the biggest. But it takes a
6 lot of work to stay on top. Growth should be
7 the goal.

8 National Commander Troiola, he will send
9 his vets pin to the Post that achieves
10 90 percent of the retention rate. The Post
11 that achieves 95 percent will receive the vets
12 coin. A membership excellence pin will go to
13 the Post that recruits five new members from
14 expired rosters. Those that achieve the
15 excellence designation will also receive a
16 signed National Commander license plate.

17 While I'm talking a little bit about
18 membership, I understand that there might be
19 some thought about what Indiana is doing. We
20 have a ten-year membership plan in Indiana.
21 What we do there, our per capita goes toward
22 National and we send in \$35 for each one. Each
23 one of our members that would like to get on
24 that ten-year plan writes out a check for \$350.
25 They are paid up for that following ten years

1 and will not get a notice for their dues each
2 year. So that might be something you might
3 want to consider looking into, and educate
4 yourself on that if Ohio would be thinking
5 about that.

6 But what you can do is go on
7 indianalegion.org, and go to the membership
8 page and look for that ten-year plan, and see
9 if this would compare for you. So that's just
10 something that you may want to consider.

11 And speaking of the vets, V-E-T-S, some of
12 you may have seen the new membership shirt. I
13 believe I've seen a couple over here at the
14 head table.

15 On the right sleeve, there is "V-E-T-S."
16 The "V" naturally stands for veterans. We want
17 to make sure all veterans and their family are
18 taken care of. The "E" stands for "Educate."
19 Educate ourselves and our members, what The
20 American Legion does and our purpose of
21 existing in our communities. They won't know
22 unless we tell them. The "T" stands for
23 "Teams." We need to build teams within our
24 Posts to get the word out to all our veterans
25 and the communities. We need to build our

1 membership teams. The "S" stands for
2 "Sponsor." Sponsor those newly-recruited
3 members.

4 I would like to focus on the word
5 "Sponsor." Some of us may understand that
6 recruiting a new member may be a simple task.
7 But how easy is it to retain that new member?
8 By recruiting a new member in The American
9 Legion, you have taken on the responsibility of
10 sponsoring that new member.

11 We take great pride in recruiting a new
12 member in the organization. But how often do
13 we follow up with that new member? Many times
14 that new member may lose the excitement of
15 being a member because they may not see
16 anything that interesting, so they may ride off
17 into the sunset and slowly disappear.

18 I found something that I'd like to share
19 with you. And some of you may have seen this
20 yourself. But this would be that veteran that
21 had been talking to you that you just
22 recruited, just recently, within the past year.

23 I notice your organization spends a lot of
24 time trying to recruit new members while I'm
25 here during your meetings. Do you remember me?

1 I'm the person you asked to join. I paid my
2 dues and was asked to be a loyal and faithful
3 member. I'm the member who came to every
4 meeting, but nobody paid attention. I tried
5 being friendly, but no one seemed to have,
6 everybody seemed to have their own friends to
7 sit and talk with. I sat with different people
8 several times, but they did not pay attention.
9 I hoped that somebody would ask me to join one
10 of their committees, or do something, but no
11 one did. Finally, because of illness, I missed
12 a meeting. When I came back, no one asked
13 where I had been. I guess it didn't matter
14 whether I made the meetings or not. The next
15 time I decided to go home, stay home and watch
16 a good TV show. When I came back again, no one
17 asked where I had been. You might say that I'm
18 a veteran and a pleasant person. You know what
19 else I am? I'm the member that never came
20 back.

21 How often does that happen?

22 So my thoughts on that, if you are a
23 recruiter and was to sponsor that new member
24 for the first five years, there would be a
25 greater chance that that member will remain as

1 one of your members.

2 By sponsoring, I mean taking the
3 initiative to educate that new member about The
4 American Legion and it's mission of existing in
5 the community, and what the organization does
6 for veterans and their families. Give that new
7 member a sense of belonging, by maybe giving
8 him a small assignment, like working at a Post
9 event. They want to feel needed. Why else did
10 they join?

11 Now if you are a high achiever, and
12 recruiting ten members or more, like this
13 gentleman back here (indicating), you might
14 want to create more teams to be able to educate
15 those new members. It's kind of hard to
16 recruit 50 new members at one time and also
17 educate them at the same time. But remember,
18 an educated Legionnaire is a more effective
19 Legionnaire.

20 As a National Vice Commander, I am given a
21 unique perspective to visit many Posts and
22 Departments, and see the great programs and
23 activities in which you engage on a regular
24 basis. But the Department officers and
25 National officers are not the only people who

1 should be aware of what you do. You have an
2 opportunity to deliver that wider audience in
3 the form of your consolidated reports. That is
4 the data that The American Legion delivers to
5 the Congress each year, and is also the
6 historical record. If we don't write down what
7 we've done in that period of time, and record
8 it, it didn't happen. So just kind of keep
9 that in mind.

10 Please be sure that your Posts complete
11 and submit your consolidated reports. There is
12 no reason why we can't achieve a 100 percent
13 submission rate.

14 In closing, there have been a lot of
15 discord throughout our nation in recent years.
16 We are seeing that at the debates that take
17 place in Congress and at the White House.
18 There have been many political divides,
19 generational divides, and cultural divides. We
20 should always remember that our American Legion
21 should be above that. We have more issues that
22 unite us than divide us. We all served in the
23 military, and we all serve and support
24 veterans. By remaining focused on our four
25 pillars, that's The Legion's defense,

1 Americanism and youth, we can leave a strong
2 American Legion for the generations that follow
3 us.

4 Thank you, and God bless you all. I
5 appreciate it.

6 (Applause).

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Give him another round
8 of applause, please.

9 (Applause).

10 At this time, Alternate NEC Chapman, did
11 you have anything for us?

12 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Commander, thanks
13 for the opportunity to speak. But I think we've
14 heard our NEC give us some reports on National,
15 we just heard our National Vice Commander, so I
16 think I will yield my time back to you.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Thank you.
18 Thank you.

19 Okay. At this point in time we will go
20 over Post Charter revocations and suspensions.

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: I'm back.

22 We have two new Squadrons that are being
23 created, Squadron 90 and 171.

24 We have five Post closings, which we will
25 have to vote on: Post 117; Post 350; Post 430;

1 Post 440; Post 453. They all meet the criteria
2 to close. So at this time I would pass it to
3 the Commander to ask for a motion.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a motion for
5 the closure of those Posts that were listed?

6 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Kevin Motter, 1st
7 District Commander, makes a motion to close those
8 Posts.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

10 6TH DISTRICT 1VC EATON: Shane Eaton, 1st
11 Vice, 6th District, seconds.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, we have a
13 first and a second.

14 Any discussion?

15 Yes, ma'am.

16 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
17 District.

18 Can you specify what the qualifications
19 for closing is? I mean, do they have no
20 members, no money?

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Post 350 was created and
22 never installed the first officer. And 117 was
23 nobody stepping up to become officers and a lack
24 of membership.

25 Correct?

1 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: For 117, correct,
2 no one would step up.

3 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Thank you, Kevin.

4 Post 430 is the same as what Kevin said.
5 They have a very good membership, but nobody
6 will step up to take a leadership role. They
7 sold their Post home and the membership voted
8 not to be a paper Post.

9 Post 440 is in Canton, and they had an
10 aging membership. They had nine members in
11 their Post. None of them wanted to continue
12 on. They all had health issues. They were
13 elderly members.

14 And 453, I would have to look into it,
15 Joyce. I can't remember of the top of my --
16 Okay.

17 13TH DISTRICT CMDR LOCKYER: Lockyer, 13th
18 District.

19 Post 453, their membership criteria is,
20 not only do you have to be a vet, you have to
21 be a --

22 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: That's it, yes.

23 13TH DISTRICT CMDR LOCKYER: Me and my 1st
24 Vice asked them if they would change their
25 constitution and they say no. You've got to be

1 Greek or you're gone.

2 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

3 They were grandfathered in. That was
4 allowed back in the day.

5 Does that answer your question, ma'am?

6 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Yes. Thank you.

7 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Uh-huh.

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: All righty.

9 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Alternate NEC
10 Chapman. Just one question.

11 All of these Posts that closed, was there
12 current membership that wished to remain
13 American Legion members given the opportunity
14 to go to 888s first?

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We will be transferring
17 them either to the Post that takes them in or to
18 888. We are sending letters out. We have some
19 letters out. We are working with all the Post
20 members to make sure they get a home.

21 Actually, some of that, Chappy, has
22 already been documented in the weekly reports.
23 If you look at the transfers, we've already
24 seen, Kevin, I know 117 has already transferred
25 some of their members already. And if you

1 continue to look down, you can see that some of
2 those members are already moving.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay. Anymore
4 discussion?

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, hearing none,
7 all in favor of the closing of those said Posts
8 use the sign of aye.

9 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

11 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, motion
13 passes.

14 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Squadron closings this
15 is informational: 143, 149, 177, 420, 526, 614,
16 684, 700, 717, 756.

17 A lot of these come from Squadrons that
18 have already turned their charter in years ago.
19 But for some reason, when we went through the
20 MyLegion issue last year, their Squadrons came
21 back to life with no members in them. So we
22 are cleaning up our books because we have to
23 have it turned in to National to take them off
24 the books.

25 So there is no vote needed for that. That

1 is with the SAL. They are free to turn in
2 their charters whenever they want.

3 Any questions?

4 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

5 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Next is a Post
6 suspension for Post 25. Would the District
7 Commander like to come up and discuss?

8 7TH DISTRICT CMDR NICHOLS: Would I like to?
9 Probably not. But will I? Yes.

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

11 7TH DISTRICT CMDR NICHOLS: So it is with a
12 heavy heart that I am asking to suspend my home
13 Post. It was brought to me quite awhile back
14 that there was finances missing. There was money
15 being misplaced. And with getting all that
16 information, I have done my due diligence. I
17 went to their accountant. I have pulled their
18 security cameras. There's a lot of documentation
19 that backs up suspending the Post until we can
20 get it ran right.

21 Right now, it is not about veterans. They
22 have social members, over 100-and-some. Their
23 social members are civilians that not only
24 partake in the Post, but they run the Post.
25 They absolutely run the Post.

1 We went in as District and state. I took
2 the Adjutant with me. We gave them a chance to
3 correct what was wrong. And instead, they
4 said, well, you guys aren't here and we'll do
5 what we want.

6 I'm here to say that, as one of the newer
7 Commanders, I do stand for The American Legion
8 and for veterans. And this is not right. We
9 are driving veterans out of this Post.

10 The goal in closing it and reopening is to
11 bring our entire community together, the VFW in
12 with The American Legion, and so all veterans
13 feel welcome everywhere in one community, and
14 not isolated because they can't go there due to
15 what is going on.

16 So I would ask that we pass a motion to
17 suspend until I can get the new officers in
18 there and reopen the Post.

19 Our goal is to only be closed for a very
20 limited amount of time. I have found new
21 officers. I have found new employees. And our
22 goal is to open as soon as we can get everybody
23 in place.

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you.

25 I think Judge Advocate Whitney has a

1 couple words.

2 JUDGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: The manuals of the
3 Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies has a
4 long, involved process in the Uniform Code for
5 the Cancellation, Suspension or Revocation of
6 Post Charters. That uniform code is almost as
7 old as I am. It was passed in 1941. It takes
8 months to follow that process.

9 However, in 2020, the National Judge
10 Advocate published an opinion letter in which
11 he outlined the procedures to be used to bypass
12 that code when immediate suspension of charter
13 is necessary to protect the public health and
14 safety, or in order to follow local and state
15 laws.

16 I'm just going to read you, basically, the
17 summary of that opinion letter from the
18 National Judge Advocate, it's two pages long,
19 in which he cites all of his authority for
20 doing so.

21 What he says is, "Any time a Department
22 Executive Committee is confronted with or
23 informed of questionable activity occurring at
24 a Post within the Department, the Department
25 Executive Committee, prior to immediately

1 acting, should determine the following: Is the
2 information of the Post activity provided to
3 the Executive Committee from a verified,
4 trusted and informed source, such as the
5 District Commander? Is the alleged
6 questionable activity potentially an illegal
7 activity, or an activity that could cause harm
8 to others?

