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THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023.

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

*Dragon Reporting Service
Cincinnati, Ohio
(513) 600-6152*

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1 Saturday, December 2, 2023.

2 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

3 COMMANDER RUE: Colors of our nation in place,
4 hand salute. Two.

5 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

6 Uncover.

7 Department Chaplain Ron Distel will offer us
8 prayer.

9 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: Before I do the invocation,
10 I'd like to have a moment of silence for Lee Price,
11 Commander of the 11th District, who passed away
12 yesterday.

13 (MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED).

14 Let us pray.

15 As we begin our gathering, Lord, we are
16 reminded of those that will not enjoy the holidays
17 as we will. We, Lord, are warriors of long ago, and
18 we remember the loneliness and the isolated feelings
19 while our obligation to protect this great nation
20 was paramount in our minds, knowing many family
21 members and friends were home celebrating and happy.

22 As veterans, Lord, we pray for all our brothers
23 and sisters who sacrifice for us at this time. We
24 pray, Lord, to you, to keep them all protected and
25 bring them all home safely.

1 Amen.

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.

3 COMMANDER RUE: We'll now have the Pledge of
4 Allegiance, led by 1st Vice AJ Whatley.

5 . . . PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BY ASSEMBLY . . .

6 We'll now have the POW/MIA Recognition, led by
7 1st Vice Commander AJ Whatley.

8 1VC WHATLEY: Resolution 288, adopted at the
9 67th National Convention, calls for designating an
10 empty chair placed at all official meetings of The
11 American Legion as a physical symbol of the
12 thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for
13 from all wars and conflicts involving the United
14 States of America.

15 This is a reminder for all of us to spare no
16 effort to secure the release of any American
17 prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the
18 remains of those who died bravely in defense of
19 liberty, and a full accounting for those missing.

20 Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital
21 endeavor.

22 COMMANDER RUE: Cover.

23 We'll now do the preamble, led by 2nd Vice
24 Commander Stan Oren.

25 . . . PREAMBLE BY ASSEMBLY . . .

1 We'll now have the roll call by Department
2 Adjutant JD Robinson.

3 . . . ROLL CALL CONDUCTED . . .

4 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Commander, you have a
5 quorum.

6 COMMANDER RUE: All right.

7 At this time we'll have the introduction of
8 guests, read by our Department Sergeant-at-Arms Dean
9 Boyers.

10 SGT-AT-ARMS BOYERS: Good morning.

11 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

12 SGT-AT-ARMS BOYERS: Well, the guests we have
13 present this morning are: Gary Cox, Jr., past 6th
14 District Commander and candidate for 2nd Vice; Mel
15 Cantrell, 6th District Assistant Chaplain; Tim Shaw,
16 Post 173 Adjutant and Past 2nd District Commander;
17 David Dilts, Ohio SAL Detachment Commander; Stanley
18 Pleasant, Past Department Commander; Holly Lewis,
19 Finance Commission Chair; Jean Wilson, Past
20 Department Commander; Bob White, 13th District Past
21 District Commander and Assistant Historian; Dayna
22 Beyer, Auxiliary Department Historian; Mike Kennedy,
23 Past 1st District Commander; Jane Ridenour,
24 Auxiliary Department President; Mike Homan, 2nd
25 District 2nd Vice Commander; Brenda Clerk, Post 241

1 2nd Vice Commander; Jim Gilliom, from Rafflebox; and
2 Bob Klostermeier, Past Department Commander.

3 Did I miss anybody?

4 Oh, I'm sorry, Bob Schmitt, Past Department
5 Commander.

6 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, Dean.

7 At this time we'll have the reading of the
8 previous minutes by Department Adjutant JD Robinson.

9 4TH DISTRICT CMDR BUXTON: Buxton, 4th District
10 Commander, moves that they be accepted as sent out.

11 COMMANDER RUE: We have a motion. Do we have a
12 second?

13 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Chris Emmons, 3rd
14 District 1st Vice Commander, seconds.

15 COMMANDER RUE: We have a proper motion and a
16 second to dispense with the reading of the minutes,
17 as they were mailed out previous to this meeting.

18 Is there any discussion?

19 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

20 COMMANDER RUE: Is there any discussion?

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

22 COMMANDER RUE: Hearing none, all those in
23 favor signify by saying aye.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

25 COMMANDER RUE: All those opposed, nay.

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

2 COMMANDER RUE: The motion carries.

3 I'd like to thank everyone for coming out
4 today. It's good to have a good turnout again,
5 especially with the PDCs showing up. It isn't often
6 we get those.

7 And I know somewhere along the line we used to
8 have Department Auxiliary Presidents speak at these,
9 and the Detachment Commanders speak at these, and we
10 got away from that at some point. But as a family,
11 I brought them back in so we can work together as a
12 family. So they'll be giving greetings and
13 discussing their stuff a little bit later.

14 Now I'll turn it over to AJ Whatley for
15 membership.

16 1VC WHATLEY: Thank you, Commander.

17 Good morning, everyone.

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

19 1VC WHATLEY: First, let me start off by taking
20 care of the most important thing.

21 I should be seeing two lanterns in our
22 conference today, the red lantern and the green
23 lantern.

24 FROM THE FLOOR: (Indicating).

25 1VC WHATLEY: So I'm only seeing one.

1 Oh, I see.

2 The green lantern goes to District 2, and the
3 red lantern stays at District 7.

4 Right now, as a District (sic), we're at 71.63%
5 in membership, a little bit higher than where we was
6 last year.

7 If you've been doing your buddy checking and
8 some Post revitalization, this will put you in place
9 to call your comrades that don't have a chance to
10 come to the meetings and have not paid their dues,
11 which are delinquent or expired.

12 If you haven't done that, you're going to have
13 a hard time getting where you need to go. You're
14 going to have a hard time.

15 Right now, as far as membership, we have
16 54,562. That's about 22,000 members short from our
17 quota, which is 76,275. The last 30%, and this is
18 about 30%, is going to be hard for us to get
19 percent.

20 If you've been doing your buddy checks, your
21 Post revitalization, it will put you in a great
22 position to get those members to pay their dues. If
23 you have not, good luck.

24 Right now, the next cutoff is January 17th
25 (sic). I'm sorry, December 13th.

1 Right now, we have 12 of our 14 Districts at
2 70% or above. We have three Districts -- and I
3 think most of you have this report, correct?

4 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.

5 1VC WHATLEY: -- that's already at the next
6 level, pretty much.

7 So that's where we are. Let's get there. We
8 can do this.

9 Nationwide, right now we're bouncing between
10 position 24 and 26. We're going up and down. One
11 month we're up, one month we're down. So that's a
12 big improvement from last year.

13 As I said before, I never, ever want to be 43
14 again. Never, ever.

15 I need your help. I need your help. So let's
16 get out and do our jobs. And hopefully, at the next
17 report, you will see a big improvement.

18 Thank you, Commander.

19 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, AJ.

20 So as the 1st Vice was saying, our next cutoff
21 is December 13th. That's 75% as a Department.

22 We are just over 71% now.

23 I would urge each of you to try to get to 75%
24 as a District. If we do that, we will definitely
25 make it.

1 Because we've already got a couple of Districts
2 already over 75%, which AJ didn't mention. But I'd
3 like to congratulate the 2nd District and the 4th
4 District for winning the Brown Jug.

5 Give them a hand.

6 (Applause).

7 If you get out there and work it, you can get
8 it done.

9 Now I'd like to call 2nd Vice Commander Stan
10 Oren for activities.

11 2VC OREN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

12 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

13 2VC OREN: I'm glad to see you're awake at
14 least.

15 Okay, we have the bowling tournament. That's
16 going to be at Cherry Grove Lanes, in Cincinnati,
17 Ohio. The Holiday Inn and Suites Cincinnati
18 Eastgate is our hotel. Post 72 is the host of this.
19 And that will be February 9th through the 10th, 16th
20 through the 17th, and the 23rd through the 24th.

21 I still need some, I'm accepting reservations
22 for golf. I'm looking for somebody to host.
23 Anybody?

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

25 2VC OREN: Okay, the euchre tournament, pool

1 tournament.

2 Plus, I've heard through the grapevine that
3 maybe a District would like to do a cornhole. If
4 they do, let me know. I'd like to get with you yet
5 today.

6 The 6th has mentioned paintball. So I'd like
7 to get with you on that one.

8 If you guys want to do this, let's get'er
9 going. The more of those things we can do, the
10 better off we are.

11 And I'd like to get young people in. And I
12 know that cornhole and paintball are two things
13 young people like to do. I'll attempt it.

14 Thank you.

15 Thank you, Commander.

16 COMMANDER RUE: Now we'll have Jose Rivera,
17 Department Treasurer.

18 TREASURER RIVERA: I will try to give a shorter
19 speech.

20 Of course you know that the stock market goes
21 up and down. So at present we're sitting at
22 \$6.472 million in our investments. And we trust the
23 company we have investing for us to make sure we
24 have the proper investments.

25 Thank you.

1 (Applause).

2 Now we'll have the Department Chaplain's Report
3 by Department Chaplain Ron Distel.

4 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: Thank you, Commander.

5 I've been kept pretty busy lately. It seems
6 like every three days I'm getting notice of one of
7 our members passing away.

8 I've been sending out cards, and it's been
9 going rather well.

10 I did have one gentlemen in a funeral home down
11 in Marietta that I didn't have any information on.
12 I went to that funeral site but you couldn't access
13 their site for some reason. I even had my grandkids
14 trying it for me.

15 I also, this past fall, attended Past
16 Department Commander Ed Anderson's funeral.

17 But everything doesn't go smoothly when I get
18 this information. So the more information you give
19 me, the easier I can get the sympathy cards out or
20 contact the funeral home for electronic sympathys on
21 their site, et cetera. So the more information I
22 get, the easier it's going to be for me to do that.
23 And I definitely will continue working as hard as I
24 can.

25 On October 21st, we had a Religious Emphasis

1 meeting here at Department. And I want to thank all
2 that attended. There wasn't an empty seat in the
3 room. And that's the first time I can remember that
4 in a Religious Emphasis meeting. There was a lot of
5 ideas thrown around. And I want to thank Christie
6 for organizing this and keeping it moving, and she
7 did.

8 Next month, we'll be having a Four Chaplains
9 Service at Mid-Winter. I'm looking for four
10 volunteers. I need four additional volunteers. I'm
11 going to be here all day, so come on up. It's
12 something really easy. It's nothing hard. So don't
13 hesitate.

14 And with that, Mr. Commander, that's about all
15 I have.

16 And once again, I need four volunteers.

17 FROM THE FLOOR: I'll volunteer.

18 (Indicating).

19 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: There's two of them.

20 FROM THE FLOOR: I'll volunteer.

21 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: Awesome.

22 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm four.

23 COMMANDER RUE: That was quick.

24 Thanks, Ron.

25 (Volunteers were: Gary Minadeo, Jose Rivera, Al

1 Buxton and Bob Mason).

2 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: Come and see me afterwards.

3 COMMANDER RUE: Now we'll have the Department
4 Historian's Report by Al Beyer.

5 HISTORIAN BEYER: Commander.

6 I'm sure everybody can hear me.

7 Commander, Department officers, the DEC, in the
8 whole country, there were only 34 entries for the
9 different, the entries of the Posts' Historian
10 Books. And there was 12 Legionnaires that were
11 judging them.

12 However, the "Best Narrative" went to first
13 place Indiana. Second place went to North Carolina.

14 And the "Best Department Yearbook," I'd like to
15 say Ohio, but first place went to Nebraska, second
16 place went to Missouri, and third place went to New
17 York.

18 And the "Best Post Narrative" went to Post 395,
19 in Missouri, second place went to Post 8, in
20 Florida, and third place went to Post 374, in Iowa.

21 By the way, if you feel like your Post,
22 District or county would like to enter a book,
23 please have the book to me no later than June 1st.
24 And if you need the rules for the contest, it's in
25 the officer's handbook -- and we still don't have an

1 officer's handbook -- or you can email me for the
2 rules and I'll get them to you.

3 I'm sure there's a lot of people in here who
4 don't know who Travis Mills is, or his foundation.
5 I never heard of him either, until I got notified
6 when I did back in October .

7 Anyway, he's a retired Army Staff Sergeant of
8 the 82nd Airborne, and is a recalibrated warrior,
9 motivational speaker, actor, author, and advocate
10 for veterans and amputees.

11 By the way, I didn't mention it, but he's a
12 quadriplegic, by the way. And he's a pretty awesome
13 guy to talk to. Despite losing portions of both his
14 arms and legs from an IED while on active duty in
15 Afghanistan, he lives by the motto, "Never give up
16 and never quit."

17 Well, on November 9th, we got to be an
18 important part of history for the Department of
19 Ohio, thanks to our Assistant Historian, Bob White.
20 Bob White had called and informed me of this show
21 called, "New Day Cleveland," which I had never heard
22 of before.

23 Anyway, through Bob, we made arrangements to
24 meet with Fox 8 News at the Parma Post 572. And the
25 Department of Ohio, a few of us got to visit with

1 Post 572 and be on this show called, "New Day
2 Cleveland." The few that were there were our
3 Department Commander; NEC Steve Masowick; Department
4 2nd Vice Stan Oren; Department Treasurer Jose
5 Rivera, who, by the way, showed us the way; your
6 Department Historian, myself; Assistant Historian
7 Bob White; and of course Department of Ohio
8 Auxiliary Historian, and my gorgeous wife, Dayna;
9 Post 572 Commander Erich Pflaidermahnn, along with
10 a few of his officers and members.

11 Anyway, Travis had a few more guests on the
12 show, which I will go into more detail in the next
13 quarterly Legion News.

14 And by the way, for all of you football fans,
15 one of the Cleveland Browns greatest was there,
16 Bernie Kosar. He was there as well.

