

MINUTES OF
Media, Marketing and Communications Commission
MEETING
Saturday, August 2nd, 2025, 2:30 P.M.
Virtual (MS Teams)

1. Call to Order 2:31 P.M.

Chair, Shallon Smith - District 6, called the meeting of the Department Media, Marketing and Communications Commission to order at 2:31 P.M. The Invocation was delegated to Bob White, sub.com. member of the 13th District. Following this, the Salute to the Colors and Pledge of Allegiance was also led by Chair Smith and recited by all present. The meeting secretary appointment was substituted by all present agreeing to be digitally recorded through the MS Teams software application to produce minutes from.

2. Roll Call:
- DISTRICT 1 – Frank (Joe) Navarre
 - DISTRICT 2 – Tim Shaw
 - DISTRICT 3 – Brian Fowle
 - DISTRICT 4 – Steve Baumann
 - DISTRICT 5 – Robert (Bob) Mason
 - DISTRICT 6 – Shallon Smith – *Chair*
 - DISTRICT 7 – *Vacant*
 - DISTRICT 8 – Laura Blake – *Not Present*
 - DISTRICT 9 – Jacqueline Whetstone
 - DISTRICT 10 – Debra Gilchrist – *Not Present*
 - DISTRICT 11 – Jason Malec – *Not Present*
 - DISTRICT 12 – Steve Ebersole
 - DISTRICT 13 – James Lockyer – *Not Present*
 - DISTRICT 14 – Rodger Wiant – *Not Present*

Roll Call of Sub Commission Member(s):

- DISTRICT 5 – Dayna Beyer
- DISTRICT 13 – Robert (Bob) White – (*Sub. For James Lockyer*)
- DISTRICT 10 – Holly Lewis – (*Sub. For Deb Gilchrist*)

8 Members present:

- DISTRICT 1 – Frank (Joe) Navarre
- DISTRICT 2 – Tim Shaw
- DISTRICT 3 – Brian Fowle
- DISTRICT 4 – Steve Baumann
- DISTRICT 5 – Robert (Bob) Mason
- DISTRICT 6 – Shallon Smith
- DISTRICT 7 – *vacant*
- DISTRICT 8 – Absent
- DISTRICT 9 – Jacqueline Whetstone
- DISTRICT 10 – Absent
- DISTRICT 11 – Absent
- DISTRICT 12 – Steve Ebersole
- DISTRICT 13 – Absent
- DISTRICT 14 – Absent

3 Sub Com. Member(s) present:

- DISTRICT 5 – Dayna Beyer
- DISTRICT 13 – Robert (Bob) White – (*Sub. For James Lockyer*)
- DISTRICT 10 – Holly Lewis – (*Sub. For Deb Gilchrist*)

2 Guest(s) Present:

- Jon Vulgamore – Department staff liaison
- Department Adjutant – JD Robinson

3. Reading of Previous Minutes

Due to the previous meeting minutes from March 22nd, 2025, being emailed to the members of the DEC for review, and approved at the April 5th, 2025, DEC meeting, no motion was required to read/approve the previous meeting minutes. Chair, Shallon Smith - District 6, then read our Commission Rules and Objectives to recap to all new members of the MMC Commission.

4. New Business; Unfinished/Old Business; Discussions; Additional Commission Objective Motions

a. *Review of new Affiliate Partnerships*

Chair, Shallon Smith - District 6, recognized Department Adjutant, John Robinson to report on our newest partner affiliations. We've partnered up with Stuart Pulk and he has two different business adventures; 1 is a Legion blanket that is woven. It is American made in North Carolina and they are \$65 and we get \$7.00 from each blanket. We finally sold our first blanket last week. We have them customizable that you can even download somebody's picture on it. If you we're at department convention, we had one out there that we've had customized for the past commander for his year of service. Plans to promote it out Boys State, we can promote it out to baseball as well. If you guys have other ideas of ways that you think something else might sell better than what we went through, we can always go back and talk to him. But that's an easy partnership because there's no cost to us other than us putting our brains together and figuring out how to advertise it. The other one that we are working with him on is primary pet care. And if you've not looked at the handouts or the e-mail blast that we've done, it is really good insurance for a very reasonable price. But if we don't get the information out to our post about these type of programs that we're working on, they're not gonna go anywhere. And the best part is we don't have to promote them at the post. We promote them out to the community through the post. If you know somebody that's got 27 dogs and 52 cats, that one pet care covers all of them. It's not individual pet, it's per family. There is a virtual vet that you can call right away. The other partnership we entered into that it's not going to give us money per SE as a billable, but we're hoping to raise membership and gain money from it is iHeartRadio. And they just donated 72 more commercials for Franklin County area radio stations, which they broadcast almost 3/4 of the state from there. So their original attempt out was mostly on AM stations, which I was not happy with. So I went back and complained a little bit and they gave us 72 more commercials on FM stations. Those will start tomorrow, Monday. So if you're local and you listen to 92.3 or 93.3, they will be going out on those type of stations. But Holly and I did our best and Stan was also there coming up with our initial commercial. At some point in time, we're going to want to change that commercial up. You guys come up with some marketing ideas on all three of those items, so if you could come up and help me with that, I would greatly appreciate it. Also plans to advance our advertising with LIT is the Legionnaire Insurance Trust is priority. It is been around since 1966. It started in California and they've given back two departments over a billion dollars since its inception. Now think about that, how often do you get a rebate from your insurance company?