9 Certainly missing money from a Post could
10 fall in that criteria.

11 Third, it is necessary that the Department
12 Executive Committee must act quickly to protect
13 the organization, the Department, its officers
14 and other volunteers and employees, from this
15 potentially illegal activity and additional
16 liability?

17 If the answers to these questions are yes,
18 then the Department Executive Committee should
19 act in the best interests of the organization
20 and the community, to take the necessary steps
21 to prevent any possible further illegal
22 activity or incur any additional liability.

23 And therefore, if this body finds that
24 those criteria have been met, then it is my
25 opinion that you could go ahead and approve the

1 suspension of the charter of Post 25 until such
2 time as that activity is corrected and the
3 charter reinstated.

4 Thank you, Commander.

5 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Commander, just a
6 point.

7 The suspension of a charter puts at risk
8 the liquor license. Are we suspending their
9 charter or just suspending operations until we
10 see that it gets straightened out?

11 Because suspending operations just says,
12 and it should be for a specific time, you will
13 not operate your Post, under the guidance of
14 the District Commander and the District
15 officers, for this amount of time, until they
16 verify that you are ready for operation. And
17 then the District Commander will notify the
18 Commander. Then you have the right and
19 authority to open it back up. We're just
20 suspending operations.

21 Suspending a charter could get into some
22 interesting secretary of state and attorney
23 general --

24 7TH DISTRICT CMDR NICHOLS: You're not,
25 you're not --

1 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: That says they're
2 no longer in good standing. We're not saying
3 they're not in good standing with The American
4 Legion. We're just saying we are not confident
5 their operations are in good order, and it's now
6 under the fiscal responsibility of the District
7 for this period of time.

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

9 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: And something
10 needs to be clarified, rather than just saying
11 when you think it's okay. We ought to have a
12 review. Well, you ought to have a review.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: Actually, we're going
14 there tomorrow.

15 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: I would just say
16 that District is putting up a proposal that,
17 what, in the next 30 days you make a
18 determination, 60 days?

19 7TH DISTRICT CMDR NICHOLS: I would like to
20 clarify it. We're not trying to suspend the
21 charter.

22 Yes, within the next 30 days it will
23 reopen. Our goal is to not have it stop
24 operation for 30 days. The goal is to open it
25 as soon as we are finished.

1 Tomorrow, I am taking my entire Department
2 officers, I'm having the state join me, and we
3 are meeting with the Post. It's just to get
4 things back in line. And it's a multitude of
5 things, breaking state law. There's are a lot
6 of things that have to change.

7 Right now, like I said, the money is one
8 thing. Looking to get the Post shut down in
9 general, there's 100 different things.

10 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Can you pick a
11 date off of your calendar and say that this group
12 could tell that Post by this date you're Ricky
13 Tick or you're Ricky Gone?

14 I mean, you've got to sit with that
15 executive committee and tell them what's on the
16 line is your charter goes at this point, and
17 then everything else has to kick in. Because
18 if you don't have that hammer, then these
19 yayhoos are just going to keep rockin' and
20 rollin'.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: So, Lorena, how would
22 you like to handle this? Thirty days may not be
23 long enough, but 60 may be too long.

24 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: You could say
25 within 60.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: Within 60. Within 60
2 days, okay.

3 7TH DISTRICT CMDR NICHOLS: We can say
4 within 60 days, absolutely.

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay. That's fine.

6 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Within 60 days, no later
7 than.

8 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So within 60 days,
9 the District Commander will validate back to the
10 Department Commander whether they're ready to
11 reopen again or shut down.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct. Correct. That
13 sounds like a plan.

14 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So, if I may,
15 Commander.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: Sure.

17 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: I'd like to take
18 the District Commander out of the room and put a
19 proposal together to be read. And then they're
20 going to submit this.

21 COMMANDER HILLIARD: Okay. That seems fair.

22 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Would that be
23 fine?

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: Very good. Very good.

25 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Thank you.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you.

2 All right. Well, until they come --

3 Yes.

4 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: You know I'm
5 going to bring this up, Commander.

6 Joyce Hannum, 9th District.

7 That is that Post 504 hasn't been closed
8 for two years. I keep hearing we're working on
9 it, we're working on it. I mean, when is
10 enough time to say forget about it? Because
11 it's been two years.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: I know. I know.

13 Can we talk off line on that?

14 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: I've heard that
15 before.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: I got you.

17 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: And I've gotten
18 nowhere.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: I got you. I got you.
20 I got you, Joyce.

21 We will get some information to you on
22 that. We will. We will.

23 I actually drove by there. So we will.

24 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Driving by is not
25 going to help.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: I know. I know.

2 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: They're doing
3 this under the Legion name.

4 COMMANDER SCHMITT: I know. I saw it too.

5 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Did you go in?

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: No, no. I'm not crazy.
7 I'm not crazy.

8 Well, until they come back, let's work on
9 resolutions and constitutional amendments.

10 You want to read the first one?

11 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: All right, I'll get it
12 started.

13 Resolution No. 23-07, Department Finance
14 Committee, Membership Dues Increase for 2024,
15 2026, and 2028, referred to Department
16 Executive Committee.

17 "Whereas, the annual department dues have
18 remained constant at \$9 since January 1, 2004,
19 although our nation has experienced a
20 cumulative inflation rate of 59 percent during
21 that time, and inflation continues to erode the
22 value of the dollar; and

23 "Whereas, membership has declined
24 41.2 percent since 2004, resulting in \$534,690
25 less dues revenue annually; and

1 "Whereas, the Department organization, by
2 practicing prudent fiscal management, including
3 increasing income from fundraising and
4 improving efficiency of DMS, was able to absorb
5 some rising costs through 2022, but will no
6 longer be able to do so; and

7 "Whereas, the Department organization has
8 a current unencumbered cash reserve close to
9 five million, which is estimated to provide for
10 operations for two years, with no ability to
11 provide for contingencies; and

12 "Whereas, it is the opinion of the
13 Department Finance Committee of The American
14 Legion Department of Ohio that a per capita
15 dues increase is necessary in 2024, in order to
16 ensure solvency for the Department
17 organization, and, in the absence of a per
18 capita dues increase, the Department
19 organization will be forced to curtail
20 drastically some of its traditional and
21 longstanding programs; now, therefore, be it

22 "Resolved, by the Department Executive
23 Committee of The American Legion Department of
24 Ohio, in regular meeting assembled in Delaware
25 on April 1st, 2023, that the Department

1 Executive Committee hereby recommends to the
2 2023 Department Convention that the Department
3 dues for the calendar year 2024 be increased by
4 roughly 33 percent, to the amount of \$12."

5 I don't know how this one got in here. I
6 do apologize.

7 The 2024 dues would go to \$12; 2026 dues
8 would go to \$14, and 2028 dues would go to \$15,
9 per capita, for the state.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Six bucks.

11 Alrighty, I need a motion and a second
12 before we can go into discussion.

13 1VC RUE: Jason Rue, Department 1st Vice
14 Commander, makes a motion to approve.

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: We have a motion.

16 Can I get a second?

17 13TH DISTRICT 1VC BOYD: Bert Boyd, Post
18 315, seconds.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. We have a
20 motion and a second.

21 Discussion.

22 PDC SCHMITT: Commander.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: Through the Chairs.

24 PDC SCHMITT: PDC Schmitt.

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

1 PDC SCHMITT: You cannot raise the dues for
2 2024. The reason being, you're not going to
3 approve this until the state convention of 2023,
4 which is at the end of June, first of July. That
5 information has to be in to National by May, I
6 believe, so that they can put the proper
7 information on the dues card when they send them
8 out. They're already going to be printed and
9 they won't have the correct dues amount on for
10 2024. This cannot go into effect until 2025.
11 That's as soon as you could do it.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Great point. Great
13 point.

14 Let's take a step back. This resolution
15 is to go in congruent with what is possibly
16 going to happen at National.

17 PDC SCHMITT: I understand that.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: So if it is 2025, then
19 it would have to be 2025.

20 PDC SCHMITT: Right.

21 However, I just wanted to make that point.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Sure.

23 PDC SCHMITT: By the same token, just
24 another point of information, any Post wanting to
25 raise their dues, besides whatever Department or

1 National raises, they need to get that
2 information in to National, and in to Department,
3 so National can put it on the dues cards before
4 they get printed out for the next year, for 2024.
5 So, anybody wanting to raise their own dues,
6 they've got to do that ahead of time. So a point
7 of information.

8 Thank you.

9 1VC RUE: Actually, if this got passed, we
10 would turn it in to National and it would take
11 effect January 1, 2024, just like the last one
12 did back in '04.

13 So what you encourage your people to do is
14 pay their dues by the end of the year, like
15 they're supposed to do in the first place,
16 because they're not a member anymore at that
17 point if they have not.

18 So, in January, say my Post dues is \$30,
19 it will be \$30 if I pay before January 1st. It
20 will be \$35, probably, after January 1st.
21 Because that's what happened the last time they
22 did a dues increase.

23 PDC SCHMITT: What is your membership card
24 going to read when they send it out to the
25 members?

1 1VC RUE: Your membership card doesn't say
2 nothing about dues, Bob. It tells you how many
3 years of service you've had.

4 PDC SCHMITT: Well, I don't get that card
5 anymore because mine is a PUFL, but --

6 1VC RUE: Well, so is mine. But you get a
7 PUFL card that will tell you how many continuous
8 years though. That's what it tells.

9 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Alternate NEC
10 Chapman.

11 The only thing that includes the price of
12 the dues is the card that actually goes to the
13 residence. That tells you what your dues are.

14 1VC RUE: The mailing.

15 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Yes.

16 1VC RUE: The renewal notice.

17 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: That's correct.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

19 PDC SCHMITT: And that would change that for
20 the first year.

21 1VC RUE: But they would have that to
22 change.

23 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Yes.

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, sir.

25 NEC MASOWICK: The dues increase is over a

1 three year -- Steve Masowick.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: No. Actually, it's over
3 a five-year period.

4 NEC MASOWICK: A five-year period?

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

6 NEC MASOWICK: And how much?

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Six dollars.

8 NEC MASOWICK: That's too little too late,
9 Commander. I think we should go with \$5 right
10 away. And then that will be the incentive to pay
11 your dues earlier. Five dollars is, in my terms,
12 is less than two beers a year.

13 But when National talks about a dues
14 increase, it's coming. By the time we pass a
15 \$3, or a \$2, that money is already going to be
16 gone and ate away. We gain nothing.

17 1VC RUE: So, Steve, when you do this, when
18 we pass this resolution, them dues increases are
19 coming no matter what, once we pass this. So
20 they'll get \$3, \$2, and then \$1, with a year in
21 between each.

22 But what that does is it also guarantees
23 the membership that, while this dues increase
24 is ongoing, we cannot present another dues
25 increase. So they're guaranteeing that this is

1 where it will stay at during that time when
2 it's all carrying on.

3 NEC MASOWICK: Steve Masowick, NEC.

4 I understand the process of what you're
5 trying to do. My point was \$5 is a now fix.

6 1VC RUE: It is. I know a lot of people
7 throw back at \$5. I agree with you. We do need
8 the \$5 right away.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: Well, if you remember, I
10 was the idiot who brought this up back in 2018,
11 2018 or 2019. 2019. So I'm used to taking the
12 shots for this.

13 And one of the things that we wanted to
14 do, and Jason, correct me if I'm wrong, we
15 wanted to smooth this out so the impact would
16 be as minimal to a Post as possible. Yeah,
17 that's what we're trying to do, smooth it out.

18 Now, from the accountant in me, Steve, I
19 agree with you. But, again, this is not a
20 dictatorship. This is a democracy. So this is
21 a great forum for us to discuss this right now.
22 I think it really is. I think it really is.

23 Yes, Joyce.

24 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
25 District.

1 What happens when we do this and then
2 National has theirs on top of that?

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: This is, actually, we're
4 trying to be progressive.