17 And having listened to Travis Mills and one of
18 his guest speakers, Chris Miller, at the end of the
19 show, everyone in the room left that day with a
20 whole new respect for the combat veteran of our
21 military. It was a really moving experience, I'm
22 telling you. There wasn't a dry eye in the room.
23 It encouraged me a lot more to say and do something
24 more on "Be the One."

25 Well, with his help and the guests on the show

1 that day, I walked away with a whole new vitality to
2 help our veterans in any way I can, such as doing
3 buddy checks and, this is a big one, just listen to
4 their experience, or what the stories are of any
5 other vet that they might have. Just listen to
6 them.

7 By them being able to talk and get it out of
8 their system it helps a hell of a lot, I'll tell
9 you.

10 And I don't know if you know it already, but
11 there's, I think it's 22,000 a day commit suicide.

12 NEC MASOWICK: It's 22.

13 HISTORIAN BEYER: Twenty-two?

14 NEC MASOWICK: Yeah.

15 HISTORIAN BEYER: Okay, a day. That's
16 veterans.

17 Anyway, if you'd like to see that show and see
18 a real good part of history, go on YouTube, punch in
19 the "New Day Cleveland" show for November 9th of
20 this year, and be inspired.

21 Be the one. You always should have your
22 buttons on.

23 Commander, that's all I got. Thank you.

24 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, Al.

25 Next we'll have NEC Steve Masowick.

1 NEC MASOWICK: Good morning, Legionnaires. How
2 are the best Legionnaires this side of the
3 Mississippi this morning?

4 FROM THE FLOOR: Great.

5 NEC MASOWICK: First off, Brenda, first day on
6 the job. Thank you for coming.

7 Don't chase her off. Maybe one day she'll be
8 the Commander of this great State of Ohio.

9 I'd like to thank Stan Oren for coming to our
10 14th District the day after your party, which was a
11 tough call.

12 I think I'm allergic to the beverages you've
13 got over there.

14 National Commander Seehafer will be coming here
15 in June. We have not talked anything about it with
16 JD yet, so we don't have anything on his
17 transportation or nothing. But we'll be showing him
18 around the State of Ohio when he comes in.

19 Dan Wiley from Kansas, he's not going to be
20 able to make it. If we can cross paths somewhere
21 along the line, that would be great.

22 And Jim, I think he's coming.

23 COMMANDER RUE: Summer convention.

24 NEC MASOWICK: Summer convention, very good.

25 COMMANDER RUE: That's the leading candidate,

1 by the way, to be National Commander next year.

2 NEC MASOWICK: A couple reports on some
3 Departments across the country.

4 PNC Tom Bock is in charge of the
5 reestablishment of the Department of Washington.
6 He's getting it better. The programs are all
7 running. And hopefully by July they'll have
8 officers in place and they'll be back in the fold.

9 PNC David Rehbein is at the Department of
10 Colorado, getting it better. All the bills are
11 being paid. They were way behind. Posts in the
12 Department are doing well. They need to be, they
13 should be, will be close to reaching lap prizes for
14 membership. And they're on the straight and narrow.

15 Jake Comer has stepped down as the go-to guy
16 for National. Dan Dellinger will be taking his
17 place. And David Rehbein, Past National Commander,
18 will be second in charge.

19 Jake is 94 years old. And when I call him on
20 the telephone, he's good. He's still got it. And
21 if he don't, he'll ask his wife. I can hear his
22 wife tell him, then he tells me.

23 We're in good hands as far as what we're doing
24 with National, National Commanders. That's a good
25 group of people who are really dedicated to what

1 we've got to be.

2 Well I hate to say this, but I think I'm done.

3 (Applause).

4 One thing, in closing, we got a chance to meet
5 Travis. And I wanted to shake his hand and I didn't
6 realize how bad off he was. But I go to shake his
7 hand, his hand turns all the way around. Freaked me
8 out. It's got some kind of control in there where
9 he can do that. It scared the shit out of me.

10 COMMANDER RUE: He did the same thing when he
11 was waiting to be on the show. He sat there and his
12 hand just spun around. And it cracked everybody up.

13 The guy is a real joker by the way. I believe
14 that's how he got through with everything that he
15 got through. He has a great sense of humor.

16 Next we'll have Ron Chapman, the Alternate NEC.

17 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Okay, so he left me
18 with the exciting part.

19 Okay, a lot of misunderstandings are going on
20 around the country right now over some of the things
21 that we support and don't support as The American
22 Legion. And I think if I read a letter to you that
23 Steve and I got from Commander Seehafer that it will
24 pretty much explain our stance. So why don't I just
25 do that.

1 And it says, "Dear American Legion Family and
2 Friends,

3 "Let me say this in the clearest terms
4 possible: Veterans should feel safe and confident
5 when filing for claims, knowing that no matter who
6 they choose for representation, the Department of
7 Veterans Affairs has reviewed, approved and
8 accredited that party.

9 "That is why The American Legion opposes the
10 PLUS Act."

11 That's the "Preserving Lawful Utilization of
12 Services for Veterans Act."

13 "If enacted, the PLUS Act would transition our
14 system of securing benefits for disabled veterans to
15 an unregulated, profit-driven industry.

16 "Currently, there are unaccredited third
17 parties that present themselves to veterans as
18 legitimate claims service companies to assist
19 veterans in obtaining their earned benefits. The
20 'PLUS Act' aims to legalize these companies by
21 allowing automatic accreditation after 90 days,
22 regardless of whether the VA has completed its
23 verification process. The VA accreditation program
24 exists to ensure that veterans and their family
25 members receive appropriate representation on their

1 VA benefits claims. The American Legion wants to
2 hold bad actors accountable, not give them a pass to
3 prey on veterans.

4 "Our team is working hard to protect all
5 veterans from the 'PLUS Act'. In September 2023,
6 The American Legion sent a letter of opposition to
7 the congressional representatives sponsoring the
8 'Plus Act,' and I personally voiced our opinion
9 during my congressional visits just last month.

10 "However, there is legislation that would help
11 veterans elude the clutches of bad actors. In an
12 effort to protect our veterans, The American Legion
13 supports the 'Governing Unaccredited Representatives
14 Defrauding Act,' the 'GUARD Act' as we know it, and
15 this legislation would reinstate criminal penalties
16 for unaccredited claim representatives who charge
17 unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with
18 filing claims for VA disability compensation
19 benefits.

20 "The American Legion continues to muster
21 support to protect all veterans and their families
22 from claims sharks. Join us in telling Congress to
23 support the 'GUARD Act'."

24 And that's signed, "Daniel J. Seehafer,
25 National Commander of The American Legion."

1 One of the things that these rumors have
2 created was the resolution, we had a resolution that
3 was written, probably last year sometime, but they
4 had to rewrite a resolution. And that's created a
5 lot of concern.

6 Some of those concerns were that The American
7 Legion does not support the "GUARD Act" because they
8 don't support the "PLUS Act." That's false. We do
9 support the "PLUS Act." So that's false.

10 These are things that are being said on social
11 media because we rewrote the resolution in support
12 of the "GUARD Act" and not in support of the "PLUS
13 Act."

14 I'm not going to read that resolution to you.
15 I'm not even going to read the resolved clause.
16 It's available in the archives from the National
17 Convention, on the National website. If you need to
18 see that, it will be on the National archives after
19 our NEC votes, probably to support this new
20 resolution, next Tuesday, when they have a virtual
21 meeting with the Commander and the National
22 Executive Committee. So that's just to make you
23 aware.

24 And also, with all that being said, I encourage
25 every one of you, if you're not already a member

1 receiving information and you haven't joined the
2 grassroots effort, please do that. Join the
3 grassroots effort and get those legislative updates
4 on a weekly basis that come out of Washington, D.C.,
5 concerning our veterans support, our veterans
6 supporting the congressional laws that are being
7 worked on in Washington, D.C.

8 Thank you, Commander.

9 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks.

10 Now we'll have Josh Brown, the Department Judge
11 Advocate.

12 JUDGE ADVOCATE BROWN: Good morning.

13 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

14 JUDGE ADVOCATE BROWN: Basically two things
15 going on legally with The American Legion.

16 We have a lawsuit down in Fayette County, a
17 couple guys named Andy Lachat and Chris Lachat, and
18 they both work for a company called Riten
19 Industries. They sued The American Legion, two of
20 our officers, and Post 25, saying that we committed
21 defamation against them.

22 I've been pretty clear that I think it's a
23 frivolous lawsuit. We lost on the motion to
24 dismiss. So the lawsuit is moving forward right
25 now.

1 We sent discovery to them this week, the
2 Lachats. And so the hope is we'll take another shot
3 at getting the case dismissed after discovery.

4 What discovery is is we send them questions
5 that they have to answer in writing. So when we get
6 that back, we're hoping to have that case, take
7 another shot at having that case dismissed.

8 They also argue that the Post kept some
9 property of theirs and some other things that are
10 more related to the Post. But for the Department of
11 Ohio, it's just the defamation claim.

12 The other thing that we have going on is the
13 closing of Post 472. And I think we're going to be
14 dealing with that, so I'll just let the Commander do
15 that and let that take the natural process here
16 today.

17 But we've got some challenges we've got to deal
18 with, just getting the Post itself taken care of.
19 But we've been on top of that and I know we're going
20 to be restarting the process to get that Post taken
21 care of.

22 So, like I said, those are the two big things
23 that I've been taking care of.

24 Thank you.

25 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, Josh.

1 Now we'll have the Department Parliamentarian
2 Gary Minadeo, for his report.

3 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Greetings, warriors.
4 How we doing?

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

6 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: What's going on with
7 the beard? Well, about mid-October, Cassie sent me
8 like 35 constitution and bylaws to review. I
9 figured it was starting to get out of control, so I
10 have to act more like Moses. Some of them are
11 extremely exciting.

12 But there's three things I want you to notice
13 when you go look at these.

14 One, a lot of folks, they think they need to do
15 this big constitution and bylaws change just to
16 scratch out "great wars" and put "all wars." It's
17 just a pen change. So they can just change that.
18 So a lot of times I'll just send back an e-mail
19 through Cassie and say, "Just change that 'great
20 wars' and then the next time you do an update you
21 vote on it." Okay?

22 Changes to constitutions and bylaws that are in
23 favor of the membership and not restricting the
24 membership's ability to get information or question
25 or vote on information can just be you scratch it

1 out and put the new information in.

2 For instance, the disciplinary procedures, we
3 range from Posts that are going to do whatever the
4 Department tells them to do in one sentence to nine
5 or ten paragraphs on how they're going to, you know,
6 throw someone out, to the Executive Committee could
7 suspend, expel, hang, quarter, I mean it's all kind
8 of stuff, at the meeting where it's brought up, as
9 long as the Executive Committee votes with the
10 majority on it. So some of those I have to write a
11 little differently for them.

12 And a lot of them reference the disciplinary
13 procedures of the Department of Ohio under the old
14 constitution, prior to July '22. All right?

15 The July '22 constitution and bylaws changed
16 the section. The disciplinary section in the bylaws
17 for the Department went from Article IV to Article
18 V.

19 So all they really need to do is talk about, in
20 discipline, that the Executive Committee will follow
21 the procedures of the Department of Ohio, as
22 outlined in Article V of the bylaws of July 2022.
23 So I send them that information and they just cross
24 that out, because the Department mandated that.
25 Your Post cannot follow the discipline procedures

1 under the uniform code of conduct for the Department
2 of Ohio. Okay? So that's one.

3 And then another one is amendments. Okay?

4 In the officer's manual, the boilerplate just
5 says, you know, you need to notify, and then it has
6 so many dates, but it doesn't recommend any dates.

7 Our amendments for the Department are 35 days
8 prior notification.

9 So a lot of them will have a constitutional
10 amendment and they'll change it at the next meeting
11 after that meeting where it's brought up. So I'm
12 telling you to scratch that out and say that you
13 will notify at least 30 days prior to when the vote
14 is being taken. So that gives people time to read
15 it, understand it, and ask questions about it.
16 That's just a pen and ink change.

17 Now some of your old-timers will say, "You
18 can't change that. You have to vote on it." No,
19 no, no. It's a change in favor of the members
20 having more ability to question and ask and educate.

21 So we'd like to see at least 30 days on that.

22 Now the other question that comes up: "Do we
23 have to do this every year?"

24 I normally send them an e-mail and say I
25 recommend, after the new officers are elected, at

1 the next meeting, have the officers at least read
2 the constitution and bylaws, see if there's any
3 changes that need to be made, and then publish it
4 once a year, however you're doing it. Through
5 e-mail is easy.

6 I've got it posted in our canteen. So at
7 various levels of alcohol, they read it. Apparently
8 they understand it better with more alcohol.

9 So that's about it.

10 So the constitution and bylaws that I have, I
11 found out, and I'm just reading them as they give
12 them to me, so I found out from Chappy today I sent
13 comment on one that was probably ten years old. I
14 don't have the most current one. So that's okay.

15 Tell your Posts to take it easy on Gary. He's
16 already growing old from this process. Don't say,
17 you know, the various levels of names other than
18 Gary that they call me in an e-mail when I send them
19 a comment about, hey, you need to change this. Just
20 tell me, you may be working off an old one and
21 here's the current one. And then I'll read it and
22 say, okay, you do have it right. Okay? Don't get
23 upset.

24 Normally what I say is "Approved with comment."
25 And unless it's really broke, I'm not going to

1 disapprove it. And to be broke, it really has to be
2 out of order.

3 I really need to see it. And Doug does this
4 too, Doug Russell. We need to see that the Post has
5 a rule in the constitution and bylaws that limits
6 discussion, that limits the blue caps from finding
7 out the information and actually managing the Post,
8 rather than the executive council or some committee
9 going wild with it.

10 So rarely am I saying "disapproved." Okay?

11 But any questions you can ask me about it.
12 I'll give you my card if you have any issues. But
13 for the most part, we're knocking them out. We're
14 knocking them out.

