



Department Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
November 17, 2018



The Department Executive Committee met on Sunday, November 17, 2018 at American Legion Department Hdqtrs, 103 Legion Plaza Rd, Columbia, SC 29210.

Dept Commander John Britt  
Dept Adjutant Nick Diener  
Department Historian Russ Cantrell  
NEC Michael Strauss  
Alt NEC Bob Scherer  
Dept 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr Walt Richardson  
Dept 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Cmdr Roberta Poulos  
Dept 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Cmdr Ron Price  
Dept 4<sup>th</sup> Vice Cmdr Robin Rucker  
D-1 Cmdr Jim Jarvis  
D-2 Cmdr Chuck Blankin  
D-3 Cmdr Bridget Lewis  
D-4 Cmdr Wayne Southworth  
D-6 Cmdr Jim Kvam  
D-7 Cmdr Charles Bethea  
D-8 Cmdr Chuck Shaffer  
D-9 Cmdr Doc Sweet  
D-10 Cmdr Tommy Sinclair  
D-11 Cmdr Jack Lonergan  
D-12 Cmdr Charlie Davis  
D-14 Cmdr Michael Brandt  
D-17 Cmdr Vacant  
D-18 Cmdr Larry Pouncy  
D-20 Cmdr Dave Mills  
Dept Chaplain Bill Quarles

**Absent:**

J/A Stephen Lewis  
Asst J/A Anthony Livoti  
D-5 Cmdr Jack Wright  
D-13 Cmdr Carlton Patterson  
D-16 Cmdr Jim Defrehn  
D-19 Cmdr Bob Gibbons  
Dept Sgt-at-Arms George Oxner

**Also Present:**

PNEC Bud Hennis  
PDC/PDA Jim Hawk  
PDC Joe Lysaght  
Exe Dir. M. May  
Darlene Walton, Dept Mbrship/RR Chairman

Cmdr John Britt asked everyone to uncover and called on Chaplain Quarles for the invocation. The Commander read Resolution 288, led the Pledge of Allegiance and then asked everyone to join him to recite the Preamble.

Cmdr Britt: If you would, please silence all telephones. Before anyone forgets, I'll give you an opportunity to do that. Thank you for attending the DEC meeting this morning, we have several things to accomplish this morning and I request your indulgence and patience in getting that done. I'll now call on the Adjutant for the roll call.

Adjutant Diener called the roll and told Commander Britt he had a quorum.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Thank you. At this point I'd like to read a letter from Eddie Miller, District 17 Commander. (Commander Britt read a letter of resignation from the District 17 Commander). That's received as information. I will call for a motion to dispense of the reading of the minutes of our last meeting.

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: I make a motion that we dispense with the reading of the minutes that were published.**

**D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: I second.**

**Dept Cmdr Britt: Any discussion? All in favor say aye? Opposed? Motion carries.** I call on NEC'man Strauss for an update on the Fall Meetings.

NEC Strauss: Good morning. I just wanted to touch base with you. We had our Fall meetings up in Indianapolis in October. Some of the things we talked about and one of the Resolutions that was approved was the unrecognized armed hostilities. For years a lot of Legionnaires have pushed through Resolutions about changing the dates of Vietnam or Korea or recognizing people that fought out on the sea in Vietnam. They've been very individualized Resolutions about armed hostilities here and there. So basically, the national organization came up with a Resolution, a list of just about every unrecognized armed hostility. Say, for instance Rudolph Anderson that was killed in action during the Cuban Missile Crisis. That was an armed hostility, he was killed but that's not a period of war. If you're getting shot down in an E-2 spy plane, that's armed hostility. But there's a lot of them out there. The National Executive Committee did pass that Resolution, so we are now actively going to Congress trying to get the dates changed. How would that affect us? It would basically open all periods, if we get it the way we'd like it, from the end of WWII to today, to have that an open period of armed conflict. As you know, there are a lot of people missing from the Cold War, more than any other conflict, and that's not even recognized as an armed hostility, There are a lot people missing in Russia somewhere, obviously they didn't just disappear on their own.

One of the other Resolutions is The American Legion Endowment Program, it's one of the oldest Programs Nationally. A big oil tycoon, back in the day, donated land to The American Legion which was oil rich land. But one of the things that he wanted to see done was to help children. And so, The American Legion Endowment Program was established a long time ago. One of the problems when you say American Legion Endowment Program to a non-Legionnaire, they say what is it? It's basically a program for veterans and children. So they decided to keep the program but have a new name for it. The new name for it is The American Legion Veterans and Children's Foundation. So that makes it a little bit easier to sell donating to The American Legion Veterans and Children's Foundation. Now, what's it do? A whole lot. For instance, let's just say, the fire in California, it's a Presidentially declared national disaster, you can get money through the National Emergency Fund. However, if it's not a Presidentially declared natural disaster, we can't really help them right now. But with this program it does help veterans. Let's just say right now, in Panama City we have a lot of veterans down there that lost their homes, they lived off post, their homes were leveled. We have NEF for Legionnaires but if they're not Legionnaires, we have this program, The American Legion Veterans and Children's Foundation. So it's a new name for an old program and our National Commander, Brett Reistad, had taken it on this year as his program. So if you're considering it, we'd like to be able to present him a check when he comes. We're not asking your Post for a lot of money, but we'd like for you to send contributions up and we'll give him a nice check in early March. So consider that, go back to your Districts, he'd like to build that program up. Now it sounds better with the new name of The Veterans and Children's Fund, people are more apt to help. Just look it up on the National website if you want, it

really details where the money goes but as you know, with any American Legion program, 100% of the donations for that program, goes to what it says. Not administrative anything. Every penny goes to what it says. There were probably over 30 Resolutions up there, most of them VA type stuff but these are the get down to the gist of it. But if you want a copy of them, I have them.

Oh, by the way, they passed these out. These are Message Points from the National Headquarters. It's important for you to just browse through these and know what The American Legion talking points are. Because if you're a Legionnaire and you're Leadership and people come up to you and say, what's The American Legion's stance on this? You don't want to be contradicting what the Message Points are. And these are great handouts, ladies & gentlemen, at your meetings. You can make copies up here if you're interested. How many times have you see that guy with the microphone in front of his face and you're like, oh, my God, who gave him the microphone! These are great to bring to back and have your Legionnaires know what the talking points are. I'm not going to sit here and go over them all, there's a lot of stuff in here but these are good, good talking points, ok? Thank you.

Cmdr Britt: Thank you Mike. Next up is the membership report. Membership Chairman?

Mbrship/RR Chairman Walton: Ok, here we are, we've reached our 65% goal line. What does that mean? Every one of us has to dig in. I don't care what color hat you wear, it is our responsibility as the Legion to work towards getting our veterans. It is vital that everyone of us get out there and find out what our posts need. If there's something they need from the membership team, let us know. But one thing I'm going to say first and foremost too. When we call you all, we're not just calling to chit-chat, we've got a reason. So when you see our name show up on your phone, please give us the courtesy of calling us back because generally it's something that's going on with your district and we need to know what we can do to help them. Maggie is passing out, right now, the current membership report, this took a little time and I'm not going to steal Jim's thunder here but with the new program where we're actually able to put our membership cards in, it's making it more difficult to come with absolute numbers. And so Nick spent time yesterday working on this report and so these numbers come out of National. So our membership team is out there trying to get out to all the districts. We have some districts yet that we haven't been able to get into but we're working on it and anything we can do as far as membership please let us know. Now I'll switch over to Rifle Raffle.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Membership. November 2<sup>nd</sup>, November 1<sup>st</sup>, I pulled up a report from Department and report from National. The Department, our total from Dept was 12, 214, our total from National was 12, 778. That's roughly a difference of 500 to 600 members. Why?

Mbrship/RR Chairman Walton: Ok, you've got to remember, you've got people that are signing up online, that we don't know about, we haven't been given privy to those numbers yet. Then also the fact that people are using the new process of sending them in, as soon as they hit National, National counts them. We don't always have those numbers until a later date.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Are you telling me there's 500 people that's in the cloud someplace? Members?