5 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: And proactive?

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

7 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Not that we
8 specifically need this?

9 1VC RUE: No, we do need it.

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Oh yeah.

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yeah, we need it because
12 we haven't had one in 20 years. But we're trying
13 to be proactive with what National will be doing.

14 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: But wouldn't that
15 double? If National raises it five and we raise
16 it five, then it's \$10 more.

17 1VC RUE: Yes.

18 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

19 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: That's where
20 they're going to get the pushback. It's not the
21 five bucks. It's the ten bucks.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: No, no, no, no, no. It
23 will stay at five.

24 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No, it will go up ten.
25 We raise ours five, National raises theirs five,

1 it's going up ten.

2 FROM THE FLOOR: Right.

3 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: That's where I
4 see the problem coming in.

5 NEC MASOWICK: I was under the impression
6 this \$5 was to match with the National.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: It is.

8 NEC MASOWICK: I didn't know that we were
9 thinking about going to \$10.

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No, no. National, if
11 they raise -- sorry.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Go ahead.

13 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: If National decides next
14 month, during their NEC meeting, to approve the
15 proposal of raising their dues, say \$5, that
16 would go on top of our \$5 that we're trying to
17 collect also. So the dues would go up \$10.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Hence the smoothing.

19 NEC MASOWICK: I didn't quite put that
20 together.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: Hence the smoothing.

22 Yes.

23 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Alternate NEC
24 Chapman.

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

1 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: One thing to keep in
2 mind, National has a tendency to do the \$5
3 increase. And in this, ours, it's going to be
4 contingent on what they do at National. So that
5 might be a plus for the stagger too.

6 But, regardless, you're going to see, my
7 fear, and you would see it every time there's a
8 dues increase anyway, is there are going to be
9 Posts that go under water --

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct, correct.

11 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: -- until they can
12 get everything straightened out.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: And I agree with you,
14 Chappy.

15 I think one of the things that we have to
16 be, as the leadership, we have to be forward
17 thinking right now. It's not a question of if
18 the dues are going to get increased, it's when.

19 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: It's when.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: It's when.

21 So, as the finance officer of my Post, and
22 having this information, I can prepare my Post
23 for this to happen.

24 My Post makes \$2 on every membership that
25 we get. Two bucks. So it's nothing. It's

1 absolutely nothing.

2 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: There again, your
3 Post is not living on their membership.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

5 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: If they are, you're
6 not doing anything else.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct, correct.

8 So our thing is is the smaller Posts, who
9 may not have a canteen, who may not have the
10 resources to assume all of that at one time,
11 that's who we're thinking about right now.

12 Now, my Post, we'll be fine. We'll be
13 fine.

14 Yes, sir.

15 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Kevin Motter, the
16 great 1st District Commander.

17 This increase has to be voted upon on the
18 floor of the convention; is that right?

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: You are correct.

20 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: So we're just
21 passing this resolution to pass it on to the
22 convention?

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: You are correct, good
24 sir. You are correct.

25 Yes, sir.

1 11TH DISTRICT 1VC STAN: Thom Stan, 1st Vice
2 Commander, 11th District.

3 I was very loudly opposed to that in 2018.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Oh, yes.

5 11TH DISTRICT 1VC STAN: That's how we know
6 each other.

7 I support this now. I do. And I think
8 that the National is going to pass the \$5
9 increase, and we should pass this increase.

10 And I think we should recommend to our
11 Posts that they consider an increase, at least
12 the ones that can't rub two nickels together as
13 it is. Because those of us that can have other
14 activities to raise funds.

15 It's going to put a ding in the
16 membership, maybe, for two or three years. If
17 we can't go beyond that, as far as gaining
18 membership, then we're not doing our job in
19 recruiting and retaining members.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct, correct.

21 11TH DISTRICT 1VC STAN: My Lions Club dues
22 are \$65 for myself and my wife each and every
23 year. And we get zero back from that. All the
24 Lions Club is is like contribute, contribute,
25 contribute.

1 So I don't object to it anymore. And I
2 know I did loudly in 2018.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thanks.

4 We got a convert, Bob. We got a convert.
5 It took four years, but we got a convert.

6 Any more discussion?

7 And honestly, I like having this
8 discussion. You guys are courteous. It's
9 poignant, it's concise, and everything that
10 you're talking about is relevant.

11 Yes.

12 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Harold Landis, 1st
13 District.

14 Are we going up \$3 or \$5 the first year?

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: We're only voting on, it
16 would be three, two, and then one.

17 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: All right.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: And this would be over a
19 five-year period.

20 Again, smoothing is the most important.
21 Bigger Posts, of course, will not have a
22 problem. It's the smaller Posts that we're
23 more concerned with.

24 Anymore discussion?

25 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

1 FROM THE FLOOR: There's a question. Call
2 for a vote.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

4 All in favor to accept Resolution No.
5 23-07, the usual sign of aye.

6 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

8 FROM THE FLOOR: No.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: You and I are talking
10 after this.

11 FROM THE FLOOR: Okay.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: You know what? Both of
13 you.

14 Thank you, everyone.

15 Next.

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: All right.

17 Resolution 23-03, endorsing Steve
18 Honigfort for the position of SAL NVC Central.
19 I'm going to read the resolve clause.

20 "Resolved, that the Sons of The American
21 Legion Kerner-Slusser Squadron No. 63, in
22 Ottawa, Ohio, proudly endorses Steve Honigfort
23 for the high office of the Sons of The American
24 Legion National Vice Commander Central, and
25 adopts this resolution; and be it further

1 "Resolved, that The American Legion
2 Kerner-Slusser Post No. 63, in Ottawa, Ohio,
3 proudly endorses Steve Honigfort for the high
4 office of the Sons of The American Legion
5 National Vice Commander Central, and adopts
6 this resolution; and be it further

7 "Resolved, that the Sons of The American
8 Legion great 1st District Detachment of Ohio
9 proudly endorses Steve Honigfort for the high
10 office of the Sons of The American Legion
11 National Vice Commander Central, and adopts
12 this resolution; and be it further

13 "Resolved, that The American Legion great
14 1st District, Department of Ohio, proudly
15 endorses Steve Honigfort for the high office of
16 the Sons of The American Legion National Vice
17 Commander Central, and adopts this resolution;
18 and be it further" -- then it stops.

19 Yeah, that shouldn't be there, but we can
20 fix that.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, I'd like to
22 entertain a motion.

23 Steve, would you like to say a couple
24 words?

25 SAL CANDIDATE HONIGFORT: I just want to let

1 you all know that I'm proud to be here and I'm
2 proud to be a part of Ohio. I'll represent the
3 Department and Detachment to the best of my
4 ability. And you're going to hear "Go Bucks" and
5 "O-H-I-O" all over.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Very good. Very good.
7 (Applause).

8 Okay. Well, I thought that someone from
9 his District would like to make that motion.

10 1VC RUE: Jason Rue. I make the motion that
11 we approve the resolution for Steve Honigfort.

12 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 4th
13 district, seconds.

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty. We have a
15 motion and a second. All in favor of accepting
16 resolution --

17 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Discussion.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Any discussion? I'm
19 sorry. Any discussion?

20 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

21 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: No.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty. He's a good
23 man. He's a good man.

24 All in favor of accepting Resolution
25 23-03, the usual sign of aye.

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

3 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

5 Thank you, Steve. And good luck to you.

6 SAL CANDIDATE HONIGFORT: Thank you.

7 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: I've still got more.

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

9 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Resolution 23-04,
10 National Security Commission, "Urged National to
11 adopt a National Civilian Life Saver Award.

12 "Whereas, the Preamble of the Constitution
13 of The American Legion includes as one of the
14 objectives to increase a sense of individual
15 obligation to the community, state and nation,
16 and civilian lifesavers contribute to their
17 community, state and the nation; and

18 "Whereas, The American Legion has always
19 strived to be active and supportive in the
20 local communities; and

21 "Whereas, the National Law Enforcement
22 Officer of the Year Award is fitting support
23 and recognition of America's finest, the
24 National Firefighter of the Year Award is
25 fitting support and recognition of America's

1 bravest, a National Civilian Life Saver of the
2 Year Award would be fitting recognition of
3 America's boldest; and

4 "Whereas, the resolution has concurrence
5 of both the Finance Commission and Internal
6 Affairs Commission, and the Trophies, Awards
7 and Ceremonials Committee; now, therefore, be
8 it

9 "Resolved, by the Department Executive
10 Committee of The American Legion Department of
11 Ohio, in regular meetings assembled in Delaware
12 on April 1, 2023, urges The American Legion to
13 establish and annually recognize a National
14 Civilian Lifesaver of the Year with an
15 appropriate award, which shall be presented at
16 the National Convention or other American
17 Legion setting as deemed appropriate; and be it
18 further

19 "Resolved, that the annual award be named
20 'The American Legion National Civilian
21 Lifesaver of the Year Award,' and that monetary
22 expenses shall not exceed the cost of the award
23 and related travel expense of the winning
24 recipient; and be it finally

25 "Resolved, that the Law and Order

1 Committee be fully authorized to develop
2 appropriate eligibility criteria, application
3 procedures, and deadlines, and selection
4 guidelines for Department submissions.

5 NEC MASOWICK: I have a question. Who is
6 the origin on that?

7 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: The National Security
8 Commission.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: All righty. Okay, can I
10 get a motion and a second?

11 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
12 District. I make a motion that we approve this
13 resolution for the Civilian Life Saver of the
14 Year.

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, we have a
16 motion.

17 6TH DISTRICT CMDR COX, JR.: Gary Cox, Jr.,
18 Commander, 6th District, seconds.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: Gary, I would love to
20 accept that second, but the lovely Miss Sharon is
21 right behind you with her hand up.

22 6TH DISTRICT CMDR COX, JR.: I couldn't see
23 her.

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: I saw her.

25 14TH DISTRICT 1VC MCCLAIN: Anyway, I second

1 the motion.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, we have a
3 motion and a second.

4 Any discussion?

5 Yes, ma'am.

6 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: I just want to
7 point out that Ohio is the only Department who
8 gives out a Civilian Lifesaver of the Year Award.
9 Nobody else does.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Anymore
11 discussion?

12 Yes, sir.

13 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: It should probably
14 be stated that this should be mailed out to all
15 the other Departments after we approve this and
16 get it done.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, very good. Very
18 good.

19 Anyone else?

20 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

21 FROM THE FLOOR: Call for a vote.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

23 All in favor of accepting Resolution
24 23-04, the usual sign of aye.

25 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, motion
4 passes.

5 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Okay, Resolution 23-05.
6 Origin: Department Children and Youth
7 Commission. Subject: To Establish our Country
8 Flag Program. Referred to: Department Executive
9 Committee.

10 "Whereas, it is the responsibility of the
11 Department of Ohio, The American Legion
12 members, to help teach each flag etiquette; and

13 "Whereas, we have the necessary tools to
14 accomplish this task; and

15 "Whereas, other Departments across the
16 nation have similar flag etiquette programs
17 designed for our youth; and

18 "Whereas, American Legion National has a
19 coloring book that teaches about our American
20 Flag and a 20-question test to test their
21 knowledge, and an essay to determine what the
22 American Flag means to them, and a tie-breaker
23 to determine the winners; and

24 "Whereas, our fourth graders are at the
25 perfect age to understand the importance of our

1 American Flag and what it stands for; then,
2 therefore, be it

3 "Resolved, by The American Legion
4 Department of Ohio Children and Youth
5 Commission, on March 11, '23, in meeting at
6 Department Headquarters, urge the DEC to
7 establish the "Our Country Flag Program" for
8 the Department of Ohio; and be it further

9 "Resolved, that The American Legion and
10 each Post that is wanting to participate in the
11 "Our Country Flag Program" purchase a coloring
12 book and test from the Department of Ohio at a
13 price of \$1.25 per each, to assist with the
14 cost of mailings; and be it finally

15 "Resolved, each Post establish how they
16 recognize and reward the winners for their
17 outstanding achievement."

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty, Resolution
19 23-05.