15 Now, in the officer's manual -- a lot of people
16 ask how we do this. Well, in our 2022 Officer's
17 Guide, it has, on page 85, a suggested Post
18 Constitution.

19 So the big question is: How do I know when it
20 was revised?

21 So go back to the boilerplate and just see if
22 you have everything there. And then have your
23 committee add some little things, the traditions you
24 may have, stuff like that. So that's one.

25 Take a look at that boilerplate. It's really

1 nice. I think they actually have it on-line as a
2 PDF also. Yeah, they do.

3 We used to have it on our website but it's not
4 there anymore.

5 And then parliamentary procedure, the thing
6 that I love, right here (indicating). Okay? It's
7 '99. This is everything you need to know to manage
8 a meeting. You don't need to know all the other
9 stuff that I deal with. Just follow this
10 (indicating).

11 So it's right in your officer's guide. If you
12 want to help new Commanders, young Commanders, old
13 Commanders, whoever, on how we run a meeting, that's
14 how you do it.

15 All right, God bless all of you.

16 COMMANDER RUE: Thank you, Gary.

17 JD Robinson, for the Department Adjutant's
18 Report.

19 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Good morning, everybody.

20 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: First off, I'd like to
22 thank our staff. They have done a tremendous job.

23 We are continually fighting to keep staff. We
24 keep replacing staff. We're moving position to
25 position daily. It is a struggle to maintain who is

1 doing what, when, where. And we have meetings to
2 make sure we know what we are doing, who is doing
3 what, and how often they are doing it.

4 So I want did say thank you to the staff.

5 (Applause).

6 Just a heads-up, the Membership Coordinator,
7 Hunter Woods, his last day was yesterday. He is
8 going to the State Highway Patrol. We wish him the
9 best of luck.

10 Sherry Yockey will be filling that position as
11 a, not quite a coordinator but a step up. We did
12 not feel that it was prudent enough to hire another
13 coordinator for a year, six months, and then they go
14 down the road, when she's more than capable of doing
15 the daily tasks. And I can help and fill in in all
16 the other areas that need filled in.

17 The other position we just lost was our
18 Cincinnati VA DSO, Jeff Delaney. He was hired by
19 the VA. So we lost another one.

20 But to tell you how good Jeff was as an
21 employee, we had a lady call in on Thursday and
22 she's writing a sizable check to the VA Committee,
23 or the VA Commission, for us, because her
24 82-year-old husband was awarded a very large sum. I
25 don't know how much. She didn't say. But Jeff was

1 such a pleasure to work with and helped her so much,
2 she felt the need that that would be the best reward
3 to help us out that way.

4 So when you're thinking about the staff, we do
5 do our best.

6 Commander.

7 COMMANDER RUE: Thank you.

8 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Thank you, sir.

9 COMMANDER RUE: As I said before, we're
10 bringing the Auxiliary and the SAL back to our
11 meetings, to give us updates and any information
12 they want to pass along.

13 So at this time we'll have our Department
14 Auxiliary President Jane Ridenour.

15 (Applause).

16 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: Thank you so much.

17 Commander, Department officers, Legionnaires
18 and guests, good morning.

19 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

20 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: And this next phrase
21 cannot be said often enough, but for all of you,
22 thank you for your service.

23 And for the Vietnam veterans, welcome home.

24 I'll give an update on our Auxiliary
25 activities, as they're participating in all of their

1 community programs for Veterans Day. Many of our
2 units are working hard with the "Wreaths Across
3 America," in preparation for the laying of the
4 wreaths.

5 Just Thursday, I had the opportunity of touring
6 the Dayton VA facility, and was totally, totally
7 impressed with what they do there, and the
8 Auxiliary's participation from the members of the
9 thundering 3rd District. I'm planning on reaching
10 out to them to try to get a little more in the other
11 areas, that we can have that type of participation
12 in all of the other VAs.

13 And I know our other Districts are all actively
14 organizing various activities to help our veterans
15 enjoy a merry Christmas season.

16 I have to -- what's the word I want to use? I
17 can't even think of it right now. I just went
18 blank.

19 What Jason said about family, that's been such
20 an important part of this year, working together
21 with Jason, and with Dave and the SAL. I think it's
22 a nice refocus, if you will, that we're doing. Not
23 only are we focused on, obviously, the veterans,
24 doing what we can for them, but our communities, our
25 children and youth.

1 We've been focused on what we can do to help
2 our veterans. Jason's special project, Dave's
3 special project, and mine, have all coincided.

4 And for those of you who do not know, my
5 special project this year is "H.O.O.V.E.S., Healing
6 Of Our Veterans Equine Services," in Swanton, Ohio.

7 And if none of you are familiar with that,
8 please look that up on-line. They are doing amazing
9 work there. It's a private, donor-supported
10 charity, dedicated to providing fully-funded,
11 four-day, non-clinical healing intensives for
12 veterans across the nation.

13 She not only houses them, she, Amanda Held is
14 the facilitator, she will fly them in. She pays for
15 the transportation. She pays for the housing, for
16 food, everything.

17 She takes in rescue horses, trains them and
18 uses them uses them as part of the therapy for the
19 veterans.

20 An amazing, amazing program.

21 So I am doing a raffle on that. So if anyone
22 is interested, see me afterwards.

23 Right now, though, I think our main focus, like
24 yours, is on membership.

25 Although we do a competition, if you will,

1 between The Legion and Auxiliary, whatever, really,
2 membership is not a competition, it's a necessity.
3 And I know this is a focus across The Legion family.

4 Right now, Ohio Auxiliary membership is only at
5 58.7%, as of November 22nd. Nationwide, it's only
6 54.73%.

7 I'm happy to say, though, overall, right now,
8 our numbers are better. We are, nationwide, 5,824
9 more members than we were last year at this time.

10 However, if we want our organizations to
11 continue and exceed what we've accomplished over the
12 last 104 years, we've got to get those numbers up.
13 So let's do what we can. If you're getting members
14 in The Legion, maybe they have a spouse that would
15 like to join the Auxiliary. Let's pass that
16 information along and share that and see what we can
17 do to help one another out.

18 And if there's anything else that the Auxiliary
19 can do to further assist your organization, please
20 do not hesitate to reach out and ask.

21 Thank you so much for having me here and have a
22 good day.

23 10TH DISTRICT CMDR CROTHERS: Wes Crothers,
24 10th District Commander.

25 When I've been doing my Post inspections the

1 last month, I came across a Post that didn't have
2 their Auxiliary. And they told me they ain't got
3 enough girls there.

4 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: Okay.

5 10TH DISTRICT CMDR CROTHERS: And they've
6 always participated before.

7 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: Okay. Make sure you see
8 me and we'll see what we can do to reach out to
9 someone in the area and get that taken care of for
10 you.

11 COMMANDER RUE: Wes, Buckeye Boys State has two
12 honor codes that gives the access to both Boys State
13 and Girls State information on it. So talk to your
14 Buckeye Boys State or Girls State staffers that are
15 here in Department and they can help you out with
16 that, to get you information for all that.

17 10TH DISTRICT CMDR CROTHERS: Okay.

18 COMMANDER RUE: Now Jane, before you walk away,
19 I know we make our wagers. And at Districts, we did
20 it back as District Commander and District
21 President.

22 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: Uh-huh.

23 COMMANDER RUE: I will challenge you for
24 membership for a \$100 donation to your charity for
25 this year as of May 31st.

1 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: Okay you're on.

2 COMMANDER RUE: Now it's up to you guys to help
3 me with that.

4 FROM THE FLOOR: Is it members or --

5 COMMANDER RUE: Percentage, percentage of
6 membership. We're a larger body than them. That's
7 not fair to just go by numbers.

8 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: Just remember, I make
9 great cheesecakes. You can help me on membership.

10 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, Jane.

11 PRESIDENT RIDENOUR: Thank you.

12 (Applause).

13 COMMANDER RUE: Now we'll bring up our
14 Detachment Commander Dave Dilts.

15 (Applause).

16 DETACHMENT CMDR DILTS: Good morning.

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

18 DETACHMENT CMDR DILTS: And you too, JD, good
19 morning.

20 We can't forget our good guy here. He helps me
21 out a lot.

22 And Jason right there, he helped me out just
23 the other day with a situation we had.

24 Thank you guys for helping us out. And I
25 appreciate that.

1 Just take a moment and just look around. Look
2 at our fellow people here. We are proud to be here.
3 We are one heck of a family. We are all making a
4 difference. If we can all get together as The
5 Legion, the Auxiliary and the Sons, we will make a
6 difference and make a heck of a good family.

7 We've got to go into our Posts and figure out
8 what the problem is with a lot of things. We've got
9 to stop this bickering and stuff that's going on in
10 our Posts.

11 I was very upset with my Post, Post 29, in
12 Zanesville. We are not a true family. We go in and
13 do things but we do not, we don't appreciate the
14 people, you know. We need recognition. Our Legion
15 does not recognize, our Auxiliary don't recognize,
16 and the Sons don't recognize, to work together.
17 We're all bickering and everything. That's my
18 biggest challenge, to try to get us together and
19 make a difference.

20 But other than that, our membership, we're not
21 as good. You know, our membership is a little over
22 46%, but it's better than what it has been at this
23 time, this year. I don't know if we'll be able to
24 make a challenge like that, but we're going to make
25 an effort to try to get things better.

1 I'm working with Tim Conway, our 1st Vice
2 Commander. And all our table officers are doing a
3 great job doing everything.

4 And as I travel through the State of Ohio and
5 visit your Legion Posts, I appreciate all the
6 hospitality the people have given me.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause).

9 COMMANDER RUE: At this time we have a
10 presentation being given by Rafflebox.

11 So Jim Gilliom, please come forward.

12 MR. GILLIOM: Good morning.

13 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

14 MR. GILLIOM: Thank you for having me.

15 I drove over from Ft. Wayne, Indiana, this
16 morning. So I'm a Hoosier, but I like Ohio too.

17 Now, I also do not like talking in microphones.

18 But anyway, I'm from a company called
19 "Rafflebox." We are privileged to work with a lot
20 of nonprofit 501s across the country and a lot in
21 Canada as well, but mainly in the United States, and
22 primarily south of here because we work with the
23 Department of Florida American Legion and all 281 of
24 their Posts.

25 And what we've done since June is actually do a

1 statewide program that has been a very big success,
2 and a growing success. They're growing month over
3 month. They're raising a lot of money.

4 But also, it's not just about the money. It's
5 about the information and the camaraderie that's
6 being captured from the Posts and younger people
7 outside the Posts.

8 So, I don't know, JD and I talked a few times.
9 And I believe there have been some conversations
10 about this in the past. But my goal today is just
11 basically to almost have an open conversation. If
12 anyone has questions about this, raise your hand.
13 I've got answers.

14 Do you have a question?

15 NEC MASOWICK: Yeah. I don't even know what a
16 Rafflebox is.

17 MR. GILLIOM: It's a raffle.

18 So basically it's, Rafflebox is the company
19 name. But we're just an electronic raffle supplier.
20 So we're GLI certified. That's the same
21 certifications that, you know, the top machines have
22 in Vegas, at casinos and things like that. So we
23 have all the accreditations, yeah.

24 COMMANDER RUE: And it's actually, it would be
25 a statewide 50-50 drawing, is what it would amount

1 to.

2 Florida does one every two weeks, roughly.

3 MR. GILLIOM: Yeah.

4 COMMANDER RUE: And their last one was of
5 18,000.

6 NEC MASOWICK: Steve Masowick, NEC.

7 This is done electronically?

8 COMMANDER RUE: Yes.

9 MR. GILLIOM: Yeah, electronically.

10 So Florida does it every two weeks. Their last
11 one, which was actually their lowest one, that he
12 spoke about, was 16,000. The highest one on a
13 two-week basis was 30,000. But yesterday theirs
14 just ended at \$53,000.

15 Last December, doing it the traditional way,
16 and I'm not saying "old-fashioned way," but the
17 grandfathered way, last year, in December, they sold
18 \$11,000, total. And that's with 29 days left in the
19 month.

20 So our program makes it easy on the Department
21 to run, and very easy for your members and family
22 and everyone outside of the membership to
23 participate as well.

24 If anyone wants, if you get out your phone
25 right now, I don't know if it's against the rules,

1 but you can go to their website, it's
2 Florida5050.org, and check it out. You can go
3 through the whole process.

4 You can't buy a ticket, because you're not in
5 the State of Florida, but you can kind of see the
6 whole workings and things like that. You can see
7 the last four purchases.

8 It's probably, in the last, since I've been up
9 here, they've probably sold a hundred to \$200 worth
10 of tickets. It's constantly flowing in.

11 And every single purchase, you capture the
12 person's first name, last name, e-mail address,
13 phone number, zip code, full address. And that
14 really helps you increase and grow your membership
15 outside of, you know, people who are already
16 members.

17 And there is a way where, and this would be up
18 to the Department and everyone here on how to
19 structure this, but the best way to do it is
20 actually bring in the Posts. So it's not only
21 benefiting the Department, the entire state, but
22 each individual Post. So if I go in --

23 What Post are you from?

24 NEC MASOWICK: 685. It's up by Cleveland.

25 MR. GILLIOM: So 685.

1 So when you go to purchase a ticket, you
2 actually select your Post at the point of purchase
3 and a percentage of the money that you spend goes
4 directly back to the Post. So at the end of the
5 quarter or biannually or a year, the Department will
6 actually be, and I'm sorry if I'm speaking out of
7 turn, contributing basically a commission back to
8 the Posts.

9 So there's incentive. Every member has skin in
10 the game. Not only a chance to win a lot of money,
11 but if they don't win, they can justify it by it's
12 going to support my Post.

13 And the more people that support it, our cut as
14 a company, it's -- sorry, I didn't know if this is
15 allowed to be spoken.

