

MINUTES
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING OF
OCTOBER 22, 2023, at 1:00 P.M.
Department Headquarters- Library

1. Call to Order 1:00 P.M.
Department Chairman White opened the meeting of the Department Legislative Commission at 1:00 P.M.
2. Salute to the Colors
The Colors were saluted.
3. Invocation by Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman.
4. Pledge of Allegiance
Department Chairman White led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
5. Roll Call: Christie White, Americanism and Children & Youth Coordinator

Members present:

Dean Boyers, 1st District Chairman- PRESENT
Tim Shaw, 2nd District Chairman- EXCUSED
Michael White, Department Chairman- PRESENT
Ronald Chapman, 4th District Chairman- PRESENT
David Root, 5th District Chairman- EXCUSED
Christopher Miller, 6th District Chairman- PRESENT
7th District Chairman- VACANT
8th District Chairman- VACANT
Joyce Hannum, 9th District Chairman- PRESENT
Robert Withrow, 10th District Chairman- NOT PRESENT
April Ogilbee, 11th District Chairman- NOT PRESENT
Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman- PRESENT
Bert Boyd Sr, 13th District Chairman- PRESENT
Jacob Marx, 14th District Chairman- PRESENT

Guests Present:

Christie White, Americanism and Children & Youth Coordinator

6. Department Chairman White introduced himself and thanked the Commission for attending. He notified the Commission that he is new, and everyone's thoughts and opinions are welcome.
7. Reading of Previous Minutes

Joyce Hannum, 9th District Chairman moved, seconded by Chris Miller, 6th District Chairman to approve the minutes of the last meeting.

MOTION PASSED

8. Unfinished Business
 - a. Legislator of the Year- Resolution?
 - i. National- David Joyce
 - ii. State- Tracy Richardson- Veteran

The Department Parliamentarian notified the Commission that there does not need to be a Resolution. The DEC already approved it as well. Discussion was had about when to award the Legislators of the year, Mid-Winter or Department Convention. Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman had discussion that when the award was created, there were not many rules that were put in place so it could be flexible. The Commission was given the flexibility to decide based on what has been going on. Joyce Hannum, 9th District Chairman would like it based on what they have done or accomplished consistently, especially in the veteran community. The Commission discussed having a Resolution written for each award recipient. Bert Boyd, 13th District Chairman, discussed having a vetting process for all nominees. Some come off as being veteran focused, but if you look at their accomplishments, what committees they are on, what they voted for, and if they visit VA hospitals, will speak volumes. Chris Miller, 6th District Chairman suggested that the Commission adds in the packet what committees they are on and how they have voted, how many bills they sponsored/co-sponsored. Jacob Marx, 14th District Chairman, suggests that each Chair find legislators in their District, bring them to the Commission, and the Commission can decide as a group how to vet them. One congressional and one state. Dean Boyer, 1st District Chairman, has been working on vetting someone and he suggests that each individual District Chair should be the ones who do the homework on the potential nominees' committees, votes, and bills, and bring their findings to the Commission. Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman discussed that the Commission could do a legislative breakfast at the Statehouse, through fundraising. If the Commission awards at Mid-Winter, if the recipient cannot attend, they can be recognized and awarded at a later date. The Commission needs to get the word out and make Legionnaires familiar with the fact that the Department has a Legislator of the Year Award. Invites for the award winners need to go out now, because the award and dinner need to be reported to the state ethics committee and they need permission in order to travel to other Districts. The Legion Preamble, Four Pillars and Consolidated Post Reports should be looked at as the criteria for the Legislator of the Year Awards. Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman wanted to nominate Bill Johnson for the next Congressional Legislator of the Year. Dean Boyers, 1st District Chairman wanted to nominate Marcy Kaptur for the next Congressional Legislator of the Year. Ronald Chapman, 4th District Chairman lets the Commission know that if they are not signed up for the Grassroots Campaign, they need to get on it.

Department Chairman White asks the Commission to create some type of criteria for the Legislators of the Year before the next Commission meeting. Each person will send their suggestions to Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman and copy Christie White, Department Americanism and Children & Youth Coordinator on them.

Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman asked to have a Zoom meeting before Mid-Winter. Suzette will set it up and notify the Department and the Commission.

9. New Business- Outside of Legislator of the Year, what is the mission/purpose of this Commission? Legion is supposed to be the largest lobbying organization for Veterans. This Commission needs to look at new bills and legislation, and lobby for or against them. Ronald Chapman, 4th District Chairman suggested creating a mission statement for the Commission. Suzette Heller, 12th District Chairman, notified the Commission that on the State General Assembly webpage, you can create your own personal individual account as well as congress.gov and you can select what subject matter you want to receive bills on. Joyce Hannum, 9th District Chairman asked the Commission if they can create an appreciation award for local politicians. The Commission suggested that each Post or District create their own, or just give them a Certificate of Appreciation.

10. Good of the Legion- Legion Posts can give an impact statement to their city council on what the local Legion is doing and contributing to their community. Jake Marx, 14th District Chairman, suggested a partial mission statement, as follows- "To educate and ensure the power of citizenship through the adherence to American Legion values". Next virtual meeting will be sometime after Thanksgiving. The Commission suggested creating a Proclamation that will go to the Legislator of the Year along with their award at Mid-Winter.

Takeaways- identifying requirements for Legislator of the Year based off of four pillars and preamble, each individual creating criteria on their own and shared, Suzette creating draft of a mission statement, Jake creating Proclamation, Dean and Suzette researching and doing the homework for Bill Johnson and Marcy Kaptur, next virtual meeting- Tuesday November 19th at 6:00PM

11. Benediction. Benediction was given by Ronald Chapman, 4th District Chairman

12. Adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 2:14 P.M.