20 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 4th
21 District, so moves that we accept this.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

23 6TH DISTRICT CMDR COX, JR.: Gary Cox, Jr.,
24 Commander, 6th District, seconds.

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty. Okay, so we

1 have a motion and a second.

2 Any discussion?

3 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Mr. Commander.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

5 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: I think our good
6 National Vice Commander knows about this, because
7 we stole it from Indiana.

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

9 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: It works. It
10 works.

11 I brought this, last year, in front of the
12 Children and Youth Commission. It's not a
13 coloring book, it's a comic book that says "Our
14 Country's Flag." And there's a test that goes
15 along with it, and an essay.

16 You've got to write an essay. If you
17 don't write the essay, then it's not going to
18 do any good. That test will be thrown out.

19 As I said in the Children and Youth
20 meeting, we did screen these tests from the one
21 school down there in Harrison. Sorry about
22 that. But anyway, the first five tests I
23 looked all had 100, but no essays.

24 So I asked Ted, who was helping me do
25 these, I said, "What are your scores?"

1 He said, "I got ten of them with
2 100 percent, but no essays on them."

3 So we went in the middle of the stack. I
4 mean, we had two stacks about like that
5 (indicating). The same thing, 100 percent, no
6 essays.

7 So he got on his phone and text the
8 teacher. Well, the teacher didn't send the
9 comic books home with the kids. He went over
10 the test in the classroom, and that's how they
11 got all 100 percents. But the kids never wrote
12 nothing.

13 It's not going to work if you don't do the
14 essay, and let the kids take the comic book
15 home and read it, and then come back and do the
16 test.

17 So it's a very good program. Indiana has
18 had good success with it. And I think we will
19 too.

20 Thank you.

21 COMMANDER STENNIS: Anymore discussion?

22 ADJUNT WHITLEY: For what grade level was
23 this?

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: Fourth grade.

25 Is there anymore discussion?

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Seeing
3 there's none, all in favor of accepting
4 Resolution 23-05, the usual sign of aye.

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, the motion
9 passes.

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: All right, Resolution
11 No. 23-10. Origin: Department Finance
12 Committee. Subject: Establishment of Financial
13 Advisory Board. Referred to: Department
14 Executive Committee.

15 "Whereas, the finances of The American
16 Legion Department of Ohio are of the greatest
17 importance; and

18 "Whereas, the Department of Ohio has a
19 complicated and detail-oriented finance system
20 that requires accurate and timely reporting to
21 the Department Finance Committee and the
22 Department Executive Committee, to allow
23 efficient and fiscally responsible finance
24 decisions; and

25 "Whereas, the finances for the Department

1 of Ohio have been under the control of an
2 outside accounting firm that has not provided
3 detailed, accurate, organized and timely
4 reporting, and

5 "Whereas, an efficient accounting system
6 must have continuity from year to year, which
7 would be provided by an advisory board of Past
8 Department Commanders and Treasurers, having
9 the knowledge and experience gained from their
10 service to the Department of Ohio; now,
11 therefore, be it

12 "Resolved, that an advisory board of the
13 Past Department Commanders and Treasurers be
14 organized to oversee the financial accounts for
15 accuracy in reporting, as well as investment
16 accounts and organization, in order to provide
17 advice and possible solutions to resolving
18 potential or emergency situations that may
19 arise; and be it further

20 "Resolved, that the Department of Ohio
21 outside accounting firm and investment advisers
22 report quarterly, or as requested, to the
23 advisory board, the financial status of the
24 Department of Ohio; and be it further

25 "Resolved, that this advisory board would

1 be responsible for reviewing and providing
2 recommendations on the fiscal policies,
3 financial reports and budget to the Department
4 Finance Committee, Department Commander, and
5 Department Executive Committee; and be it
6 further

7 "Resolved, that this advisory board could
8 assist the Department Finance Committee,
9 Department Commander, and the Department
10 Executive Committee, on special projects that
11 affect the financial affairs of The American
12 Legion Department of Ohio; and be it further

13 "Resolved, that the individuals serving on
14 this advisory board must have knowledge of the
15 Department operations, finances, and basic
16 accounting principles, and adequate report
17 generation; and be it further

18 "Resolved, the Department Commander shall
19 appoint the first five members of the advisory
20 board, and each Department Commander thereafter
21 shall reappoint or appoint new members as their
22 terms may expire, resignation or removal; and
23 be it further

24 "Resolved, the Advisory Board shall
25 consist of 5 members, with one member serving a

1 one-year term, renewable for one additional
2 three-year term, and two members serving a
3 two-year term, renewable for one additional
4 three-year term, and two members serving a
5 three-year term, renewable for one additional
6 three-year term. Thereafter, each new member
7 would serve a three-year term, renewable for
8 one additional three-year term. No member may
9 serve more than two consecutive appointments,
10 each being evaluated annually to ensure the
11 most effective contribution to the board; and,
12 be it further" -- and we stop.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty.

14 This has been mentioned before. We
15 discussed this on both town hall meetings that
16 we had before. So can I get a motion?

17 Thank you, Shane.

18 6TH DISTRICT 1VC EATON: Shane Eaton, 1st
19 Vice Commander, 6th District, makes the motion.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a second?

21 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Harold Landis so
22 seconds.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you, Harold.

24 Any discussion?

25 Yes, sir.

1 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: John Life, 14th
2 District Commander.

3 Don't get me wrong, I do like this and I
4 do agree with this. The only thing that I'm
5 questioning is where it says, "The Department
6 Commander shall appoint the first five." In
7 the rules of the DEC, on page 8, it says we are
8 to confirm the Department Commander's
9 appointments of any and all other Department
10 committees. So are you just picking five or
11 shouldn't that still go through this body to
12 agree upon it?

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: Sure. Oh, yeah. Oh,
14 yeah. Oh, yeah. But the Commander will pick
15 those five.

16 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: I thought that.
17 But with that being the language, I was just
18 wanted to make sure, you know, the DEC is the one
19 who approves the five chosen.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Uh-huh, yes.

21 Yes, ma'am.

22 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
23 District. I have a question with it.

24 I'm sorry, not all Commanders and Finance
25 officers actually know what they're doing.

1 We've had some like that in the past, which is
2 why we're at where we're at.

3 You should open that up to somebody else
4 who's got some financial training, like a
5 bachelor's degree or a Master's degree in
6 accounting. They would definitely be more
7 important to the committee than somebody
8 without that training. You know?

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: And Joyce, we have
10 already taken that into consideration.

11 Actually, I want to thank the PDCs,
12 because that actually came out of a meeting.
13 This came out of a meeting at Mid-Winter.

14 So I think we're all on the same page.
15 The intention of this resolution is to create
16 the committee. I don't want to guarantee, but
17 the folks who will be on it will have some
18 financial acumen. They will have some
19 financial acumen.

20 Actually, I know two people in this room
21 who will probably be on that committee, who
22 will be on that committee.

23 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: But it
24 specifically states, "Past Department Commanders
25 and Treasurers."

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: And that can be updated.
2 That can be updated.

3 What we want is five people that have
4 financial acumen to serve the Department as a
5 whole.

6 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: I couldn't vote
7 on that with that statement, leaving it as it is.

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Well, we can amend that.

9 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: But if that's
10 going to come in the future, that's who it has to
11 be.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: We can amend that.
13 That's not a problem.

14 1VC RUE: You can make a motion to amend
15 that right now.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yeah, we can amend that.
17 That's not a problem.

18 Yes, sir.

19 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Landis, 1st
20 District.

21 Why does it have to be so complicated
22 about how long they can be in the position?
23 Nobody is going to remember who was the first
24 one and the second one and the third one.
25 That's getting a little too complicated.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: We will have to keep
2 track of that, good sir.

3 The thing of it is is that we want people
4 to come in and people to come off. We do not
5 want this committee to become stagnant.

6 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Right. But the
7 way you have it, it's so complicated. It could
8 be less complicated and easier to keep track of.

9 1VC RUE: The reason that it's written out
10 like that is so every year somebody comes up to
11 be replaced, just like we do Charities, Inc.,
12 every year.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yeah.

14 1VC RUE: It's odd stating it the first
15 time, to get it rolling, but that's the way it's
16 supposed to work.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: No, that's right.
18 That's right.

19 We want folks to come on and we want folks
20 to come off. We do not want this to become
21 stagnant. So that's why.

22 Is there anymore discussion?

23 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: Do you want to amend
25 that portion?

1 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Yes, I would like
2 to amend the portion where it says, "An advisory
3 board of Past Department Commanders and
4 Treasurers," and I would add into that any
5 additional Legion members having the knowledge
6 and experience.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

8 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: She said,
9 "Additional Legion members." It sounds like
10 she's adding to it.

11 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No, no.

12 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: It's just the pool
13 of people we can draw from?

14 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

15 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So what you're
16 saying is the Department Commander, who selects
17 the committee, should give a higher level of
18 credence to those that have a financial
19 background?

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

21 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Is that what
22 you're saying?

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

24 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Because this says,
25 "Additional Legion members," and you're not

1 adding to it.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: Qualified members.

3 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: The Commander will
4 select --

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: Qualified.

6 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: -- the
7 appointments based on qualified members,
8 qualified financial capabilities of the members.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

10 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: And not just Past
11 Department Commanders and Treasurers.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

13 Okay.

14 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: We need a second
15 to that amendment.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: We need a second to the
17 amendment.

18 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Harold Landis, 1st
19 District, seconds that.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. We have a
21 motion and a second.

22 Any discussion on the amendment?

23 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, seeing
25 there's none, all in favor of accepting the

1 amendment use the sign of aye.

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

4 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

6 Is there any further discussion for
7 Resolution 23-10, so we can vote on that as a
8 whole, now that it has been amended to add
9 additional Legion members with financial
10 acumen.

11 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

13 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Just for
14 clarification, Alternate NEC Chapman, and this is
15 for verification too, this is not an oversight
16 committee for the Finance Committee?

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: No.

18 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: This is an advisory
19 board?

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct. Correct.

21 This is special projects. This is to
22 ensure. It will serve, almost, as an audit
23 function. That's what it will to.

24 The other issue with this is also going
25 into Charities. It will serve a function for

1 Ohio Legion Charities also. That way, it does
2 not overburden the Finance Committee.

3 All right, all in favor of accepting
4 Resolution 23-10, the usual sign of aye.

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, the
9 resolution passed.

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Resolution 23-08,
11 Department Legislative Commission, "Awarding
12 Tracy Richardson State Legislator of the Year."

13 Can I just read the resolve clause?

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

15 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: "Resolved, by The
16 American Legion Legislative Commission in virtual
17 meeting on March 25, 2023, urges the Department
18 Executive Committee to accept State
19 Representative Tracy Richardson as The American
20 Legion Department of Ohio State Legislator of the
21 Year 2022."

22 FROM THE FLOOR: What about 23-06?

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: We will step back. We
24 will step back and get that one right after we
25 decide this one.

1 All right. Resolution 23-08, can I get a
2 motion to accept?

3 6TH DISTRICT CMDR COX, JR.: Gary Cox, Jr.,
4 Commander of the 6th District, makes the motion.

5 4TH DISTRICT CMDR PERRY: Jerry Perry, 4th
6 District, I second that.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: You know what? I have
8 to watch out for those guys that come out of
9 even-numbered Districts.

10 All right, we have a motion and a second.

11 Is there any discussion?

12 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, seeing
14 there's none, all in favor of accepting
15 Resolution 23-08, the usual sign of aye.

16 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, the
20 resolution passed.

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Do you want to do the
22 other legislator before I go on to the last one?

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

24 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Resolution 23-09, from
25 the Department Legislative Commission, "Awarding

1 David Joyce Congressional Legislator of the
2 Year."

3 "Resolved, by The American Legion
4 Legislative Commission in virtual meeting on
5 March 25, 2023, urges the Department Executive
6 Committee to accept Congressman David Joyce as
7 The American Legion Department of Ohio
8 Congressional Legislator of the Year 2022."

9 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 4th
10 District, so moves that we accept.

