



Department Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 14, 2018



The Department Executive Committee met on Saturday April 14, 2018 at The American Legion Department of South Carolina Headquarters, 103 Legion Plaza Rd, Columbia, SC 29210.

**Present:**

Dept Cmdr Mike Strauss  
Dept Adjutant Nick Diener  
IPDC Bob Scherer  
Dept 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr John Britt  
Dept 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Cmdr Walt Richardson  
Dept 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Cmdr Roberta Poulos  
Dept 4<sup>th</sup> Vice Cmdr Ron Price  
Dept Historian Matt Gooden  
D-1 Cmdr Jim Jarvis  
D-3 Cmdr Bridget Lewis  
D-4 David Goodman  
D-5 Cmdr Jack Wright  
D-6 Cmdr Jim Kvam  
D-7 Cmdr Charlie Bethea  
D-8 Cmdr Chuck Shaffer  
D-9 Cmdr Doc Sweet  
D-10 Cmdr Russ Cantrell  
D-11 Cmdr Jack Lonergan  
D-12 Cmdr Charlie Davis  
D-14 Cmdr Michael Brandt  
D-15 Cmdr Leroy Williams  
D-16 Cmdr Jim DeFrehn  
D-18 Cmdr Larry Pouncy  
D-19 Cmdr Bob Gibbons  
D-20 Cmdr Robin Rucker  
Dept Sgt-at-Arms George Oxner  
Dept Chaplain Bill Quarles

**Absent:**

NEC Gary Mitchell  
D-1 Cmdr Chuck Blankin  
D-13 Cmdr Carlton Patterson  
D-17 Cmdr Ed Miller

**Also Present:**

PDC Cecil Phillips  
PDC Joe Lysaght  
PDC Bud Hennis  
Exec Dir M. May  
Mbrship/Program Dir E. Massaro  
P-130 Adjutant Darlene Walton  
P-6 Cmdr Loren Moss  
ALRSC Director Darrell Hodges  
P-93 Mbr Bill Wade

Cmdr Strauss opened the meeting 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 for the Preamble.

Adjutant Diener called the roll and told Cmdr Strauss he had a quorum.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: At this time this would be the area where I would read the minutes from the last meeting.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: I make a motion we accept the minutes as published.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I second that motion.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any discussion? All in favor? Any opposed? Passed. I'll call on the Department Adjutant.

Dept Adj Diener called on the Membership Chairman.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker; We made 95%. We need about 1100 more, before May 8<sup>th</sup>? Or May 5<sup>th</sup>? What is it? ( So I need about 1100 that ya'll need to do, so that means like, even though Jim Defrehn has 100% I need you to get another 100%. But I appreciate what you done, it's been a long road but we gotten there, a lot of you came through for us and please continue to do that. We're still climbing and hopefully we'll add to our numbers. And on the legislative part, I've passed out a brochure, if you need one take one before you leave. The new membership year starts at the convention.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Right after the convention.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: And so we got to finish the run, so we would appreciate it if you would call your post Cmdrs and if you need help from the membership team, let us know. We got one more revitalization, that's district 7 next Saturday. Jim Kvam will be going out for me and hopefully we'll get some good numbers from that. We are 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation right now but we could be 3<sup>rd</sup>. Some numbers got changed last year but we're doing what we're supposed to do. Anything else?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: How many posts at 100%.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: 60.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: 69.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We had 89 last year?

Dept Adj Diener: No, 78 at the conference but we ended up with 80.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: How many districts?

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: We ended up last with seven last year, right now we have four.

Dept Adj Diener: But a bunch of ya'll are close. One of the things that Ernie is passing out is the delinquent post report, this shows the posts that have not achieved the minimum of 15 required to keep their charters. So if you're District Cmdr and those posts belong to you need to get with Cmdr Rucker and us to make a special effort to keep those posts above 15. We just can't cancel their charters to get those posts so get those posts to do what they're supposed to do to get them above.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: No action is recommended for the delinquent posts at this time. Robin, I just want to give you the props, you've seen the Big Board on the door, Robin's # 1 and Jim Defrehn is # 2. Over half of you made the 95% cut-off date for this month. There are just a few of you that are just a few away from getting

there and some of you have a lot of work to do. We did a lot of great things the last couple weeks when we got the word out about the membership. It was very encouraging to see everybody rally around. We got down to the nitty gritty and we had a lot to pick up and we got that 95% but our work's not done. That number is big, over a thousand, but it's not that big when you break it down, it's about 200 a week, we got a lot of posts out there with posts that need just one membership. It's extremely doable. You may be called on here again, we got one more mail out coming towards the end of this month but between here and the end of the month we're going to have to keep calling and keep calling. Because the calls are working, the calls are definitely working. Just don't focus on the posts that are doing bad, focus on the ones that are doing good because the ones that doing good out there have done a significant amount for us too. Some of them have gone way over 100% instead of just stopping and those are the ones that we need too so reach out to your posts and strongly encourage them to keep on going. One or two per post per week is not asking a lot so we're in striking range of 100%. I'll call on the new Finance Chairman, Jim Jarvis.

D-1 Cmdr Jim Jarvis: Commander, I just took over the other day actually. We had our first Finance meeting, two thirds of the budget year has already passed us, but over all we're doing rather well, we're in good shape and that's due to the gentleman that I relieved and his committee. My personal goal is to keep moving the wind in the direction that we're moving. If it's budgeted, fine, if it's not budgeted, it's not fine so we'll have to work around that. But we're in good shape and that's because of the past chairman and his committee. We have \$120,000 in the reserve fund and we couldn't say that a couple years ago. I think the budget is self-explanatory. You've been looking at this for a couple months here but there are four or five lines I want to go over because they might pop out at you. On the first page, you'll see National FR Income. The budgeted income was zero. But we have \$10,591.00. National told us we weren't going to get that this year, Fundraiser income. So that's \$10,591.00 that's come in that we hadn't planned on. The other one on that first page is down there under expenditures, the flood insurance. 5.66% over budget. And if you turn on the second page, the car insurance is only 27.9 but that's a quarter. So, what that is the budget was written but then we found out about the policy increases on those two areas. Another line is down there under convention and conferences. You'll see the Ntl Cmdr's visit. We budgeted \$4500 for that but we did not have to spend that. Her Aide was her husband, so we saved money on a room cost. But what happened inadvertently was we did a revitalization in D-16 and the Ntl Vice Cmdr came down. We thought that was paid for by membership, but we got charged for the rooms. So, we put that cost under the Ntl Cmdr's visit. It's still under budget but that's where we put it. On the last page, due to the Commander and the Adjutant's thriftiness, they regret it now but the Washington meeting, we had budgeted \$4,000 and we only spend \$2514,68 so that's the difference there.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: We did not stay inside the DC area, we stayed in Virginia and took the train in.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: They saved some money there. That's the budget. I'm going to work, we're trying to figure this out. Being the new kid on the block. I'm trying to figure out how to get this out earlier. The biggest thing is we got to get the bank statement and then we got to reconcile it and then we got to get it to the finance statement. We got it on Wednesday and here we are on Saturday. We're starting the process for next year in June with the goal of getting it out by mid-October prior to the last DEC meeting of the year. But that's something that I'm playing with right now so bear with me right now.

D-7 Cmdr Charlie Bethea: That 39.7 on line 12 on the last page should go up.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: You're looking at a report that was sent out, but we caught those percentage errors and fixed them. That's not the report that was handed out today. Sorry, Charlie. We had five issues that will require a vote Cmdr.

