

MINUTES
Media, Marketing and Communications Commission
MEETING OF
Thursday, March 14th, 2024, 5:00 P.M.
Virtual (MS Teams)

1. Call to Order 5:13 P.M.

Chair, Chris Emmons - District 3, called the meeting of the Department Media, Marketing and Communications Commission to order at 5:13 P.M. and gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was also led by Chair Emmons and recited by all present. The meeting secretary appointment was substituted by all present agreeing to be digitally recorded through the MS Teams application to produce minutes from.

2. Roll Call:
- DISTRICT 1 – Frank (Joe) Navarre – *(Excused, hospitalization)*
 - DISTRICT 2 – Tim Shaw
 - DISTRICT 3 – Christopher (Chris) Emmons
 - DISTRICT 4 – Albert (Al) Buxton – *Not Present (declined virtual meeting)*
 - DISTRICT 5 – Martin Moore – *Not Present*
 - DISTRICT 6 – Mel Cantrell – *Not Present*
 - DISTRICT 7 – Vacant
 - DISTRICT 8 – Vacant
 - DISTRICT 9 – Jacqueline Whetstone
 - DISTRICT 10 – Holly Lewis
 - DISTRICT 11 – Jason Malec
 - DISTRICT 12 – Steve Ebersole – *Not Present*
 - DISTRICT 13 – Robert (Bob) White
 - DISTRICT 14 – Robert (Bob) Carson – *Not Present*

Roll Call of Sub Commission Member(s):

- DISTRICT 5 – Al Beyer – *(Excused, hospitalization)*
- DISTRICT 5 – Dayna Beyer – *(Excused, hospitalization)*

6 Members present:

- DISTRICT 1 – Excused
- DISTRICT 2 – Tim Shaw
- DISTRICT 3 – Chris Emmons
- DISTRICT 4 – Absent
- DISTRICT 5 – Absent
- DISTRICT 6 – Absent
- DISTRICT 7 – N/A
- DISTRICT 8 – N/A
- DISTRICT 9 – Jacqueline Whetstone
- DISTRICT 10 – Holly Lewis
- DISTRICT 11 – Jason Malec
- DISTRICT 12 – Absent
- DISTRICT 13 – Bob White
- DISTRICT 14 – Absent

****Due to there being 2 vacant Districts for the majority of this membership year, the MMC Commission agreed that 6 appointed members on this Commission would constitute as a quorum to conduct meeting business.***

0 Sub Com. Member(s) present:

1 Guest(s) Present:

Jon Vulgamore, Department staff liaison

3. Reading of Previous Minutes

Due to the previous meeting minutes from October 5th, 2023, being emailed to the members of the Commission for review, Chris Emmons - District 3, moved to entertain a motion to approve and suspend the reading of the previous meeting minutes. Bob White - District 13, so motioned and Holly Lewis - District 10, seconded the motion. No discussion was offered, and the Commission oral vote unanimously passed approving the minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

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

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

Chair, Chris Emmons - District 3, recognized MM&C Commission Department Staff Liaison, Jon Vulgamore, to present his OLN report. First announced was the review of the Winter 2024 OLN: \$20,482.59 postage and distribution + \$5,750.00 layout & printing = **\$26,232.59** – \$1,436.50 (active 888 member removal) – \$4,990.62 (active Global War on Terror & Gulf war era member removal) – \$1,018.81 (D.O. campaign savings) = **\$18,786.66** / 50,813 papers printed = 36.97 cents per individual paper (7 cents per paper or \$3,542.76 total over C&BL budget of \$1.20 to the membership annually / .30 cents per quarter, per active member) There was a 4 cent per paper postal increase for the Winter 2024 edition. Due to a previous meeting carried motion to auto-enroll the 888 and most recent war era active members into the online only newsletter, this is the closest to on budget a quarterly edition of the OLN has been in several years. Next Vulgamore went into more detail with the online newsletter (OLN 'Digital Only') distribution: 2,305 members (2,723 individuals) are voluntarily signed up for Digital Only OLN online newsletter program which had an estimated budget savings of \$1,018.81 this past edition. 3,250 active 888 members & 11,291 active Gulf and GWOT war era members auto enrolled into the online newsletter (per previous meeting mandates) totaled: 14,541 members with an estimated savings of \$6,427.12 – These members were contacted, by those with listed emails, prior to their auto enrollment and offered an opportunity to continue receiving the mailed newspaper (currently 11 members contacted Department for this exception to auto enrollment into the online newsletter). The Winter newsletter edition OLN email was sent by Constant Contact mass email client program on February 19th to applicable/active war era and 888 members with a listed email, and those signed up with the D.O. program plus current DEC members, all Posts with a listed email, and all Post Commanders & Adjutants with a listed email. The current reporting metrics of this are: 5,465 (52%) opens; 11,230 successful sends; 792 (8%) click thrus; 742 (7%) bounced (full inboxes, undeliverable, blocked, non-existent emails) & 19 (1%) unsubscribed. This mass email of the full newsletter includes all content that was unable to fit in the 20-page limit (MMC Commission mandated) hardcopy OLN (fyi, 24-page same price, was offered this past quarter by the print company) and is designed and published solely by Department. This 'extra' content, dubbed the 'OLN Annex' is only available with the online only version (both hard copy and Annex combined make up the Digital Only OLN online newsletter). The Winter edition Annex contained 15