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: We have a motion. Can I
12 get a second?

13 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
14 District, seconds.

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Any
16 discussion?

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Seeing
19 there's none, all in favor of accepting
20 Resolution No. 23-09, the usual sign of aye.

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

23 FROM THE FLOOR: Aye.

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, the
25 resolution passes.

1 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: All right.

2 Resolution No. 23-06, Department Media,

3 Marketing and Communication Commission.

4 Subject: "To Amend the Department Constitution

5 and Bylaws Language on OLN."

6 Can I read the resolve clause or do you

7 want to hear the whole --

8 COMMANDER STENNIS: Resolve.

9 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: "Resolved, by The
10 American Legion Department of Ohio Department
11 Executive Committee in regular meeting on
12 April 1, 2023, that Article XI, Section 2, of the
13 Department Constitution and Bylaws be amended to
14 state, 'Of which each year at least \$1.20 shall
15 be allocated to publish and distribute to the
16 membership a Department newsletter.'"

17 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a motion to
18 accept Resolution 23-06?

19 11TH DISTRICT CMDR WAINWRIGHT: Wainwright,
20 I make the motion that we adopt Resolution 23-06.
21 That's Wainwright, 11th District Commander.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a second?

23 11TH DISTRICT 2VC STAN: Thom Stan, 1st
24 Vice, 11th District. I'll second that motion.

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Any

1 discussion?

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: It seems that I have to
4 watch out for the odd-numbered Districts too now.

5 Is there any discussion?

6 Yes, sir.

7 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: Wes Crothers,
8 10th District. Is this going to eliminate the
9 newsletter?

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: No. What this does is
11 give the Department of Ohio an option to e-mail
12 the newsletter. Right now, in the constitution,
13 it does not give us that option. That's it.
14 That's all this does.

15 Yes, sir.

16 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Al Buxton, 4th
17 District. It costs more money to print it;
18 right?

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

20 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: What this is about
21 is e-mail?

22 FROM THE FLOOR: Well aren't they paying
23 \$1.20 now?

24 It's the constitution, not the bylaws.

25 This has nothing to do with the price.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: No. This has to do with
2 the distribution of it, Al, not the cost, just
3 the distribution.

4 FROM THE FLOOR: This should bring down the
5 cost?

6 COMMANDER STENNIS: Right.

7 It's just the distribution; right?

8 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

9 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: The \$1.20 was not
10 enough to publish it, so they added "and
11 distribute."

12 So now, "distribute" means you can send it
13 on e-mail, and then use the \$1.20 to publish
14 it.

15 COMMANDER STENNIS: Right.

16 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: All they wanted
17 was the authority to use e-mail, which means to
18 distribute. Really, if you just put, "To
19 distribute," then it's all wide open.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

21 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: It's just to add
22 "To distribute," and not to increase the \$1.20.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

24 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Because right now
25 they can't e-mail it automatically. They have to

1 request that.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

3 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: I got you.

4 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: And I have
5 requested that and I do get it.

6 But, again, as the gentleman over here
7 (indicating) said, a lot of the older people do
8 not have computers.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: We're not taking it
10 away, Al.

11 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: All right.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, Joyce.

13 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
14 District.

15 When we were discussing the Media
16 Marketing, not to take it away. Can we have
17 the mailing data to 888 members? Because we
18 gain nothing from that.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: Right.

20 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: And the newer
21 members want to get into that. So maybe we could
22 set an age limit on when it would have to be
23 e-mailed versus regular mail.

24 COMMANDER STENNIS: This is all about
25 distribution.

1 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Commander, as a
2 point of order for entry into the minutes, it's
3 only in the constitution, not the bylaws. It
4 says "bylaws" and "constitution."

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: Right.

6 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: When this goes
7 forward to convention, it should only say
8 "constitution."

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: Not "bylaws," okay.

10 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: It could be
11 rejected because of that.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay. Only
13 constitution.

14 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: It's only in the
15 constitution.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, very good.

17 Is there anymore discussion?

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty. Seeing
20 there's none, all in favor of accepting
21 Resolution 23-06, the usual sign of aye.

22 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, resolution

1 passes.

2 Unfinished business.

3 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: All right, the next
4 order of business is the hiring of a Membership
5 Coordinator, Colby Mars.

6 You all received his resume. He is a fine
7 young man. He lives in Marion. Talking with
8 his past businesses, he has done well at his
9 past employment. He's an Army veteran.

10 Commander, I need a motion to approve.

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: Alrighty.

12 Can I get a motion to -- yes, sir.

13 5TH DISTRICT 1VC BISHOP: I make a motion to
14 accept. Darell Bishop, 5th District.

15 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Kevin Motter of
16 the great 1st District, I second.

17 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: That is a motion to
18 hire.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, okay.

20 All right, we're still on the motion to
21 hire.

22 Is there any discussion?

23 Yes, sir.

24 NEC MASOWICK: What's his duties?

25 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Membership Coordinator.

1 NEC MASOWICK: And?

2 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: He will be running the
3 reports. He will be going into Posts to do
4 trainings. Everything that I've done before and
5 additional duties. He'll be Membership
6 coordinator and SAL. He'll also be taking over
7 collecting all the Squadron Constitution and
8 Bylaws, working on keeping all those updated.
9 All the SAL forms will fall all under him now.

10 NEC MASOWICK: Well we already have a
11 membership --

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: No, no.

13 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: That was me.

14 NEC MASOWICK: What's the lady doing on the
15 reception area?

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: She processes all the
17 cards.

18 NEC MASOWICK: So he won't do that?

19 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: He'll take over
20 processing SAL cards when needed. She normally
21 can keep up with the day-to-day of the cards.
22 His job will be more working with the Posts on
23 their membership. And when there is Post issues
24 within the membership, taking those phone calls,
25 so I don't have to answer them all day long.

1 Because that's about half what I get done. So it
2 will let me concentrate more on other areas of
3 need.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, sir.

5 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: John Life, 14th
6 District Commander.

7 What is his salary going to be?

8 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: It's 45,000, approved by
9 the Finance Committee.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Through the Chairs.

11 PDC SCHMITT: Commander, PDC Schmitt.

12 We've been having some financial issues.

13 How do we turn around and hire another
14 employee, basically, including his benefits,
15 about \$60,000, when we can't pay our bills now?
16 I'm not against hiring a Membership
17 Coordinator, I'm just questioning it now
18 because we have this financial issue until at
19 least the 1st of July.

20 FROM THE FLOOR: We're filling an old
21 position.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, we're filling a
23 position.

24 And I hear your concern, Bob. We're
25 filling an old position.

1 And let me take a step back.

2 There was a meeting that was held in
3 February, back in February, and it was stressed
4 from this Chair about where we are fiscally.
5 And we are taking steps to address any concerns
6 that would be involved with that. That's the
7 best that I can tell you right now.

8 But, yes, this is why certain other fiscal
9 concerns and actions have been taken. The
10 Finance Committee has taken other fiscal
11 actions because of certain things that we've
12 noticed and found out that were going on. And
13 we continue to seek to improve on those. So
14 when we come back to you in June, this should
15 not be an issue.

16 But this is just basically just filling a
17 role that was already open. Let me take
18 another step back, a role that was already
19 budgeted for for this year.

20 PDC SCHMITT: Okay, let me put one
21 additional item out there for the DEC.

22 Prior, a few years ago, one person did
23 membership. Sherry is still going to be back
24 there; right?

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

1 PDC SCHMITT: Now you've got two people
2 doing membership.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: There will be other
4 duties assigned also. Two people aren't just
5 going to be doing one thing.

6 PDC SCHMITT: And if I really want to go
7 back, I can go back to where there was only four
8 people on that side of the building and one
9 secretary. That was it.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

11 FROM THE FLOOR: Times have changed.

12 PDC SCHMITT: I understand that.

13 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Chapman, Alternate
14 NEC.

15 And I think one of the concerns, through
16 you to Bob, I think one of the big concerns is
17 that our membership is down, I know in the last
18 five years, 20,000 people, but our staff has
19 increased. So, you know, there's less work. I
20 know there's less money. So there's got to be
21 less work too. That's what you have to justify
22 to us.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: Right, right.

24 From what I see -- what's the best way of
25 putting this? From what I see, there are

1 segments of improvement that we could work on.
2 Not we could work on, we are going to work on
3 it.

4 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: And Commander,
5 that's another issue. With all the technology
6 and the so-called improvements to make jobs
7 easier, once again, we're not seeing any fiscal
8 responsibilities, as far as job performance.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: I think we're drifting
10 away from where we need to be right now. I think
11 we are. I think we are.

12 Because let me also say this -- you know
13 what? I'll step back from that. Because we
14 have staff in the room. And I don't want to
15 insult or embarrass. I don't want to do that.

16 PDC SCHMITT: But those are the concerns
17 that I hear out in the field.

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct. Correct.

19 And I think that discussion is probably
20 better for another time, when it's just
21 primarily the DEC as a whole.

22 This resolution, this motion, is to bring
23 another person on that we've already budgeted
24 for. Evaluation of staff and those sorts of
25 things will probably be needed for another

1 time, another time. Not to say that we will
2 not discuss it, but this is probably not the
3 forum in which it needs to be done.

4 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Very good.

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you. Thank you.

6 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Commander.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, sir.

8 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Buxton, 4th
9 District.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

11 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: I don't remember
12 getting an e-mail with this guy's resume in it.
13 When was it sent out?

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: It was sent out. It was
15 sent out awhile back. I got it. Yeah, I got it.

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: It was with all the
17 other information.

18 FROM THE FLOOR: It was in that zip file
19 with all the resolutions and everything.

20 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yeah.

21 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Okay.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. Yes, sir.

23 FROM THE FLOOR: On the discussion about the
24 staff, if you go back to, let's say nine years
25 ago, or whatever, I'll tell you this, just like

1 everything else, if you don't change things, they
2 tend to move smoothly. The last nine years,
3 we've had tons of change, it seems like. And I
4 know because I call JD all the time for problems
5 that I have. And so there's brush fires we put
6 out all the time that I never used to see, nine,
7 ten, 15 years ago.

8 The first time I was a Post Commander was
9 in 1977. You know, everything ran like
10 clockwork.

11 So I'm not evaluating anybody, but I
12 understand where they're coming from. And they
13 need the help, I think.

14 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: I'm not going to
15 disagree with the Commander.

16 Chapman, Alternate NEC.

17 I don't disagree with the Commander at
18 all. And I've got 56 years in this
19 organization, you know, we've seen a lot.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: Correct.

21 And actually, at the end of this meeting,
22 I need to see the DEC for about five minutes
23 after this meeting.

24 FROM THE FLOOR: In executive session?

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: No. No, not in

1 executive session. But I need them for about
2 five minutes, the DEC. It will be informal.

3 All right, question on the motion.

4 All in favor of hiring Colby Mars, the
5 usual sign of aye.

6 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, Colby Mars is
10 the new Membership Coordinator of the Department
11 of Ohio.

12 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: At this time, I would
13 like to call up Kathy Wilkins, the new Fiscal
14 Officer, so you can all meet her.

15 Miss Kathy, would you come forward?

16 (Applause).

17 Miss Kathy, did you salute the flag?

18 FISCAL OFFICER WILKINS: I did.

19 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Because you're a
20 veteran.

21 FISCAL OFFICER WILKINS: I did.

22 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Would you mind telling
23 us a little bit about yourself?

24 And thank you for coming up today.

25 FISCAL OFFICER WILKINS: My name is Kathleen

1 Wilkins. And I graduated from college with a
2 bachelor's degree in accounting. And I hope to
3 better your financial situations that I'm hearing
4 real good about, and make things a little bit
5 smoother.

6 (Appause).

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes. Give her a round
8 of applause. Welcome her aboard please.

9 (Appause).

10 Okay. All right, Christie, would you come
11 up and give us --

12 COORDINATOR WHITE: Good afternoon,
13 everyone.

14 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.

15 COORDINATOR WHITE: I would like to give a
16 convention update, and then I want to backtrack a
17 little bit, if you don't mind, after my
18 convention update.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: You sure can.

