

**The American Legion Buckeye Boys State
Trustees Meeting
American Legion Department of Ohio Headquarters
Delaware, Ohio
Saturday, October 17th, 2020**

The Fall Trustees Meeting of American Legion Buckeye Boys State was called to order by President William Pennell at 10:00 am, at the American Legion Department of Ohio Headquarters, Delaware, Ohio with a Salute to the Colors and Invocation by Melissa Fowle.

Memorial Service: Following the Invocation, Director Koppin conducted a brief memorial service for the following staff members who died in the past year:

Commissioner George Holmes

Trustee Emeritus Ralph Waite

Trustee Emeritus Joel Davis

Trustee Emeritus Ed Voisard

Trustee Emeritus Richard Knieriem

These staff members gave a combined total of over 138 years to the Boys State program.

Members present:

Officers: President William Pennell, 1st Vice President Ron Chapman, 2nd Vice President David Ridenour, Secretary Mark Weldon, Director Jim Koppin, Coordinator Christie White.

Past Presidents: James Koppin, Richard Schuck, Jim Vaughan, Mark Weldon, Paul Wiehe, Richard Zulch.

Trustees: Charles Armstrong, Dennis Aselage, Jack Forster, Richard Fortman, Melissa Fowle, Richard Gallaher, Jim Hoessle, Charles Kvochick, David Lofy, John Looker, Steve Masowick, George Monroe, Robert Schmitt, James Starr, Nathan Winkleman.

Commissioners: Bart Arndt, Lawrence Baker, William Hoff, Terry Kaufman, Patric Leedom, James Moorman, Bruce Tolle, Rodger Wiant,

Consultants: Eric Bucher, John Coffield, Robert Guillozet, Jeff Jordan, Luther Liggett, Jr., Steve Oechsle, Greg Peel, Jesse Thomas,

Guests: Sgt. Drew Heartlein and Sgt. Bryan Cook, Ohio State Highway Patrol; David Cobb, Gordon Cromwell, William Dittebrand, Vivan Duffy, Steven Ervin, John Life, Dennis Morrison, Jason Pennell, Paul Sands, Rob Terry.

Minutes of the Fall 2019 Meeting, 10/12/2019: **Sec. Mark Weldon**

Charles Kvochick made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Melissa Fowle.

MOTION PASSED

Ohio State Highway Patrol:

Sgt. Drew Heartlein from the Cincinnati Post will be in charge of the detail. This will be his second year. Sgt. Bryan Cook, also from the Cincinnati Post, will be attending for his first year. Both stated they are looking forward to it, and are already working on their part of the program.

Personnel Report:

2nd VP David Ridenour

A. Commissioner Applications:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Vivan Duffy | State Government |
| 2. Frank Navarre | Float |
| 3. Paul Sands | Mini-mall |
| 4. John Life | Recreation |
| 5. Dave Cobb | City Government |
| 6. Steven Ervin | School Boards, Elections |

B. Consultant Applications

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Thayne Gray | County Government |
|----------------|-------------------|

Above applicants were assigned to sections as shown above at the recommendation of the Executive Committee. Pursuant to established procedure, final action on their applications will be deferred until they have attended the 2021 program.

Melissa Fowle encouraged those applicants present to also volunteer in Elections Section in addition to their given assignments.

Appointment of Samsung Scholarship Committee: Pres. Pennell

Ron Chapman
Mike Leone
Steve Scherer

Paul Wiehe made the motion to approve the above members of the committee, seconded by George Monroe.

MOTION PASSED

Appointment of Hall of Fame Committee: Pres. Pennell

Darrell Bishop
John Looker
Bill Strong

Bruce Tolle made the motion to approve the above members of the committee, seconded by Melissa Fowle.

