

MINUTES
Media, Marketing and Communications Commission
MEETING OF
Sunday, March 13th, 2022
3:00 P.M. Department Headquarters – Library

1. Call to Order 3:05 P.M.

Chairman Lewis opened the meeting of the Department Media, Marketing and Communications Commission in regular form at 3:05 P.M. The invocation was given by Al Beyer, District 5. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Lewis (10th) and recited by all present. The meeting secretary appointment was substituted by all present agreeing to be video recorded for a transcribed copy of the meeting to produce minutes from. There was also a virtual option to join this Commission meeting through Microsoft Teams.

2. Roll Call: DISTRICT 1 – Frank (Joe) Navarre
 DISTRICT 2 – TBD
 DISTRICT 3 – Christopher (Chris) Emmons
 DISTRICT 4 – W. Frank Morrow
 DISTRICT 5 – Martin Moore
 DISTRICT 6 – Mel Cantrell
 DISTRICT 7 – Ersel (Ray) Howe
 DISTRICT 8 – TBD
 DISTRICT 9 – Joyce Hannum
 DISTRICT 10 – Holly Lewis - *Chair*
 DISTRICT 11 – Chuck Clark
 DISTRICT 12 – Steve Ebersole
 DISTRICT 13 – James Lockyer
 DISTRICT 14 – TBD (confirmed Steve Downey was in fact not appointed)

Roll Call of (established & possible) Sub Commission Members:

- DISTRICT 5 – Al & Dayna Beyer
DISTRICT 13 – Richard Wright
DISTRICT 13 – Bob White

Members present:

- DISTRICT 1 – Joe Navarre (v)
DISTRICT 2 – Absent
DISTRICT 3 – Chris Emmons (v)
DISTRICT 4 – Excused
DISTRICT 5 – Martin Moore
DISTRICT 6 – Excused
DISTRICT 7 – Ray Howe (v)
DISTRICT 8 – Absent
DISTRICT 9 – Joyce Hannum
DISTRICT 10 – Holly Lewis
DISTRICT 11 – Absent
DISTRICT 12 – Steve Ebersole
DISTRICT 13 – James Lockyer
DISTRICT 14 – Bob Carson (sb)

Sub Com. Members present:

- DISTRICT 5 – Al & Dayna Beyer
DISTRICT 13 – Absent
DISTRICT 13 – Excused

Guests Present:

Department 1st Vice Commander, Brad Teis;
Department 2nd Vice Commander, Charles Stennis; 12th District 2nd Vice Commander, Suzette Heller; Department Adjutant, Eric Hall; and Jon Vulgamore, Department Staff liaison.

3. Reading of Previous Minutes

All present reviewed the previous meeting minutes of October 10th, 2021 – no discussion was offered, therefore the motion to approve the minutes was made by the Chair. DISTRICT 5 – Martin Moore moved, seconded by DISTRICT 3 – Chris Emmons, to approve the minutes of the last meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

4. Unfinished Business - None

5. New Business/Discussion/Motions

a. Review of Commission Objectives:

Chair Lewis (10th) recognized staff liaison, Jon Vulgamore to present his Department report. First was the review of fall and winter editions of OLN. He gave a cost analysis of the fall edition: \$20,106.77 postage and distribution + \$10,464.82 design & printing = **\$30,571.59** - @\$2,779.10 (Ad and D.O. campaign savings) = **\$27,792.49** / 83,382 papers printed = 33.4 cents per individual paper (3.33 cents per or **\$2,777.89** total over budget – much better!). The winter edition is just recently mailed out at this time, so a cost analysis is not available at this time. @\$2,786.00 (Ad and D.O. campaign savings) = was able to do a streamline edition content to a 16 page vs. 20 page paper this edition @69,360 (current active members) to be mailed. Anticipating being on budget for the first time in years!