16 COMMANDER RUE: Oh, yeah. This is the body
17 that's going to make the decision. So they're the
18 ones that are going to have to --

19 MR. GILLIOM: Okay.

20 Rafflebox will be charging an 8% fee on gross
21 sales. That's what we charge.

22 The other costs to this are just the costs of
23 doing business on-line, which is a 2.9% processing
24 fee that's not paid to us. It's paid to Stripe,
25 which is the processor.

1 NEC MASOWICK: I have a lot of questions,
2 but -- Steve Masowick.

3 How is the transaction, electronically, cash,
4 check?

5 MR. GILLIOM: Electronically. So similar to if
6 you --

7 NEC MASOWICK: So our members don't touch any
8 money, it just goes into a digital bank and they
9 take it out of your account?

10 MR. GILLIOM: It's all processed on our back
11 end. And our back end is very, one, secure; and
12 two, very clean in the transaction.

13 So it's all processed. There's no cash
14 exchanging hands. So, you know, there can't be any
15 money laundering or lost funds or anything like
16 that. It's very transparent.

17 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: Brad Beatty, 12th
18 District.

19 Your name and website, please.

20 MR. GILLIOM: My name is Jim Gilliom,
21 G-I-L-L-I-O-M. And the company and the website is
22 Rafflebox.us. The dot-com is currently being
23 negotiated with someone.

24 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: So it's ".us"?

25 MR. GILLIOM: It's ".us," yes.

1 And then there will also be a ".org", once that
2 goes live, actually in January.

3 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: So it's new?

4 MR. GILLIOM: It's not, the company is not new.
5 We've been around since 2017. It's just the domain.

6 And then this is just a technicality. There's
7 squatter on our domain, the dot-com. And he wants
8 \$100,000 to buy it.

9 COMMANDER RUE: Gary.

10 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Minadeo, Post 7.

11 Are you cleared through the charitable gaming
12 laws of the State of Ohio?

13 MR. GILLIOM: Yeah. Yeah, we are registered in
14 the State of Ohio. We are registered in every state
15 that this is legal in. With that, we also keep all
16 of our other accreditations. We're 100% on the
17 right side of things.

18 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Once you take your
19 10%, your eight and the another two, then we have to
20 split the 90 50-50 with the charity?

21 MR. GILLIOM: The Department would be --

22 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Unless Charities is
23 holding it.

24 MR. GILLIOM: It comes to the Department.

25 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: So we're splitting

1 90, essentially 90%? If we get \$100, you keep 10
2 and we get 90, and have to send 45 of that to the
3 charity. So 45 would go to the person that won.
4 And then out of our 45, we would keep half of that?

5 FROM THE FLOOR: No.

6 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: No, no, no. You can
7 check the law. It's a raffle. We are allowed to
8 hold a raffle. We have to give 50% of our net to a
9 501(c)(3).

10 COMMANDER RUE: That would go to Charities,
11 Inc.

12 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Well, they would have
13 to, Charities, Inc., would have to be in charge of
14 it, to distribute it, and they would get all of it
15 and send us our 90%, after they take their ten
16 and -- I mean, I'm just saying it's not as easy as
17 it seems. Florida is a little easier with their
18 gambling laws than the State of Ohio.

19 MR. GILLIOM: You are correct.

20 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: That's all.

21 COMMANDER RUE: Do we have any other questions?

22 9TH DISTRICT 1VC WHETSTONE: I do.

23 COMMANDER RUE: Yes.

24 9TH DISTRICT 1VC WHETSTONE: I'm Jacqueline
25 Whetstone, 9th District 1st Vice Commander.

1 What about your players' privacy? You're
2 getting a lot of information from everybody. How
3 can I be sure that my name and address and phone
4 number isn't going somewhere else where I start
5 getting a bunch of crap in the mail?

6 MR. GILLIOM: That's a good question.

7 The Department, the organization who would run
8 this, who we would be under contract with, owns 100%
9 of the data. We don't touch it. We don't sell it.
10 It is not our information and purchase you're not
11 going to get another e-mail.

12 And then once you purchase a ticket, you can
13 opt out. As long as you don't purchase another
14 ticket, you're not going to get another e-mail. But
15 most people who do purchase once purchase every
16 single time there is a draw.

17 Again, in Florida, they've done this since the
18 beginning of July. So that's five total months and
19 they've done just under 300,000 in sales, which is
20 over 50,000 a month.

21 And then they've captured 4,000 of their, 4,000
22 donor profiles. Again, none of those are sold
23 externally. They're all captured by the Department
24 of Florida. And from who I speak to, about 20% of
25 those are from outside their current list.

1 9TH DISTRICT 1VC WHETSTONE: So in other words,
2 when you buy a ticket, you get an e-mail
3 confirmation of that ticket?

4 MR. GILLIOM: Yeah, the ticket is
5 electronically --

6 And what's nice is that, you know, e-mails do
7 get lost and stuff, so when that winner is pulled,
8 the Department, the system knows exactly who
9 purchased it. So even if you've purchased and lose
10 the e-mail, which isn't very common. But in that
11 uncommon circumstance, the Department could call the
12 person and say, "Congrats, you won."

13 9TH DISTRICT 1VC WHETSTONE: So you're getting
14 a confirmation number that you have to hold on to in
15 order to get your payout?

16 MR. GILLIOM: Essentially. That's getting into
17 kind of the weeds of things, but the claim process
18 is very clean-handed.

19 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Well I've got one
20 more question for Post 7.

21 Is there an automatic reporting accompanied to
22 the IRS on who won the money?

23 MR. GILLIOM: There's automatic -- no. The
24 quick answer is no. There's no automatic reporting
25 to the IRS.

1 Now we have all the automatic reports that you
2 need. However, we just have to have that
3 separation, as the technology provider and the
4 organization running the event.

5 1VC WHATLEY: Any other questions?

6 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

7 1VC WHATLEY: Hearing none, thank you, sir.

8 MR. GILLIOM: Thank you.

9 And we also run, I don't know if we have any
10 Buckeye fans in here, but do run all their programs
11 in the State of Ohio.

12 NEC MASOWICK: Who did you say?

13 MR. GILLIOM: Ohio State.

14 FROM THE FLOOR: O-H.

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: I-O.

16 MR. GILLIOM: Okay, I guess you are fans.

17 And that's osu5050.com, if you want to write
18 that down. You can go buy a ticket right now and do
19 the whole process because that's in the state.

20 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Alternate NEC Chapman.

21 So do you do like Major League Baseball
22 stadiums and things?

23 MR. GILLIOM: Yeah. We do everything from, you
24 know, little kids little league all the way up to
25 Ohio State University, and everywhere in between.

1 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Because I know the Reds
2 do one.

3 MR. GILLIOM: Yeah. We don't run the Reds.

4 NEC MASOWICK: The Guardians do it too.

5 MR. GILLIOM: Yeah.

6 And I used to run the Indianapolis Colts Raffle
7 Program. Fortunately, I've worked in raffles for
8 about a third of my life. So I've seen about every
9 one you could have.

10 But here is my contact information
11 (indicating). You know, it will be a privilege to
12 work with the State of Ohio.

13 So thank you.

14 NEC MASOWICK: Thank you for your time.

15 COMMANDER RUE: Thank you.

16 (Applause).

17 All right, now we'll go into our commission
18 reports.

19 Holly Lewis, for the Finance report.

20 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Commander.

21 COMMANDER RUE: Yes.

22 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Chris Emmons, 3rd
23 District.

24 I move that we suspend the reading of the
25 minutes that were previously e-mailed to everybody

1 multiple times, hearing any questions or concerns to
2 these reports.

3 COMMANDER RUE: This report here was just
4 e-mailed, because we just had a meeting this past
5 week. So there's some stuff that needs to go into
6 this.

7 CHAIRMAN LEWIS: I'll keep it short, I promise.
8 Good morning.

9 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

10 CHRMN LEWIS: All right, you guys got three
11 sets of minutes from the Finance Commission. We
12 meet quite often, usually once a month.

13 I want to just hit the highlights for you, just
14 so everyone is aware of what is going on.

15 So, in the September minutes, we raised the
16 price of the Americanism Test to a quarter from 10
17 cents.

18 We also are looking at baseball and how are we
19 going to fund the baseball program.

20 We also made a motion to increase 888
21 membership dues to \$50.00 per year.

22 Okay?

23 So that's out of that set of minutes that I
24 wanted to bring to your attention.

25 The next set of minutes are October.

1 What I wanted to bring to your attention there
2 is that we made a motion to increase the dues, and
3 seconded by Jose. I see you have a separate item
4 that's on about resolutions, so I'm going to leave
5 it there.

6 The other thing that we decided is -- we're
7 trying to save money, if you can't tell. Okay?

8 All of you have an ACH folder in front of you.
9 One of the things that we want you to do is get your
10 expenses via ACH, so that we can save money on
11 postage, checks, paper, all the things.

12 So, please, fill out an ACH form. And when you
13 fill out your expenses, make sure you put on there
14 "ACH." All right?

15 And the other thing is, we released the
16 District Activity Funds, if you didn't notice that.
17 We went back to the old policy, where we subtracted
18 the hats from what you were getting and then sent
19 you the remainder.

20 We also had three quotes for the parking lot.
21 And we decided to use Sheedy Paving. And we'll be
22 doing a parking lot repave in the spring.

23 And we also moved to put the Legislative
24 position back to a full-time position, when we can
25 find someone to fill it.

1 All right, November minutes. I'm going to skip
2 one thing here and just talk about the other things.

3 We updated the resolution. We took out one
4 part of it where we had said we wanted to raise the
5 dues in coordination with National. We took that
6 part out. And we also realized that we didn't have
7 an effective date in the resolution, so we added one
8 and got that approved.

9 The other thing that's going on is Maloney and
10 Novotny, our current auditors, I'm just going to say
11 it, they suck. Okay? They've gotten very far
12 behind. And so we've asked JD to pull the contract
13 and talk to Josh about what are our options here,
14 can we stop paying them, what? Right?

15 And then we're also, JD is meeting with the
16 VFW, AMVETS, and a couple of other organizations, to
17 talk to them about who they use for auditors, so
18 that we can get a better auditing team. Okay?

19 All right, at this point I would like to ask
20 the Commander if we could go into executive session.

21 COMMANDER RUE: I'd entertain a motion to go
22 into executive session at this time.

23 TREASURER RIVERA: Jose Rivera makes the
24 motion.

25 6TH DISTRICT CMDR EATON: Eaton, 6th District

1 Commander, seconds.

2 COMMANDER RUE: All right, so we have a motion
3 and a second to go into executive session.

4 All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

6 COMMANDER RUE: All those opposed, nay.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

8 COMMANDER RUE: The motion carries.

9 (THEREUPON, THE COMMITTEE WENT INTO EXECUTIVE
10 SESSION).

11 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

12 COMMANDER RUE: We're back in session.

13 CHRMN LEWIS: Okay. So the committee discussed
14 ways to cut costs and raise revenue. That's the way
15 business works, revenue, expenses. Right?

16 So we're looking for ways to bring in more
17 revenue so that we're not as dependent on
18 membership.

19 Chris.

20 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Chris Emmons, 3rd
21 District Vice Commander.

22 I have a question about the raffles. Does it
23 really increase the revenue or are we going to give
24 the money to Charities, Inc.?

25 CHRMN LEWIS: Yeah, I think we need to look

1 into that. So I think Gary brought up a great
2 point. Like how does that work? Right? How does
3 that part of it work?

4 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: One thing we don't
5 have transparency on is Charities, Inc.

6 CHRMN LEWIS: I agree.

7 So, the last thing on the November minutes, you
8 will see that staff increases were reviewed and
9 discussed, with amounts agreed upon.

10 And that concludes my report.

11 COMMANDER RUE: Yes.

12 12TH DISTRICT 1VC HIGGINS: Mike Higgins,
13 District 12 1st Vice.

14 On revenue, there are a number of accounts that
15 belong to the Department of Ohio on the Department
16 of Commerce's unclaimed website.

17 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We started on that
18 Thursday.

19 CHRMN LEWIS: Yes.

20 12TH DISTRICT 1VC HIGGINS: Great.

21 Two is the ones that, the other Legion
22 accounts, if those organizations are no longer,
23 you've got that covered?

24 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes, sir.

25 12TH DISTRICT 1VC HIGGINS: Thank you.

1 NEC MASOWICK: Good for you.

2 CHRMN LEWIS: Any other questions?

3 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

4 CHRMN LEWIS: That concludes my report,
5 Commander.

6 COMMANDER RUE: Yes, sir.

7 6TH DISTRICT CMDR EATON: Shane Eaton,
8 Commander of the 6th District, I make a motion to
9 approve.

10 11TH DISTRICT CMDR STAN: Thom Stan, Commander,
11 11th District, I second that motion to approve.

12 COMMANDER RUE: All right, we have a motion and
13 a second to approve the minutes from the Finance
14 Committee.

15 Is there any discussion?

16 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

17 COMMANDER RUE: Is there any discussion?

18 FROM THE FLOOR: (No response).

19 COMMANDER RUE: Hearing none, all those in
20 favor signify by saying aye.

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

22 COMMANDER RUE: All those opposed, nay.

23 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Nay.

24 COMMANDER RUE: The motion carries.

25 Thanks, Holly.

1 CHRMN LEWIS: You're welcome.

2 COMMANDER RUE: All right, Christie White,
3 Americanism Commission.

4 COORDINATOR WHITE: All right, I will be quick,
5 because you're going to hear a lot from me.

6 Can everyone hear me? Is everyone awake?

7 Americanism met on October 7th, at noon. The
8 minutes were motioned and approved.

9 Educator of the Year was discussed.

10 Within discussing the Educator of the Year, the
11 commission talked about changing the rules of the
12 packet, making some of the wording a little more
13 clear. It depends who reads it, how you interpret
14 it. So we want to clean that up a little bit.