MOTION PASSED

Appointment of Boys Nation Selection Committee: Pres. Pennell

David Ridenour
Dan Favreau
Mark Weldon
John Turney

Paul Wiehe made the motion to approve the above members of the committee, seconded by Charlie Armstrong. MOTION PASSED

2021 Program dates: Director Koppin

- A. June 13th-20th, 2021.
- B. Spring meeting will be April 16th & 17th, 2021.
- C. Director Koppin announced that the current conference agreement with Miami University has been extended by one year, due to the cancellation of the 2020 program. The contract extension has been signed by the appropriate Department officers.

Budget and Finance Report: Director Koppin

- A. 2021 program fee:
Dick Schuck made a motion to keep the fee at \$300.00, due to possible financial hardships our Posts are facing due to the Covid shutdown. Dick Zulch seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED
- B. A list of the current balances of the Boys State bank accounts was made available to the membership.

Report on National Directors Conference: Christie White

Christie White reported that the National conference was conducted virtually this year. She was the only staff member to “attend”. She said there was not very much useful content.

She said there was a lot of emphasis was on promoting risk management and youth protection training. This basically consists of a lot of basic things that we already know, such as not being alone in a room or vehicle with a minor, inappropriate touching, etc. This training is currently mandatory for the Baseball program, but is voluntary for our staff at this time. Training is done on-line, after which you get certificate good for two years. Contact her to find out how to access the training.

The Tennessee and New Jersey Girls States and Texas Boys State did virtual programs this year. They presented on how it was done and lessons learned. They are willing to assist any other state that wants to go this route in the future.

2020 Program Administration: Director Koppin, Christie White

A. On-line Application Status

Christie advised it's working well on her end. She did note that delegates have to hit the "submit" button before printing off the application, or the information does not get into the system.

B. Site Issues

Director Koppin said that we will be flip flopping and the dorms we had the last program will be changed to the ones we lost that year for renovations. Ogden Hall will remain on-line, so City Government section will not have to change.

Director noted that Miami University has been hit fairly hard with Covid cases, and they are still learning how to deal with it. If we have a program next year he will rely heavily on them for our protocols.

C. Administration

Mark Weldon reminded everyone to accurately mark the housing form as to date arriving and leaving. This has a bearing on how we are billed. If you arrive before the date you give us your room will not be available.

Mark also stated that social security numbers are required for the background check form. This is to insure that it's actually your information that's being reported.

D. 2020 Delegates attending in 2021

Director Koppin advised that the 2020 delegates will be spread out as evenly as possible through all the cities. They will be able to do everything except the Samsung Scholarship, US Senate program, and Boys Nation. We have 193 delegates from last year registered.

Section Heads Reports:

Elections— Melissa Fowle needs more city commissioners, and asked the new applicants to step up and volunteer. Everything else is ready except any changes that may come up.

Campaign Headquarters— no report. Dick Schuck reminded that if anyone has contacts for possible poster board donations to let the Director or Christie know.

State Government— Bob Schmitt said they will be ready. There are no changes scheduled as of now.

County Government— Paul Wiehe noted he has recruited a new staff member to work with the county prosecutors, and alleviate some of the problems he has coordinating with the Legal section. They are otherwise ready to go.

City Government— Dick Schuck said we'll be there, but don't know just how. He is working on plans for safe operation. He may incorporate more technology using cell phones to mitigate the close contact issues we have. He is also instituting a training program change for staff who have no prior knowledge of how city governments operate to bring them up to speed.

Recreation—Jim Starr said everything is OK for now with Miami University.

School Boards— Jeff Jordan said Mike Jordan appreciates the extra help he'll be getting with the new staff applicants. He reported that Mike has been diagnosed with liver cancer, but his prognosis is good. Charlie Armstrong reported that John Singleton has had a stroke, so someone should reach out to him about his status with the program.

Courts—Luther Liggett said they have been working during the year, getting everything electronic. The boys don't read books anymore, so they've gotten rid of all their physical books. They're looking forward to a good year.

Legislature— Nate Winkleman said they're all set as far as we know. The facilities should be the same.