107-D. Girls State wants to rent that room for \$300 plus utilities per month. It would be a separate lease from the Auxiliary. The Auxiliary is a two-year lease, but Girls State wants a one-year lease, they want to go from May to December and then work out another lease in January for the entire lease. It's vacant, I don't see, or the committee didn't see that we're going to get somebody to rent that. And even if we did, we'd have to put new carpeting in there, we'd have to do some work in there to make it rentable, but Girls State will take it as such. Girls State is adamant about putting it together. We said why don't we put it with the Auxiliary and both the

Auxiliary and GS argued that so at this point the committee said we're not getting anything so let's do it for \$300 per month and that's the issue. That requires us to approve that.

**D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: I make a motion that we accept the rent of \$300 plus utilities, starting in May.**

**D-9 Cmdr Sweet: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: You heard the motion and second, any discussion? All in favor, opposed? Ok.**

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Thank you.

The next thing is a two parter. The first thing is the Law Cadet budget and we need to approve that as a governing body. It's typical with the exception of the food cost, it's in the \$5,000 range. What the issues here, and I'm going to let the Adjutant explain that particular issue but we need to get a handle on the food. We think that's going to happen but right now that's what it's budgeted at.

Dept Adj Diener: We hold this over at the Criminal Justice Academy (CJA) and in past years they've given us breakfast free. And this past year they said they can no longer do that, so we've got to pay \$5 per person so that's raised that cost. We also had some of the people that were just contributing or providing meals, there's been an issue of the meals not being enough. You've got a high school kid that's been running around all day and you bring him one chick-fil-a sandwich and small fries and that doesn't cut it with them. In some of those cases we're reverting those and covering those by eating in the CJA, we're trying to get contributions from some of our different sponsors to contribute the money to allow us to pay for that but only two for now have committed to that so that's why you see the worst cost scenario in there for the budget.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I just wanted to point that out because that's the line item that stands out. But like the Adjutant pointed out that's the worst-case scenario with all expectations that will ease up.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: I need a motion.

**D-10 Cmdr Cantrell: I make that motion to approve the Law Cadet Budget.**

**D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any discussion? All in favor? Any opposed? The ayes have it.**

Finance Chairman Jarvis: The second part of this is we've been talking about this for a while or at least Law Cadet staff has. Right now, the registration fee is \$200 per person, they want to increase it and the finance committee agrees with this, to increase it to \$250 per person. Part of this is the food but part is expenses being a little bit higher. It hasn't been raised in a while so the motion that for 2019 that registration increases to \$250 from \$200.

**D-16 Cmdr DeFrehn: I make the recommendation that we increase the registration fee from \$200 to \$250 for Law Cadet.**

**D-10 Cmdr Cantrell: Second**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: You've heard the motion and the second. If there's no discussion, all in favor? Any opposed? Ayes have it.**

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: The next thing is the 2020 Dept Convention Conference. We have to make a decision and we have to do it now. Because those dates are hard to keep and if don't keep the continuity because if we don't keep the continuity we don't keep the dates. The Adjutant and Maggie went out, we really only have two facilities that have a hotel and everything to handle the size of our convention. And that's the Marriott in

downtown Columbia and the Doubletree on Bush River Road and I-20. They went and looked it over and we did a process of one giving us this and one giving us that and in the end, it came out basically pretty even. The finance committee felt we need to stay with what we know; the cost is no different. With the Marriott, they are working they're tail off trying to deal with the city of Columbia on this parking issue. They realize that's a major force with us, they're working that issue, I think they've eased it up a little bit, but we won't see it until we see it in writing. But the recommendation of the finance committee is to have the 2020 and Fall Conference at basically the same dates and same time frames at the Downtown Columbia Marriott. That is our recommendation.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Just to be clear, that's the Dept Convention and the Fall Conference.**

**Finance Chairman Jarvis: And that's for one year on that.**

**D-14 Cmdr Brandt: I make a motion that we stay with the Marriott.**

**D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Second.**

Dept Cmdr Strauss: You heard the motion and the second. Any discussion?

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: That's a one-year deal?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: None of them will go out more three years. And we already have two years so it's a one-year extension.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: I was looking at the parking, if we do it at the Doubletree, we can park free, it's easy to get in and easy to get out.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: There's a lot of things that are better about one and not better about one. The thing about the Doubletree, there's not a lot of places to eat around it.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: At the convention, a lot of us go home and then come back. It's a hard time getting in and out unless you park on the street.

Dept Adj Diener: That was a major plus for the Doubletree, but we also had to look at the Doubletree wanted to charge us more per night per sleeping room, more for set-up fees, so you had to hit all of those back and forth on it as plus's and minus's, but we did look that. In my rating I gave a lot points to them but some of the things at the Marriott outweighed that when you looked at the overall thing.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Didn't it go down to \$5 per night?

D-1 Cmdr Chairman Jarvis: It was \$10. And I basically think we've decreased that to \$5.

Dept Adj Diener: The problem the hotel has is every time the City changes someone or fires someone they change those policies.

D-1 Cmdr Chairman: We've got a 2020 contract and they're leery with what the City is going to do between now and then. We think we've got it cut in half and we're hoping for further and that's all I can say at this point in time. When we weighed everything all the way down, we felt that staying with the known quantity is the way to go.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any other discussion? All in favor? Any opposed? Ok, the ayes have it.**

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: The other proposal is the Rifle Raffle but I'm going to leave that alone and leave that with the rifle raffle person who is coming up right after me. We have a raw sewage down at the bottom of the hill and

to fix that, we have to dig out what's there, the liner leaks. The pump still works but it's leaking into the ground. The estimate from our plumber, he did all that work down there. The estimate is \$8200 to dig it out, put a new foundation in, put a new liner, pave over it and put a manhole cover access on it. In other words, do the job right. The finance committee approved and authorized that based on the maintenance line item on the budget and put it into that line item there. We had \$26,000 originally in the initial budget so that one I'm just letting you know so you know significant expense is parceled out.

The other item is the Centennial Cmte wants to get a banner so they can put the banner inside the hotel for the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday, make it so we can use it for other events. It will be a pole type thing where they can use it in a parade, they can use sit outside and inside. The expense for that is about \$150 to \$200. We authorized that based on the fact that the coins are going to bring in their money and they'll pay back the seed money we gave them and give us back the \$150 to \$200 on this banner. So, we authorized that as well.

And based on the membership meeting that happened just before our finance meeting, do you know that we had 2,293 members in P-172 that have not paid their 2018 dues. I thought about what was said, this brought about by the Cmdr, I thought about it, we don't look at 172. All we do with 172 is take from them if we can. The only contact they have from this dept or anyone in this dept is if some post tries to get them to go to an active post. That's an issue that coming up on the next membership cycle, the membership team is going to look at that pretty hard. If we get 115 renewals out of those 2,293, that's about 5%, if we get that, we're talking about \$4200 to the Dept in dues. It can pay for itself, we used postage money, we sent a letter to every one of them asking them and explaining to them about renewing. That could put a major dent in those 1100 people we're still short in. The cost is \$324 in postage to get that out so we authorized that under the postage line item but I'm mentioning it to keep in mind is what's that going to do is at the end of the year, postage might go over budget somewhat. But the committee felt we had to touch base with those in 172 and this was a quick ditch effort to do that and try to get them to renew in this cycle.