15 Stuart Grunder, from the 10th District, was
16 elected, nominated as the 2023-2024 Educator of the
17 Year.

18 The A&G test judging. The judges were
19 selected. It will be District 6, District 14,
20 District 12, District 8, along with SAL and
21 Auxiliary Americanism Chairs. The alternates will
22 be District 2, District 10, and District 4.

23 The commission also discussed the Red, White
24 and Blue Award. The one that we had looked like it
25 was made on a typewriter. It's probably 30, 40

1 years old. We revamped it, cleaned it up, made it
2 nice, and it is on the website.

3 So please encourage your Posts to go out in
4 their communities, and if there are businesses that
5 are just gung-ho on Americanism, please award them.

6 That is my Americanism report.

7 COMMANDER RUE: Yes, Bob.

8 PDC SCHMITT: Commander, through the Chair, PDC
9 Schmitt.

10 Just to let you know, the Educator of the Year
11 of, I believe about 2015, his name was Joe Boyle.
12 He taught at Woodward High School in Toledo. He did
13 of cancer. He had cancer back then, when we gave
14 him the award. And we also had him at Buckeye Boys
15 State that year. And it finally got to him, but he
16 had cancer way back a long time ago and has been
17 fighting it and still --

18 COMMANDER RUE: Bob, where is this going at
19 with Americanism?

20 PDC SCHMITT: Well, it's Americanism because he
21 was Educator of the Year.

22 COMMANDER RUE: Yeah, but where are you going
23 with this? What does this have to do with the
24 current report?

25 PDC SCHMITT: An Educator of the Year for the

1 Department of Ohio passed away due to cancer and he
2 was an exceptional teacher.

3 COMMANDER RUE: Okay. Thank you.

4 Go ahead.

5 COORDINATOR WHITE: Okay, Buckeye Boys State.
6 They met on October 14th. The previous minutes were
7 approved. They gave personnel reports and approved
8 some guests to be new commissioners and some guests
9 to be consultants. They appointed the Samsung
10 Scholarship Committee, the Hall of Fame Committee,
11 and the Boys Nation Selection Committee.

12 The dates for Boys State for 2024 are June 9th
13 through the 16th, 2024. Again, it will be at Miami.
14 It will be there for the next eight years, because
15 we've got a ten-year contract with them.

16 Section Head reports were given. And it was
17 decided that the spring meeting for Boys State is
18 April 12th and 13th. So if anyone wants to come
19 check it out, see what Buckeye Boys State is about,
20 you're more than welcome to attend the meeting.

21 That is my Boys State report.

22 Any questions?

23 5TH DISTRICT 1VC MASON: Yes. What was the
24 dates you said for Boys State, June --

25 COORDINATOR WHITE: June 9th through the 16th.

1 Okay, Baseball.

2 And Baseball is a little bit longer because
3 there are some changes going on.

4 Baseball, they met on October 22nd. The
5 previous minutes were approved. The committee rules
6 were approved.

7 The Baseball Commission decided to create a
8 subcommittee to clean up the Ohio Rulebook. The
9 subcommittee will be Jeff Vrabel, Mike Higgins, Bill
10 Lonsbury, Bryce Agner, Mel Cantrell, our Chairman
11 Chris Emmons, and myself.

12 The spring Baseball meeting will be Sunday,
13 February 24th. The meeting starts at 10:30 for the
14 commissioners and the chairmen, and 1:00 o'clock for
15 coaches and managers.

16 So if you have baseball teams in your District,
17 tell them of the spring date and encourage them to
18 attend. They have to attend.

19 FROM THE FLOOR: There will be a virtual
20 option.

21 COMMANDER RUE: There will be a virtual option
22 as well.

23 Junior and senior tournament dates were
24 discussed. The junior tournament will be July 18th
25 through the 20th.

1 You can find all this information on-line also.
2 So you don't have to frantically start writing
3 things down.

4 The winners, the region winners for the junior
5 tournament, needs to be at Department by Sunday,
6 July 14th.

7 The senior tournament will be Friday, July
8 26th, through July 29th. July 30th will be the
9 "what-if" game.

10 Instead of doing a banquet this year, we're
11 doing things a little different. The teams will
12 check in at the field earlier in the day. And then
13 all day, at the field, we will have a "Family Fun
14 Day," to kind of encourage families to come out, and
15 the community to come out, and really get involved
16 with Legion Baseball.

17 We're trying to get food trucks donated, a
18 bounce house donated. The only way that we are
19 going to do this is if things are donated. So we're
20 not throwing money out there.

21 So there will be a "Family Fun Day" all
22 throughout the day. And then at 7:30, we'll have a
23 game under the lights for two of the teams.

24 At 10:00 AM, the coaches will meet at the
25 field. Each team will be given 30 minutes to run

1 drills.

2 The region tournament winners will need to be
3 turned in to Department by July 21st. So you have
4 to have your region tournaments done by July 21st.

5 We are also creating a new bracket this year.
6 Every year there's a rain delay or teams winning
7 that are supposed to lose and we have issues. So
8 we're fixing that this year.

9 The junior team fees are \$500. The senior team
10 fees are \$600.

11 The regional tournament dates for National are
12 August 7th through 11th. The National World Series
13 is August 15th through the 20th.

14 National had some updates this year. They will
15 get rid of the dual roster rules. There is no
16 limit. The National Americanism Commission approved
17 it during fall meetings. The rule is "6.E.1, Dual
18 Roster."

19 Again, all this will be on the website.

20 There is also a new resolution from National
21 that will require 18-year-olds to have background
22 checks and sexual abuse and molestation training.
23 That includes players.

24 FROM THE FLOOR: That's on hold-ish.

25 COORDINATOR WHITE: That's on hold-ish.

1 "USA Baseball" and "Protect Youth Sports" will
2 be the two approved companies that will handle the
3 background checks and S.A.M. training.

4 I would also like to mention that 2025 is the
5 centennial year for American Legion Baseball.

6 The commission also appointed the Past
7 Chairman, Marv Shamhart, as an Assistant Chairman to
8 Chris this year. Marv did great things for
9 Baseball. They didn't want to just shove him aside.
10 Chris is new. He's learning from Marv. So they
11 decided to appoint him as the Assistant Chair.

12 That is my Baseball report.

13 Questions?

14 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

15 COORDINATOR WHITE: Moving on, Oratorical met
16 on October 21st. The previous minutes were
17 approved. The committee rules were approved.

18 The 2023 contest was reviewed.

19 Each District that was present notified us of
20 their contest dates. And we'll make sure and get
21 those up on the website as well.

22 The Department Oratorical Contest will be March
23 17th.

24 The winners need to be sent to Department by
25 March 11th.

1 And then our Department winner needs to be to
2 National by April 1st.

3 The National Oratorical Contest is May 17th
4 through the 19th, in Hillsdale, Michigan. They
5 switched it so they're doing it at a college now.

6 If anyone wants to volunteer, they can fill out
7 a volunteer form at legion.org. They're looking for
8 volunteers. So if you've ever wanted to see an
9 Oratorical Contest, please feel free to volunteer at
10 the Department's, and then you can also volunteer at
11 the National's.

12 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: If you have questions on
13 volunteering, ask John Looker. He goes out every
14 year.

15 COORDINATOR WHITE: A lot of times, National is
16 looking for escorts. It's not what you think.
17 Being an escort in this situation is a good thing.

18 Prize money was discussed. We were notified of
19 different prize amounts. So then, during the
20 meeting, the Oratorical Commission created a
21 resolution. However, there were no minutes to back
22 up the different prize amounts. So the prize
23 amounts stayed the same. The resolution in the
24 minutes are null and void, according to the
25 Parliamentarian. He says that they are overcome by

1 events and do not need to move forward. So the
2 resolution in the minutes, just ignore it.

3 And Oratorical also created a brochure, kind of
4 like Boys State has, Americanism has. So if anyone
5 is looking for Oratorical brochures, you want to go
6 out to your schools when they're talking about other
7 programs and you want to take Oratorical with you,
8 let me know. I do not have any on hand here, but we
9 can get some printed out and sent to you.

10 Any questions on Oratorical?

11 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

12 COORDINATOR WHITE: Moving on, Religious
13 Emphasis.

14 Religious Emphasis met on October 21st as well.
15 Chaplain Distel talked a little bit about it.

16 The main thing on the Religious Emphasis
17 Committee was the Father John Duffy Award and the
18 Post Chaplain's Award were discussed.

19 Previously, the Father John Duffy Award was an
20 award that was decided by a convention committee.
21 It is now going to be voted on by the Religious
22 Emphasis Committee. It just kind of made more sense
23 that way. Each District will send in their Father
24 John Duffy Award and Chaplain Award to the
25 Department immediately following their District

1 Summer Conventions.

2 So please fill out the Father John Duffy and
3 Chaplain Awards at your District Summer Conventions.
4 The body will vote on it there. And then we will
5 have 14 District winners from the Department after
6 your summer conventions.

7 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: Question.

8 Beatty, Commander, 12th District.

9 So that packet, is it mailed out to our
10 Americanism Chairpersons in our Districts when, the
11 packet that has all those, all that documentation?

12 COORDINATOR WHITE: So, that's a good question,
13 because this was just decided on.

14 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: Last year, it never
15 did reach the chairs.

16 COORDINATOR WHITE: The of-the-year packet?

17 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: It reached someone,
18 but it didn't move forward. So I want to know what
19 the date is so I can hold accountability.

20 COORDINATOR WHITE: So the of-the-year award
21 winners are two separate things. Those are all due
22 here by September 15th.

23 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: Okay.

24 COORDINATOR WHITE: The John Duffy is after
25 your summer convention, which is --

1 FROM THE FLOOR: May.

2 COORDINATOR WHITE: -- May.

3 12TH DISTRICT CMDR BEATTY: But there's a
4 packet that's sent, right? Isn't there a packet
5 with --

6 COORDINATOR WHITE: Those are of-the-year
7 awards. Those are completely separate. The John
8 Duffy is separate from that. So that will be mailed
9 differently from the of-the-year awards, just
10 because of-the-year all have the same due date.
11 Father John Duffy has a different one.

12 And this is kind of brand new, so we're working
13 out the kinks as we go. Most likely, your District
14 Chaplain will get the information and then can send
15 it out to your Posts. But, we are open for
16 suggestions.

17 So, the Father John Duffy, the District will
18 send the award to Department immediately following
19 their District Summer Conventions. The 14 District
20 winners will be voted on by the Religious Emphasis
21 Committee and selected as the Department Father John
22 Duffy and Chaplain of the Year, to be awarded at
23 Department Convention.

24 As the Chaplain had mentioned, the Sunday
25 service for Mid-Winter is a Four Chaplains.

1 Department Convention will be a Catholic and a
2 Protestant service. So Four Chaplains at
3 Mid-Winter, Catholic and Protestant at convention.

4 Any questions?

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

6 COMMANDER RUE: All right, I'll entertain a
7 motion to accept the Americanism reports as a whole.

8 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Chris Emmons, 3rd
9 District, so moves.

10 4TH DISTRICT CMDR BUXTON: Buxton, 4th District
11 Commander, seconds.

12 COMMANDER RUE: We have a motion properly made
13 and seconded.

14 Is there any questions?

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

16 COMMANDER RUE: Hearing none, all those in
17 favor signify by saying aye.

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

19 COMMANDER RUE: All those opposed, nay.

20 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

21 COMMANDER RUE: Motion carries.

22 COORDINATOR WHITE: Children and Youth, they
23 met on October 7th. The previous minutes were
24 approved.

25 Unfinished Business that they had, I don't know

1 if anybody has seen it in your Post, but there's
2 cans or boxes or something that should be sitting
3 around, that look like this (indicating). It's a
4 sticker. The idea is this will stay on whatever
5 can, or whatever it is, whoever the organization is
6 that Children and Youth decide to raise money for,
7 and will be replaced at the bottom every year.

8 If your Post does not have one of these, let me
9 know. I have extra stickers.

10 Any money that is put in these cans will go to
11 Stockhands, because that is what Children and Youth
12 selected this year.

13 If you put money in those pigs that say "Child
14 Welfare," that will go to National's Child Welfare.

15 So if you want to donate to Stockhands and
16 stick it in a Child Welfare pig, it's not going to
17 go to Stockhands.

18 Anything that's purple will stay here.

19 Anything that is not purple will go elsewhere.

20 I also have some Stockhands brochures that they
21 came and brought us, if anyone wants any to put in
22 your Posts by your cans. That way people know what
23 they're donating for. I will get those to you as
24 well.

25 The Children and Youth Commission created a new

1 program. It is the Fourth Grade Flag Program. It's
2 a little comic book that the fourth graders get to
3 learn about the flag. They take a test.

4 As of right now, they're keeping it at District
5 level. So your Post winners will go to District.
6 Your District will award them, one boy, one girl.

7 Once we kind of get the kinks worked out,
8 because it is a new program, then we'll talk about
9 running it to Department level and awarding them at
10 Department.

11 Your District Children and Youth Chairs have
12 certificates for the winners.

13 Again, this is brand new. There are some Posts
14 that are doing it currently. A lot of the
15 information did not get out because the commission
16 still needed to vote on it. So next year we will be
17 pushing it really hard. Just know that next year
18 and keep your eyes out for that.

19 The Child Welfare Worker of the Year, the
20 deadline was September 15th. However, there were no
21 submissions. They voted to move the deadline to
22 November 15th. They did.

23 There was a submission. It was voted on via
24 e-mail. And Tanga Mitchell was selected as the
25 Child Welfare Worker of the Year.

1 Children and Youth also, last year, created
2 "Teen Suicide Awareness" pamphlets. If anyone needs
3 more of those, please let me know and we'll get you
4 some.

5 Any questions?

6 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: That fourth grade
7 program was the one we approved in convention?

8 COORDINATOR WHITE: Yes. Yeah, there was
9 already a resolution that was passed at convention
10 for that. We just started working on it.