We average about \$100,000 a year in rebates from them. So if you sign up for an LIT insurance, we get part of your, whatever you're paying, we get part of that back to help the department. Now if you're Medicare age, you have travel insurance. The Sal and auxiliary are also eligible to sign up for LIT. It's not just Legionnaires, it's anybody that is Legion family is eligible and they all count towards helping us. So there again we're looking for banners, skywriting, smoke signals, whatever you guys can think of to get it out. Yeah we make quite a bit of money from this you guys and it is a consistent revenue stream for the department. So if we can just, and we don't advertise it at all and we're making about 100 grand a year, sometimes more, if we could just advertise it, get it on our socials, you know, send out whatever, we can make a lot more money for the department to help pay the bills. Steve Baumann - District 4, suggested we promote these new partnerships during post inspections with a QR code drop sheet, plans to design this are in the works. Steve Ebersole - District 12, added that this is something that could be placed in their newsletter as well. These two gentlemen as well as Dayna Beyer (D5) and Holly Lewis (D10) will head up a small sub com. To assist department staff with creating content to publicize our new partnerships and promote our established LIT relationship and email update campaigns too.

b. Review of the most recent edition(s) of Ohio Legion News:

Chair, Shallon Smith - District 6, next gave the floor to MM&C Commission staff liaison, Jon Vulgamore, to present his OLN report. The Spring online newsletter email blast was sent by Constant Contact mass email client program on June 9th to all active Legion members with a listed email, those signed up with the previous Digital Only program, plus DEC members, all Posts with a listed email, and all Post Commanders & Adjutants listed emails. The current reporting metrics are: 17,213 (49%) opens; 39,984 successful sends; 1,393 (4%) click thrus; 4,633 (12%) bounced (full inboxes, undeliverable/suspended, blocked, non-existent emails) & 44 (1%) unsubscribed from receiving further emails from the Constant Contact server. The newsletter is also posted on the Department website for anyone to view in .pdf and interactive format. Summer edition being designed currently. Holly Lewis – District 10, suggested a OLN survey be created to gauge the membership's feedback of our online Dept. newsletter. This concludes the Ohio Legion News report. Next Vulgamore gave an update on the previous meeting mandate to begin The Digital Ready Posts Campaign "Operation: Stay Connected" -this has been implemented for a few months now. Less than ideal progress with this project has been gained with only 73 requests to update emails have been submitted so far – of course those doing it themselves in their own myLegion.org accounts cannot be trackable. Discussion on continuing the campaign and doing additional publicizing and possible incentive programs for updating one's email by the Commission was given. Next Vulgamore gave the Department website and Social Media report. Department website changes to reflect the new membership year's officers and committees are the next priority. National's website has been recently revamped and many of your familiar links have been changed – those that are linked within our Department website may still need to be updated, please inform me if you find such an instance-or any outdated material, thank you. The Department Facebook has recently had high engagement due to the Legion Baseball posts. Cassie Lee (our fiscal secretary) has been given access

to make repeated Raffle Program announcement posts. The X, YouTube and Instagram channels have no major American Legion Ohio Family Events Facebook page report. Holly Lewis – District 10 & Dayna Beyer – District 5 explained to the Commission the value of sharing posts through Post, District, and personal FB pages to activate the algorithm more effectively getting more views with our content. Vulgamore continued on with the publications and mailings report. The majority of required forms that are either processed or go through Department now include that if one is emailing the completed form to Department - send to the email forms@ohiolegion.com The more popular forms have been updated but with the number of forms and the alternative methods of completing them 100% accuracy is tough – help me get the word out to use this email please. The Convention Call mailing was the last major mailing sent out last to all Post Adjutants, Post Commanders, and District Adjutants listed home addresses. The Fall mailing will be assembled and sent out late next month. The most recent created publications have been the Convention program book and the Baseball program book. The next major publication projects on the horizon are printing/formatting the District Planning guides, Summer OLN, and the Department Directory. Vulgamore wrapped up his report with the I.T. & Audio/Visual updates. Reasonable success with the new large ballroom screen, new speakers and wireless microphones was had at Dept. Convention. Efforts to eliminate the astronomical A/V hotel contractor costs are starting to pay off. Plans for another screen and professional short-throw projectors are being considered for our upcoming conferences and conventions. Steve Baumann - District 4 volunteered for some additional research on new short throw projectors for the finance committee to review. Smaller meeting A/V equipment still functioning satisfactorily. Immediate office needs are two new staff laptops and monitors.

5. Good of the Commission / Announcements

Holly Lewis – District 10, gave her report from the spring meetings from the National Media Commission, primarily promoting the America 250 campaign, which we have plans of participating widely in. Adjutant Robinson mentioned the money that was raised at Dept. Convention for the Texas flood victims and Charities Inc. plans to match that donation amount as well. Shallon Smith – District 6, added a possible partnership with the Army Guard readiness NCO for participation in their family day events.

6. Close

The Benediction was given by Chair Smith - District 6 and then closed the meeting with directing a Salute to the Colors. The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 P.M.