I've already told you we're going to start working the budget in June. The problem is timing. We have our Convention in June, we start July 1<sup>st</sup> we have the National Convention in August, we turn around and go into Fall Conference and two weeks later we're into the National Fall Meetings. So, the goal is to get in there between our Fall Conference and the Ntl Fall meetings. If you have any inputs for the budget, get them in via e-mail, but they need to be in writing, letter, e-mail or whatever, to the Adjutant. But I'm asking that you get it in by the August DEC meeting. All of this said, I think Cmdr Rucker, made a motion that passed, that the proposed budget would be out to everyone by October 31<sup>st</sup>. We'll try but I don't know, we'll just be getting back from the Fall meetings, so it may be off by a week but we're going to work that issue. Cmdr, that's pretty much all I have.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Very good report, thank you.

D-16 Cmdr DeFrehn: On the membership report, the 172's, when you contact them, can you have them contact Ernie for their local post.

Finance Cmte Chairman: At this point in time, we didn't have any time, basically a personalized letter to remind them to that the 2018 dues are due and they're about ready to expire. And that was our goal was to touch them and get them to renew and once we get them to renew, we'll deal with that.

Dept Adj Diener: We did put a line asking if they wanted to transfer.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: I did my own for the area asking them and named all the posts.

Finance Cmte Chairman: It's 2200 people, that's a lot that haven't renewed from 2018. And that could help us a lot towards that 1100 that we're missing. Hell, I didn't even tell Cmdr Rucker, we just did it. We had to, it was out by Friday.

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: I would like to accept the finance report as presented.**

**D-12 Cmdr Davis: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: You heard the motion and the second. All in favor, opposed? Ayes have it.**

Just a reminder to please stand be recognized so we know who you are. We are recording and have to know who you are. Rifle Raffle update from our brand-new chairman, Darlene Walton from Cayce.

RR Chairman Walton: I've got some big shoes to fill. With Walt taking us into this venture, we learned a lot the first year and hopefully we can make this one bigger and better. The handout has the previous numbers that between the Dept and the Posts we had \$228,000 plus earnings on that. And on that you will note that was an 80/20 split. In other words, the Dept got \$20 of that ticket and the Posts got \$5. I am proposing that this go around, everybody out there knows posts are doing the work. We need to make sure they're getting paid fairly. If you look at my projections for this one, we're looking at making \$180,000 to the Dept and \$120,000 to the posts. And with that being a 60/40 split and I'm shooting for a sale of 12,000 tickets. There again, we're going to stay basically with the same rules. The only changes are we're putting a letter out in the convention packets, when they meet, to let us know exactly how many tickets they want to sell. You will see on the back pages of this packet, it tells you, how many out of the posts that worked with this what each one of them made. And this is why we came up with the idea of letting the posts tell us how many tickets they want. It was brought to my attention that Murrells Inlet and Goose Creek, they were flabbergasted when they got not just a packet, but a box of tickets and it was so overwhelming I think they got dumfounded with it and really didn't know how to handle it. So, we feel like this, by giving it out to the posts and letting them know they have their choice. Because they're going to be making \$10 a ticket. This is our way to step it up, we got a good start. So, I'm asking, Cmdr, that you ask for a motion that we approve the changing of the split this go around. And also, you will find a schedule in there. These tickets will go out to the District Cmdr's on the DEC meeting of November 17<sup>th</sup>. And I'm going to assure you that every one of these District Cmdr's that get these, I expect those posts to get those tickets within a week. Tell your posts when you're going to have them but let them come pick them up. But we need to get those out there and get running. Because with Christmas coming, that's a great time. I know my sons-in-law enjoyed it. I'm asking you to consider this.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Ok, so we need a motion to approve the Rifle Raffle, the rules for the Rifle Raffle and the proposed timeline for the Raffle, all into one.

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I make a motion that we accept the proposal for the Raffle, the split, the rules and the delivery time as printed.**

**D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: I second.**

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any discussion on the Rifle Raffle?

Vice Cmdr Richardson: That is with a 60/40 split.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Right. All in favor say aye, opposed? Ayes have it. Thank you for all your hard work and the committees hard work and we look forward to another adventure.**

RR Chairman Walton: I just want to say, on Wednesday, Walt went with me to Palmetto State Armory (PSA). They were so excited to see us come through the door, they said they would make it even bigger and better than it was before. Walt, do you want to tell them what they said?

Vice Cmdr Richardson: They said because the AR-15's went so well last year that they're going to upgrade the AR-15's. It should be no problem getting at least five donated to the Department.

RR Chairman Walton: Thank you very much.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Let's give her a big round of applause. (applause). It's not easy doing that RR, Walt can attest to that. It is a lot of hard work for that and the Department will benefit from that, if we get the word out there about what a great fundraiser that is for us and the posts so thank you for the hard work there, Darlene. I'll call on the Adjutant for Administrative updates.

Dept Adj Diener: I know this is part of the meeting you look forward to.

- 1) April 24<sup>th</sup> is the Veterans Resource Fair, next Tuesday, at the State Capitol. Anybody that's in the area or any of ya'lls posts, we'd like to see ya'll there. Ernie and I will have a table with membership fliers and all that if any of you would like to come down and volunteer.
- 2) We're seeing that the Centennial Shirts, that some of ya'll are wearing, the shirts are running small. When you talk with your posts, let them know. If you're in doubt, go up one size, they're cut just a little small. We've had several District Cmdr's said they're a little snug and it's they're regular size.
- 3) There's a possibility of a DEC meeting to hear an appeal on a disciplinary action. The J/A has looked at it and it's a question now of whether it goes back to the post or comes straight here. There was a member that was kicked out a post and they had appealed the decision and so we will may end up, as a body, come back together and hold a hearing on that but we will let you know on that.
- 4) One of the things that Finance Chairman Jarvis did not mention was the sale of the Pamplico property. We did sign that and it's just a matter of waiting for the closing to happen now. We accepted the agreement and it's in the process for \$20,000.
- 5) In your handouts, we passed out an envelope today with your name on it, one of the things in that envelope is the copy of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) form. There's one copy for each post. It's very important we get that in from everybody. All of the Posts were sent the form, but we wanted to give the District Cmdr's a copy and ask you're holding your District meetings, if they haven't sent one in, get them to fill one out. Every year we get picked on by National. The figures are used for the testimony to Congress, and South Carolina runs under 50% on sending those in. Other Departments are setting at 100% or close to 100% on those. Even if a post has only done a couple hours of volunteer time, they still need to get those on.
- 6) In that same envelope, ya'll were given a copy of the Rules of the NEC. I use as an example, the vote on Pamplico, we did an e-mail vote. There are some things we do as a body, we can't put everything line for line in the Constitution because they're just procedures. Our DEC doesn't have any procedures. National has procedures, rule 9 in that book covers voting by e-mail and how it works and lays it all out in detail. My recommendation to the Cmdr and this body is that form a committee or a working group of some folks to put together a set of rules like that for the DEC so we can get our procedures set down and have something in writing for what we're doing.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: So we're looking for a motion to formulate a committee for, I presume, 2018-2019, to develop a procedural rules committee for the DEC.

IPDC Scherer: I make a motion for a committee to be formed for that.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Second.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any discussion?

Dept Historian Gooden: Will the J/A be part of that?

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Absolutely. All in favor? Any opposed? The ayes have it.

Dept Adj Diener:

- 7) Just a reminder to remind your posts that Law Cadet applications are due May 1<sup>st</sup>. Every year we have some that come late, and it causes problems.