Bank & Realty—Jim Hoessle advised they're all set. He was able to get a couple of outside speakers at the last program who were well received by the delegates. They will try to repeat that this year. Social distancing will be a challenge.

Utilities— everything should be ok.

Hetuck— Jesse Thomas reported that the section is continuing to look at delivery methods and content. They're trying to keep everything up-to-date.

Counselors— Steve Oechsle said they will be ready.

Administration— No additional report.

Band— Jeff Jordan said has unique issues w/ covid protocols, so he has been talking with friend at the Ohio State University about their protocols and methods. There are lots of pieces to work through, but they are not insurmountable.

Mini-mall— Charlie Kvochick appreciates the new help he'll be getting. He reported that Ruth Crutcher will be resigning. She has a circulation problem and can't walk much. He is looking at new items to sell based on delegate surveys. He also said we still need a way to use credit cards.

Public Relations— No report.

Computer support— Rick Gallaher advised that everything is up in the air until we know more of what will be needed and available. Meanwhile, let him know of any specific needs you may have.

No-shows— No report

Hall of Fame Report:

No report

Planning Committee Report:**Mark Weldon**

Mark reviewed the reason for establishing the committee following the news of the drastic enrollment drop we saw in 2019. The purpose of the committee is to enhance enrollment by examining all aspects of the program to make recommendations to improve the delegate experience, and looking at ways to improve access to the program for interested students.

The committee met several times before the Covid situation shut things down. Many of the early meetings involved identifying what information we need and getting what was available. Items we worked on prior to the shutdown were on-line orientation, since it was uncertain if we could have in-person sessions. We also started looking at the evolving Covid threat and possible responses. Dick Schuck has been tracking Covid numbers since the beginning.

Dick Schuck then took the floor to outline the results of his inquiries, and the main implications for the program. His conclusion is that there is almost no risk to our students due to their age. The greater concern is the susceptibility of our older staff, or the students getting the illness here and taking it home.

This sparked a discussion of the Covid situation, with a number of questions as to what we were looking at for procedures. Director Koppin mentioned some ideas they have come up with. Nothing was settled as there is just too much we don't know yet, or even if we'll be able to have a program.

The Program Planning Committee consists of Mark Weldon, Dick Schuck, Ron Chapman, Dave Ridenour, Grant Grace, John Garvey, Steve Scherer and Jeff Jordan.

Suggestions for Daily Schedule:**Director Koppin**

As always, the Director needs any changes to the daily schedule from section heads as soon as possible.

Returning to the Covid discussion, Jim said we don't really feel we can go another year without having a program. One of the ideas mentioned in the prior discussion was to have a program with reduced numbers, such as only 600 delegates. He inquired if we might be in favor of a reduced program if that's the only alternative to having no program. This would mean fewer cities and counties. This led to more discussion but no decisions.

Christie noted that if you are having any more of last year's delegates registered, use the appropriate special enrollment request form.

Lunch Break from noon to 1:00pm.

Good of the Program:

Rodger Wyant asked if we vetted counselors to insure they share our values regarding the flag and national anthem. His concern stems from a few social media posts made by counselors. Dick Schuck responded that problem counselors have been always been weeded out. Jeff Jordan noted that the counseling staff is very good about policing itself. Any concerns about counselors should be directed to the attention of Grant Grace.

Bob Schmitt expressed concern about the amount of money just sitting around in various accounts. He asked why more of these funds invested to make more money.

David Ridenour relayed a comment made two weeks ago at the Veterans Hall of Fame Ceremony by Major General Debbie Ashenurst. Upon learning he is involved in Boys State, she remarked it's an excellent program, and She and Governor really appreciate the quality of the program.

Bob Schmitt noted to everybody that Dave Ridenour was just inducted into Veterans Hall Of Fame.

Benediction:

Melissa Fowle

Salute to Colors:

Meeting Adjourned at 1:03pm.