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, when she said that I worked to do this membership report, with this new system it's basically our AIM system, which is what we've done our membership on, to not be accurate anymore. All those, so what I've done, basically National's figures, now, are going to be the most accurate figures. So I hand jammed this, the report we've got today did not come out of AIM. It came out of, I took the format and I took National's figures. Because what happens off this new system, and we had people putting post membership in on October 25<sup>th</sup> I think was the first one in. I won't actually have those numbers to put in our AIM system until the 10<sup>th</sup> of November or later. So it's going to cause the report to be off. The report I handed out today, it's missing a few cards that haven't made it to National so it's probably a hundred or so off. So it's a matter of getting it whichever way we can do it. That's going to be an ongoing problem now with this new system, it's totally flip-flopped everything and we're still having to come to grips on how to do it easy.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Well, when I got this, what I did is I took the percentage, 65%, because that's what our goal was and 65% was 12788 and we're 500 short. If we're putting this out, this is erroneous information.

Dept Adj Diener: No, that is the accurate information.

District 1 Cmdr Jarvis/Finance Chairman Jarvis: This one is close because he hand punched it in.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: One second, please Jim. So this one is erroneous. I mean, both of them can't be right because they're different.

Dept Adj Diener: No, no, what day did you pull that out?

Vice Cmdr Richardson: November the 1st.

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, that's now, the figures are 17 days old.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: I'm not worried, I'm not worried about, I'm worried about the 1st of November because we had the big push for 65%. Somebody's giving out wrong information. I mean, the Dept is saying 12,200 member as of November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, I'll just tell you where the difference was to reconcile it. From that first of November AIM report that got put out, what was missing on there was anybody that renewed online for the month of October and there were close to 500 of them. Anybody that put in under the new system, ok, was not on there because of those had came into us yet, we don't have the figures. So that's why with all this hitting, ok, we had to figure out a way to put out a more accurate report. That report, the November report that you saw there.....

Vice Cmdr Richardson: ...from the Department.

Dept Adj Diener: Is what had came through the Department.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: So, we had more than that.

Dept Adj Diener: We had more than that because we had all these ones coming in that didn't come through the Department.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: So we were putting out wrong information?

NEC Strauss: Can I explain that little bit?

Dept Cmdr Britt: Go ahead Mike.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Listen, whoa, whoa, hold on...

NEC Strauss: I was just recognized, sir. One of the biggest changes in membership was, in traditional membership, the membership came through the Department. When it came through the Department, all the dues and cards came through there, it was counted here, and we sent those cards and dues up to the National organization. Now, we've got online, and more people are paying online then are not paying online and we have this new system that they're bringing in, a lot of these dues are going straight to the National organization. When they go the National organization, we have to wait for the National organization process those and then they send us a check. We don't have the members until we get that check from National here at Hdqtrs. So that's the main reason why you're seeing that National has the numbers ahead of us where it used to be, we had the numbers ahead of National. Now, they're getting so much of dues that the Departments are the last in line to get those online dues. But Nick can't count a dues that he hasn't received the money for yet and that's probably the best way to explain that.

Dept Adj Diener: Before, there's always been a discrepancy. Before it was using our AIM system and using that report is what kept it down to a minimum. What we've found off this new one and that November 1 report shows you that and reflects it so that's why we've changed how we do the report to try and get it more accurate.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: I understand that, I understand how the dues work. What I'm trying to say is that you've got two reports here, one report says one thing, another report says another thing, both of them can't be right.

Dept Adj Diener: Yes, they are. For at that point in time and where they were at.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: One was on November the 1st and one was on November the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Dept Adj Diener: Yeh, one was on November the 1st as to what National had.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: That's right, that was 12,778. And one day later we had 12, 214, we had less a day later when we should have had more.

Dept Adj Diener: No.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: We hadn't got those other 400 yet.

Dept Adj Diener: That report was a report of what had come through National.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Ok, we'll talk about this later.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Before you start on the Gun Raffle, the page that was just handed out, are you going to speak to that.

Dept Adj Diener: I will. I won't belabor it, but I broke it out by how your post stood. Basically, if you're down in the yellow, that means your post didn't hit the 65%. And the only reason I bring these up is out in the districts, they pay attention to where you're at.

Alt NEC Scherer: What's the next Target date?

Dept Adj Diener: 75% is due to us by December 7th.

Dept Cmdr Britt: That yellow there is that's egg on my face and Bill Quarles and Russ's face. It says 56.76%, 10 cards came in yesterday, we're now at looking better. Post Cmdrs. & Adjutant's get those numbers up. I will say on Veterans Day they had a boot drive at Wal-Mart and a couple other places, and in two days Post 25 raised \$3300 just asking people to put money in a fireman's boot and we picked up six members out of that. Any way that you can get your numbers up, go for it. Ok, Rifle Raffle?

Mbrship/RR Chairman Walton: I just have one thing to say on membership still, it boils down to something that you all have brought up. Membership, there again, your posts look at their leadership. And they always say, I've heard this come out of National a couple of times, they don't worry as much about membership as much as do their leaders because if you're not leading, you're not having anyone following you and doing what you're doing. Now, on the Rifle Raffle, I've ordered up 15,000 tickets and out of those 15,000 with all the orders that have come in, I have in reserve 125 tickets left. So I went ahead and submitted another order because I know there's a lot of you out there chomping at the bit because the other night I was at a meeting and someone said, did you bring the Rifle Raffle tickets? And I said, not until the 17th. So please, District Cmdrs., get these tickets out to your posts. If they need more, they need to let me know and we'll get them to them. And like I said, let's get them dumped off right now. If you sell all 15,000 before the first of the year, then we'll be ready to look at what we can do after that. But I am hoping we can have a big success on this. Good luck to you all and if you've got any questions don't hesitate to give me a holler.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: November 17th, is that an arbitrary date or...here's what I'm getting at. Chester, other's do too, depend on this \$10 to survive almost. I said I'm not getting them until Saturday, but I'll get them to you (inaudible). But here's the point I'm getting at. You just talked about how active the community was Veterans Day. Looks to me like it'd be pretty simple and effective to at least have those tickets before Veterans Day, if it's an arbitrary day. Now, if it's not an arbitrary date, you can't do anything about it, I understand. But if we do it out in years and I don't know if we're going to keep this up, but it seems very productive, that we try to have it in the hands of the people at least before Veterans Day. Because that is a community active situation (inaudible).

Mbrship/RR Chairman Walton: I agree with you, there was a lot of debate as to when we were actually going to put the tickets out being the drawing doesn't start until July. And the thing of it was we trying to look at when we going to have everybody most together and that's where it came up to have it at this meeting. I've already had people say hunting season started three weeks ago, why didn't we have them before that. I understand where you're coming from, we're all hearing this and this is something we'll consider for the next go round.

Dept Adj Diener: I need to add one point in there too. You have to remember, when we get the approval to have this Rifle Raffle, ok, from the State, the official date to start selling the tickets, and no money can come in to me to be processed, until one January because we have to keep it in the same fiscal year.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: That's what I was asking, is there an arbitrary date. I understand.

Dept Adj Diener: Our official answer if anybody asks me is we're just prepositioning so you can get ready to sell them one January, but we know you're going to sell them before.

D Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We just not going to register any money until one January.

Mbrship/RR Chairman Walton: Any other questions?

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Thank you for all that you're doing.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Thank you.

Dept Adj Diener: Darlene, did you want Jim to say something about what you're doing?