20 COORDINATOR WHITE: So, as I said at the
21 last DEC, convention is June 30th through
22 July 2nd, in Dayton.

23 The hotel is the Marriott University of
24 Dayton. Deadline for registration is May 28th.
25 So please make sure that you contact the hotel

1 and get a room before May 28th. If it is after
2 the 28th, I cannot guarantee that they will
3 still have rooms and I cannot guarantee your
4 room rate.

5 The information to register is on the
6 website. The Convention Call should be going
7 out within the next month, and there will be
8 more convention information in that.

9 All of The Legion meeting space will be at
10 the Dayton Convention Center. I've contacted
11 the CVB. And then Mike and I are going to be
12 working together on some other CVB stuff.

13 They're going to be shuttling from the
14 hotel to the convention center. They do not
15 have ADA accessible buses. So if you have a
16 scooter or are handicapped, you're going to
17 have to drive your car to the convention
18 center. However, there is a parking structure
19 that's attached. You can park for free.

20 Any convention questions?

21 Yes, ma'am.

22 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: So anybody drive
23 up there or just the ones that have --

24 COORDINATOR WHITE: Anyone. If you want to
25 drive your car and you would prefer it that way,

1 you are more than welcome to.

2 We are trying to have shuttles 24/7, so
3 you're not standing around for 20 minutes,
4 waiting to go back to the hotel.

5 So, yes, you are more than welcome to
6 drive yourself, and it would still be free.

7 No other convention questions?

8 FROM THE FLOOR: Do we have the whole hotel?

9 COORDINATOR WHITE: The whole hotel is us
10 and Auxiliary. The Auxiliary, all of their
11 meeting space is in that hotel. And then --

12 FROM THE FLOOR: So we have enough rooms to
13 book the whole hotel?

14 COORDINATOR WHITE: Yes. So that is part of
15 our contract.

16 Generally, when we go someplace, that's
17 part of our contract, that the entire hotel is
18 ours. But by law, hotels have to have X number
19 of percent that they can't release. Because if
20 there is a pilot that comes in and needs
21 overnight accommodations, they have to give it
22 to them, stuff like that. But for the most
23 part, we're the only ones in there.

24 Okay, I would like to circle back to the
25 committee reports real quick. Americanism and

1 Baseball was skipped.

2 Baseball, they just kind of went over
3 everything that they need to do for the
4 upcoming tournament in the summer.

5 However, Americanism I wanted to mention
6 because I believe the DEC needs to approve
7 this.

8 The Americanism Commission selected an
9 Eagle Scout of the Year. This is the first
10 year that we had four nominations for Eagle
11 Scout. It's been years since we've had one.

12 So there were four nominations for Eagle
13 Scout. The Americanism Commission selected,
14 and voted on, Libby Greenbaum as the Eagle
15 Scout of the Year. So our Eagle Scout is a
16 female. I believe she is the only one of the
17 four that did her Eagle Scout project for a
18 Legion Post.

19 So the due date to send her in to National
20 is today. Americanism already voted on it, but
21 I believe I need a motion for them to accept
22 that selection.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

24 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: We just need to
25 vote. The committee made the motion.

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: Go right ahead.

2 11TH DISTRICT 2VC STAN: Do we need a
3 motion?

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

5 11TH DISTRICT 1VC STAN: Thom Stan, 11th
6 District.

7 Since the Americanism Commission approved
8 it, I'll make a motion that we accept their
9 Eagle Scout of the Year and forward it to
10 National.

11 1ST DISTRICT 1VC LANDIS: Landis, 1st
12 District, seconds the motion.

13 COMMANDER STENNIS: We have a motion and a
14 second to accept Libby Greenbaum as the Eagle
15 Scout of the Year.

16 Any discussion?

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, seeing
19 there's none, all in favor, the usual sign of
20 aye.

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, very good.

23 Before we have -- are you all done? I'm
24 sorry, Christie.

25 COORDINATOR WHITE: Yes, I am. I wanted to

1 make sure.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: No problem, no problem.

3 Before we have Mr. Mitchell come up and
4 speak to us, I'd like for us to finish Post 25.

5 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: I'm going to read
6 this for the District 7 Commander so it gets in
7 the minutes clearly. And no one else could
8 probably read my writing.

9 "District 7 moves to have Post 25
10 operations suspended until May 1, 2023, or
11 until the Department Commander reinstates
12 operations.

13 "If the Department Commander feels that
14 the Post 25 members are unwilling to align
15 operations with Department, National and State
16 of Ohio guidance, the Department Executive
17 Committee will initiate charter revocation,
18 with notification to the Ohio Secretary of
19 State and Ohio Attorney General that Post 25 is
20 no longer in good standing, thus revoking any
21 gaming and alcohol licenses."

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, that sounds
23 good.

24 Can I get a motion?

25 7TH DISTRICT CMDR NICHOLS: 7th District

1 Commander Lorena Nichols makes the motion.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: Can I get a second?

3 6TH DISTRICT CMDR COX, JR.: Gary Cox, Jr.,
4 Commander, 6th District, seconds.

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right.

6 Discussion.

7 Yes, sir.

8 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Commander, Kevin
9 Motter, 1st District, great 1st District.

10 I just want to say that it takes a lot of
11 bravery.

12 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, yes.

13 (Applause).

14 You're right, yes. Yes, she should be
15 applauded. That's not an easy thing to do.

16 Okay, is there anymore discussion?

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right, seeing
19 there's none, all in favor of accepting the
20 proposal given by our Parliamentarian use the
21 sign of aye.

22 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: All not in favor.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

25 COMMANDER STENNIS: Outstanding. Thank you

1 all.

2 NEC MASOWICK: If we're handing out
3 compliments, that was well read and well versed.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes. Yes, it was.

5 Mr. Mitchell, would you like to come up,
6 please.

7 MR. MITCHELL: I would first like to thank
8 Scott and the Commander here, and The Legion, for
9 allowing us to speak today.

10 I am Bob Mitchell. I'm with Jodi Bechtel
11 Prater here. We are here today because I'm an
12 advocate for Herbert Bechtel and the Herb
13 Bechtel family, an advocate to upgrade him from
14 the Distinguished Service Cross to the Medal of
15 Honor.

16 Herb was a classmate and friend of mine,
17 up in Logan County, back in 1964-'65. I can be
18 the advocate because I was a friend. I'm not a
19 family member. I'm also a veteran of that time
20 period.

21 Her was a very popular fellow in high
22 school. He was athletic, smart, good looking,
23 never had a problem with anybody. He
24 graduated, went to college. He was drafted out
25 of college in the middle or the latter part of

1 '65, and went to Ft. Polk, Louisiana, for basic
2 training and AIT. And by March 25th of '66, he
3 was in Vietnam with B Company, 1st Battalion,
4 2nd Infantry, of the 1st Infantry Division. He
5 was in War Zone C, III Corps, just northeast of
6 Saigon. He was an M60 machine gunner, PFC-3.

7 What I want to tell you about today, or we
8 want to tell you about today, is the Battle of
9 Bong Trang and Operation AMARILLO, August 24th,
10 25th and 26th, of '66.

11 There was a large contingent of Viet Cong
12 in the area. And three companies of the 1st
13 Battalion, 2nd Infantry, were in a semi-circle
14 around this area. And they didn't know how
15 many Viet Cong fighters were in there. It
16 ended up being battalion-sized. They sent a
17 large unit in on the 24th. In the end, six
18 members of the large unit were killed.

19 Herb, on the 25th, was instructed to move
20 his platoon and his gun unit, three-man gun
21 unit, to help out on the south, where C Company
22 was about to be overrun by the Viet Cong. Herb
23 took it upon himself to move his machine gun
24 crew in between the Viet Cong in the onslaught
25 and the recovery of the American wounded and

1 killed soldiers.

2 Herb, in the end, was killed. He was
3 given the Distinguished Service Cross. Jodi,
4 in a second, is going to be reading that to
5 you. Pay close attention to it. Because it
6 breaks my heart every time I hear it read or I
7 read it myself.

8 Jodi.

9 MS. BECHTEL PRATER: Thank you, Bob.

10 And thank you all for being here and
11 accepting our story.

12 Just a little bit about our family. We
13 were a good German Catholic family. There were
14 12 of us. And Herb was No. 5. I'm No. 9, one
15 of the younger half of it.

16 Again, this is the Distinguished Service
17 Cross. He was originally put in for the Medal
18 of Honor, but was downgraded to the
19 Distinguished Service Cross. And I will
20 explain that later, after I read this, his
21 citation.

22 So the President of the United States,
23 authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918,
24 amended by act of July 25th, 1963, takes pride
25 in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross,

1 posthumously, to Private First Class Herbert
2 Stephen Bechtel, ASN52637473, United States
3 Army, for extraordinary heroism in action in
4 connection with military operations involving
5 conflict with an armed, hostile force in the
6 Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company
7 B, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry, 1st Infantry
8 Division, on 25 August, 1966.

9 Private Bechtel, serving as a machine
10 gunner during Operation AMARILLO, moved with
11 his unit through a dense jungle area in War
12 Zone C, in an attempt to drive heavily
13 reinforced Viet Cong units from their
14 sanctuaries along Route 16. His commander had
15 received word that a 16-man patrol from the
16 Battalion had stumbled across a
17 well-camouflaged enemy base and was being
18 heavily engaged by a numerically-superior Viet
19 Cong force.

20 Explaining that, this was Company C, a
21 portion of Company C, that was sent out as a
22 reconnaissance unit, basically. And that's the
23 unit that, they basically got lost and had to
24 settle in for the night. So when they woke up
25 in the morning, they found they were in the

1 middle of this Hue Battalion, which was one of
2 the premier battalions, fighting battalions, of
3 the Viet Cong.

4 Private Bechtel's company joined with
5 other elements of the battalion and quickly
6 moved to assist the beleaguered patrol. As
7 they arrived in the embattled area, his platoon
8 maneuvered between the patrol and the Viet
9 Cong. This gave the patrol sufficient time to
10 move their dead and wounded to the rear.

11 No sooner was the patrol extracted than
12 the Viet Cong struck the platoon with every
13 weapon at their command. Casualties were many
14 and the platoon was suddenly in grave danger of
15 being destroyed. Artillery and air strikes
16 could not be used against the Viet Cong because
17 of the platoon's proximity to them.

18 Private Bechtel realized the platoon faced
19 annihilation unless someone was able to provide
20 sufficient covering fire to enable the platoon
21 to withdraw. Unhesitatingly, he ordered his
22 gun crew to follow him as he moved to a foxhole
23 forward of the platoon's position. He directed
24 extremely heavy fire on the insurgent bunkers
25 and emplacements, enabling most of the platoon

1 to move back to less exposed positions. There
2 were many wounded who had to be left behind,
3 and Private Bechtel was all that stood between
4 them and the enemy. His steady, intensive fire
5 enabled aidmen to crawl forward and start
6 evacuating the wounded.

7 The Viet Cong concentrated their firepower
8 on Private Bechtel's position. An enemy rifle
9 grenade landed near him. The concussion lifted
10 him from the foxhole and shrapnel wounded him
11 in his arms and hands. He ignored the pain and
12 crawled back to his position to resume firing
13 on the Viet Cong. The assistant machine
14 gunner, and this is PFC Brubaker, had taken
15 over the weapon.

16 Although he was severely wounded and there
17 was someone else to man the weapon, Private
18 Bechtel refused to go to the rear for medical
19 attention. Instead, he painfully crawled 30
20 meters, through a hail of enemy fire. Although
21 he realized he was the primary target of the
22 Viet Cong, he secured three boxes of ammunition
23 and started the perilous crawl back to his
24 foxhole. When he reached the position, he
25 found that the assistant gunner, Brubaker, had

1 been killed, and that the ammunition bearer,
2 PFC Matson, had manned the machine gun.

3 As their ammunition supply became
4 critically low again, Private Bechtel defied a
5 furious volume of hostile fire a second time,
6 as he crawled to another demolished machine gun
7 position and returned with a large quantity of
8 ammunition.