8) Coins and shirts are due May 1<sup>st</sup>. The deadline for the rooms at convention is April 30<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't made reservations at the Marriott, you need to get them in because the rooms are starting to run out.

P-130 Adj Walton: I just want to remind everyone that we need one order form and one check for the shirts and one order form and check for the coins. I've already had to send some of those back.

D-4 Cmdr Goodman: What if someone gives you an order after you already sent your order in?

Dept Adj Diener: If we're within the deadline, you can send in a change to your order but there's reasons for separate checks and one check from each post for coins and one check from each post for shirts. Ok, the chairman of the Trophies & Awards sub-committee has asked to make some comments.

Trophies & Awards Chairman Davis: Cmdr, the sub-committee met on March 28 to review the awards and select the nominees. I'd like to make a couple of recommendations. The first award we looked at was Dept Historian of the Year. This award was created three years, he established the criteria for the award. In three years, only two have been submitted. It's our opinion to do away with this award and recommend we do something else.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Ok, we have a recommendation. Do we have a motion?

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I make a motion that we dis-establish the Dept Historian of the Year award.**

**D-16 Cmdr DeFrehn: Second.**

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any discussion?

Dept Historian Gooden: This was created three years ago, every year we've had a submission for that award. We have awards like the Adjutant of the Year, been around 26 years, we get five of those from the other posts. And the Historian Award, percentage wise, is doing much better than that award. But we need to stop at looking at trying to decrease awards. That award was created to help the History book program out. That award was established to help the membership out because one of the criteria is to have five brand new members. To me that's taking away Esprit De Corps from the organization. We need to look at all awards, when you look Adjutant of the year, we had three submissions this year. Post of the year, we had five submissions this year. And so forth. So, let's look at a young award in its early stages. We need to go out and promote that award, Post Cmdr's, District Cmdr's and Historians at the Post.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: That's not the only award we're going to talk about, right?

Dept Cmdr Strauss: No.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: As far as consideration for awards, something was given to my attention, we give out Fireman, Law Enforcement but we leave out Dispatcher. They should be recognized as well.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any further discussion? Ayes? Nays? We'll go with a hand vote because that was pretty close.

Trophies & Awards Chairman Davis: Just a reminder we already do have a Post History Book Contest.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: All in favor please raise your hand? All opposed? Let's do that again. All in favor raise your hand, opposed? Ok, Nays have it. Commander, you have something else?**

Trophies & Awards Chairman Davis: The committee also reviewed our awards. We noted that two of our awards are named after Legionnaires, E. Roy Stone Legionnaire of the year Awards and the Frederick Carlos Jones Adjutant of the Year Award. But the Post Commander Achievement or Department Commander

Achievement Award have been named to honor a Legionnaire of our Department. Therefore, we would like to make a recommendation that the DEC approve naming the Department Commander Post Achievement Award after our first Department Commander, Julius H. Walker Post Achievement Award. This award will be given to any post that achieves the award criteria.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: I make a motion that we change the name.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: I second that motion.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I just want to add that award goes to any post that meets the criteria, would be eligible, it could be six, or 10.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any other discussion? Call for the vote. All in favor? Any opposed? Ayes have it.**

Trophies & Awards Chairman Davis: Commander, that the DEC approve naming the Post Commander's Achievement Award after our first African-American Department Commander, W.M. McLaughlin, who most of us know as Willie Mac. The Award title would be read as the W.M. McLaughlin Post Commander Achievement Award. This award would recognize the Post Commander of the Year.

**D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: I make a motion to name that award after PDC Willie McLaughlin.**

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any discussion?**

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We had a hard time with that one, we considered naming the Teacher of the Year Award for him because he was a teacher, but we ended up with that one.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: I'll call for the vote. All in favor? Any opposed? (All present voted in favor of naming the award the W.M. McLaughlin Post Commander Achievement Award.)** I'll call on the Adjutant who is going to give us some updates on The American Legion Riders.

Dept Adj Diener: There are three amendments that were submitted for consideration that are being passed out. The amendments go to the ALR Executive Committee and then they come to this body, if this body approves the amendments it goes to the ALR Convention. If this body disapproves those amendments, they stop right here. That's a change. It used to be it went to their convention and then it came to this body but now it comes here. There were three amendments:

- 1) The first amendment is to allow the Chapter Directors to be SAL or Auxiliary members. Currently Chapter Director and Assistant Directors have to be Legion members.
- 2) The second amendment covers the changes to the documentation from DD-214 to go along with making that first amendment work.
- 3) The third amendment would change the wording where The State Director and Asst Director would still be required to be a Legion member.

That's basically the three amendments we have to vote on today. I would like to call on Cecil Phillips, Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman:

C & Bylaw Chairman Phillips: Let me point out that first the Constitution & Bylaws committee takes all these submissions very seriously. We know each post, and in this case, each Chapter are submitting these for the good of their Chapter. There are things that come into play when you want to change the Constitution and Bylaws because you have to be very careful. I've got some people in here that are pretty good friends, and they want things to go their way and most of the time they don't. These recommendations to change the constitution

and bylaws, the C & Bylaws committee disapproved these. The reason for this and we also discussed this with the Department J/A who was at the meeting. The reason being is the Legion Riders is a program of the Legion. And not all members are members of The American Legion, they are members of the Auxiliary or the SAL and that is one of the reason for disapproval. Also, only local post chapters and the Department are represented by The American Legion Riders. There is no National American Legion Riders. And if that ever does come to pass, everything in the National Riders Constitution and Bylaws would filter down to the Department. And those are the main reason that the Constitution & Bylaws Committee recommended disapproval.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: We heard from the Chairman of the C & Bylaws Committee. Do we have a motion to accept that?**

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I make a motion that we accept on all three amendments, what the results are from the Constitution & Bylaws Committee.**

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: And I second that.**

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Ok, I'll go into discussion but at this time I'd like to recognize, as a voice, our Department Riders Director, Darrell Hodges.

ALRSC Director Hodges: The reason I'm here today is I want you to make an informed decision. And I've heard why the committee decided not to do that. First thing, let me remind you what the Riders do for this Department. For the past six years, our Department Commanders have been able to go to the National Convention and give away over \$280,000 to The American Legion Legacy Fund. The Riders made that happen. Out of that \$280,000, the one Chapter that's in trouble right now that's really wanting this, has donated \$31,000 of that money. Out of that \$280,000, they're responsible for \$31,000. So they're not an inactive chapter, they're an active chapter. So why do we need to change it. Well, there's not a blue-hat in that chapter that's willing to step up and take the leadership role. I'm sure all you District Commanders have seen it in your post. I've seen it in my post. I can tell you right now, if I wasn't willing to be the Ride Director at my post, Post 15 in Sumter, we wouldn't have a Chapter. Promise you, it wouldn't happen. Right now we got one chapter that's in trouble but later on it could be one of your chapters in your districts.