Mbrship/RR Chairman Walton: Thanks Nick, Jim, do you want to tell them what we've done with the membership?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: I wanted to just give you a workshop debrief and a new transmittal system brief, if that's what you want to call it. We held seven workshops this year and we had 70 posts participate out of 163, about 43%, that's basically the same as last year. 17 of the 20 District Cmdr.'s participated and when they don't participate, what are they telling their District? We had 116 Legionnaires between all seven of them, and what we're finding is, and this has happened the last two or three years, about 75% of the people in attendance, they're at 98% or 100% plus the previous year. We had one 74%, one 82%, one 88% and the most or the others were in the low 90s or more. We're not getting to the posts that need it, we don't have any answer for that, we just don't know what to do about it. And I think what's going to happen it's got to be this room that makes it happen. We got to get those posts that are having the problems there. But we consider them a success because my idea, I did some of them, Jim Kvam did some of them and Darlene did some of them. It was to try to build enthusiasm and a peaceful competition and there was some good points brought out and there was a lot of enthusiasm generated from it but we're asking them to bring that back to the post level and if we don't have the posts that are having the difficulty then we can't get that enthusiasm in there. We need your help in doing that. This new transmittal system is going to make life a lot easier for most people. Right now, the big glitch on this is the District Cmdrs., we don't have a clue. That they recognize so National is working that issue. The other issue is National is getting everything and us being at the tail end now. And now us trying to take their data that they use and try to make it into something useful for me. I'm almost inclined at this point to pull off our website the membership report because there's just too much confusion because there's people here that don't understand it. I mean, I've listened to it explained to me, I

understand what both of you said, it made perfect sense to me, I understand 100%. But you're having a difficult time understanding it. It took me three years to get to that point with Robin's help. It's not an easy thing and we don't have a way to change their data to our data yet. We got to work that issue yet, but I think we need to pull that report off of there and hope.... we wanted it there to give them something, to keep them considering membership but I'm not sure that's the case so this new transmittal system. Bill Eroh did one, Darlene and have done six, so we have six District's we've been to. We have five scheduled to do between now and Christmas, I haven't heard a peep out of nine districts, right now we have, as of last night, we have 27 people using the system, using it by submitting, e-checks set up and everything. We have two that have set up their e-check and have yet to submit anything, but we have 17 of the Districts that have at least one post in there using the system. It's a good system, it's going to work, it's going to get rid of a lot of heartache, in seven days you're going to have it up there and it's going to be a much more accurate number. We still have to deal with certain types of transfers the old-fashioned way, we're still dealing with the on lines the old-fashioned way. So we're working with a lot of different systems to get a count. But so far, so good, we've only been on the new system less than three weeks and they day we got it the next day we had two posts on it already. Its worked for everybody, I think it's an operator error, but we'll figure it out.

Dept Adj Diener: 26 posts already being on it at this point far exceeds where I thought where we'd be.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: I went on to do a transfer for my post and it will allow you to do that, but it wants payment for that right away.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Remember now, with this system, there has to be an exchange of money, period. Now, if you transfer that's already paid their 2019 dues, you've got to do it the old-fashioned way.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: Well, if they've only paid the 2018 dues and I transfer them in, and I pay the money, who gets the money, 172 or my post?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: You, and you'll learn that on the 28<sup>th</sup>. You're the one putting the money out, it's coming out of your money. You couldn't do that in the past. But now, if you do the transfer and the renewal, it goes to you. Any other questions?

Dept Cmdr Britt: Ok, thank you for that update. Alright, Finance Chairman?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: You heard the old thing where you write out a script that you're going to use, and you leave it on the printer and you walk out the house? Well, that's what I did but I think I have it up here. Thank you, Commander, I got a couple of things to talk about. The first thing that's being handed out is the September statement. As usual, it's cut and dry, I think you can understand it, Grady did a great job with this but there's a couple lines I want to throw out you. One is line item # 13, Fundraiser Income. We're behind the eight ball on that. In the spring fundraiser sweepstakes, this budget, the budget for 2018 was set up to get a hundred thousand dollars. Not net income, but a hundred thousand dollars, \$50,000 basically on each raffle. Well, in the spring we got \$43,000, in the \$43,000 range, which we were short. This one, right now, we're doing is at \$39,500 and that's going to be, there's a couple trickling in but I want to add I'm the one sitting there, most of it, Darlene did some of it. We had one white hat, one red hat and four blue and white hats have joined or participated in the sweepstakes. That's one of our four main incomes for this Department. That's not, that's not good. But we're falling behind in that area, that's why I wanted to point out # 13. You'll see a couple, I think it was line # 68 and # 94, there to the negative. All that means is we have more money, the expenses and the money haven't come in and jelled out yet, we're still working it. That's from the Fall Conference, that's from the Membership Workshop type thing. We're still trying to get that all to jive out, that's why you got those negative numbers there. The other thing I wanted to point out is line item, I had all this written out on my little sheet. Where is it, the Leading Candidate donation, line item # 76. I want to point out here that this was started, this line item was put in there because contributing to the leading candidate is important. And why it's important is, yes, it's political but they bend over backwards for us in getting us call-ins and things like that. And without that we'd have some problems. This account was set up, or this line item was set up to subsidize what the leadership of the Department of SC donated. Not to fund the whole \$3,000. We took in \$790 last year for the last one so now that means that's where that \$2210

came out of the Department now. I want to make sure you understand that just because it's there doesn't mean you don't donate. This line is there to give us extra money if we needed it in the end, but it was just to subsidize what went out with the donations from each individual. And those are the line items that I thought would be questioned.

PNEC Hennis: Also, that line item, if you look at it another way rather than just money. Its veterans helping veterans, period. And that's our job, in case ya'll forgot.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Good point. Any questions on the finance statement? We're on track, I think we're going to be alright. The sweepstakes bothers me a little bit, it concerns me because to me it looks like we're going to be about \$18,000 short in that area based on the 2018 budget so we're keeping a close eye on that. Of course, membership is where it's at, we're behind where we were last year. So that income is behind as well so, and they're fluid, all four of our incomes are fluid. We don't have a clue what we're going end up, we're guessing. We're going on history and we're trying to see where the trend is and that's what we got to deal with, that's what the finance committee's got to deal with and recommend, make our recommendations to you guys. But that's the statement, ok? The other thing that we got, I'm not sure, I'm throwing this out because we're not sure how to handle it. The finance committee recommends that we send it back but let me show you what, tell you what we've got. Due to Hurricane Michael, the issues with Hurricane Michael, the Department of Texas sent us a \$10,000 check and a \$250 check, that's \$10250 they sent us to help us with Hurricane Michael. The Post 27 in Glennallen, Arkansas sent \$1,000 for that same thing. And Post 36 in Windsor Locks, Connecticut sent us \$100. So, we have \$11,000, four checks here that what do we do with them? No post has come forth to the Department on an issue with it. NEF was used a few times, but we don't need it and I don't think we want to use it or do something that it wasn't intended to do. So if we're not going to use it for was it was intended to do, the recommendation from the finance committee is, with a nice note, we send this back to them. One of the options we played with was put it in a fund so when Texas has its next issue, which it's going to have, we send them money. But that's not right either. We decided that the right thing to recommend to do was to write a nice letter and send it back to them. And that's what I'm trying to get some ideas on.

Dept Cmdr Britt: If that's going to be a motion, we need to get a second and then we'll go to discussion.

Dept Adj Diener: I don't think he was actually....

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: I was just stating the issue, I'm not, I'm trying to get some ideas, I'm not...

Alt NEC Scherer: Is there a deadline for these claims, has that passed already?

Dept Adj Diener: 90 days.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: So that's passed, no, it's probably within 90 days. It's close to the end of it.

NEC Strauss: Was the money included for Florence also, the Texas donation? You said Michael but....

Dept Adj Diener: They gave it us for Hurricane, to help with our Hurricane relief.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yeh, and we're looking at it as both of them.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: Otherwise could we do the nice note and then send it to Florida where they really need it?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: See, to me, this is their money and they sent it to us to put it to use in South Carolina. And it's not our position to turn around and put it somewhere else, that's why we thought leave it in a fund and send it to Texas at the time when they're in trouble again but that's sketchy.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: If we'd sent it to someone and they didn't need it, what we'd want them to do is what we ought to do.

Unidentified Person: We'd want them to send it back.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: That's right. The check is good.

PDC Lysaght: Nick, have all the Department inquiries for relief from Legionnaires in the state been satisfied regarding the flood and the Hurricane?

Dept Adj Diener: We've received a few NEF, I've had no posts request anything, and I know from when we talked with Texas when they gave us the check, they were kind of meaning it to help out posts. We've had some NEF claims come through and when you say have, they all been settled, I mean, did they all get everything they asked for? No, did some of them get denied, yeh. So mean, it's hard to give you an exact answer there because some of them, we had person put in and wanted to claim through Hurricane and NEF for the new tires on his Mercedes. That got denied.

PDC Lysaght: (inaudible) but right now we don't have anything floating on the pond, do we?

Dept Adj Diener: Not really.

PDC Lysaght: What Jim's saying is exactly right, we've got money that technically we need to return.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: With a real nice note thanking them.

PDC Lysaght: Real nice.