extra pages. Next up Vulgamore gave this past edition's Advertising report: Multiple attempts were made to obtain established advertisers, but no interest or no new Ad submissions were given for the Winter edition. The Ad submission form was published in the online newsletter. Holly Lewis – District 10 inquired the name of the OLN printing company Department is contracted with and followed up with if Department is able to terminate our contract with them at any time or if there was a certain date or financial obligation to stay with them. Vulgamore answered that we can terminate our business with Times New Leader Media Association at any time without penalty. Next Chair, Chris Emmons - District 3, directed discussion on the next stages of Ohio Legion News distribution progression. Chair Emmons then moved to entertain a motion to discontinue the printing and mailing of the Ohio Legion News and have the publication be distributed completely online to the active membership. Holly Lewis - District 10 so motioned and Jacqueline Whetstone - District 9 seconded the motion. Chair Emmons then opened up the floor for discussion and Holly Lewis – District 10 suggested that one more quarterly edition be printed and mailed with the front page of upcoming Spring edition announcing this significant change in digital distribution to the membership. Bob White – District 13 added that some newsletters that are sent to our non-member affiliates should still be printed and sent to them. Vulgamore – staff liaison announced that in place of an unrealistic and counterproductive cost of printing to those wishing for an exception to still receive a printed newspaper he plans to mail 3 printed copies of the newly regular paper sized (Department designed) newsletter to each Post as well as our non-member affiliates already receiving the printed OLN – he hopes that this estimated 1,500 dollar cost will help mediate some of the concerns of all those members that do not have computer access. When members go to their belonging Post they can get the OLN information there with the few copies on hand. With the discussion details incorporated within this motion, the Commission oral vote unanimously passed approving the change in Ohio Legion News distribution going solely digital with only a set number of copies be printed beginning with the Summer 2024 edition.

MOTION CARRIED

Chair Emmons then asked Vulgamore – staff liaison to continue with the social media, website, other Department publications & mailings report. Vulgamore first thanked Dayna Beyer – District 5, for her hard work with the new Legion Family Events Facebook page and notified the Commission of its surprising success and healthy engagement metrics. Vulgamore continued with an update to the Commission on recent publications that are being printed, designed, and updated as well as informing all of the Post & Squadron mailing with many mandatory membership forms that went out in February. He concluded with the Department website running smoothly and the pages he was currently maintaining and working on. Chair, Chris Emmons - District 3 asked if the Ohio Legion Baseball Facebook page could be linked with the main Department Facebook page and Vulgamore asked him to be notified of when notable baseball posts are made so that he can share them on the main timeline feed, but the baseball group is already linked to the main page.

5. Announcements

Holly Lewis – District 10 announced that the National Media and Communications Contest deadline for submissions is April 15th if anyone is interested she can send the emailed instructions and also that she will be a participating judge with the event. Bob White - District 13 announced his involvement with the Cuyahoga Regatta event coming up and wanted to tie a promotional video of the event within our newly formatted newsletter.

6. Good of the Commission

Bob White - District 13 inquired on the usage and costs of Department's printing services, and suggested an advertisement of these services be in the online newsletter going forward. Holly Lewis – District 10 answered with 10 cents per colored page. Vulgamore – staff liaison then added that Department is expecting new print and copy machines to replace the current ones by April with a new contracted company offering a more cost-effective arrangement, this may adjust our printing services capabilities and prices possibly. Emmons - District 3 also mentioned the success he has had with the membership renewal postcards. Vulgamore then provided a visual on these to the Commission as an example of this particular print job that Department receives frequently.

7. Chair Chris Emmons - District 3, closed the meeting with directing a hand over the heart as a Salute to the Colors. The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 P.M.