I talked with a gentleman named Bob Sussen at National. National has absolutely no problem with this, none. And to whit, several states, Ohio and Pennsylvania come to mind. And I realize that all Departments are different, but they're all doing it. But they all asked me, like, why are you doing excluding people, what is the issue. We're not breaking new ground across the Legion. Some do, some don't, we're all different. IT's not new, it's being done already. So, I've been told, how will this body going to maintain control. If it's an Auxiliary member or a Son, that's a Chapter Director, how do you maintain control, when for a lack of a better term, they go rogue.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, it's already happened before, it happened in Murrells Inlet. And that was a Legionnaire. what happened? You people was able to revoke their chapter, that's what you do. The Chapter Director, and it's right in our Constitution & Bylaws, right in the Legion Riders Constitution & Bylaws, there's two things that come to mind. First thing, under Nature, Section III, The ALRSC is a program of the ALDSC subject to rules and regulations and polices and oversight and control thereof. That is black & White, you have control, ok? Under that, when you get to "Organization", Section III, Post chapters in violation of the ALRSC constitution will be suspended and all members and all members will be denied voice and vote in Department meetings.

You have the control no matter if a Sons or Auxiliary were the chapter director, it's already in black and white. So therefore, I don't see why it would be real problem with us allowing a Sons to maintain a Chapter. And oh, by the way, Commander. You mentioned talking about something getting delivered and brought back. We have a Pony Express. I don't even know if you guys know that. If you yourself don't even have time, you contact the Ride Director in your District at one your posts and say, I need a Pony Express set up. I need membership cards back to the Post as quick as possible, or anything else. We have a Pony Express, you probably didn't know that

it's something else that we offer. These are things that if we're not willing to help a chapter that's in trouble, you know, then I mean, what else are we supposed to do, you know, we're going to lose them.

Right now there's a proposal in front of the Riders right now, again, to help our Department look good for the Centennial that's coming up. Right now, there's a proposal in front of the Riders that we visit, as chapters, each and every single post in this state. It's going to take every single chapter in this state that we have to make that happen. So that's another reason we want to save this chapter. So that's why we're asking for these changes.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Thank you. If you have discussion on it, address your questions to the chair.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: On the Riders Executive Committee, it's based on one vote per Chapter. Will the Chapter Director if he or she they or whatever, is the SAL or Auxiliary, will they get a vote on the Riders Executive Committee? Even though not a Legion member?

Dept Adj Diener: Having looked at the Constitution, the changes that were written yes, they would get a vote. They would be a member of the Executive Committee.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Discussion?

PDC Lysaght: Question, did I understand that we're considering, in effect, to help one post?

Dept Cmdr Strauss: If you would direct your comments to the Chair.

PDC Lysaght: I'm sorry. My apologies. We are addressing these amendments so we can affect the lack of membership in one chapter, is that correct?

Dept Cmdr Strauss: That's correct.

ALDSC Director Hodges: Not lack of membership.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: The question was directed to the Commander.

PDC Lysaght: Second question. To be an American Legion Rider, do you have to be a Legionnaire? To an SAL member, do you have to be a Legionnaire? To be an Auxiliary member, do you have to be a Legionnaire? The way your amendments are written, for us to vote in favor, we would have to consider all non-members being able to participate, period with full coverage, am I interpreting that correctly?

Dept Cmdr Strauss: I'll ask the Adjutant on that one.

Dept Adj Diener: The SAL and Auxiliary members can be members, currently, can be members of the Riders.

PDC Lysaght: But they're not Legionnaires.

Dept Adj Diener: Yeah, the way the Riders are set up, they can be members of the Riders, they just currently can't be the Chapter Director or the Chapter Asst Director. There's a limitation on there that says the Chapter Director and Asst Director have to be a Legionnaire but other members of the Riders, the membership includes Legionnaires, SAL and Auxiliary.

PDC Lysaght: So our Constitution & Bylaws sub-committee is in error ruling that these amendments not be approved? The first line of the SAL recognizes they are participants in The American Legion Dept of SC because of the support and caring and (inaudible) for those that have gone on. This is a veteran's organization, you keep cutting these limbs off the trees and pretty soon, anybody at any time anywhere can come in and do whatever they intend to do. I'm not opposed to changes, please understand that Commander. But I'm opposed to we start diluting too much to satisfy different things. Pretty soon this body is going to spend a lot of time in

Columbia looking at tons of amendments to appease different posts, chapters, squadrons, auxiliary. This body was not built for that, it shouldn't be built for that. If the ALR have problems and situations that they can address, they should address the issue head-on. And if it is a lack of leadership, welcome to the boat. There is not one of the 160 some odd posts in this state that don't have leadership problems. 160, not one, but 160 plus. If we take measures in this type of meeting, collectively with this leadership sitting here to try and resolve the issue, that's sad. My best example is the new chairman of the Rifle Raffle. She took the initiative to increase sales by over 2800 tickets, but she offered a carrot at the end with the split. Which in all likelihood, she's probably probably going to hit the numbers. My concern is, as the Director said, we need to make an informed decision, think long and hard about allowing people who are not really Legionnaires, to begin to ease into the fabric of this Department. Thank you.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: I don't know if this is the right time to ask this but I think our Riders have the right to know, our Riders voted on this to bring these amendments to us and to the Constitution Cmte and I think the Riders have a right to know who's supporting them and who's not so I'm not too sure if this is the right time but I think we need to do a roll call vote.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: We're not ready for a vote right now, this is just the comment time.

IPDC Scherer: I think the intent of this is not just for that one post but any chapter that comes up that's having a problem. So any one of the 20 chapters could have a problem so this is a far-reaching effort for that.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: I was contacted a mbr of our post, Alan Osborne, about this issue. As I understand what the concern is, if they do not have someone to take over as Director then the whole thing collapses, and they don't have a chapter, is that not correct? So what they're trying to do is salvage the chapter by allowing this to go through. I personally don't see this as a huge problem but that's just my opinion.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I have a problem with changing the constitution, the bible, for an organization, for one post. And I have a question, why is a post with 728 members, why can't they come up with a Riders Director or are there other issues going on there that's stopping a Legionnaire from being the Director of that Chapter. There's just too many questions for me coming out of that with 728 people. I mean, it's like, hey, I can't get somebody to be post 6's Commander, well, would a SON do it for us? That's what we're asking.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: One of the questions with it is I have is if it's an Auxiliary member, I'm also an Auxiliary member, legally under my own self. I'm also a member of the Legion. Therefore, my allegiance though, is with The American Legion. The Auxiliary, we came across this already once with an Auxiliary unit, the post was disbanded, they are still an entity of themselves because they are not The American Legion. If for some unforeseen reason, a Post goes under, they still have a Riders group, they can't have a Riders group, but where does that Auxiliary member that still wants to be a Rider and has already been a Director, where is her allegiance actually going to be? With the Post that's disbanded or with her Auxiliary? So, I just want you to think about that too because that Auxiliary member, once she's been a member and if she divorces the man that she became a member under, she no longer has to worry about it, she's an Auxiliary member forever. So as long as she pays her dues or her PUFL or however they have it in the Auxiliary and I'm a female bringing this up, to ask these things. So I just asked that question, Commander.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Originally, I came here, and I was against it, I was going to vote no. However. Cmdr Lysaght said something that made a lot of sense. He said, we're looking for leaders. Let the leadership decide, right here, in this room. Of the voting members of the DEC, how many are Riders members do we have? I don't think it is our place, we have controls over them. Every time we need something, who do we call? We call on the Riders. I'm going to have to support it, like Cmdr Lysaght said. They selected the leaders, I their leadership decide, but in the end, we still have the final say so. But let them decide. They're doing a fantastic job now.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: I know like in my post most of my Legionnaires are very old and I don't mean that to be an insult. And it might be an issue they're having, they don't have a Legionnaire that's young enough to step up.