D-20 Cmdr Mills: We have a situation with one of our Post Cmdrs., Post 12, Steve Reck. His daughter and three children have just relocated just outside of Tyndall Air Force Base. She got a contract job at Tyndall and they lost everything. Now, she's not military, doesn't qualify but the posts and everything have been trying to collect gift cards and stuff like that and we've been doing that through some to our other posts. Now I don't know if this qualifies for something like that to help a member's family, but she has just started a new life with three kids down there or whatever so, just bringing that forward.

Dept Adj Diener: The only thing I would say on that is if we were to consider something like that we would need to get a whole set of rules in place and get that out because there could be other situations like that and I mean, you're opening, it might be something that we need to put into place for the future. But again, the intent with Texas because I talked with them was to help the victims in South Carolina.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: And Legionnaires. Predominately when I talked it was Posts. It was one of the things that came up in the conversation.

**D-2 Cmdr Blankin: I make a motion that we return it with a nice note.**

**D-6 Cmdr Kvam: I second.**

**Dept Cmdr Britt: We have a motion and a second to return the money to the each of these Posts or Department with a very nice note. Any discussion?**

Vice Cmdr Poulos: The only discussion I would have is in that note you could say there are places like California and stuff that are now coming more needy than what we are right now, we're ok. But just make it known that we really do appreciate it.

**Dept Cmdr Britt: All in favor of the motion say aye? Opposed? Motion carried.**

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Ok, the last item but certainly not the least item. You're getting another budget and don't go get alarmed. I was trying, nothing changed per money line items or anything like that. All

was trying, and the committee was trying to do was make it more understandable at that very end, that last three or four lines, is all we tried to do and that's the only change in that budget that you were given on 30 September. It wasn't any money, any line items, nothing like that. It was to try and make it clearer where that ending was. And like I said, the last page, the very bottom down there where it says that total budget, projected net income, below that was what was changed, and I was just trying to depict where we actually stood. And it brings forth one of the issues that this body needs to resolve. Is when we did the first Rifle Raffle, we were going back and forth with everybody. It was a lot more success than we ever dreamed of and we said, ok, this is two years and we kept saying that, ok, whatever we get out of this we need to spread over two years, we need to spread over two years. We have never voted on that, if that's the intent.

Now here's the problem with that. That went into that reserve fund. It didn't go into the 2018 budget and I thought that what the intent was, spread it on the 2017/2018 budget. It didn't, it went into the reserve fund. Now, to get out of that reserve fund, part of the reserve fund is also the membership savings, to get anything out of there, we have to say, you have to say that, you have to vote that out. So when we did this for two years, did we really do it for two years? We used it for 2017 and 2018, we didn't get any of that into the budget, none of that was spent in the budget. So that's something I think we need to clarify what we intend. Right here on the projected net income, I wanted you to understand that half of that, net income i.e. the income minus the expenses, I cut the expenses in half. It was \$56,010 for the Rifle, that goes into the, off into the next year and you've also got that transfer to membership so the adjusted net income, in reality is \$617. I just wanted, I thought that was a clearer picture and that's why I changed that.

NEC Strauss: When you say bring it out what account would it go in to? We're bringing it out and bringing it where?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That \$56,010? We did in the past, we took it out and put it in to the....

NEC Strauss: Operating?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: No, it went into that savings. It went into that reserve fund. So we spent half and we put the other half into the reserve fund. And I don't have an issue with that, but I don't think that's a clear, when I say I that's the committee. We have two very active smart people helping me here. But that, I think we need to make that clear and the only way to make that clear, if that's our intent, is to vote that and put that into the record, into the minutes.

NEC Strauss: So, to make it clear, you're transferring the money from the membership savings to the...

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: No, these bottom two numbers, the \$56,010 and the \$36,724, \$36,724 is an altogether different animal. That's the membership savings. That's in this account. Well, that's also the account that we put half of the first Rifle Raffle into, that's why that account's up to \$120,000, we call it the reserve fund. Now, all I wanted to say is yeh, we got a projected net income of \$93,000 but in reality, from that \$93,000, \$56,000 of that is for next year or into the reserve fund or and then of course the membership savings goes in there as well.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Where did the \$56,000 come from?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That's half of the projected income minus the expenses, half of the expenses. That's.....

Vice Cmdr Price: That's based on the upcoming....

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Based on the upcoming raffle, what we think's going to be there. \$137,500 divided in half and \$45,000 divided in half and that's how we came up with the \$56,000.00

Dept Adj Diener: \$25,000 for that.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Oh, I'm sorry, I looked at the wrong line. \$25,480 in half and that's why I called it a net income so technically each year it's about \$56,000 each. Very conservative now, every income the committee considered, every income we went conservative, really conservative and on the expenses, we went high and that was, that's the way we looked at it and think about it.

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: I do have one question, I was reading the other day, the \$137,500 that you have as an income is based on selling 11,000 tickets. If you multiply 11,000 x \$15 that's \$165,000, there's a \$27,500 difference there, where's that other money going.

Dept Adj Diener: No, we did not base that on selling 11,000, we based that...

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: According to your paperwork, it was based on selling 11,000 tickets. And that's what the income was based on.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That was in the cover letter, I think. What level did we use?

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: But if you take your \$137,000 and divide it by \$15 it's 9,000 and something tickets.

Dept Adj Diener: We used what we sold last time.

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: Well, it says on the proposed budget on the narrative, which is all I'm going on which is what I was given.

Dept Adj Diener: And that may be a mistake on there but...

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: It says based on 11,000 tickets even though the chairman said it was going to be 15,000.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: I understand, I understand, that's a mistake. We based it on what was sold. And we realized also that we went from \$5 to \$10 so now we're talking so instead of a \$20 we were looking at \$15. So the first number that went out we said, we know what they're expecting but we went conservative and we said, ok, I wanted to say it was 9500 or something like that. But we came up with a number and very conservative on the number. But does anybody have any questions on that portion right below on the back. I just felt like it wasn't quite clear where we actually stood.

Vice Cmdr Price: So under the projected income of \$93,000 on the raffle, we projected \$93,351. You're taking out \$56,000 and putting it to 2020?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Well, that's what we've got to get clear on, yeh.

Vice Cmdr Price: Ok. The \$36,000, is that coming out of that also?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yes.

Vice Cmdr Price: And that's going into membership?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That's the membership saving's portion, it's part of that \$120,000.

Vice Cmdr Price: So we have a requirement to actually put two dollars per member, right?

Dept Adj Diener: Correct.

Vice Cmdr Price: Ok. So you've got \$36,000, \$36,000 and \$56,000, when you add that together...

Alt NEC Scherer: That's \$92,000.

Vice Cmdr Price: Yeh, I mean, so you're leaving nothing for the current year.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That's what I'm trying to show you. But keep in mind the incomes are conservative. I mean, we're well above \$137,000. I mean, they're talking 14,000, 15,000 tickets. That is a major windfall. And so that's a low number on the income but where we stand right now, I just wanted to make sure you understood with the way this is laid out that that's basically where we're at.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: And I see here for the sweepstakes you did go down by \$18,000 and that's to cover the shortage that were expecting for this year, so I just wanted to clarify that for everyone.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yeh, that was, we brought that down because it looks like it and it's actually looks that's what we're going to pull in this year, about \$82,000, if we get another...But remember, \$45,000 of that is...the sweepstakes is something the finance committee is going to look at. Because basically one sweepstakes pays for the other, for both of them. So you're only really, you know, we're putting in a dollar and getting a dollar type issue and that to me doesn't make sense. So we're going to look at that and figure out if we can bring the expenses down. Maybe we need to drop it, but we've got to look at it, we're not getting out of it what we should be getting out of it.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: The problem, I understand all the numbers and everything, the problem I have is what whenever you start, instead of giving realistic numbers, you give conservative numbers and then you give other numbers that you think, like you said the income is conservative and you went up on the expenses. That's not giving us a realistic number.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Not much on the expenses, we basically brought the expenses from last year over to this year.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: I understand. But on the budget, we want to know what its going to be, not a conservative estimate.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Well then you tell me how many members we're going to have. You tell me how many people are going to participate in the sweepstakes, I can't tell you that.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: And since it's been going down. I mean, I know I send in for two people on ours because my husband and I both contribute.