Next was the review of the winter OLN Digital Only Distribution. Vulgamore reported 2,621 members are currently signed up for Digital Only OLN program which will have an estimated budget savings of \$873.68 The OLN email was sent by Constant Contact mass email client program on Feb 23rd. Reporting metrics as of March 7th - 1,641 (71%) opens; 2,384 successful sends; 639 (28%) click thrus; 8 (1%) unsubscribed; 70 (3%) bounced (undeliverable, blocked, non-existent emails). Digital only email campaign went out Oct. 1st to all members with a listed email - sent by social media (FB and Instagram) and Constant Contact mass email client program: @300 new sign ups since Fall campaigns (duplicate sign-ups and non LGN member, additional joiners will affect this total). Next bi-annual mass campaign for potential Digital Only recipients is slated for April. Vulgamore continued on to remind the Commission on the specifics of the OLN 'Annex' - All content that was unable to fit in the main OLN only available in extended version (both combined make up the D.O. OLN). This winter edition had 6 extra pages, with 'Letters to Dept' new feature added. The next line item on the agenda Vulgamore introduced as the top meeting point of discussion. A new OLN Contractor has provided Department with a bid. Our current contractor, Vision Printing & Graphics and Woodward Printing Services, reliability has been significantly decreasing over the past year especially with the edition over the holidays. After extensive research only 1 company (Times Leader Media Group) has come back with a solid offering bid to accommodate us with a 10 x10 sized 20page paper for \$6,000 vs. the 11.375 x 15 size 20page we currently have for roughly \$10,000+ (Postage is a static price no matter who you go with, with frequent increases). Besides hopefully getting reliable deadlines, this would put us closer to budget or even under for a good while, however, in turn less material would make it in the mailed paper and the D.O. edition would be extended even more. Chair

Lewis (10th) offered the suggestion of completely doing away with the mailed paper and having a stand-alone website such as www.ohiolegionnews.com for example, and an employee dedicated just to the content creation and maintenance of this website which would still cost significantly less than what is allocated for the mailed paper as of now, and those interested could still print their desired section of the OLN. Marty Moore (5th) had a question if such a change would be in violation of National Constitution and bylaws – Chair Lewis (10th) answered by pointing out that we are one of the few states left that even offer a member-wide mailed newsletter, most have gone to purely a digital format and the state sets those policies. Some more discussion with various Commission members on variations of scaled back mailings to just the Posts and clarification on why we just don't switch to an all-digital format - due to our own bylaw 'and mail' verbiage, a resolution would have to be drawn up to make such a policy change was explained by Chris Emmons (3rd). After a bit more discussion on the significant time it would take to get a resolution passed to change this phrase in the Constitution and bylaws and in case the resolution would not pass it was suggested that we use the new OLN contractor on a quarter-by-quarter basis to see how this transpires. Some discussion by Ray Howe (7th) on a scaled-out time schedule to roll the announcements out on a purely digital change was given to accommodate those members who do not have email and readily available computer/internet access. Chair Lewis (10th) answered by a dual pronged approach to the resolution development and implementation and going with the new OLN contractor. Marty Moore (5th) mentioned the reasonable pricing of getting Spectrum communications that his Post has. Bob Carson inquired as to when the resolution would be voted on and the next Department Convention was answered. A motion was made to draft a resolution for the Constitution and bylaws wording change by Chris Emmons (3rd). DISTRICT 3 – Chris Emmons (3rd) moved, seconded by DISTRICT 12 – Steve Ebersole (12th).

MOTION CARRIED(1nay)

Chris Emmons (3rd) had a question on if the resolution will have to come up from the Post level or from the Commission and volunteered to draft it, Chair Lewis (10th) will verify. A motion was also made to change OLN contractors from Vision Printing & Graphics and Woodward Printing Services to Times Leader Media Group by Chair Lewis (10th). Joyce Hannum (9th) led some discussion on how many other companies were contacted – Vulgamore answered with research on 6 different researched printing companies most of whom could not accommodate our circulation size and that this only current bidding company is the only one that could design, print, and distribute for our needs, but will continue to be open to most cost-effective companies if found. Further Commission discussion on the overall pricing breakdown of the paper and static pricing of mailing despite the new proposed sizing of the new contractor was explained by Chair Lewis (10th) and Vulgamore. Ray Howe (7th) had further discussion on the requirements of the OLN electronic copy and the requirements of sending the mailing copy – Chair Lewis (10th) answered with those that have signed up for the D.O. with email and mailed to all active LGN members. Further Commission discussion on the difficulties of getting the paper for members without technical resources took place. Discussion was closed for

the new OLN contractor and was put to vote: DISTRICT 12 – Steve Ebersole moved, seconded by DISTRICT 5 – Martin Moore.