And I don't mean disrespect by that so that means a SON might need to step up. It doesn't mean the post leaders don't want to, they may not be able to.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: I had an opportunity, this has been a big question I heard all week. I called my post Cmdrs and Adjutant's, and I listened to them. It's like Vice Cmdr Richardson said is what they told me, let them decide, the posts voted four to three but let them decide what they want to do for leadership.

PDC Lysaght: I think what Cmdr Richardson is an excellent point, let the leadership decide their fate. But if you look at the way these are written and you're asking us to consider these, that's where I got heartburn. Look at amendment # 2. If you read amendment # 2, the way it's written, "or other supporting documents as to their eligibility for these positions". What other supporting documents besides a DD-214? What are they talking about? So we pass it and we're in a box. In fact, I've heard the speeches, he's a good guy and he wanted to be in the Service, but he couldn't, he can still be part of the program. I'm trying to positive, not negative on this. I just to make sure we understand what we are voting on. And I think the ALR do a fantastic job, I was honored to walk up to the podium with a \$59,000 check. Absolutely! They do a great job, they've escorted me to food banks and everybody in this room have used the Riders. But the Riders are their worst enemy. Because see, I can't be a Rider. Oh, yeah, I can walk and chew gum at the same time, but I can't be a Rider.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: You can't ride a bike?

PDC Lysaght: I don't have a bike. Therefore, there's only two types of members in the Riders, only two. And I don't qualify for either one. But the second one means I have to be dead, but I have (inaudible) membership. I don't have a bike so therefore I can't join.

D-14 Cmdr Brandt: I got a Rider group of mine and the best thing they say when you bring a Rider in, you get them to be a Legionnaire. But to answer your question, you don't have to be a ride a bike to be a Rider. The Riders I got, they are Legionnaires but there are posts that can't Legionnaires to join so I see no reason we can't accept the proposals.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: There being no further discussion, there are three ways we can do it, a roll call vote, a voice vote or we can do a ballot.

**IPDC Scherer: I call for a roll call vote.**

**D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: All in favor for a roll call vote? Ayes have it. We'll do it individually. Ok, as we call out your name, Say Ay, aye, aye or Nay, nay, nay on 1,2,3. That way we'll do it, nay would be you're for passage of the amendment, Yay would be your against it.**

Dept Adj Diener: No, the recommendation of the committee is that we disapprove it so it's actually the opposite way. So, if your voting yes to disapprove it, that's going to get too complicated. As long as we got the vote down, if you approve it, it goes forward it, or you vote to disapprove it, it dies.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: That's contrary to the original motion.

Dept Adj Diener: He's right, the initial motion was to accept the Constitution & Bylaws sub-committee's recommendation. So, to do it just approved or disapproved, they would have to change their initial motion.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: We're voting on the original motion. So a yes vote is to disapprove the recommendation. Now I'm getting confused.

Dept Adj Diener: And the original motion is to disapprove so they would have to change their original motion.

If we could just get the folks that made the motion to amend their motion to say, instead of accepting or not accepting the committee’s recommendation, just change the motion to say we accept the amendments or disapprove the amendments and that way we have the vote easier.

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: My motion is that if we approve or disapprove the written amendment. I make the motion that we disapprove this amendment so if we disapprove it, it stops. If we approve it, it goes on.**

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: I second it.**

**Dept Adj Diener: If we do approve it, this goes to the Riders convention.**

Dept Cmdr: Ok, we’ll do the roll call vote.

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, when we do the roll call vote, you’ve to give me three yes’s or no’s. Unless ya’ll want to do them one at a time.

Vice Cmdr Price: We really didn’t discuss the 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment, I have issues with the 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Discussion’s over.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: My motion is for the first amendment because that’s what we called for in the beginning. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> will go away if # 1 doesn’t go. But we still have to look at all three, I have a question on # 3 as well but if # 1 doesn’t pass, what’s the point of # 2 & # 3.?

Dept Cmdr Strauss: The original thing was for approval of the recommendations and the recommendations was not to approve any of them.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: But the first call for a motion was only for the first one, you said let’s do 1,2,3.

Dept Adj Diener: We’ll do that. This vote will be for the first amendment.

Amendment # 1 – **Approved and forwarded to ALRSC Convention 14 yes -9 no’s**

**Change to (read: All Chapter Directors and Assistant Directors must be members in good standing with the ALRSC, the American Legion Department of SC, the Sons of the American Legion or the American Legion Auxiliary of the Post where the ALRSC is located)**

PDC Scherer	yes	Historian Gooden	no
Vice Cmdr Richardson	yes	Vice Cmdr Britt	no
D-3 Cmdr Lewis	yes	Vice Cmdr Poulos	no
D-4 Cmdr Goodman	yes	Vice Cmdr Price	no
D-5 Cmdr Wright	yes	D-1 Cmdr Jarvis	no
D-6 Cmdr Kvam	yes	D-8 Cmdr Shaffer	no
D-7 Cmdr Bethea	yes	D-12 Cmdr Davis	no
D-8 Cmdr Sweet	yes	D-18 Cmdr Pouncy	no
D-10 Cmdr Cantrell	yes	D-19 Cmdr Gibbons	no
D-11 Cmdr Lonergan	yes		
D-14 Cmdr Brandt	yes		
D-15 Cmdr Williams	yes		
D-16 Cmdr Defrehn	yes		
D-20 Cmdr Rucker	yes		
	14		9

Vice Cmdr Richardson: The Riders need to make sure they have 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote to change the Constitution.

Dept Adj Diener: When they vote on it. Because the Riders can still vote no on this and it ends.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Ok, do we have a motion?

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I make a motion that we concur with the Constitution & Bylaws Cmte and disapprove it.**

**Dept Historian Gooden: Second.**

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I would like somebody to clarify, I'm assuming it's a SONS membership card or Auxiliary membership card.

Dept Adj Diener: We can't really assume that, once you are all are voting, it's going to be what that wording is.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: I call for the roll call vote.

Dept Adj Diener: It's the same thing, approved it goes forward, disapproved it is dead.

**Amendment # 2 – Approved and forwarded to the ALRSC Convention 12 yes-11 no's  
(Change to read: All Chapter Directors and Assistant Directors will submit copies of their DD-214 or other supporting document as to their eligibility for these positions within 30 days of taking office to the Department Executive Director)**

PDC Scherer	yes	Historian Gooden	no
Vice Cmdr Richardson	yes	Vice Cmdr Britt	no
D-3 Cmdr Lewis	yes	Vice Cmdr Poulos	no
D-5 Cmdr Wright	yes	Vice Cmdr Price	no
D-6 Cmdr Kvam	yes	D-1 Cmdr Jarvis	no
D-7 Cmdr Bethea	yes	D-4 Cmdr Goodman	no
D-9 Cmdr Sweet	yes	D-8 Cmdr Shaffer	no
D-10 Cmdr Cantrell	yes	D-12 Cmdr Davis	no
D-11 Cmdr Lonergan	yes	D-15 Cmdr Williams	no
D-14 Cmdr Brandt	yes	D-18 Cmdr Pouncy	no
D-16 Cmdr Defrehn	yes	D--19 Cmdr Gibbons	no
D-20 Cmdr Rucker	yes		
	12		11

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Do we have a motion on amendment # 3?**

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I'll try to keep it easy. I make a motion that we concur with the Constitution & Bylaws Cmte and disapprove this. Move it on with an approved, kill it with a disapproved.**

**D-14 Cmdr Brandt: I second it.**

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Any discussion on this?

