

MINUTES  
Media, Marketing and Communications Commission  
MEETING OF  
Sunday, October 10th, 2021  
10:00 A.M. Cherry Valley Hotel – Dennison Room

1. Call to Order 10:06 A.M.

Chairman Lewis opened the meeting of the Department Media, Marketing and Communications Commission in regular form at 10:06 A.M. The invocation was given by Ersel (Ray) Howe, District 7. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Lewis and recited by all present. The meeting secretary appointment was substituted by all present agreeing to be video taped for a transcribed copy of the meeting to produce minutes from.

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 – Steve Downey

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

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

**Members present:**

- DISTRICT 1 – Joe Navarre
- DISTRICT 2 – Absent
- DISTRICT 3 – Chris Emmons
- DISTRICT 4 – W. Frank Morrow
- DISTRICT 5 – Excused
- DISTRICT 6 – Mel Cantrell
- DISTRICT 7 – Ray Howe
- DISTRICT 8 – Absent
- DISTRICT 9 – Joyce Hannum
- DISTRICT 10 – Holly Lewis
- DISTRICT 11 – Absent
- DISTRICT 12 – Absent
- DISTRICT 13 – Absent
- DISTRICT 14 – Absent

**Sub Com. Members present:**

- DISTRICT 5 – Absent
- DISTRICT 13 – Absent
- DISTRICT 13 – Absent

**Guests Present:**

Department Commander, Jean L. Wilson of Post 0199  
County Commander, Elizabeth Kendrick-Creech of Post 0763; Larry Stottsberry of Post 0221; 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander, Bill Dittebrand of Post 0214; and Jon Vulgamore Department Staff liaison.

### 3. Reading of Previous Minutes

All present reviewed the previous meeting minutes of July 24<sup>th</sup> 2021 – no discussion was offered, however, a quorum of 8 Commission members being not satisfied, therefore the motion to approve the minutes will be postponed until the next Commission meeting.

### 4. Unfinished Business - None

### 5. New Business/Discussion/Motions

#### a. Review of Commission Objectives:

Chair Lewis recognized the meeting guests and Commander Wilson gave welcoming remarks. Chair Lewis recognized staff liaison, Jon Vulgamore to present his Department report. First was the review of summer edition of OLN. He reported that \$20,811.93 was spent on postage and distribution and \$11,181.27 was spent for the printing of the paper, bringing the total to \$31,993.20 / 81,806 papers printed - @\$2,420.00 (Ad and D.O. campaign savings) = 36.2 cents per individual paper.

Next was the review of the Summer OLN Digital Only Distribution. 1,171 members signed up for Digital Only OLN program. The OLN email sent by Constant Contact mass email client program had metrics of 876 opens; 1124 successful sends; 392 click thrus; 248 manually sent through outlook for possible non-delivery; 2 unsubscribes and 20 bounces (undeliverable, blocked, non-existent listed emails). Estimated savings of \$423.90. Chair Lewis mentioned some layout details and how the campaign was simplified by making only one click option for increased success and how it's also accessible on the website along with flipbook format. (3) Chris Emmons added that he in fact did receive the email campaign and confirmed the subject matter being discussed as this. (9) Joyce Hannum made the suggestion to appeal to older members going digital an a 'Letters to the Editor/Commander/Adjutant' open ended comment, Q&A type of section on the digital only portion to give members more of a voice to get their concerns acknowledged; this will be discussed with leadership and hopefully integrated perhaps in a clickable link to a survey type of form for next edition. (3) Chris Emmons commented on the idea of getting rid of the OLN mailing all together and only having the digital option available, Commander Wilson explained that this would have to be a constitution and by-law change and may not be met with much enthusiasm as many members prefer the printed newspaper but perhaps an increase in the allocated amount of membership dues for the OLN within the constitution and by-laws could be entertained by contacting the Judge Advocate and gauging their opinion on the matter – there was some continued discussion on this by the Commission by using that financial allocation for the media marketing and communications of the Ohio American Legion rather than just the printed OLN by Emmons and Cantrell. Vulgamore reminded the Commission of a previous meeting idea of switching the paper distribution from a quarterly publication to a trimester but would again require a resolution to change the Department Constitution and Bi-laws, Chair Lewis then asked for a discussion on the matter which resulted in the majority of the Commission against this proposal. (9) Joyce Hannum discussed this idea of doing a trial run to all members with email both hardcopy and digital copy of the paper to increase interest in the program, this will be implemented in the

next digital only edition distribution. (4) Frank Morrow added to the importance of making the digital only campaigns simple and at a high frequency of distribution.