PDA/PDC Hawk: This is a proposed budget. You can't get Adam and Eve when they're going to eat the apple, ok. It's a proposed budget, you can't project numbers, you can't define numbers, like Jim is telling you. And Nick put together a proposed budget for next year. Now, the onus is on everybody sitting in this room to make this proposed budget work where Nick can pay the bills and Jim can come up and the finance committee use the money correctly and expeditiously where we need it. It's proposed. If anybody in here can project what we're going to get on membership or sweepstakes or raffle tickets or whatever, then buddy, you need to go buy a lottery ticket. But what I'm saying it's a proposed budget and they cannot hit the nail on the head because it's our responsibility to see that we meet that proposed budget. If we exceed it, they're in hog heaven.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: Did you lowball the income by x%, an estimate?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We estimated it on what we had and what we've done in the past.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: Did you lowball the estimate by some percentage?

Dept Adj Diener: For the Rifle Raffle, even though Darlene all of them looking at it think the new way is going to increase ticket sales, for the budget we based it off the number of the tickets we sold the last time. Because we're confident that we're going to sell as many tickets, it's an unknown how many of increase we could have. That's

what when we say we did it conservative, we did it off of figures that we're pretty optimistic that we'll at least hit that figure.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: I understand that. You're beating us about membership numbers, but you don't know what they are, and that's what (inaudible) I mean if you're going to beat us about a number, at least kind of have them.

Dept Adj Diener: Well, anybody, on the membership, anybody that would like to stick around here for about 30 minutes after this, then I'll explain all the intricacies on that.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: I understand that.

Dept Adj Diener: But the same way on the membership number, when we do this budget up, I didn't put in there that we were going to hit 100% of membership. Because we can't always count on that so have to kind of make a projection there of...

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: And we're behind on that but we may ahead. I looked at it this way, the last year, that I wanted to do, in my mind, this is a personal thing. The last thing I want to do when I come up with my budgets is not to have enough. So I'm going to say to myself, I'm not going to have enough and I'm going to be very happy in the end when I do, when I exceed that. That's how I've done my household budget and that kind of stuff.

**NEC Strauss: I'd like to make a motion that we take the net income from the 2019 Rifle Raffle, split it in half and use half of that profit for the 2020 operating budget.**

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Ok, so you're saying 2019 and 2020 then?

NEC Strauss: Half of the projected income, half of the income from the Rifle Raffle, of the 2019 Rifle Raffle, take half of that, and put it towards, minus expenses, towards the 2020 membership year.

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: I'll second that.**

Dept Cmdr Britt: I have a motion and a second. Any other discussion?

Dept Adj Diener: Can I say one thing to get you to possibly amend that motion and say that it will be done that way for the Rifle Raffles here on out, so we don't have to do this every time.

**NEC Strauss: I would make an amendment to include that language.**

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: And I'll second, re-second. For whenever we have a Rifle Raffle.**

**Dept Cmdr Britt: Any other discussion? All in favor, do you need to say something, Jim?**

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We should also amend him to fact, I want to get money into that reserve, other than the membership savings. So if at the end of the year, we have that over, then I think we should take that over and put it into that account.

NEC Strauss: We can look at that somewhere down the road.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: I don't know if that has to go together or not, I would like to really talk that one over with that with Bud and...ok.

**Dept Cmdr Britt: I think that part needs to go the Finance Committee. Any further discussion say aye? Opposed? Motion carries.**

**D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: As the Chairman, I'd like to make a motion that we accept this 2019 proposed budget as written.**

**NEC Strauss: Second.**

Dept Cmdr Britt: I have a motion and a second, discussion?

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Because we, if you look at our, if you've gone back and looked at our budgets from years past, right now we're still in debt, I estimate somewhere around \$880,000. Putting in a vehicle for \$40,000, where it may be something we need, I don't think this year, especially with the payment, we got a balloon payment coming up also, would be a wise decision. In that, also looking at, you had spoke about changing, Jim, the sweepstakes. You're going to study that but we're going to do it again even though we're losing money. Well, if we're losing...

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We're not losing money.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: We're not losing money but we're not making as much as we should. So is that something that we need to talk about today so that we won't carry on later on or change that what we're talking about unless we're going to back for next year. Also, I had a question about how this is written on this proposed budget about the Fisher House. I know that the Commander has a project he wanted to do, \$7500. We add a new line item into the budget based on his goal, there's also a new expense line item that matches the same. With that wording, it sounds like we're going to have, instead of \$7500....

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Are you reading the budget or are you reading a piece of paper?

Vice Cmdr Rucker: I'm reading the letter that was sent out with the budget.

D-Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: You need to be looking at the budget and see what the budget says.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Well, if this was the way it was worded.

Dept Adj Diener: That was the cover letter.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: The cover letter on it, I'm just going by what it says. And indicates to me that if you're matching money, that's \$15,000.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: What we're showing there is what he's budgeting, what we think we can get for the Fisher House, for the Commander's Project and then that's going to go out. So we're bringing it in as an income and taking it out as an expense.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Ok.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: But that's not what it says.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: That's not what it says though.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That's what the budget says.

Dept Adj Diener: That's what it says.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: It's coming in here and going out right there.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: In other words, this is nothing.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: Are we going to accept donations from the posts for the Commanders' Project? That would decrease that significantly I would hope.

Vice Commander Poulos: Correct.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: Because last year we did the same thing for last years' Commander and it was a big success.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yeh, I sent an e-mail out to my District that said, I'm going to copy all the District Cmdrs., explaining what, because there's a lot of misconception out there, talking to different people, what the Commander's project was. In the past, we would get something, for instance, my post. The first comment out of everybody's mouth is here's the Department wanting more money. It was never understood what a Commander's project was, last year his Commander's project. So I sent out that e-mail trying to explain to people, that yes, this is what happened, we're using it, we need it, so A, Posts, why don't you donate and personal donations also. And all you have to do is send it to the Department, down there on that, what do they call it, the for line, put down there, Commander's Project. That's what we want, the donations to come out of the posts. If every post gave a hundred dollars, we'd exceed that \$7,500 in a heartbeat.

Dept Adj Diener: The intent is all that will go to Fisher House is what gets donated. If only \$5,000 gets donated, then only \$5,000 will go to Fisher House.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: Thank you.

Dept Adj Diener: If it's \$10,000 it will be \$10,000.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: And please get that out to your posts and I mean you got people out there that gave personal ones, I mean, I gave a personal check so.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: I had another question on bank charges, \$1,000. Can Nick tell me?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That's if we have overdrawns, that's buying new checks, and that's all. It's check maintenance, checking account maintenance. I mean it cost me \$40 just to get a little stack of personal checks so you can imagine what it's going to cost for the book. Now, if we can cut back on those seven checking accounts, then that will help a little bit on that, that's just the swag right there, that's what we had in there last year. We did not spend that all on that but it's overdrawns, bad checks and buying new checks primarily.

Dept Adj Diener: Or for example we had to put in a stop payment on a check, it's all those, any of those things like that.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Just standard, just the bank maintenance and doing business with them.

PDC Lysaght: Nick, on that account, is that where we also pay the credit card?

Dept Adj Diener: No.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: No.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Has the procedure to initiate the Quicken books or QuickBooks or whatever it was called been initiated yet?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We're still waiting for Jessica to get back to us on that. But we want to get that done ASAP, it should not take us long. The problem right now is getting the three of us at the same place at the same time.

Alt NEC Scherer: Before we had a thing for the centennial income and expenses, I don't see that on the 2109 budget. Did I miss something?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yeh. It should be on the front page. It was in there. It's not there now. Good catch.

Vice Cmdr Price: It was in the first one you had.

D-1 Cmdr Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yeh, how did it get out of there?

Dept Adj Diener: Because we weren't looking at additional, at that point, we weren't looking at additional income coming in from the....

D-1 Cmdr Finance Chairman Jarvis: But it was in the first one, I never, we never, we never just took it out. And the last one I looked at it was there.

Alt NEC Scherer: Yeh, because you borrowed \$2500 from the Rifle Raffle and (inaudible).

Dept Adj Diener: I'm not sure we're going to be selling next year though. We had a line in there, but it was zero. Then we took all the zeros out.

Vice Cmdr Price: It doesn't affect January, we'll still be selling coins (inaudible).

NEC Strauss: Do you want to amend the motion?

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: It's got to be in there because we had, we have, they paid back their seed money. They've sold hats, coins & shirts and they do have an income based on their expenses for that to be used during the 2019 year for, up to and including the convention. So I think I need to amend this.

Dept Adj Diener: We can put a line in there, we have no projections for it.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We don't need numbers. All we got to do is put a line and say what we have and.