11 COMMANDER RUE: Yes.

12 2ND DISTRICT 2VC HOMAN: On that fourth grade
13 thing, do you have the brochures here?

14 I have maybe like a dozen back at the Post, so
15 I can show my officers what it's about and take that
16 to schools.

17 FROM THE FLOOR: Who are you?

18 2ND DISTRICT 2VC HOMAN: Mike Homan, 2nd Vice
19 Commander of the 2nd District.

20 COMMANDER RUE: Please stand to be recognized
21 when you're speaking. State your name, your title.

22 2ND DISTRICT 2VC HOMAN: Sorry.

23 COMMANDER RUE: Thank you.

24 2ND DISTRICT 2VC HOMAN: Okay, Mike Homan, 2nd
25 District 2nd Vice.

1 On the pamphlets for the fourth graders, do you
2 have some here or do we have to order those through
3 emblem sales?

4 COORDINATOR WHITE: We have them here. The
5 books, the comic books, are a dollar apiece. But I
6 can give you a memo that was created that explains
7 what the test is to take with you to schools.

8 2ND DISTRICT 2VC HOMAN: Okay. Can I get one
9 of those today?

10 COORDINATOR WHITE: Sure. You've got to give
11 me a little bit to print them out but I'll get them
12 to you.

13 2ND DISTRICT 2VC HOMAN: Okay.

14 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Chapman, Alternate NEC,
15 through you to the Parliamentarian.

16 A 2nd Vice Commander has no voice with this
17 DEC. He should go through his chair out here with a
18 question like that. Not to be nitpicky, but that's
19 the way it should be.

20 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: The Commander
21 recognized him, so he could speak.

22 COMMANDER RUE: Since the of-the-year awards in
23 that report were pulled out and approved already,
24 that's just for informational purposes only.

25 So now we'll go ahead with National Security.

1 COORDINATOR WHITE: National Security met on
2 November 4th. The previous minutes were approved.
3 Each District gave reports on what their District is
4 working on National Security-wise.

5 The commission wanted to emphasize that we take
6 our Civilian Lifesaver Resolution and give it to
7 National Headquarters, as well as other Departments,
8 to encourage National to create a Civilian Lifesaver
9 Award.

10 The Ralph Doll Award was talked about. There
11 is a couple members of the commission that will
12 create criteria for that. The Ralph Doll Award, as
13 of now, is one of those convention awards as well.
14 There's really no criteria for it, so they're going
15 to create some criteria.

16 Their new business, because it was an odd year,
17 odd Districts voted on the of-the-year awards. So
18 it was 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13.

19 The Civilian Lifesaver was named, Robert
20 Hursong, District 4.

21 Law enforcement was Kyle Brookover, of District
22 11.

23 And the firefighter was Tiffany Bailes, of
24 District 12.

25 The Chairman had mentioned a website, "Defense

1 POW/MIA Accounting Agency." It's a website where
2 you can go in order to get a list of all your
3 POW/MIAs in your District. The commission was
4 encouraged to take the information back to their
5 Districts and give it to their POW/MIA Chairmen.

6 The National Security Commission also has
7 decided, for their commission, that the standing
8 commission meetings immediately following Department
9 Convention will be virtual. The fall meeting will
10 be the only one in person, and then the spring
11 meeting will be virtual. So they have decided that
12 their commission will only have one in-person
13 meeting.

14 And that is my report for National Security.

15 COMMANDER RUE: Once again, since the
16 of-the-year awards were sent out and voted on
17 already, this is just informational purposes.

18 So now we'll move on to the Legislative report.

19 COORDINATOR WHITE: The Legislative Commission
20 had two meetings since October, one was in person,
21 one was virtual.

22 The first one was October 22nd. Their previous
23 minutes were approved.

24 In their unfinished business, there was a
25 Legislator of the Year that was decided on by the

1 DEC, approved last year. Then there was a change of
2 people, and then more change of people, and then no
3 people. So that was kind of put on the back burner.

4 We picked it up again. The National Legislator
5 of the Year was David Joyce. The state is Tracy
6 Richardson.

7 The commission discussed creating a
8 proclamation for them, so we can give them a
9 proclamation as well as an award. So that was
10 discussed.

11 They also discussed creating criteria for the
12 Legislator of the Year. Right now it's kind of
13 somebody brings somebody to the table, they talk
14 about it, and they either agree or disagree.

15 There's really no set this, this, this and this for
16 the Legislator of the Year. So that was discussed.

17 The takeaways from the meeting: They were
18 creating criteria for the Legislator of the Year,
19 based off of the four pillars and preamble, they
20 were creating a draft mission statement, and then
21 creating a proclamation.

22 They voted to have a virtual meeting then on
23 Tuesday, November 19th, to review their takeaways.

24 So the virtual meeting on November 19th, I
25 believe you guys should have those minutes as well.

1 COMMANDER RUE: They've all been sent.

2 COORDINATOR WHITE: Okay.

3 The minutes from the last meeting were
4 approved.

5 The Legislator of the Year criteria, those are
6 all typed out in your minutes. There was a couple
7 edits, but everything in here is the edited version.

8 There was also a proclamation created for Dave
9 Joyce and Tracy Richardson. Both of those are in
10 here as well.

11 The proclamations were sent to their offices
12 for them to review to make sure everything is
13 correct and if there's anything they wanted to add
14 or take away.

15 Tracy Richardson's office responded the end of
16 last week. So her proclamation is done.

17 We are waiting for Dave Joyce's proclamation to
18 come back, for them to either approve it or make
19 changes.

20 They are either going to be awarded -- it's
21 going to depend on each legislator's office. They
22 want to do it at the Washington Conference. If for
23 some reason they can't be there, they're talking
24 about the Districts doing it within their Districts.

25 The problem with having it at convention or

1 Mid-Winter is a lot of these legislators, once they
2 cross different boundaries, different rules apply.
3 So it's easier to either do it at Washington
4 Conference or within the District. And it's going
5 to be based off of each legislators' offices, their
6 decision.

7 So that is what was discussed in the
8 Legislative Commission.

9 COMMANDER RUE: All right, now I'll entertain a
10 motion to accept that report, since we created some
11 certificates for them and stuff.

12 4TH DISTRICT CMDR BUXTON: Buxton, 4th District
13 Commander, so moves.

14 ALTERNATE NEC CHAPMAN: Chapman, Alternate NEC,
15 seconds.

16 COMMANDER RUE: We have a proper motion and a
17 second.

18 Is there any discussion?

19 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

20 COMMANDER RUE: Is there any discussion?

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

22 COMMANDER RUE: All those in favor, signify by
23 saying aye.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

25 COMMANDER RUE: All those opposed, nay.

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

2 COMMANDER RUE: Motion carries.

3 All right. Thanks, Christie.

4 Now we'll have Mr. William Genochio for VA&R.

5 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: Good morning, or
6 afternoon.

7 The VA&R, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
8 Committee met on October 7, '23. A reading of the
9 previous minutes was approved. There was no
10 District reports given.

11 And also, I should note that there was not a
12 quorum. We only had six attend that virtual
13 meeting. So we did not have a quorum. So no
14 District reports.

15 There was unfinished business.

16 A review of the commission awards was held. A
17 motion was made by Mr. Capps of District 8 to
18 approve. That motion passed.

19 We also reviewed guidelines for the Veterans
20 Treatment Court that were drafted by Darell Bishop,
21 of the 5th District, and myself. Those were read by
22 Commissioner David Cook, of District 6. A review of
23 the guidelines was e-mailed out, since we did not
24 have a quorum. And that was done for an e-mail
25 vote. And then the responses will need to be in by

1 the 13th of October. And that motion passed.

2 There was also a review of the commission rules
3 regarding the change to the first paragraph. I
4 mentioned there's no answer from Department. So
5 we're still waiting on that change.

6 An update was given on House Bill 69.

7 Under new business, the DSO report was given.
8 The Gifts for Yanks report was given by Darell
9 Bishop of District 5, which said some of the
10 locations have issues with the previous gifts they
11 were getting. That's why we went with the gift
12 cards.

13 Under the good of The Legion, I stated that
14 there was 46 service officers that attended the last
15 Post Service Officers' school. And we're looking to
16 do both an in-person and a virtual class in the
17 future. I'll have to work with Jon Vulgamore on
18 doing that.

19 And the meeting adjourned at 2:35 PM.

20 That concludes my VA&R report, Commander.

21 COMMANDER RUE: Okay, so that's just
22 informational only.

23 Thank you.

24 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: Commander, I do have the
25 DSO report and The American Legion Riders report if

1 you want it.

2 COMMANDER RUE: Yes, please.

3 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: So the DSO report, as I
4 actually mentioned earlier, I did notice on November
5 16th of 2023, the VA released their Veteran Suicide
6 Prevention Annual Report. They reported the
7 suicides through '21. The report showed that 6,392
8 veterans lost their lives to suicide. This is an
9 increase of 114 since 2020. Since January 17th of
10 '23, veterans in acute suicidal crisis have been
11 able seek a VA or non-VA healthcare facility for
12 emergency healthcare at no cost. This includes
13 inpatient or crisis residential care for 30 days,
14 and outpatient care for 90 days.

15 And also, I'm sure you guys have seen it, but
16 the VA has also shortened their crisis line. You
17 dial 988, and press 1 for immediate assistance.

18 The Cleveland office remains open to the
19 public. We have seen an increase in our BVA
20 hearings. They are getting scheduled heavier and
21 heavier. We're having anywhere from 20 to 30 a
22 month. We're also seeing an increase in our walk-in
23 traffic at the Cleveland office.

24 The Columbus VA Ambulatory Clinic is still
25 currently vacant.

1 As they mentioned earlier, Cincinnati is now
2 vacant. Jeff Delaney took a job with the VA. He
3 starts Monday. Yesterday was his last day.

4 Dayton is open to the public. Gary Felver is
5 now conducting BVA hearings at that location for
6 veterans in that area.

7 Production for 2023 on BVA success is 82%, with
8 586,000 in awards.

9 I've reported all the years, annually. Since
10 we started tracking in 2017, the DSO team has
11 brought in \$21,469,131.50. And that's just board
12 hearings we've conducted.

13 That's my DSO report.

14 (Applause).

15 These DSOs are phenomenal in the research they
16 do and their representations. I'm very lucky to be
17 able to work with them on a day-to-day basis.
18 They're fantastic.

19 Any questions on the DSO report?

20 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

21 COORDINATOR GENOCHIO: Okay, I'll move on to
22 The American Legion Riders.

23 As many of you know, we have a new state
24 director. Mike Lincoln stepped up. He was our
25 deputy director. He is now the state director. And

1 he appointed Deputy Director Thom Fowler as the
2 Deputy Director for The Legion Riders.

3 The 2024 "Ride on Military Pride," referred to
4 as the "ROMP," will be held August 1st through the
5 4th of 2024. Zanesville Post 29 will be hosting
6 that ROMP.

7 There was five new chapters that opened this
8 year. That's Marion Post 584, Athens Post 21,
9 London Post 105, Austintown 301, and Wellington Post
10 8.

11 For any of your Riders looking for the unity
12 patch, the deadline is December 15th, for those
13 Riders to receive that at Mid-Winter Conference.

14 And then discussions will be held at Mid-Winter
15 to discuss possible charities or programs to support
16 as the Legacy Ride from National is no longer the
17 Legacy Ride.

18 So, Commander, that completes my three reports.

19 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, Bill.

20 Next we'll have Jon Vulgamore with the Media,
21 Marketing and Communications Commission.

22 COORDINATOR VULGAMORE: Thank you, Commander.

23 Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.

25 COORDINATOR VULGAMORE: MMC Chair Chris Ermons

1 called the virtual Microsoft Teams meeting of the
2 Department Media, Marketing and Communications
3 Commission to order on Thursday, October 5th, 2023,
4 at 5:31 P.M. Ten members, one subcommission member,
5 and one guest were present. Bob White, District 13,
6 gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was
7 also led by Chair Emmons and recited by all present.

8 The meeting secretary appointment was
9 substituted by all present agreeing to be digitally
10 recorded through Microsoft Teams to produce the
11 minutes from.

12 Due to the previous meeting minutes from August
13 10th, 2023, being e-mailed to the members of the
14 commission for review, Chris Emmons, District 3
15 Chair, moved to entertain a motion to approve and
16 suspend the reading of the previous minutes. Holly
17 Lewis, District 10, so motioned. And Bob White,
18 District 13, seconded the motion. No discussion was
19 offered, and the commission oral vote unanimously
20 passed approving the minutes as presented. The
21 motion carried.

22 Next, MMC Commission Staff Liaison Jon
23 Vulgamore presented his Ohio Legion News report on
24 current costs of the mailed summer OLN edition, also
25 the digital-only program, the extended on-line

1 newsletter e-mail campaign, OLN advertising and cost
2 savings report with the recent mailing distribution
3 changes.

4 Next, Bob White, District 13, lead the
5 discussion of the Department creating or outsourcing
6 our own press credentials. After lengthy commission
7 discussion, it was decided to table the Department
8 press badge sanctioned program due to the undefined
9 cost and difficulty implementing the infrastructure,
10 budget and administration involved with it.

11 Vulgamore continued with the Department website
12 and social media report.

13 Dayna Beyer, District 5, offered to create a
14 new Legion Family and Post Facebook page and
15 Instagram page, and also to moderate it to solve the
16 issue of the current one no longer being active.

17 Now this is different from our main Department
18 page.

19 Chair Emmons then moved to entertain a motion
20 to create these social media pages. Holly Lewis,
21 District 10, so motioned. And Al Beyer, District 5,
22 seconded the motion. No discussion was offered and
23 the commission oral vote passed with seven ayes for
24 and 2 ayes against. The motion carried.

25 After some announcements and good of commission

1 discussion, Chair Emmons closed the meeting with a
2 salute to colors. The meeting was adjourned at 6:32
3 PM.