Continuing on the Department staff report was the Fall digital only email campaign which went out Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> to all members with a listed email. This was sent by social media and Constant Contact mass email client program as well with 15,814 opens; 46,248 successful sends; 3,381 click thrus; 224 unsubscribes and 4,432 bounces; as of 10/07/2021 – 1,301 new members signed up bringing the total to 2,472 members which will have an estimated savings of \$894.86 next edition (duplicate sign-ups and additional joiners will affect this total). Vulgamore continued to report on the newly adopted OLN 'Annex' - All content that was unable to fit in the 20page limit was implemented into an extended version of the summer OLN edition (per discussion from previous meeting; 5 extra pages was created).

Next staff report item from Vulgamore gave a status update with the OLN Ad opportunity program now in circulation. Arrow International, Inc. (manufacturer of charitable gaming products) provided the current maximum allocated full-page Ad for \$2,000. Ohio Charities Inc. is contemplating a full-page Ad for next fall edition. Chair Lewis reminded everyone of the different size ads and their pricing. (4) Frank Morrow inquired as to where to send potential Ad constituents to apply for a OLN ad, Vulgamore directed him to the Ad submission form posted on the website and Chair Lewis gave a quick explanation of the Ad selection process. (3) Chris Emmons suggested the digital OLN contain a link to the Ad sponsors website, this will be something to integrate into the next edition. Commander Wilson inquired on our plan of action to acquire Advertising sponsors and suggested more dedicated space for Ads; Chair Lewis explained the balance of losing Legion content space vs. more ads, also discussed was solely digital advertising, Chair Lewis reminded all the that marketing reach would only be to the @2,000 signed up. (6) Mel Cantrell offered the idea of giving a discounted rate for digital advertising only due to the abbreviated circulation (3) Chris Emmons added that these advertising contracts could be made annually to solidify interest in digital only Ads.

Next on the Department staff report was the Website and Social Media Review. Major website upgrades have been completed by the VividPoint rep for \$566 – notable work included: Backing up website on their local server, creating a clone site on their local server, Integrating updated site theme, and updated plugins & WordPress version. Vulgamore explained the time-consuming work process of updating all the website pages and requested everyone especially the website Sub Commission to forward him outdated material to edit and keep current – Chair Lewis expanded on website work details and addressed Frank Morrow on this Sub Commission to assist with this if possible. Vulgamore commented on the Social Media Sub Commission and how they are doing a great job supplementing and properly editing posts.

The conclusion of the Department staff report ended with the Department Commander's Program Fundraiser for Save a Warrior. The Fundraiser announcement (example enclosed meeting packet) is to go out in next major Post mailing (mid/late Oct.). The SAW and Department joint logo is being finalized as well as the marketing campaign. Commander Wilson explained the 'pickiness' of the SAW marketing

team and how we have had several drafts for the logo and fundraising messaging continue to be edited to satisfy all parties. (9) Joyce Hannum asked the Commander on the status of when more Commander's pins would be available, the Commander agreed to reach out when they come in. A proposed District competition for highest contribution award to be presented at Department Convention as a participation incentive. Chair Lewis then expanded on the Commander's program details to the Commission.

The last meeting agenda line item discussed was presented by Ray Howe, 7<sup>th</sup> District, with his suggested Member Engagement topics. He explained how district leadership needs to take more of a lead in distributing information to their Posts especially to rural Posts. He added having to 'tailor make' communications strategies based on what's effective for what region. He voiced his concerns on the age of Post leadership and their reluctance to use computer technologies and prefer telephone and face to face engagements. Also, he suggested a member volunteer program to assist Department with the frequency of returning phone calls and that this could help alleviate some communication complaints – this program will be added to the volunteer website Slider sign up form to ascertain interest and authorized by Department leadership. (9) Joyce Hannum conveyed her concern over the decrease of mailed forms, applications, and information and suggested all information be given to District officers to distribute at the beginning of the year. This spurred some Commission discussion on their own Post/District experiences – this will be brought to the Department Adjutant's attention for DEC consideration.

The Commission closed business with discussion on the hotel meeting venue and adding meeting/training end times to the agenda and schedule.

6. Chair Lewis (10th) called for any additional announcements and Good of the Commission discussion.
  - a. Guest, County Commander Elizabeth Kendrick-Creech, mentioned her appreciation for sitting in on the meeting and feels better informed to push out vital communications information to her assigned Posts that she was made aware of in the meeting.
7. Chair Lewis (10th) directed the Salute to the Colors.
8. Chair Lewis (10th) closed the meeting in regular form. The meeting adjourned at 11:13 A.M.