Dept Adj Diener: All this year it was added in there because it wasn't in the initial budget, it was just a line item and a ....

Alt NEC Scherer: \$18350 was the income, \$16913 was the expenses.

Dept Adj Diener: That's this years.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: See, we got it here in the finance statement. We have it on the finance statement.

Dept Adj Diener: But no budgeted amounts.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yeh, that's true, no budgeted amounts.

Dept Adj Diener: That's what I say, it wasn't a budgeted amount, it was based off of what they have in, that's what they give out, there wasn't an actual amount for that.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: But you're going to have income coming in, you have to have it somewhere. So you have to put a line in there to see it.

Dept Adj Diener: Yeh, we can always put a line but just no dollars against it.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Yeh, that's what I say.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We to put a number/

Dept Adj Diener: No. I mean, unless you're wanting to make a projection on how we're spending that. It's just like we already have to add throughout the year, we have to add.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We have the actual expenses and the actual income that we're getting, and we've never projected an income. We've never projected one. So I don't know how to put that in a budget but no budgeted amount. Now, we're tracking it on the monthly finance statement, which really should match up to the budget though, that's my hang up.

NEC Strauss: The reason why it wasn't budgeted was because it was an ad-hoc committee.

Dept Adj Diener: An ad-hoc committee that was appointed after the budget, so the line item gets reported on there.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: **I amend my motion to take this as written with the addition of adding, I think we can do that because I'm not increasing anything and I'm not decreasing anything, I think I'm allowed to make that motion that we add that line item in there.** At least so we know where we're at, we're not going to project any income or project any expenses but at least it's a line item on there that is on our present agenda.

**NEC Strauss: And I will still second that.**

Dept Cmdr Britt: You will still second that.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: First of all, let me, let me begin by saying that I really, based on this budget, and I understand its projection, and we're going to end the year, the 2019 year with \$617 in the bank. I think that buying a \$40,000 vehicle would be ill-advised. Now, that being said, I am very concerned with the wording "vehicle purchase will not be made until cash balance safely allows. Membership Savings account will not be used." And I hate to open this can of worms again, but if we, with a conservative amount on the income, the cash balance is going to go up rapidly. So I you know, I'm, you know, I don't that think we should approve this one with the vehicle in the budget at this time.

Vice Cmdr Price: I agree with the Vice Cmdr.'s comments, I don't even see a reason that we're tracking \$40,000 on there. I mean if I got rid of my vehicle because it had 70,000 or 80,000 miles on it, I'd have to be getting a new vehicle every other year. The other thing is, these vehicles don't have that high mileage and I think that we're also, I'm throwing this out there. If we're using these vehicles to drive home or for personal stuff, doing stuff like that, back and forth to work, I don't think that was the intent of these vehicles. This Department used to have one vehicle.

Several people said no.

Vice Cmdr Price: Well, I remember it as having one vehicle.

PDC/PDA Hawk: We've always had two vehicles in South Carolina.

Exec Dir May: Always, always.

PNEC Hennis: Yes sir.

PDC/PDA Hawk: There was one for the Adjutant and one for the Cmdr.

Vice Cmdr Price: In any case, to have a vehicle for the Adjutant or the Cmdr to go back and forth to work from home, I don't think was the intent of the vehicles. If I remember, when we hired the adjutant, there was nothing said about him having a vehicle, ok. And so I just don't see the cost right now with \$617 projected net income, for us to maintain a vehicle on there, seems a little bit, unneeded, excessive, that's the right word.

Dept Adj Diener: I just want to make one correction.

Vice Cmdr Price: Ok.

Dept Adj Diener: The Adjutant's vehicle has 132,000 miles again, it's not 70,000 or 80,000, so we're not dumping it off early.

Vice Cmdr Price: One of mine has 300,000 miles on it, ok.

Dept Adj Diener: And I would not drive a vehicle with 300,000 miles on it to Indianapolis and back. But the other thing that I would say, and again, assume this body was told, back when I was hired as Adjutant, my discussions with James Holland, he asked me the dollar amount that I would require to consider taking the job. And of the things that he did off that was that he pulled \$4,000 of that figure based on the benefits that I'd have by having that driving that vehicle back and forth.

Vice Cmdr Price: I've never heard that. It wasn't addressed by the DEC, it wasn't approved by us.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: He's just telling you.

PNEC Hennis: Mr. Commander. Can either of ya'll, Mr. Rucker or any of these other fellows that object to this car, this vehicle, can you give me a good, as a blue cap Legionnaire, reason for not doing it and doing it this year when it's going to come up in one of yall's years for sure? What's the purpose?

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Can I answer that? \$617.97.

Vice Cmdr Price: We don't have it.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: We don't have it, we can't afford it.

Vice Cmdr Price: So why put it on there?

Alt Scherer: The car's paid for.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: We're a non-profit organization and I have no qualms having a zero at the end. We're here as Legionnaires, volunteers, to take care of the veterans of our state, not to jeopardize somebody driving up and down the road in a worn-out vehicle.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: But we're \$880,000 in debt.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: That's the mortgage.

Dept Cmdr Britt: One person at a time and they'll have to be recognized by me. The next person standing was...

PDC Lysaght: It amazes how we switch horses in the middle of the stream. All of a sudden, we're concerned about a proposed figure of \$617. And the word in front of that was proposed, and we're going to base our debate on a number that we can't even assure that's going to be there. The second thing that you've got to understand is that the Department of SC in my 20 years here, has never operated on a fixed income, never. We've had tremendous fluctuations in membership, in the last ten years friends, we didn't hit 100% membership. So when you put it on the finance committee to come up with conservative numbers to CYA this Department, we need to

applaud their efforts and what they're trying to do. As far as this vehicle goes, we're not voting on buying a vehicle. It's there in black and white, we're not buying nothing. If the money's not there, we're not buying anything. If the money is conceivably there, guess where they're going to come to get permission to buy it? The chairs in this room. So, look, it's almost time for a hot dog and a coke, you guys can sit here and whine through all this you want to, but face reality, reality's simple. We may end up with \$26617, I don't know, I wish I did. So let's look at this in value of it was prepared. This is a proposed budget, it's being tracked monthly. I mean, the paperwork is there to justify anything and everything. We don't have any bandits in the Department, thank you Mr. Commander.

Dept Cmdr Britt: I have one comment, my vehicle only goes on Department business, I have never used it for a private vehicle, only for Department business. And I will not use it for personal use, I've got two other vehicles sitting in my yard, three that I can use. That vehicle is parked when it's not used for the Department. Any other questions or comments? **We have a motion on the floor to approve the budget, any further discussion? All in favor say aye? Opposed? It seemed like, raised hands then, all in favor of this budget, aye? And it's only voting members. All opposed raise your hand? What was the total?**

**Dept Adj Diener: 13 for, six against.**

**Dept Cmdr Britt: Motion passed.** Nick, administrative updates?

Dept Adj Diener: Real quick and I'm not going to go through the details on it but I did want to hand out to you all the Fall Conference we put a survey out for everybody that came to the Fall Conference to turn in and I wanted to release back to ya'll so you can have it to be able to see what those results were. We basically had 21 surveys got turned back out of the 239 registered attendees, two of those were from PDC's, three came from District Cmdr.'s and the other 16 came from blue cappers. I will say, and I caught this just before, one typo on there, paragraph three where it says 90.48% and then in parenthesis it says nine, that number should be 19, I left out a one. So they should all up to the number of people that turned in. But basically 90% of the respondents gave us a very satisfied or satisfied with the Conference, 95% of them were happy with the support by the Department but I will say the one thing that came through and attached in there is any of the comments that were put, turned in on the surveys. By question I put down every comment as they put them on the form. And for the most part they were very constructive but there were some recommendations that came in. I would say the main recurring theme across all those that you all can look at is people want more training in more detail and one of the subject areas that we gave training on expanded. I didn't see any of the comments where somebody said don't do the training. There were a lot of very good comments, a lot of constructive recommendations that came in with that. So ya'll can look at those in your pleasure, we're still studying them as well.

Second thing I'd like to go over is the National Commander's visit. He's scheduled to arrive here on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March and he'll be here through the 7<sup>th</sup> of March, I looked at the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Alt NEC Scherer: That will really blow our budget (laughter).