9 Soon thereafter, the ammunition bearer,
10 Matson, was severely wounded. Private Bechtel
11 told him to crawl to the rear, where he could
12 rejoin the platoon and receive medical
13 attention.

14 Although seriously wounded himself,
15 Private Bechtel refused to go with his comrade.
16 Instead, he placed intensive fire onto the
17 insurgent positions to cover the wounded man's
18 withdrawal. He was now alone in his isolated
19 forward position. Private Bechtel, aware that
20 he was low on ammunition, carefully placed
21 short bursts of fire onto the Viet Cong
22 emplacements.

23 Again, a well-placed enemy grenade
24 exploded near his position, and Private Bechtel
25 was struck in the shoulder and hip by

1 fragments. His platoon sergeant shouted to him
2 to return to the rear, so that his wounds could
3 be treated, but he replied that he would remain
4 at his position and continue covering the
5 evacuation of the casualties.

6 Again the Viet Cong increased the
7 intensity of their fire at his position.
8 Private Bechtel continued firing at the enemy.
9 His highly accurate, suppressive fire
10 effectively covered the extraction of the
11 casualties from the battlefield. Then his
12 weapon was silenced.

13 Later, the American forces completely
14 routed the Viet Cong from the base camp.
15 Private Bechtel was found dead behind his
16 weapon, with his finger still on the trigger
17 and all ammunition expended. He had decided
18 that, if necessary, he would sacrifice his own
19 life to enable his comrades to live.

20 Although there was ample opportunity for
21 him to change his mind, he stuck with his
22 decision to the end. His conspicuous gallantry
23 and intrepidity, at the cost of his own life,
24 provided the covering fire that enabled his
25 platoon to withdraw from an extremely dangerous

1 situation and allowed his wounded comrades to
2 be carried from the battlefield. Not only did
3 his actions save many of his comrade's lives,
4 it also provided them with the inspiration to
5 continue the battle and resoundingly defeat the
6 enemy. He never relented from his determined
7 effort to destroy the enemy and to assist and
8 impart confidence to his fallen comrades.

9 Private Bechtel's actions are in keeping
10 with the finest traditions of the military
11 service, and reflect great credit upon himself,
12 the 1st Infantry Division, and the United
13 States Army.

14 There were only four men of his platoon
15 that walked off that battlefield that day
16 unharmed. Three of them are no longer with us.
17 The last man lives in Mississippi. I have met
18 the gentleman. He's about this tall and about
19 this wide (indicating). The gentleman's name
20 is Tony Langford. He's a very nice man.

21 I have also met another one of his other
22 comrades who served with his platoon for a
23 short while and then transferred to another,
24 actually to Company C, one of the ones that was
25 involved in the battle.

1 As I stated, he was initially put in for
2 the Medal of Honor. But according to a letter
3 that I have from Colonel Caldwell, who did the
4 initial investigation, there were some issues
5 with it. And there was a letter that he wrote
6 to the Decorations Board, to the Commanding
7 General of the 1st Infantry Division. In the
8 first paragraph, he states, "From October 1966,
9 this award on PFC Bechtel was first submitted
10 to the brigade commander, Colonel Sidney B.
11 Berry, Jr. Colonel Berry, at the time, thought
12 the valorous actions worthy of a recommendation
13 for the Congressional Medal of Honor, but that
14 it was not correctly worded or written strong
15 enough to pass the division board. Colonel
16 Berry returned the reward and allied papers to
17 the 1st Battalion's 2nd Infantry."

18 The second paragraph reads, "During the
19 month of October '66, the command and staff
20 sections of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry, to
21 include commanding officer, executive officer,
22 S1 and S3, changed and new personnel assumed
23 these positions. Because of this change of
24 personnel, the award was put in the back of the
25 battalion file. The awards clerk who was

1 handling this award rotated in November and,
2 subsequently, all paperwork allied to this
3 award was destroyed. The Adjutant, at that
4 time, had no knowledge of this award."

5 Paragraph three states that, "Captain
6 Johanson, in April, was checking with the 1st
7 Battalion, 2nd Infantry, to ensure that all
8 members of his command were recognized for
9 their individual valorous actions on 25 August,
10 1966. At that time he learned that PFC Bechtel
11 was not recognized in any way for his valorous
12 actions. He felt that PFC Bechtel should be
13 recognized above all the others who received
14 awards for the action of this date.

15 Unfortunately, Captain Johanson was wounded and
16 evacuated from the field of battle, and did not
17 witness Herb's actions."

18 He goes on to state, in the fourth
19 paragraph, that, "PFC Richardson, who was the
20 company clerk at the time, and the personnel
21 listed in the item, are the only eyewitnesses
22 remaining to the command. Other eyewitnesses
23 are unknown or have departed the command.
24 Through no fault of Captain Johanson, the award
25 is late. However, I strongly recommend the

1 award for PFC Bechtel be approved."

2 Because the papers were lost, it was
3 downgraded to the Distinguished Service Cross
4 from the Medal of Honor. However, in doing
5 some research, we came across the book by John
6 Carlin, who is a noted Vietnam historian, and
7 it states, if I can find it here real quick --
8 oh, goodness, where is it?

9 Okay. So, heavy automatic weapons fire
10 from the Viet Cong in the trees and incoming
11 mortar fire pinned them down when a grenade
12 injured Johanson, who was the captain at the
13 time, his intelligence officer, George M.
14 Downs, and he's either a junior or a second,
15 it's not listed in here, replaced him.

16 Company B made three unsuccessful attempts
17 to break through. But with each try, more and
18 more men were wounded or became separated.
19 Only 14 men made the last charge. And I'm
20 assuming that that was, that Herb was part of
21 that last charge.

22 By then, Captain Downs himself was
23 wounded, and almost everyone was exhausted.
24 The communications officer took charge.

25 From the information here, and another

1 article that I found in the, "Pathway To
2 Courage," written by a Mark Hubs, who is a
3 retired Army reservist, it stated, or also
4 stated, that Captain Johanson was wounded by
5 the grenade fragments and Captain Downs took
6 over.

7 The rules state, No. 1, that family
8 members cannot recommend for the Medal of
9 Honor. No. 2, that an officer needs to witness
10 the procedures. In lieu of an officer doing
11 that, you have to have other eyewitnesses.

12 Again, apparently this wasn't enough.

13 Our position is the fact that due
14 diligence was not done in researching, totally,
15 what happened that day, as we can find no
16 evidence that Captain Downs was ever
17 interviewed, nor Colonel Clark's communications
18 officer. So due diligence was not followed
19 through on this. That's the reason it was
20 downgraded, one of the reasons it was
21 downgraded.

22 MR. MITCHELL: Thanks, Jodi.

23 Jodi was 11 years old when her brother was
24 killed. You may be wondering why, and it has
25 been asked of me, why did we wait so long, or

1 why did she wait so long?

2 The Army substituted the Distinguished
3 Service Cross for the Medal of Honor. They
4 substituted it. I think they realized they
5 screwed up and they put in the Distinguished
6 Service Cross because if they had to go
7 backtrack and find the officers, they had
8 already rotated out and came home, it would be
9 more work on their part. So for 53 or 54
10 years, the Bechtel family was unaware that he
11 was put in for the Medal of Honor.

12 A niece of Herb's and Jodi's in
13 Indianapolis, just by researching her heroic
14 uncle, came upon this. And again, she is a
15 relation. But as a relation, she cannot do
16 anything about it. So that's why we are doing
17 this.

18 Herb had many, many opportunities. He had
19 many, many opportunities to leave, leave that
20 point, come back, get a Purple Heart, a Silver
21 Star, and all that. He could have done it. He
22 could have left and went. He didn't.

23 You know, there are many heroes. We have
24 many heroes today. Herb never scored 38,000
25 points. He never won seven Super Bowls. He

1 didn't even hit 62 home runs. What he did was
2 give his life for his fellow countrymen. He
3 did more than, much more than Westmoreland did,
4 or Schwarzkopf, or Eisenhower, or Patton, and
5 even Washington. He gave his life.

6 He had the opportunity to be, maybe be a
7 grandpa today, with kids and grandkids and
8 everything, but he chose, at 20 years old, with
9 his whole life in front of him, he chose to
10 sacrifice it for the betterment of his fellow
11 soldiers and his country.

12 What we're asking for is your support.
13 Tim Shaw, 2nd District Commander, I've been in
14 contact with him, along with Jerry Perry, to
15 write a resolution to the Ohio Legion.

16 Today, I don't know if -- Tim Shaw is not
17 here, is he?

18 FROM THE FLOOR: No.

19 MR. MITCHELL: Okay.

20 To write a resolution, hoping to get it
21 approved by The Legion, to pass it on to the
22 National site.

23 And I know there are power in numbers,
24 like was discussed today. Well I need the
25 support of The American Legion.

1 We have been in contact. About six weeks
2 ago, we met in Bellefontaine with Jim Jordan.

3 I need to speak with J.D. Vance. If
4 anybody here, sir, can arrange that, Jodi and I
5 need a face-to-face with J.D. Vance, because
6 I'm sure he would understand this. Because,
7 being a Marine veteran, I need that. That
8 would be of help tremendously.

9 And 2.9 million American Legion members,
10 if we all send a text message to the president,
11 to Jim Jordan, J.D. Vance, I'm hoping that
12 would get some more attention, more than just
13 me and Jodi trying to contact them. That's
14 what I need from you, and if we can get the
15 resolution to the National level, if you
16 approve it.

17 And if there's somebody here that doesn't
18 think he is deserving of it, I'd appreciate
19 your comment. Because that's what every one of
20 you were in the service fighting for. That's
21 what you went in for, so we would have a
22 choice. And I can accept that, no problem.

23 Herb was inducted, last April, into the
24 Ohio Hall of Fame Wall of Valor. Of the 17
25 members last year inducted, he was the first

1 inducted because he was killed in action. He
2 was killed in combat.

3 Herb gave it all. Everybody here gave
4 some. Herb, he gave up what our next breath
5 would be to us, our next heartbeat. He said,
6 "Greater is Thou."

7 Greater love hath no one than give one's
8 life for his friend. That day, Herbert Bechtel
9 had many, many, many friends. There were many
10 mothers and fathers that year, grandmas,
11 grandpas, wives, children, who received their
12 loved one home because of Herb. Herb gave it
13 all. He decided on that split second that day
14 not to see Jodi again. She was 11 years old.

15 Jodi.

16 MS. BECHTEL PRATER: There's something I
17 wanted to share with you. Last September, I was
18 with a trip, accompanying husband on a trip for
19 veterans to D.C. And we visited all of the
20 monuments around Washington D.C. And what I'm
21 reading here is something that was on the Air
22 Force wall. This is from Sergeant Carl Goldman0.
23 He was a U.S. Army, Air Force, World War II, B-17
24 gunner, killed in action over western Europe.
25 And this is from a letter to his parents.

1 "I'm going on a raid this afternoon.
2 There's a possibility I won't return. Do not
3 worry about me, as everyone has to leave this
4 earth, one way or another, and this is the way
5 I have selected. If after this terrible war is
6 over, the world emerges a saner place,
7 Pogroms" -- meaning people like Hitler -- "and
8 persecutions halted, then I'm glad I gave my
9 efforts with thousands of others for such a
10 cause."

11 I read this on the wall and it just hit me
12 like a ton of bricks, because that's what Herb
13 did. That's what many of you, many of you
14 could have written this same letter to your
15 parents as you served.

16 Like Bob said, we need your support. We
17 need your 2.9 million voices. We need your
18 resolutions.

19 Around Christmastime, we sent packets to
20 the Secretary of Defense, President Biden, the
21 Secretary of the Army, Shirley -- I'm sorry, I
22 can't remember her last name.

23 And then when we met with Jordan about six
24 weeks ago. We gave, again, packets for all of
25 those, as well as the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

1 and Governor DeWine, as we had been on his
2 website and tried to get his attention and had
3 not heard from him.

4 We have also tried to get ahold of JD
5 Vance and have not heard anything from him,
6 from his website.

7 So that's why we need to -- we need you.
8 Anyone who has a connection that can help us
9 see someone face to face to get this to them.