4 That concludes my meeting summary report,
5 Commander.

6 Any questions or discussion?

7 NEC MASOWICK: Steve Masowick, NEC.

8 Are the on-line subscriptions going up?

9 COORDINATOR VULGAMORE: No, the on-line
10 subscription is free.

11 NEC MASOWICK: No, I mean is it rising? Are
12 more people doing it?

13 COORDINATOR VULGAMORE: At the previous
14 meeting, we passed a motion to put on all the 888
15 members, since, you know, they probably have little
16 invested interest in receiving the bale of paper
17 anyway. And then also implemented this fall was the
18 war eras for the Gulf and Global War on Terror
19 members to be auto-enrolled in that program. So the
20 short answer is yes, it's gone up significantly, to
21 almost 16,000 now.

22 NEC MASOWICK: Great.

23 COORDINATOR VULGAMORE: The cost savings should
24 be around eight grand.

25 COMMANDER RUE: Anything else?

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

2 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, Jon.

3 Now we'll have the Department Adjutant, JD,
4 give the Sons of the American Legion report.

5 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Sons of The American Legion
6 Report to the Department Executive Committee,
7 December 2, 2023.

8 The Detachment Executive Committee met at
9 Paschall Post 164, in Grove City, on Saturday,
10 October 21st, 2023.

11 Presentations were given by Cindy Boehnlein of
12 The American Legion Auxiliary on legislation and the
13 President of the OVH Volunteer Advisory Committee on
14 the Sandusky home. They both gave great
15 presentations.

16 Reports were heard from the committee chairmen.

17 The following donations from future projects
18 were approved: The Central Region Extravaganza was
19 \$1500; the Task Force 20, Commander Dilts' project,
20 was 1,000; Child Welfare Foundation was 651.29; for
21 a grand total of 3,151.29.

22 The next Detachment Exec Committee meeting will
23 be Friday, January 19th, at the Marriott Columbus,
24 at Mid-Winter Convention.

25 Commander, that is the report.

1 COMMANDER RUE: All right, thanks, JD.

2 All right, it is now, 12:12. We will meet back
3 here at 12:45. We're going to break for lunch.

4 (THEREUPON, THE PROCEEDINGS STOOD IN RECESS).

5 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

6 COMMANDER RUE: We are reconvening.

7 At this time we'll move on to Post Charters,
8 revocations and suspensions, Department Adjutant
9 John Robinson.

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We have several new
11 charters for Squadrons: Squadron 2, in Cleveland,
12 was created; Squadron 90, in Bethesda; Squadron 171,
13 in Westerville; Squadron 608, in Fremont; and
14 Squadron 764, in Newark.

15 The only closing, we are still working on 472.
16 And I'll let the Commander speak on that.

17 COMMANDER RUE: So, after talking to the
18 National Judge Advocate and a few others, we went
19 back and had to redo a few things starting this. So
20 we are moving forward with that. We have the
21 subcommittee picked and we're waiting for a trial
22 date to be set at this point. And that's about as
23 far as I can go into it right now.

24 Resolutions.

25 So, two of the resolutions, the JROTC Award one

1 and The American Legion Department of Ohio Video
2 Gaming Committee, are being pulled from here. They
3 are not going to be heard by the DEC today. They
4 have to go to Finance first before they can come
5 before the DEC. So we're not going to waste the
6 time of the DEC with those.

7 Now, we have the Department dues increase.
8 Everybody should have got a resolution packet on
9 your desk with that. And it also has the supporting
10 information on the second sheet.

11 I'm not going to read the whole resolution.

12 We'll start at, "Resolved, by The American
13 Legion Department of Ohio --

14 No, that's not the right one.

15 Okay, so, "Resolved, by the Department of Ohio,
16 that the Department Commander shall direct the
17 Department Finance Commission to look for additional
18 revenue streams, cut costs, and self-fund Baseball,
19 A&G Trip, and Oratorical programs, in collaboration
20 with the Commission Chairs and Department Adjutant."

21 That's not the full thing either.

22 "Resolved, by the Department of Ohio, to
23 increase dues from \$9 to \$14, to provide an
24 additional approximate revenue of \$375,000,
25 effective January 1, 2025; and be it further

1 "Resolved, by the Department, that the
2 Department Commander shall direct the Department
3 Finance Commission to look for additional revenue
4 streams, cut costs, and self-fund Baseball, the A&G
5 Trip, and the Oratorical programs, in collaboration
6 with Commission Chairs and the Department Adjutant."

7 Is there any discussion at this time?

8 Yes, Bill.

9 9TH DISTRICT CMDR DITTEBRAND: Bill Dittebrand,
10 9th District Commander. I have a few issues with
11 this.

12 This was brought up at the outgoing DEC in
13 June. And they was talking about getting committees
14 together to see about cutting costs and all that.
15 What costs did they actually cut to do this dues
16 increase? And do we have a committee that's
17 supposed to be made up of --

18 COMMANDER RUE: It's on the back page of that
19 handout that you got.

20 9TH DISTRICT CMDR DITTEBRAND: Okay, Commander.

21 COMMANDER RUE: The commissions have been put
22 on a budget. So there's no travel for every
23 meeting. Some of them are going to do their
24 meetings, some of them are going to be virtual. Us
25 three (indicating) have been put on a budget for the

1 first time in many years, as Department officers.
2 We've reduced the employees that are here by two.

3 FROM THE FLOOR: It's on the back.

4 COMMANDER RUE: Yeah, it's all right here on
5 the back (indicating). "Cost Reduction Projects
6 Underway, Appendix A."

7 And actually, if all the DEC would do the ACH
8 and encourage all your Posts to be on an ACH, it
9 would save a lot of money, because we're not paying
10 for checks to be mailed out, we're not paying for
11 stamps, we're not paying for envelopes for them.
12 That gets expensive when you're talking about
13 mailing and you're talking about 590-some Posts in
14 the state. So if we could get everybody on board
15 with doing the ACH, it would save Department a ton
16 of money.

17 9TH DISTRICT CMDR DITTEBRAND: Okay. And also,
18 this \$600,000 that we took out of the investments,
19 are we going to pay that back?

20 COMMANDER RUE: No.

21 9TH DISTRICT CMDR DITTEBRAND: Well that was
22 one of the reasons they took it out was with the
23 intention of paying it back.

24 COMMANDER RUE: There's a problem. When you
25 don't have the funds to pay it back, you just keep

1 taking it out, Bill. And eventually --

2 I mean, it's wrote down in here as to how much
3 of that money we can actually touch in the
4 investments, which isn't the whole six million.

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: No, it's only 2.7.

6 COMMANDER RUE: Exactly.

7 So if you keep taking six to \$800,000 out of
8 there every year, how long until we're going to be
9 broke?

10 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: One of the other key ways
11 that we can start saving money is we have issued
12 every District a Commander, a 1st Vice, a 2nd Vice
13 and an Adjutant's e-mail. So that way we can start
14 e-mailing all of you, versus sending with postage.
15 That way we know you are getting it.

16 FROM THE FLOOR: They have been issued. Mine
17 don't work. I've never heard of it.

18 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: I sent it out and all the
19 Commanders got them, to be able to pass out to the
20 people below them. I will reissue them again and
21 we'll go through it again. But that is something we
22 are wanting to get started. So once we can get it
23 working to the best of its ability, then we will
24 stop using snail mail, for lack of a better term.

25 8TH DISTRICT CMDR CAPPS: Don Capps, District 8

1 Commander.

2 This seems to be missing a little information
3 on the top of this resolution, such as a number.

4 COMMANDER RUE: What type of number?

5 8TH DISTRICT CMDR CAPPS: A resolution number,
6 like all the others have.

7 COMMANDER RUE: There's two pages in there.
8 One has the actual resolution with the resolution
9 number on it. The other has kind of the generic
10 version of it.

11 8TH DISTRICT CMDR CAPPS: Then I missing the
12 resolution.

13 COMMANDER RUE: And this (indicating) is on the
14 back. The front page looks just like this
15 (indicating). There's no back page to it.

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: The copy they have does
17 not --

18 8TH DISTRICT CMDR CAPPS: That's my point, we
19 don't have that.

20 COMMANDER RUE: It's 24-01, is the actual
21 resolution number.

22 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: I didn't have the formatted
23 version this morning when I printed it out.

24 8TH DISTRICT CMDR CAPPS: All right. Thanks.

25 5TH DISTRICT 1VC MASON: Mason, District 5 1st

1 Vice Commander.

2 Maybe I'm out of line here, but I've got to say
3 this.

4 We are elected by our members in our Districts
5 to represent them, are we not?

6 COMMANDER RUE: Yes.

7 5TH DISTRICT 1VC MASON: I, personally, in our
8 District, since September, I have visited, we have
9 ten counties, 52 Posts in our District, I have been
10 to seven out of our ten county meetings, and talking
11 about membership, and I've been bringing it up about
12 the dues, National raising them, we went through
13 this the last time, Commander, I have not had one
14 person, not one single person, say, "Hey, Bob,
15 great, we do need to raise our dues."

16 What I'm getting at is what I am getting from
17 them is, "If you raise my dues, I'm going to quit."
18 I'm getting that. We got that at National. We got
19 that before.

20 On the one hand we're saying we need
21 membership, we need all the membership we can get.
22 On the other hand, we know that if we raise the
23 membership, we're going to lose, like they estimated
24 the last time National raised them, 600,000 members.

25 Now they're going to smack together somewhere.

1 We've got to make up our mind. Do we want members
2 or do we want to raise dues?

3 Now, I know we have to do it. I understand
4 that. I don't feel that now is the time. And I
5 believe that it's not our duty to do what we want,
6 it's our duty to do what our members elected us to
7 do.

8 COMMANDER RUE: Well you also have to do what's
9 best for the Department of Ohio in --

10 5TH DISTRICT 1VC MASON: I understand.

11 COMMANDER RUE: No, wait.

12 You also have to do what's best for the
13 Department of Ohio. Because now you are
14 representing the Department of Ohio on the board.

15 So, therefore, when is the best time to do it,
16 in three years, when we run out of money in the
17 coffers and we don't have investments to go back on?
18 We're operating a zero budget then. It's hard to
19 do.

20 I mean, eventually, if we can't get some of
21 these programs that help with the money, programs
22 will eventually be cut. And it ain't five years
23 down the road. We're talking two, three years down
24 the road if we don't get a dues increase.

25 I mean, these are things that we have to look

1 at, is, you know, all of the Americanism programs we
2 fund. They're not self-sustaining at all. So
3 you're talking about the Department Baseball
4 Tournament, the Oratorical Contest we put on, all
5 that stuff, you know, the Washington trip for the
6 A&G Test. Those tests don't pay for that trip. The
7 Department pays for that trip. That comes out of
8 our budget.

9 So those things will have to start getting cut
10 if we don't have the money to come in and help
11 support them. And that's going to happen quicker
12 than you think.

13 5TH DISTRICT 1VC MASON: I understand that.

14 One of those things you mentioned was baseball.
15 Are we not charging the teams? Didn't I just hear
16 we're going to start charging them \$600 now?

17 COMMANDER RUE: That covers the fees.

18 FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah, that just covers the
19 fees.

20 5TH DISTRICT 1VC MASON: Right. And I get
21 that.

22 I'm just saying, you know, I'm hearing this
23 from the membership. I thought I needed to bring it
24 up.

25 COMMANDER RUE: Do we have any other

1 discussion?

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

3 COMMANDER RUE: At this time, the committee
4 made and seconded the motion, the Finance Committee.
5 So we'll take a vote on accepting the dues increase
6 resolution to go before the body at Department
7 Convention.

8 All those in favor of the dues increase signify
9 by saying aye.

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

11 COMMANDER RUE: All those opposed, nay.

12 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Nay.

13 COMMANDER RUE: What we're going to do, because
14 that was pretty chose, all those in favor, please
15 stand at this time.

16 Sergeant-at-Arms, will you please count those
17 standing.

18 All right, thank you.

19 All those opposed and voting nay, please stand.

20 SGT-AT-ARMS BOYERS: Fifteen for, 11 against.

21 COMMANDER RUE: The vote passes. It will move
22 to the Department Convention floor.

23 There's no unfinished business to report at
24 this time.

25 How about the good of The Legion, do we have

1 anything for the good of The Legion?

2 HISTORIAN BEYER: I'm sure you can hear me
3 anyway.

4 As mentioned earlier today, 22 veterans commit
5 suicide every day, for a number of reasons.

6 And it was also mentioned how it increased to
7 6,392 in '21, from 6,278 the previous year.

8 And that data comes from the Department of
9 Veterans Affairs, released this past November 16th.

10 This is a topic that hits close for me, you
11 know, and the details of which I won't go into at
12 this time.

13 But I am glad of how receptive people are to
14 find out what "Be the One" is about, and why I
15 attached a flyer to each of the buttons, which I
16 wish you would all take a bunch of them home with
17 you and pass them out at your Posts or wherever.
18 They're laying back there (indicating) on the back
19 table.

20 And I just want to say thank you to Jon
21 Vulgamore for putting up with me and printing all
22 these flyers for me as I needed them.

23 Anyway, in 2021, The American Legion launched
24 its "Be the One" mission to reduce the rate of
25 veteran suicide by creating more awareness,

1 lessening the stigma of mental health treatment, and
2 encouraging everyone to act when the life of a
3 veteran might be at risk.

4 I have placed a number of buttons, "Be The
5 One," with the mission statements, on the shelf in
6 the back room there. Please take them back to your
7 District, pass them out within your command, and
8 educate.

9 I have made it a point to always have some
10 buttons with me when I visit a Post now.

11 And should you like more of those buttons, give
12 me a call.

13 Our goal is to de-stigmatize asking for mental
14 health support, provide peer-to-peer support and
15 resources, and educate on how you can "Be The One."

16 You have no idea what someone is frustrated
17 about. But just by giving him or her an ear,
18 there's a good chance you'd be saving their life.