Dept Adj Diener: In this month's Connector that's coming out we've put out a tentative agenda, basically he arrives on a Sunday, again, all this is still very fluid. We're looking at going to West Columbia Post 79 on Sunday. On Monday we'll be looking at taking him to Shaw Air Force Base and do the tour there. That afternoon we're looking at going up to Rock Hill Post 34 and then also to Indian Land Post 250 for a visit there.

On Tuesday we're looking at going to Post 56, that's not real firm and then lunch at Greenwood Post 224, that's confirmed, then we're looking at going to Anderson Post 184 which is at the Anderson Nursing Home, we think that will be good and then we'll be going to Laurens Post 25, actually at the Ridge, but Post 25 is hosting the Commander's Homecoming. One Wednesday, we'll be having the session that's open to all Blue Cappers at the Marriott for the National Commander can talk to all the Blue Cappers and they can talk to him, and then the Ntl Commander goes to the Legislature and a change this year from what we've done in the past and this is why ya'll need to mark this date of the 6<sup>th</sup> of March down. Is that afternoon we're looking at coming back over here from

1:30 to 4:00 with the Ntl Commander and the DEC members and that's a chance for him to talk to you all to talk with the Ntl Commander and ask him any questions and go over any concerns that you have.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: 6<sup>th</sup> of March at, what's the time?

Dept Adj Diener: Right now, we've got it scheduled for 1:30.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: After the Legislature.

Dept Adj Diener: Yeh, so it's basically after he speaks to the Legislature, we'll give him time to change clothes and we'll bring him over here.

Dept Vice Cmdr Richardson: All this is going to be sent out?

Dept Adj Diener: It's in the Connector and then as we keep firming up dates and times, we'll keep putting that out. It won't be an official DEC meeting that day but that's one of those that we need all the DEC mbrs to come to.

PDC Lysaght: Just one quick question. The other posts below the Mason Dixon line in Columbia, does he not want to come see us?

Dept Adj Diener: We try and adjust it, but we can't hit the whole state so what we have done, if you look at last year, we went a different area, this year we're trying to rotate it around to hit different areas.

PDC Lysaght: Good idea, so I need to write the Director of the VA Hospital which is in the top five in the United States and tell him that the National Commander doesn't have time to come down there? Because he's working the other areas (inaudible)?

Dept Adj Diener: We've been there several times; do we go down there and not go to Dorn?

PDC Lysaght: I thought you went to Dorn?

Dept Adj Diener: No, this year we don't have Dorn on the schedule. In order to take him up to Anderson Nursing Home.

PDC Lysaght: I understand, I just wanted to make a point. You've got 160 Posts plus and if you're going to try to hit 46 counties, I'm just trying to watch the mileage on your vehicles (laughter). You've got some pretty good posts that have been in business a long time, 147's one of them. We celebrated one hundred years, so we've been in this Department a long time. And I don't care how many times you come if you want to see donations, contributions, participation in the Rifle Raffle, and anything else, you better make sure you hit at least the big ten because that's where the membership the promotes the money, thank you.

Dept Adj Diener: The challenge we have every year when we put this together is, we have a limited amount of time because when you start adding travel in there it eats up time real fast and we literally can't get all over the State, we just flat run out time. If I tell a Post the Ntl Commander is going to come visit them at 9:00 on Tuesday morning, a lot of the posts will say I can't get anybody there at that time. So different things like that limit us. Last year, where did we go, let's don't go there, let's go a different place. It's a nightmare to try and figure out, I'd love to talk him to Dorn, I'd love to take him to Charleston, I wish we had more time, but we don't.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: What happens on Wednesday evening?

Dept Adj Diener: Right now, Wednesday evening is still to be determined. we're trying to find someplace to go visit. But again, I throw that out but we hit Wednesday evening, after we get done over here, I've got to look how long do we take to drive to go see another Post and also the drive time to get the Cmdr, and it doesn't do to get him

back here at 10:30 at night if he's got a 7:00 am flight. Right now, we don't have it firmed up on a Post to go visit that night.

Ok, we're also beating up on ya'll getting the Consolidated Post Reports in. I'm going to hit this one a little different. National sent out the forms early this year and so we went ahead, and we sent them out. We're starting to get CPR's already in and you might say that's a great thing. Except if they're sending them in their cheating themselves because they're supposed to be putting data in on the post all the way through June. I'm just asking you as you talk to your posts and all that, tell them to hold off sending those in yet so they can add more data in, alright? The best way for any of them to do it, by the way, is to do it online with mylegion. Because then you can go in and you can update it, hit submit and two weeks if you do something and you want to put three hours over here you can go put it in, change the hours and it's automatically in there and keeps a running total there for you. But just, it's a tough one, yes, we want everybody to get them in but hold on so that you can get some more information into there. That surprised us, we did not expect to see CPR's this fast.

The last thing I have on it and I don't think we need to go into Exec. Session on it. Just to let you know Ernie is back home. I am going to be meeting with him, he doesn't think his schedule with the VA is going to let him do it next week so it's probably going to be the week after Thanksgiving but I'll meeting with him to discuss what his plans for the future are here. But he is back home, doing good, still's got a lot he's got to go through though. Commander, that's all I have.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Ok, I know we have a couple things for the Good of The American Legion, Robin requested a few minutes.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Last year at the Convention, we voted on amending a law for the General Assembly of the State of SC to add a spouse to be able to attend College for certain veterans, like killed in action, POW, Purple Heart, there's a few other ones. You'll get a copy of the proposed bill. Representative Hosey of Barnwell County is our sponsor. I think this will be one of the first times we've gotten one in South Carolina from The American Legion in a while. And I am also going to try to get with Senate.... Senate and get a sponsor on that part of the bill and it will amend it to add spouse and it already has children there, to attend any college that is supported by the State. So you take that back, what we're going to need is it's coming up in February, they will start having committees to meet and talk about these and I would like to have people to come and represent The American Legion at those committees. And I'll let you know by e-mail and I'll notify the District Cmdrs. what we need. And we will need some people to show up when they start talking about this because what going to happen is the college and universities are going to fight us on it, ok. There's approximately 11,000 spouses in the State of SC that are spouses of veterans. Now, that goes from 19 years old to 90, most of those spouses that's over 50 are probably not going to try to attend college, ok, most of the time. So I am working on that, I'm trying to get statistics on those age groups, I don't have it on the spouse but what I'm going to try to do is get the statistics on the veteran them self to see what age group they are, so we can narrow that number down. Because, like I said, the colleges and universities are going to fight us on it because they're going to have to foot the bill, ok. So that's why we got to have people to show up. And now like I said, if I can get a sponsor on the Senate side, which I hope Nikki Seltzer will sponsor it with me, we're going to have, when they start talking about it on their side, we'll have to have Blue Hats and people to come and talk on that side. So then what they'll do, after they get, if we can get it out of committee, they'll have to come together and come with a bill and hopefully that bill will go forward for the Governor's signature. And Governor McMaster, from what I understand, through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, said he would fully support it, so I wanted to bring that an update on that.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Robin, I have one quick question. If the spouse is remarried, will she still be eligible?

Vice Cmdr Rucker: No.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Ok, I didn't think they would be.

PDC Lysaght: You addressed the issue, so I assume that the Legislators have reviewed Title 38 so there's no conflict?

Vice Cmdr Rucker: That's something that will be reviewed once they start talking in committee.

PDC Lysaght: Ok, because I see where it says permanently and totally disabled and you know that's full coverage for dependents.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Right.

PDC Lysaght: Education and everything.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Right.

PDC Lysaght: That's where you're going to get the argument from the colleges.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: And that's fine, and they'll be talking about that.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: I have a new topic, that's all I wanted, a sales pitch.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Go ahead.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: The nine posts, nine posts, the nine Districts that haven't invited me down to give you the update on the new processing system, I'm scheduling. All you've got to do is hit me, January and February, I'm into January now, I'm full between now and Christmas but I'm available in the January/February timeframe. This isn't immediate, I mean, this isn't mandatory, and we can gradually go into this so don't get alarmed on that aspect. But the more we get into it I think the easier it's going to be and the big posts if they go into it it's going to make the life in this building a lot easier too.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: Is Bobby Gibbons one of those nine Districts? If he is, I'll call him and invite him to mine.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: I'm scheduled for 19.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Thank you Jim.