Vice Cmdr Price: If we are going to allow Auxiliary or SAL to be a Chapter Director, that's like saying, you can be a Sergeant, but you cannot go any higher. So why are we limiting them to being a Legionnaire if they want to become a State Director? On one hand you're saying they can be a Chapter Director but you're saying you can't be a State Director. To me you're limiting growth. If you're going to let them be a Chapter Director, you got to let them be a State Director

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: I'll call for the roll call vote:**

**Amendment # 3: - Approved and forwarded to the ALRSC Convention 12 yes – 11 no's**  
**Change to Read: (The ALRSC State Director and ALRSC Assistant State Director will be elected from the Chapter Directors who are members in good standing with the American Legion Department of South Carolina)**

PDC Scherer	yes	Historian Gooden	no
Vice Cmdr Richardson	yes	Vice Cmdr Britt	no
D-1 Cmdr Jarvis	yes	Vice Cmdr Poulos	no
D-3 Cmdr Lewis	yes	Vice Cmdr Price	no
D-5 Cmdr Wright	yes	D-4 Cmdr Goodman	no
D-6 Cmdr Kvam	yes	D-8 Cmdr Shaffer	no
D-7 Cmdr Bethea	yes	D-12 Cmdr Davis	no
D-9 Cmdr Sweet	yes	D-14 Cmdr Brandt	no
D-10 Cmdr Cantrell	yes	D-15 Cmdr Williams	no
D-11 Cmdr Lonergan	yes	D-18 Cmdr Pouncy	no
D-16 Cmdr Defrehn	yes	D-19 Cmdr Gibbons	no
D-20 Cmdr Rucker	yes		
	12		11

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: What did we vote on, in layman's terms, what did we just say in the 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment? What did we just say yes to?

Dept Adj Diener: It says it goes onto the ALRSC Convention.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: What does that amendment say?

Dept Adj Diener: That amendment says the Director and Assistant Director have to be Legionnaires.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Ok, I'm going to give some updates. First of all, I wanted to recognize real quick, Darrell Hodges, Dave Mills, Jack Lonergan, Jim Jarvis, Roberta Poulos, Jim Defrehn, please rise. I just want to recognize these individuals for the outstanding job they did when our National Commander and National Vice Commander came to South Carolina. They went the extra mile, well done during that week, it went very well, and I just wanted to recognize all the individuals. Let's give them a hand (applause).

Commander Rucker, I just wanted to say, you don't have to stand. I just wanted to recognize him, he's going in for surgery on his hip. On behalf of the Executive Committee, wish you luck in that surgery, I hope everything goes good and hopefully you'll be able to work the phones from the bed. We're rooting for you and hopefully everything goes good.

The Alternate NEC position is open, as you saw during the roll call, there's going to be a special meeting called for that election, that date has not been set yet. We're kind of looking at dates but be looking for that in the near

future. We're not finished for the year on DEC meetings, we have the possible appeal so we're looking at a new date here before the convention to get that done.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Since it's such a short time before the convention, could this body make a motion that we postpone that vote until the convention, on the Alternate NEC?

Dept Cmdr Straus: I can't tell you what...

Dept Adj Diener: I asked the J/A that question and based on past precedents, the DEC can vote to delay and allow the Convention to take care of that.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: My next question is there anything that the Alt NEC would have to do before the Convention.

Dept Adj Diener: No.

**D-20 Cmdr Rucker: In that case I'd like to make a motion that we postpone the election and turn it over to the blue hats in June instead of having a special one for the DEC.**

**D-14 Cmdr Brandt: Second.**

Dept Cmdr Straus: Alright, any discussion?

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Yeah. The Constitution clearly states that if an Alt NEC moves forward, that this body will hold an election and will elect a new Alt NEC 'man. Now, we have known since February 3<sup>rd</sup> that this was going to take place. Why are we continuing to kick it down the road? We should have already taken care of this. This foolishness of just putting it off is accomplishing nothing. We're going against our constitution. Our constitution says we need to do it.

Historian Good: Let's vote. Let's get this over with.

PDC Lysaght: The constitution says we should appoint, however, we didn't get official notification until March 31<sup>st</sup>. That's number one.

Number Two, there a 30 day window, by the time you go through the paperwork, Maggie has to do all this stuff, go through all these hoops to get that information to National, we're going to go to the Convention and guess what, one of the amendments that's being considered is that the Immediate Past Dept Cmdr will become the Alternate NEC for one year to show our gratitude for service. So now in 30 days we're going to have to go through it all again if that amendment passes. I believe the motion of delaying or putting it on the table until the convention is not going to hurt this department one bit.

Dept Cmdr Straus: The resignation didn't officially take place until March 31<sup>st</sup>. He submitted a letter, but he could have rescinded it at any point, so it wasn't official until March 31<sup>st</sup>. And the Bylaws does say a special called meeting, this is a regular meeting.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: We could have a meeting on the first of April.

Cmdr Straus: But I don't want to have a whole bunch of meetings if we don't have to.

Dept Adj Diener: What the constitution says is we don't appoint someone to that position, the DEC elects someone to that position. So, in my opinion we need to get word out to all the posts so that any Legionnaire that wants to put their name in the hat that wants to run for that position ought to be allowed.

Dept Cmdr: Yes, it's not just open to our Executive Committee.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Are you saying there will be nominations from the floor?

Dept Adj Diener: There will already be an election at the convention. IF we did one now, that person would only serve until the convention.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: I'm just not a fan of special meetings.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: We have a second. Any other discussion? All in favor say aye?

Dept Adj Diener: Restate the motion.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: **The motion is to postpone the election until the convention and turn it over to the blue hats in June instead of having a special one for the DEC. All in favor say aye, any opposed? I think the ayes have it. Now is there any business for the good of The American Legion?**

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: I work for Shaw AF Base, I'm the club manager for Shaw but I'm also the person that does the special programs on Shaw and the project officer for the Air Show for the non-(inaudible) side. And I'm the project officer for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration and our 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration is called the Freedom Bash. We normally hold the Freedom Bash the Thursday before July 4<sup>th</sup> and it's normally for Base people and it's for 1,000, Cmdr Scherer has been there, Cmdr Richardson has been there. This year we're doing something different, last year the AF entertainment sent country music entertainment to Charleston AF Base that got rained out. This year my Cmdr and my deputy went to AF Entertainment and the said yes. So, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, we're going to have the performers Thompson Square and Easton Corbin come and do a show for the men and women of the armed forces who are eligible to get on base, including civilians who are eligible to get on base. Even though AF entertainment is sending them, they want us to make this an event, they want us to make it a festival. So, the Freedom Bash will include fireworks at the end. We're going to open the gates at 5:00, at 7:00 Thompson Square is going to perform until 8:15 and Houston is going to come and perform until 10:00 and then we're going to have a 25 minute, 40 second fireworks show and it's going to be a Disney type electronic show, that's a \$25,000 firework show. The money we use to pay for these shows is paid for troop dollars, so we try and save the troop dollars, it comes out of money we make in or organization, but we also ask for sponsorships so that's why I'm coming to you now is to talk to you about a sponsorship opportunity. A lot of our sponsors have 10 x 10 tents in the area where they can advertise their programs. We're offering The American Legion a 20 x 40 canopy which is going to have 8 tables underneath with 8 chairs around them, so you'll have a total of 64 chairs for members of The American Legion Dept of SC to come in and sit and get out of the sun. Second thing we're offering is we're going to have 120 bottles of water under the tent. There will be four cash bars in the area and one of the things I can promise you is one of them will be real close. I can't put it in there, but I can put it real close. Two reserved parking spots and then for those of you who are veterans but not ID card holders that you can get on military installations, you need to get on an EAL, which is a Entry Access List and we're going to submit a EAL for up to 50 people at your discretion on who that would be. Anybody else can get on but they have to be in a vehicle with a card-carrying holder.