10 I'm sure these packets that we sent out,
11 with all of this information and all the
12 documentation that we have, that we've
13 gathered, is laying on somebody's desk, buried,
14 because they don't have time to look at it.
15 Somebody needs to put that in front of their
16 face.

17 There are so many veterans out there who
18 have been overlooked for their actions. Just
19 several weeks ago, I was contacted by another
20 gentleman that's been helping with this. His
21 name is Scott Stewart, who was with the
22 Veterans to D.C., telling me that a gentleman
23 from Alaska has had 60 years waiting for his
24 Medal of Honor. His circumstances were a
25 little different, but he is alive and was able

1 to travel to Washington to collect his Medal of
2 Honor. And I'm not going to go into his
3 circumstances. It's not my place.

4 Anyway, again, I'd like to thank you for
5 your attention. Thank you for any support that
6 you're willing to give us. And I appreciate
7 all of you for your service.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. MITCHELL: I'm going to have some
10 information handouts, my cards, back here
11 (indicating). If you have any ideas,
12 suggestions, my name and address and e-mail is
13 going to be back here.

14 Are there any comments, statements,
15 questions for us? Please ask. Any questions
16 whatsoever?

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you.

19 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you.

20 Give them a round of applause, please.

21 (Applause).

22 Thank you again. Thank you again.

23 Okay, I think Becky is going to bring us
24 on home.

25 NEC MASOWICK: All right Becky.

1 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We've been waiting on
2 you all day.

3 FISCAL SECRETARY CORBIN: Had to wait my
4 turn, wait my turn.

5 This is just a quick update for National
6 housing. I'm trying to get things done a
7 little early this time, get some more
8 information out there to you.

9 National Convention is going to be in
10 Charlotte, North Carolina. We'll be staying at
11 the Hampton Inn. It's a very nice location.
12 It's beside the convention center; is that
13 right?

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes. Yes, it is.

15 FISCAL SECRETARY CORBIN: So it's very
16 nicely located.

17 This year, the biggest difference we want
18 to do is the Ohio party. We're going to hold
19 it at the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

20 Now we do have to charge for this. You
21 have to buy tickets. They're \$20 each, but
22 this includes your meal and it includes the
23 admission. So I think it's a pretty good
24 price. Because, normally, I think the
25 admission is like \$18 per ticket. So I think

1 it will be a nice event.

2 The Hall of Fame is within walking
3 distance of the hotel. It's all on the same
4 street. So it's very convenient. So that
5 would be something new, something exciting to
6 do.

7 I have provided information sheets, your
8 order forms for your tickets. The banquet
9 tickets are \$60. Both sets of these tickets --

10 So your NASCAR tickets are very limited.
11 We're only allotted so many. So if you want to
12 go, get them in early. It's a first-come,
13 first-serve basis.

14 We don't have a lot of banquet tickets
15 available to sell. So if you know you're going
16 to want a banquet ticket, please get your money
17 in early.

18 I'd ask you just make sure you make your
19 checks out to The American Legion, and on the
20 memo line put "NASCAR tickets," or put "Banquet
21 tickets," so we know exactly what you're
22 buying.

23 FROM THE FLOOR: Who do we make the check
24 out to?

25 FISCAL SECRETARY CORBIN: The American

1 Legion Department of Ohio. But just make sure
2 that you specify what it's for.

3 The housing forms are available and
4 they're ready. We do need a credit card for
5 the hotel. Do not send checks. We must have
6 an active credit card. The hotel requires
7 that.

8 If there's any changes -- like I said,
9 this is still kind of early, and National may
10 have to change a few things.

11 The only thing we know that might change
12 is our Ohio Caucus room. Right now, it's in
13 the Ivy Room at the Hilton Hotel. It's a
14 little small, so they're going to try to work
15 with another state to see if we could use a
16 bigger room for an hour or so, so we won't be
17 so cramped. So that might change. As I get
18 that information in, I'll definitely pass it
19 along.

20 Keep your eye on the National website.
21 They have a list of the maps, the hotels,
22 everything that you might want to look at ahead
23 of time. But you can always feel free to
24 contact me.

25 The convention is August 25th through the

1 31st.

2 We've adjusted our registration time a
3 little bit. It's pretty much the same. We're
4 just shortening our hours. Because usually by
5 the last hour there's nobody coming in.

6 But if it's Saturday and you can't be
7 there by 2:00 o'clock to pick up your packet,
8 give JD a call and we'll make sure that you get
9 it so you can get registered in time.

10 Is there any questions?

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, sir.

12 FROM THE FLOOR: When is the Ohio party?

13 FISCAL SECRETARY CORBIN: The Ohio party is,
14 that is on a Saturday. And the date is on the
15 form, the ticket form.

16 Any other questions?

17 FROM THE FLOOR: That's the day we get
18 there?

19 FISCAL SECRETARY CORBIN: It's Saturday.

20 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. There's no
21 more questions?

22 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

23 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you, Becky.

24 FISCAL SECRETARY CORBIN: Like I said, if
25 you have any questions, just give me a call or

1 e-mail me and we'll get it figured out.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: All right. We have one
3 item for good of The Legion.

4 And Al, if you'll be on deck for the
5 benediction.

6 Oh, you have something?

7 14TH DISTRICT CMDR LIFE: Yes.

8 For the good of the legion, I'd just like
9 to say the 14th District is donating \$500 to
10 your project this year.

11 COMMANDER STENNIS: Outstanding.

12 Outstanding. Thank you. Thank you.

13 (Applause).

14 3RD DISTRICT 1VC LAVOY: For the good of The
15 Legion.

16 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

17 3RD DISTRICT 1VC LAVOY: Ken LaVoy, 3rd
18 District 1st Vice.

19 The burgee, we've been talking about this
20 for two years. It's getting ready for caps
21 again, and the order keeps being told that it's
22 a thread count. And we need to put a timeline
23 on it so we don't just keep pushing it and
24 kicking the can down the road.

25 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Two weeks.

1 3RD DISTRICT 1VC LAVOY: Two weeks? That's
2 fine.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, sir.

4 FROM THE FLOOR: Commander, Post 2 is
5 donating to Boys State, Children and Youth, and
6 Gifts for Yanks.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Outstanding. Alrighty,
8 outstanding. Thank you.

9 Mr. Crothers.

10 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: Wes Crothers,
11 10th District 1st Vice Commander.

12 Just an update on East Palestine. They're
13 estimating now that they will be done with the
14 clean up within the next two months. The
15 buildings themselves are doing all right. The
16 surrounding areas, they're going to be hurting
17 for years because their well water is probably
18 contaminated.

19 NEC MASOWICK: Do they still need water
20 delivered?

21 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: Yes.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

23 NEC MASOWICK: We have a collection at our
24 Post that they're going to bring over.

25 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: Inside the

1 buildings itself, they don't need the water.

2 Outside they do.

3 NEC MASOWICK: How do we know where to take
4 it?

5 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: You can always
6 get ahold of Post 31.

7 NEC MASOWICK: Take it to the Post?

8 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: They will
9 distribute it for you.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, very good.

11 10TH DISTRICT 1VC CROTHERS: That's where JD
12 took his.

13 NEC MASOWICK: Okay. Nice.

14 COMMANDER STENNIS: I got Kevin and then I
15 have you.

16 Yes, sir.

17 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: Kevin Motter,
18 Commander of the great 1st District.

19 Just a selling point that you can take
20 back to your Districts. I ran some numbers,
21 somebody suggested, on what it cost to be a
22 member of a different organization. Boots
23 yearly membership is \$65. Another veterans
24 organization I will not mention is \$45. The
25 Lions Club is \$43. The Rotary Club is \$75 a

1 year membership.

2 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

3 1ST DISTRICT CMDR MOTTER: So we are low.

4 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes, we are.

5 Thank you, Kevin.

6 9TH DISTRICT CMDR HANNUM: Joyce Hannum, 9th
7 District.

8 Are we going to exchange the lanterns?

9 COMMANDER SCHMITT: That's what's next.

10 1VC RUE: Everybody keeps taking my thunder.
11 I was getting ready to do that.

12 So at this time --

13 FROM THE FLOOR: Aren't we going to do a
14 membership report?

15 1VC RUE: No. Nobody turned in any
16 membership today.

17 So at this time, the green lantern, which
18 was held by the 4th District, is going to be
19 transferred over to the 9th District.

20 (Applause).

21 Congratulations, 9th District.

22 That gives you incentive to work harder
23 next time, Al, when you have to hand it off.

24 Unfortunately, the red lantern stays in
25 the same place. I won't mention any names.

1 Thank you.

2 COMMANDER SCHMITT: Alrighty. Yes, sir.

3 PDC SCHMITT: Commander, PDC Schmitt.

4 In light of information I found at the
5 lunch break, according to the Treasurer's
6 report, there is only \$1,750 in Veterans Court.

7 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

8 PDC SCHMITT: So \$1,500 was given to me at
9 my home by Jerry Wilson. I have contributed well
10 over 2000, probably 2500, myself. Jerry then
11 gave me \$10,000. And who knows what other monies
12 may have come in.

13 This should have really been under new
14 business, but I don't think I have the ability
15 to put this there because I'm not a member of
16 the DEC. However, I would like a complete
17 accounting of the monies that were put in there
18 and the distribution of those monies, if any
19 money has been distributed. If not, then I
20 want to know where that money is at and why
21 it's not on the reports where it should be.

22 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay.

23 PDC SCHMITT: You know, if it was
24 distributed, where it was distributed and who
25 authorized it?

1 COMMANDER STENNIS: Okay, okay.

2 PDC SCHMITT: Thank you.

3 COMMANDER STENNIS: Thank you, Bob.

4 11TH DISTRICT CMDR WAINWRIGHT: Commander.

5 COMMANDER STENNIS: Yes.

6 11TH DISTRICT CMDR WAINWRIGHT: Under the
7 good of The American Legion, to end on a good
8 note --

9 FROM THE FLOOR: Who are you?

10 11TH DISTRICT CMDR WAINWRIGHT: Wainwright,
11 Commander, 11th District.

12 Our county veterans service office
13 organized a welcome home for Vietnam veterans.
14 Okay? In our county alone, there are 13
15 veterans organizations. Thirteen. Every one
16 of them attended. Every one of them had
17 representatives there in uniform. I don't
18 think they ever expected the crowd. There was
19 over 300 people.

20 The highlight of the night was when they
21 asked all Vietnam veterans to come forward,
22 step to the microphone, and they gave them
23 time, really gave them time to tell a little
24 story about what they had done. And it was the
25 most moving thing I've seen for a long time.

1 There was some old guys that could barely hold
2 their salute through the Star Spangled Banner
3 and the presentation of colors.

4 But it was really something that was very
5 well organized by our veterans service
6 organization.

7 In the end, so many guys from Vietnam said
8 they were never welcomed home. So it was a
9 great thing for Vietnam veterans.

10 COMMANDER STENNIS: Outstanding.
11 Outstanding. Thank you.

12 (Applause).

13 Okay, on your feet.

14 Remember, remember, I need to see the
15 voting members of the DEC after this meeting
16 closes. If you have to go, I totally
17 understand. But I need to see you for about
18 five minutes.

19 So let's uncover.

20 Assistant Chaplain Buxton, will you give
21 us the benediction.

22 4TH DISTRICT 1VC BUXTON: Okay, let's
23 remember Jean Wilson in our prayers. She, I
24 don't know if anybody knows, but she fell last
25 Saturday night and broke her arm and she's in

1 pretty much pain. She needs our prayers.

2 Our Heavenly Father, as we leave and go
3 our separate ways, we ask that You guide us
4 home and keep us safe from all evil, and to
5 help us do our job as being officers of The
6 American Legion and its family.

7 In Your name we pray, amen.

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.

9 COMMANDER STENNIS: Colors being stationary,
10 hand salute. One, two.

11 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

12 I now declare the Department of Ohio DEC
13 meeting of April 1, 2023 officially adjourned.

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15 (PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED)

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