Dept Historian Cantrell: I just want to remind the District Cmdrs. tell your Posts if they have any kind of history for the Centennial year, please send it to me. I'm in the process of doing the Dept Yearbook and I'm also doing one for the Commander, this being the Centennial year, we need all that information we can get. If you have pictures or group pictures, make sure you've got names attached to them because I don't know everybody and that would surely help.

There's one other thing too, I'd like to address, and this is my personal opinion. The last time I checked, we all served under that one flag right there. Now I'm going to be honest with you folks, I'm a little discouraged at times. I'm thinking about taking this white cap off and putting a blue one on and saying I'm just here as a member. Because we all need to get along, I ain't got nothing against nobody in here. This is the first time I've stood up, I've kind of monitored the last three or four years and folks, I mean, we all need to be on the same page is what I'm saying. We need to be on the same page. Because I got a lot of young veterans that I've been trying to talk to and their one complaint is I just fought a war, I don't want to go into another one. Because they're hearing rumors and all, you know. I mean, things can be worked out, everybody, I heard great ideas from everybody today. We need, we need to come together as one body and as our slogan says, for God and Country. We need to remember, where's God, where's the Country, and the veterans. We haven't talked in depth about how we're going to help veterans, that's is what our organization is about. If I'm mistaken, please tell me. I mean, I just, you know, I just don't, I just think we can, this Department can do better because I know it can, we've got great Leadership here, each and everybody in this room. And I'm friends with everybody, I haven't made no enemies and I don't plan to make enemies, I really don't. I want to get along with every single person in here and with all the blue caps. You need to change, we need to change the routine and all and focus more on the veterans. I know we got things we're

required to do but I'm just saying we need to focus a little more on the veteran, that's where my heart is. My heart is really for homeless veterans because I go every year to Indianapolis on a Church Mission and go to downtown Indianapolis and I see homeless veterans which should never be. And I mean it's sad and I'll be outside signing autographs if you've got any complaints. I'm serious. Hey, I'll work with you, all you got to do is call me, just call me, I'll come to your post and I'd love to come to your post and talk about history and all because this year we're going to have a Department Yearbook. I say we, my wife is in the process because she's into scrap booking, I don't know the first thing about scrap booking. (laughter) We're going to get it done and it's for the betterment of The American Legion for the Department and each and every one of you. Thank you, Commander. (applause)

Dept Mbrship Chairman Walton: Thank you Russ, I'd like to add to that. I think everybody forgets too, where we have been and what we've accomplished, the last two years have been outstanding. We've got four people sitting up here that are going to be taking over your place, John, but if we can't get everybody to work together, we're not going to keep climbing, we're going to only keep tearing ourselves apart. I'm a blue cap, I'm proud to be a blue cap, I don't need any other color cap. My heart and soul's in this organization and I have to back him up on this. If we have been chosen as Leaders out here by the Blue Caps, then honor the Blue Caps and do your job, then you don't need to be here folks. Thank you.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Anybody else, Doc?

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: I've got a couple of things I need to talk about, the first thing is the oratorical contest. We've seen some of things that have come out and at the Quadrant level, the judges cannot be from the Post, I'd like to emphasize that because I've run into a little bit of a problem. I talked to a lot of people at the schools in my District about being judges but some of the schools are going to have contestants and if they win at the post level and move onto the Quadrant level, then there's a conflict of interest. So you may want to think about going to the University, maybe, to get a judge for the Quadrant contest.

D-1 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Jarvis: You got to also be careful that's it not a repeat that's had one of those students in front of you the previous year.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: I'd also like to commend Jim Jarvis and the financial committee for the work that they did because it appeared to me that it was good work, not everything is perfect. We have a proposed budget and I think we need to emphasize proposed because that's what it is and so, you know, to get down to the minute specifics I think goes counter to what we're trying to do. So those are the two things I have, thank you, Commander.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Thank you, anyone else.

Dept Adj Diener: I just one to make this short and sweet on mine, I want to personally thank, from Maggie's and my benefit, I just want to thank Darlene and Jim Jarvis for all the hours they've been up here volunteering on not only membership but helping us cover with Ernie gone and the putting in of the sweepstakes and all that, they've put a bunch of hours in up here and I just want to personally thank them from Maggie and I. (applause).

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: I want to thank this body and the Cmdrs. for giving me the opportunity two weeks to go to the National American Legion College, I want to say thank you very much for that. It was a very intensive one-week course, we put in 12-14-hour days, it was not a walk in the park. And to echo there Russ on what you say with the homeless in Indianapolis. It's amazing how many homeless people are right there at The American Legion building that you have to walk through just to get in to the building. But I learned an awful lot up there and a lot with the training on membership, on Resolution writing, I didn't realize how hard it was to write a Resolution other than the whereas's and the Therefore's, it can get quite complicated on it. Also, on how to resolve problems in Posts, we had to do, they gave us scenarios, if the Post Cmdr died and had the only set of keys, what do you do, you have to figure out how to get the Post back open, so we worked on that. But one of the biggest things was and I think it's something that we all can do and bring it back to your post. The very first day, they brought us back there and we sat down, and they said, why do you want to be in the Legion, why are you in the Legion or why are you associated with the Legion. You had 30 seconds, they call it the elevator speech and you have to get up in front of the class and for 30 seconds only, you have to tell them why you're in The American Legion or why would you be

associated with The American Legion. And it was 30 seconds, they had a person with a stopwatch and if you went 31 seconds, they gonged you and you had to shut up. But it was something that you really need to think about, why are you in the Legion or associated with the Legion. Because you get that 30 seconds that we've all talked about, hey, why are you in the Legion. You have to be able to give it a quick answer to set the hook to bring them back in. So think about why are you in the Legion and that makes it better for you and everybody else. I had an experience with that on my way back from Indianapolis. I happened to be at the Chop House in Gatlinburg and a guy asked me why I was in the Legion because he saw my emblem. I and I started my 30 second speech and a half hour later we got done. And this guy's going back to Birmingham, Alabama and is going to donate his fishing time to veterans. And he isn't a veteran. He said Jim, I'm not a veteran, I never served but my Dad was in the Korean war and I said, Buddy, do we have a plan for you and it's called the SAL. I don't know a lot about the SAL but told him about the SAL and he's going to look into that. So just get that 30 seconds, why are you in the Legion, why are you associated with the Legion and then if somebody asks you can give a quick answer. And again, thank you all very much for giving me the opportunity to go to that College up in Indianapolis, it was very rewarding and eye opening. There was some self-evaluation on my part where I could see where I was letting my District down, I need to do some more work. But if you get a chance to go, go, Thank you. (applause).

Dept Cmdr Britt: This morning at breakfast in Newberry, Russ and Bill and I were sitting there, and a gentleman came in and he had on a Vietnam Veteran's hat on. And, as he walked by, I thanked him. He stopped, he gave each of us a penny with a cross cut into it,. He's spent the last number of years passing these pennies out and I asked him, I said, are you a member of The American Legion? He said no, but I got an application yesterday and I'm going to fill it out. Just a conversation, your conversation, that's all it takes. He gave me a penny and I got a commitment to fill out an application, he'll probably be in the Newberry Post, that's where he lives. So, anybody can recruit at anytime, anywhere. I got a penny with a cross cut in it, Bill got one and Russ got one.

Chaplain Quarles: He said he's handed out 30,000 of them.

D-14 Cmdr Brandt: Talk about recruiting, I carry memberships in my pocket all the time and any time I see a veteran I always talk to them about the Legion.

Dept Cmdr Britt: Ok, my closing remarks, as Nick mentioned, my Homecoming will be on Tuesday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, Post 25 has the mailing labels so you all will be receiving an invitation so mark your calendars for that. It's going to be a great event, is a new facility in Laurens called the Ridge, it's owned by the City of Laurens and they have donated it to Post 25 for this event, no charge, the Mayor's going to be there, and have a Proclamation that March the 5<sup>th</sup> is American Legion Day in Laurens County. So, each of you will be getting an invitation for that. I want to thank each of you for being here today, I thank you for the calmness that we had, we did get, a couple little times there but for the most part we were calm, we were polite to each other and I thank you for that. Having nothing else, I'm going to call our Chaplain for our Invocation.

Chaplain Quarles gave the Invocation and Commander Britt closed the meeting.

For God and Country,

Nick I. Diener  
Department Adjutant

ND/mm