MOTION CARRIED

Next staff report item from Vulgamore gave a status update with the OLN Ad opportunity program in circulation. Arrow International, Inc. (manufacturer of charitable gaming products) provided another consecutive three-fourths page Ad for \$1,500. SESD Germans from Russia Heritage Society provided a WWII Tour Ad that allocated one-fourth page size for \$500.00 (approved by Dept Adj and Commission Chair). Department leadership would like discussion on expanding the 1-page limit for Ads. Marty Moore (5th) questioned how many advertisers we currently have wishing to be published – Vulgamore answered with the likelihood of Arrow having another repeat Ad and an Ohio military museum organization has expressed interest in running an Ad as well. Al Beyer inquired as to why any Ad space restrictions are necessary, Chair Lewis (10th) explained that the allotted advertisement page was to offset the overall cost of the OLN but didn't want to expand this to maximize information content. The Commission determined that no change in Ad page allocation or pricing should be implemented at this time. Department leadership would also call for discussion on making TAPS available in the digital format only. A motion was made to take TAPS section to electronic only by Chris Emmons (3rd). Vulgamore pulled the website up on the projection screen to illustrate how to navigate to the website 'Post Everlasting' TAPS section. Discussion closed on the motion and DISTRICT 3 – Chris Emmons moved, seconded by DISTRICT 9 – Joyce Hannum.

MOTION CARRIED(1nay)

Department 1st and 2nd Vice Commanders stepped into the meeting to give remarks and thanks to all Commission members for their attendance and to obtain a brief report of what the Commission has gone over in the meeting thus far.

Ray Howe (7th) brought up the suggestion of phasing the mailed paper out slowly by continuing to send to established members but say starting in 2023 any new members would automatically be placed to receive the digital only edition. Commission discussion continued that again, before this to take effect the resolution to change the Constitution and bylaws wording would have to be DEC approved, but this could be a great technique in further introducing the electronic OLN to our members and incrementally phasing out the mailed OLN.

Next on the Department staff report was the Website and Social Media Review. Department leadership would like a more user-friendly mobile app experience with our website. Vulgamore explained the need on major site alterations (i.e., fewer menus and theme changes to make this happen). New app from scratch would cost upwards of \$40,000. Chair Lewis (10th) agreed that a new app from scratch may cost much more than this. Joyce Hannum (9th) added that the majority of members, at least to print forms,

uses the computer/printer route anyways and not the phone. The Commission consensus was not to suggest a new app but to approve ComResource to continue to find ways to make our current website more user friendly and incur the minor labor costs of this effort. Vulgamore thanked the Sub Commissions for their efforts on website searches to assist with updates and the Social Media Sub Commission which is doing a great job supplementing posts.

The last meeting agenda line item discussed was the Mobile Phone Text Marketing project. Department leadership has introduced the idea of marketing informational text messages to our membership. Vulgamore explained how upcoming major event reminders, meeting announcements, links to important deadlined forms, etc. would be the base target objectives. Member-wide messaging would be quite expensive, but DEC, District & Post leadership messaging has a more manageable pricing strategy. Chair Lewis (10th) offered her experience with another text marketing program called Community.com which will be researched for price comparison. Joyce Hannum (9th) mentioned how this tool would be more geared to the younger generation, and the older members are the ones running meetings and wouldn't necessarily be effective communication through texting due to small print and difficulty reading and that email preference is far more effective. No further discussion occurred whether to continue to pursue this, more research and information, trial runs are needed before major investment into this project.

6. Chair Lewis (10th) called for any additional announcements and Good of the Commission discussion.
 - a. Dayna Beyer announced that she will be a National Oratorical Contest escort and the Department Facebook posts have become more personable and polished. James Lockyer (13th) requested to be re-signed up for the Digital Only OLN. Joyce Hannum (9th) suggested more live streaming of District/Post level events. Chris Emmons (3rd) asked if this Commission would meet at Department Convention, Chair Lewis (10th) answered yes.
7. Chair Lewis (10th) directed the Salute to the Colors.
8. Chair Lewis (10th) closed the meeting in regular form. The meeting adjourned at 4:13 P.M.