



Department Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
June 4, 2017



The Department Executive Committee met on Sunday June 4, 2017 at the Columbia Marriott, 1200 Hampton St, Cola, SC 29201.

**Present:**

Dept Cmdr Mike Strauss  
Dept Adjutant Nick Diener  
NEC Bud Hennis  
Alt NEC Gary Mitchell  
Imm PDC 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  
D-1 Cmdr Jim Jarvis  
D-2 -Vacant  
D-3 Cmdr Melvin Pearson  
D-4 Vacant  
D-5 Cmdr Jack Wright  
D-6 Cmdr Jim Kvam  
D-7 Cmdr Vacant  
D-9 Cmdr Isaac Miller  
D-11 Cmdr Jim Rabon  
D-12 Cmdr Charlie Davis  
D-13 Carlton Patterson  
D-14 Cmdr Mike Brandt  
D-15 Cmdr Leroy Williams  
D-17 Cmdr Jack Lonergan  
D-18 Cmdr Larry Pouncy  
D-19 Cmdr Grady Richardson  
D-20 Cmdr Robin Rucker  
Dept Chaplain Bill Quarles  
Dept Sgt-at-Arms George Oxner

**Absent:**

Dept Historian Gooden  
D-8 Cmdr Bill Wade  
D-9 Isaac Miller  
D-10 Cmdr Russ Cantrell  
D-16 Cmdr Jim DeFrehn

**Also Present:**

NVC Fae Casper	Joe Dipasqua, Dept Asst Sgt-at-Arms
PDC W. M. McLaughlin	Leo Knorr, Dept Asst Sgt-at-Arms
PDC/PDA Jim Hawk	Darlene Walton, P-130 Adj
PDC Bob Gibbons	Sherri Scherer, Unit 200
PDC John Palmer	Carolyn Price, P-71
Dept Exec Dir. M. May	

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. Cmdr Strauss called the roll and announced there was a quorum to conduct a meeting.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: You've received your minutes, do we have a motion to waive the reading?

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

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: All in favor say aye, opposed? Very Good. (motion to accept the minutes as published as passed and so ordered. Finance Report, Grady? Do you have a finance report?**

D-20 Cmdr/Finance Chairman Richardson: No.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Very Good. I'll call on NEC'man Hennis who wants to talk about Resolution 16.

**NEC Hennis: At our last meeting there was a motion made to accept what our Boys State Director asked to kind of override but not do away with Resolution 16 concerning respect for the flag. A motion was made and it was seconded and it was amended. At this time, I'd like to make a motion to rescind that motion, it was not necessary for a motion. We do not have the power to disregard a Resolution of any kind and by making this motion, it would. So at this time I'd like to make a motion to rescind the motion made by Jack Wright and then it was amended.**

**Imm PDC Scherer: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: We have a motion and a second, any discussion? All in favor, any opposed? Ayes have it.**

D-5 Cmdr Wright: I think we just approved the minutes as presented. I think we need to take some kind of actions to correct those minutes to reflect this action that was taken.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: That will reflect in the next minutes. Ok, Committee appointments.

Adjutant Diener proceeded to read the new appointments for the sub-committees and the chairmen. (please see attached). **Do I have a motion to accept the appointments that the Commander has made?**

**NEC Hennis: I make a motion to accept.**

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

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Will we be getting those?

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Yes, with all the phone numbers. All in favor say aye, opposed? Passed.**

Adjutant Diener proceeded to read the SAL officers for 2017/2018. (please see attached).

**NEC Hennis: I make a motion to accept the new officers of the SAL.**

**D-5 Cmdr Wright: Second.**

Dept Cmdr Strauss: We have a motion and a second, any discussion?

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Yes, on that list I heard the name of Ike Miller and I've also heard the name Ike Miller for a couple of other positions and at the same time I notice that Ike Miller is not present at this meeting. And I

like Ike and I think he does a good job but is he dragging himself out too thin? His first responsibility is to the Department of South Carolina so I'm just worried that Ike, while his intentions are good, his resources are limited and he's going to be stretched out too thin.