19 Keep in contact with other Posts. Because, as
20 we all know, some Posts are more active than others.
21 Find out what is making it happen at their Post.
22 See what they're doing. Perhaps even join them in
23 an event in their community, making all, even
24 civilians, aware.

25 As we've done in the military, in looking out

1 for our brothers and sisters, we, as Legionnaires
2 today, are committed to doing the same thing because
3 of one reason: We care. We are our brother's
4 keepers.

5 "Be the One."

6 Thank you. That's all I've got, Commander.

7 COMMANDER RUE: Thanks, Al.

8 (Applause).

9 Christie is up next.

10 COORDINATOR WHITE: Hey there, I'm back.

11 Okay, really quick, Mid-Winter Conference.

12 Please make your reservations. Your
13 reservations need to be made by December 22nd.

14 If anyone has any ideas for vendors that we can
15 potentially have at Mid-Winter, please let us know.
16 We are open to getting new vendors in there. We
17 have a whole lot of space to work with. So please,
18 please, please, please, please, if you have any
19 suggestions, let me know.

20 The of-the-year awards banquet. Everybody
21 should have the flyer in front of you. The meal
22 choices are on the back. Please, please, please,
23 please, please, fill that out. If possible, turn it
24 in today. If not, get it in the mail, so we can
25 start getting the banquet set up.

1 We're also having a blood drive. This is new.
2 It was not on the tentative agenda. It is not on
3 the website yet. It was just solidified this past
4 week.

5 There will be a blood drive on Friday. So
6 please consider giving blood for Mid-Winter
7 Conference.

8 Sergeant-at-Arms, I'm going to get with you and
9 your assistants on some assistance that will be
10 needed at Mid-Winter.

11 And thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms and Assistant
12 Sergeant-at-Arms, for everything you guys do. You
13 guys saved our butts multiple times at Mid-Winter
14 Convention and here.

15 (Applause).

16 Does anyone have any Mid-Winter questions?

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 COORDINATOR WHITE: Mid-Winter, Saturday, will
19 be BALC classes. There will be programs that are
20 being taught.

21 No Mid-Winter questions?

22 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

23 COORDINATOR WHITE: Okay, Department
24 Convention, quickly.

25 It will be in Independence. We've been at that

1 hotel multiple times.

2 The deadline for registration is June 10th. So
3 please make sure, if you're making your hotel
4 reservations for Mid-Winter, you might as well get
5 Department Convention out of the way. Doing it
6 earlier is better than somebody calling me the week
7 of and saying, "Oh shoot, I forgot to make
8 reservations. Do you have a room?" No, I don't.

9 Any convention questions?

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

11 COORDINATOR WHITE: Commander, that's all I've
12 got.

13 COMMANDER RUE: All right.

14 JD will do the National Convention.

15 Thanks, Christie.

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Commander Rue and I went to
17 New Orleans last month. We toured our hotel. We're
18 staying at the Renaissance. It is a very, very nice
19 hotel. It does have a lounge and a restaurant and
20 an art gallery in it.

21 We are close by several eating establishments,
22 a comedy club, and we even found a nice cafe that
23 has \$1.25 beers during the day. Just saying.

24 So, the important part, room rates are 155 a
25 night, with parking \$38. And it is valet parking.

1 There is no parking structure nearby. They will
2 valet park for you.

3 We'll have the form to register at Mid-Winter.
4 Make sure you fill the form out. Even if you don't
5 go, fill the form out. I need to know how many
6 rooms we're going to need. So if we go over our
7 allotment, I can start finding other places for
8 people to stay. Because this could be a very big
9 year for us for a travel destination. So the sooner
10 you let me know, the sooner I can get with the hotel
11 and make sure we have all the reservations we need.

12 Thank you.

13 4TH DISTRICT CMDR BUXTON: Buxton, 4th
14 District.

15 Is the \$38 a night?

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

17 COMMANDER RUE: Yes. And it is a brokered,
18 discount rate from what it normally is too.

19 3RD DISTRICT CMDR LaVOY: LaVoy, 3rd District.

20 Is this the French Quarter?

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: The arts district.

22 COMMANDER RUE: The arts district.

23 3RD DISTRICT CMDR LaVOY: Thank you.

24 COMMANDER RUE: You're about a half an hour
25 walk from Bourbon Street and all that.

1 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We're about ten minutes
2 from the convention center. But it's a nice, easy
3 walk.

4 COMMANDER RUE: It's level. It's not uphill
5 and downhill like last year.

6 FROM THE FLOOR: Be careful where you walk.

7 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Actually, the area we were
8 in was quite nice.

9 FROM THE FLOOR: How close to that cemetery?

10 COMMANDER RUE: I don't know.

11 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: There weren't any
12 cemeteries by where we were at.

13 COMMANDER RUE: All right, moving on.

14 Did everybody got one of these handouts
15 (indicating), just a little bit ago? They were sent
16 out to all of the Posts this week.

17 This is the National Commander's Plan of
18 Action. These are things he wants us to engage on
19 this coming year.

20 "Be the One." No. 1, changing lives, saving
21 lives. That is what "Be the One" is.

22 Servant leadership.

23 Competence, character and commitment.

24 As they talked about earlier, the grassroots
25 legislation campaign. They get those alerts right

1 there on the top. Legion.org/action, that puts you
2 on the action alert, which allows you to directly
3 contact your senators and representatives with just
4 the push of a button on a computer.

5 And you can do that every day. Until they act
6 on that, it will be there for you to keep acting on
7 every day. You can push on that every 24 hours.

8 That one is also on the website.

9 His goal is 100% CPR reports, of course it is.

10 And let me tell you, there is no reason why,
11 after the first of the year, you can't start doing
12 your CPRs, because it's all based on stuff from this
13 past year. There's no reason we are not 100% by the
14 time we hit Department Convention, let alone
15 National Convention.

16 So we need to start getting that out at your
17 District Conferences too, that we need to start
18 getting that stuff done. Because now we're moving
19 into January, when those are going to start
20 happening.

21 And Jon, do you know when the updated form
22 comes out and when we can have it on the website?

23 COORDINATOR VULGAMORE: They send to us around
24 mid-March. And I get it out as soon as we get our
25 boxes in so everybody has it.

1 COMMANDER RUE: By the end of March?

2 COORDINATOR VULGAMORE: By the end of March.

3 COMMANDER RUE: The National Veterans and
4 Children's Foundation.

5 And then payments benefiting Department.

6 Basically, we're going to go out and get some people
7 to help support us, which will also help with
8 offsetting costs on everything.

9 So at this time, with nothing further to come
10 before the meeting, I would ask --

11 Go ahead, Bill.

12 9TH DISTRICT CMDR DITTEBRAND: Dittebrand, 9th
13 District Commander.

14 It was brought to our attention that the 9th
15 District was not in support of Jose Rivera for 2nd
16 Vice Commander. That is not true. That is a false
17 statement. Whoever said that, it was the wrong
18 thing to say.

19 A copy of this resolution was given to the
20 Department Adjutant today, and the Department
21 Commander.

22 The 9th District does support Jose Rivera, and
23 supported him for running for 2nd Vice Commander.
24 We'll give him the proper endorsement and we will be
25 giving him donations for his campaign next Saturday

1 at our District Conference.

2 And the second thing is, it probably should
3 have come under old business, or maybe new business,
4 but there was an appointment made on the Charities,
5 Inc. Okay? Jerry Wilson was reappointed on to
6 Charities, Inc.

7 And I believe, at the DEC, we asked to get a
8 copy of the constitution and bylaws for the
9 Charities, Inc.

10 Every member here on the DEC, they are also on
11 the 1099 that is submitted to the Internal Revenue
12 Service every year. We are responsible for that.

13 And we were told that we were going to get a
14 copy of their constitution and bylaws, but we have
15 not got a copy of that yet.

16 And why was Jerry Wilson reappointed?
17 Shouldn't there have been an appointment made to the
18 DEC, or a nomination and appointment made by the
19 DEC?

20 COMMANDER RUE: Yes, I just found out about
21 that today.

22 9TH DISTRICT CMDR DITTEBRAND: Okay.

23 COMMANDER RUE: We didn't throw it on the
24 agenda last minute.

25 But yes, the DEC is the one who appoints people

1 to that body.

2 PDC JEAN WILSON: No.

3 COMMANDER RUE: Yes, Jean, it is. The DEC is
4 the one that appoints people to that body.

5 PDC JEAN WILSON: They approve.

6 COMMANDER RUE: What's that?

7 PDC JEAN WILSON: They approve.

8 COMMANDER RUE: Yes.

9 PDC JEAN WILSON: Thank you.

10 COMMANDER RUE: We get nominations that come
11 forth -- actually, we vote for it. The DEC here
12 votes for people to go on that board.

13 So we will have a special meeting later on,
14 where we will vote for that, and take nominations
15 for that. But it's not going to happen today
16 because, like I said, I just found out about it this
17 morning. It was brought to my attention this
18 morning. I did not know that.

19 So what I will say is, all those wishing to put
20 nominations forward, get them in to Department. We
21 will push out when we're going to have our meeting
22 for that. Probably in January we will do a virtual
23 meeting for it on Teams.

24 And when we send out the memos for that, it
25 will also be the last call for all those who want to

1 put nominations forward for it. And then we will
2 have our vote for it then.

3 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Commander, just to
4 keep it legal, since they are a 501(c)(3), I would
5 recommend that there be a motion from the floor that
6 Jerry Wilson fill the slot as an interim until the
7 final decision is made at the next DEC meeting to
8 fill that vacancy. That way, they're not in trouble
9 that they went outside of any procedures, which we
10 don't know, and the DEC covered that with an interim
11 appointment.

12 COMMANDER RUE: Did everybody hear that?

13 I would, at this time, entertain a motion for
14 Jerry Wilson to hold the position on Charities,
15 Inc., until we have an actual election, a nomination
16 process and election coming up.

17 4TH DISTRICT CMDR BUXTON: Buxton, 4th District
18 Commander, so moves.

19 6TH DISTRICT 1VC MILLER: Christopher Miller,
20 6th District 1st Vice, seconds.

21 COMMANDER RUE: All right, we have a motion and
22 second for Jerry Wilson to temporarily fill in until
23 we have an election, a nomination and election
24 process to fill that through the DEC.

25 Is there any discussion?

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

2 COMMANDER RUE: Is there any discussion?

3 Wes.

4 10TH DISTRICT CMDR CROTHERS: How come we can't
5 do this at the Mid-Winter?

6 COMMANDER RUE: We don't have a DEC meeting at
7 that.

8 We're wanting to save costs. We'd have to pay
9 everybody to come in and go home if we're going to
10 do that.

11 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Commander, Chris
12 Emmons, 3rd District Vice Commander.

13 COMMANDER RUE: Please stand up, Chris.

14 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Do we have visibility
15 as to who is on that committee and how long their
16 terms are?

17 COMMANDER RUE: We elect one every year.

18 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: What's that?

19 COMMANDER RUE: We elect one every year.

20 Art Lustig resigned off the committee.

21 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: In January, we're
22 going to be voting on a full slate?

23 COMMANDER RUE: No.

24 We elect one every year. But now, in January,
25 we'll be electing someone to finish out Art Lustig's

1 term.

2 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: Where's the listing
3 of everybody's names and terms and their years?

4 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: I e-mail out a list of
5 names. I do not have term limits. I can try to get
6 them from Charities, Inc.

7 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: So they need to all
8 be revoted on and start their term next year?

9 COMMANDER RUE: No.

10 There's four members that were voted in. And
11 they rotate every year as to which one gets voted
12 in. And then you have a fifth member, who this year
13 is Charles, it's the Immediate Past Commander. They
14 have five members on there. Every year, one of the
15 other four come up for reelection.

16 And they just voted off Jerry and put Roger
17 Friend on.

18 Art Lustig, I'm not sure if he's the next one
19 up or the one after that. I know he's coming.

20 But the election in January will be to fulfill
21 the rest of Art Lustig's term.

22 3RD DISTRICT 1VC EMMONS: I would just request
23 that in January, when we're asked to vote, that we
24 have the names and their years.

25 COMMANDER RUE: We can put that forward.

1 Is there any further discussion?

2 13TH DISTRICT 1VC WRIGHT: Commander, Post 2

3 has donations to give to the Department.

4 COMMANDER RUE: We're in the middle of a motion
5 right now.

6 13TH DISTRICT 1VC WRIGHT: Okay. Sorry.

7 COMMANDER RUE: Wait till we get done with
8 that.

9 All right, hearing no further discussion, all
10 those in favor signify by saying aye.

11 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

12 COMMANDER RUE: Those opposed, nay.

13 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Nay.

14 COMMANDER RUE: Motion carries.

15 All right.

16 13TH DISTRICT 1VC WRIGHT: Commander, Cleveland
17 Post 2 has donations to donate to our four pillars
18 in the amount of \$3,000.

19 COMMANDER RUE: Awesome.

20 It's 1,000 for Boys State, 1,000 for VA&R Gifts
21 for Yanks, 500 for National Security, and \$1,000 for
22 Children and Youth.

23 Thank you.

24 (Applause).

25 All right, at this time we're going to have Jim

1 Fast, our Assistant Department Chaplain, give the
2 benediction for today.

3 Please rise.

4 Uncover.

5 ASST. CHAPLAIN FAST: As we depart, receive the
6 blessing of the Lord, the Lord bless you and keep
7 you. The Lord makes His face to shine upon you and
8 be gracious unto you, and the Lord lifts His
9 countenance upon you and grants you peace.

10 Now I say to you "Mizpah." The Lord watch
11 between us while we are absent one from another.

12 Amen.

13 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.

14 COMMANDER RUE: Cover.

15 Colors of our nation in place, hand salute.

16 Two.

17 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

18 I now declare this DEC adjourned.

19 * * * * *

20 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

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