The stage they're going to be performing on is 104' wide total, but out of that 104', wide, 32' of it is a 16' monitor on the side of the stage that is 25' high, that from 5:00 to 7:00 will be running advertisements on it where we'll be thanking our sponsors and I don't know if National has it or not but if they have an advertisement clip for 60 seconds we'll put that on there as well as part of the package.

Another thing we'll be offering is a 10 x 10 tent, in addition to the 20 x 40 so we can do a membership drive since membership begins the first of July. So, it's an opportunity to go out and get membership. We're expecting between 6,000 and 10,000 people at this event. We're inviting Charleston AF Base, Fort Jackson Army Base, Seymour Johnson AF Base in NC, all the bases in South Carolina are going to get invitations sent to them because it's free from the military. Thompson Square and Easton Corbin are doing this for a reduced price because they want to perform for the military and the retirees in the area, that's what they want to do. We're not opening the gates to the public, so for this, and it's going to be a little pricey, we're asking for a \$5,000

donation. Most of our sponsors are going to get a 10 x 10 tent but there's going to be offered this. And I'm offering it to the American Legion, I haven't talked to the VFW, I haven't talked to the DAV. I try to take care of The American Legion the best I can for these events. When we had the Air Show in 2016, The American Legion had a table set up at the entrance of the activity, we didn't charge the Legion anything for that, but I can't do it for this one. There's going to have to be a vote for it, but I'll recuse myself.

IPDC Scherer: Will the new driver's license get you on?

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: No, that will get you on the airline.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Before we go any further, do we have a motion for that?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I think we need to use the proper order here, first off, that needs to come to the Finance Cmte, that proposal.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: It doesn't need to go to the Finance Cmte if we don't have a motion.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Why have a motion if it doesn't get to the Finance Cmte first?

Dept Adj Diener: They can send it to the Finance Cmte so the Finance Cmte can make recommendations because per constitution anything non-budgeted to the Finance Cmte for a recommendation before it comes here.

**D-20 Cmdr Rucker: I make a motion for it to go to the Finance Cmte for study.**

**IPDC Cmdr Scherer: I'll second it.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Motion and second,** so I'll just refer it straight from there, referred to the Finance Cmte. We don't have to have a vote, I just referred right there. We'll vote on it later.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: What's the timing? We have to make a recommendation and we got to get a vote out of here and being that it's the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, we're not going to be able to wait. So how do you want to handle the process? We need to get it from Finance to the DEC before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: I make a motion he e-mails it out.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: We can do it at state convention.

Dept Adj Diener: You can't hold one during the convention, you can do it at the Post convention DEC meeting on Sunday.

**District 1 Cmdr Jarvis: My recommendation is I grab the Finance Cmte, we get together, we get the word to the Cmdr and we accomplish the vote by e-mail.**

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Would you re-state that?

**D-3 Cmdr Lewis: I second.**

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I make the motion that this is referred to the Finance Cmte, the Finance Cmte gives that decision to the Cmdr, the Cmdr gets it emailed out for a vote by the DEC. Let's say that out front of everybody right now.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: For the recommendation by the Finance Cmte. All in favor of that? Actually, is there any discussion on it first? Ok. All in favor of that? Any opposed? Ayes have it.**

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: During our opening ceremony, we always talk about POW/MIA and repatriation. If anybody is in Charleston on April 19 at Carolina Memorial Gardens, one of our MIA's has been identified and is coming to Charleston to be laid to rest next to his wife. The last time he was seen was in 1950. So, if you're in the Charleston area, and if you want to come down to Memorial Garden of Valor, we have the Chapel there and we're going to take him over and lay him to rest.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: What was the date on that?

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: April 19<sup>th</sup>. Sgt Finley James Daniels.

PNEC Hennis: Mr. Cmdr, I've got a question. The money that we receive from the Pamplico property, are there any plans on what to do with that \$20,000.?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We talked about it at the last Finance Cmte and we were leaning toward putting in the savings account.

Dept Mbrship/Programs Director Massaro: We jumped through the hoops and got those letters out this week, if we get those 115 back, from Post 172, right now we're 189 ahead towards that 100%, if we those from Jim too, you're looking we already got 25% of it nailed down. I'm just reiterating what Mike said, this is very doable. I'm sure if we beat them bushes hard enough, we can make this happen. Also, the Law Cadet program was mentioned here, Russ has oversight and I just do the paperwork. The Director, Steffonie Cockerill was talking with me the other day and she said they really don't see a lot of members from the Legion. Not only can they show up at registration and graduation, but they would love to see blue-caps walking around all week long. We are welcome there with open arms at all times. We don't get that much, I mean, these guys are counselors, if they had just an extra half a dozen people walking around, it would carry a lot of weight.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: How much is it per meal?

Dept Mbrship/Programs Director Massaro: Right now, it's \$5 per head, \$300 per meal. They are really stretching it, they're getting a lot of police officers to come out. They come in and bring the roasters and grills and everything. Hamburgers and hot dogs don't sound like much, but I remember when I was 16 or 17 I could slice down three or four of those. And snacks, just throw a few of them out there.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: If you do sponsor a meal, your name goes in the program, maybe you could tag-team up with your local police department, half from the post and half from the police department. But we need some sponsors now because the Academy dropped that part of the sponsorship.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: I'd like everyone to thing off me next Saturday, Lake City 73 wanted to turn in their Charter. After 60 letters and 40 cards and talking with people in the community and the schools. The only program they have is boys state. They have 21 that signed up and now they have 105%. This was a post that didn't have a chance and now they're together. But Saturday they're going to make a decision on their post.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Is this a permanent thing? The white hats. The white hats on our side of the room? (laughter).

Dept Adj Diener: That was a space issue, there's no room for them over here.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: I'm going to give some closing remarks real quick. The Dept J/A made a ruling on my candidacy for the office of Alt. NEC. He said not only was I eligible but if I were elected Alt NEC and PDC, I would get two votes. I immediately right after that I don't intend to vote two votes. We need to change the by-laws, no one should get more than one vote on this committee. So, I'm just putting it out there, and I will only cast one vote and I'm putting it in the minutes and I'm saying that here today. That If I'm elected as Alt NEC, I will only cast one vote at the DEC meeting. I just want to put that out there for my closing remarks. I want to

recognize Jim Kvam and the Centennial Cmte, I think we're going to have real good convention. Please get the word out there about the coins and shirts because we don't want them to convention and now know about the coins and shirts. And you know if most of the Cmdrs got those packets, you know how it is, Cmdr's don't always convey what they get in the mail. Please let them know all orders have to come in my May 1<sup>st</sup> and size up.

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: For those that have not picked up their shirts, they are in the office, you can see Miss Maggie, she'll have you sign your life away. (laughter).

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: They're only tight if you have a gut (laughter).

Dept Cmdr Strauss called on Chaplain Quarles for the benediction and closed the meeting.

For God and Country,

Nick I. Diener  
Department Adjutant

ND/mm