Imm PDC Scherer: I talked with Ike this morning. He spent the last seven hours in an airport trying to get here. He was there last night, they had a connection for one flight (inaudible) nothing got here and the other one left a little bit early so he got delayed, they didn't have another flight out (inaudible) and he was at the airport, not even in a motel room so that's why he got delayed.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: All in favor of approving the SAL officers say aye, any opposed? Looks like the ayes have it.**

Dept Adj Diener read the ALR Officers for 2017/2018.

**D-5 Cmdr Wright: I make a motion to approve.**

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

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: All in favor of approving the ALR officers as they elected them, any opposed? The ayes have it.**

Dept Adj Diener: I'll go ahead and do the Administrative updates. According to our department constitution there is a requirement in there to do training for the new officers within 30 days. **I'd like to ask to do what we do as we have the past and ask you all to allow us to do that training at the fall conference so we don't have to expend additional expenses and planning separate training from the conference.**

**Imm PDC Scherer: I make a motion do that at the fall conference.**

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

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: We have a motion and a second. Do we have any discussion? All in favor, any opposed? Ayes have it.**

Dept Adj Diener: I'd like to ask that someone makes a motion to allow if we have any vacancies to any of the committees throughout the year that we allow the commander to make those appointments without coming back to the DEC for approval.

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: I make that motion the commander have the authority to fill all those appointments without coming back to the DEC.**

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: Commissions and Committees?**

**Vice Cmdr Poulos: Yes.**

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

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: All in favor say aye, opposed? Carried.**

Dept Adj Diener: That's all I have on administrative updates.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Membership is big. I've been on the membership team for a long time, it's something that's very near and dear to my heart and excites me so at this time I call on the Membership Chairman, Robin Rucker.

D-20 Cmdr/Mbrship Chmn Rucker: Thank you Commander for the appointment. We had a lot of fun, met a lot of new people, some really great people throughout the state and we're looking forward to doing that again. We

got to the end of this month to reach our goal, ok? We got within 382? Is that what it is, with everything. I picked up 30 something and think Nick's got 60 at the office. And so we just need a couple more like Goose Creek, if I can ever get Jim to do something down there. I mean, just 'cause they got over 100%, I think they should try to to get 200%. I'm just kidding, Jim's done a great job. I do want to announce our training, we'll have another training module this year to go out. Jim, what are we calling that? Jim Jarvis? It's not a training module, what do we call it?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I call it anything but training.

D-20 Cmdr/Mbrship Chmn Rucker: Ok, How about a retreat. I do have the dates for you, but if you want to write this down, ok? And we do want to get this out just so you know before anybody else knows. (he read off a list of dates and places). Did I get them wrong?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: At least that's not what we talked about.

Dept Adj Diener: We'll get an e-mail out.

D-20 Cmdr/ Mbrship Chmn Rucker: We'll get an e-mail out. The main thing is, forget about the districts, if you're close to one of these training sites, come to it. What we want to emphasize this year and I won't keep you long but we have changed the module, ok? This year we are not only going to be pressing for new members but for renewals. We are down about 67% from National for renewals, ok? That's what hurt us this year from reaching 100%. We had almost a thousand new members throughout the state, a thousand new ones. But our renewals was only about 81% renewals, ok? That's what we're going to work on this year, that's going to be our emphasis. Any questions?

Dept Cmdr Strauss: He emphasized renewals, to be on a good renewal program for the department, we really should be about 90% And we know who the renewal people are because some of you had to go and get them recently. How about instead of waiting to get them at the end of the year, why not work on those guys right now. Work on those renewals so you don't have to wait until the end of the year. Work on them right now, reach out to them, talk with them, get them to renew their dues. You have your cards now, you'll get them before you leave today, getting those cards into post hands is going to speed up renewals. The quicker we get them into post hands the quicker we start the renewal process. Get that 172 list right now. Send them a letter and SASE, think about that, if you mail 20 of them and you get one back, that pays for that postage right there. And then you'll probably have that guy or girl in your post. So think about getting an oversize envelope, put another envelope in there, write them a nice letter, put your meeting dates on there. Getting that 172 to renew right now is bonus member in your post.

I'd like to talk about my them. aA lot of you got to meet my wife for the first time yesterday, some of you know my wife. Back when I had my second daughter there, the tallest one on the stage, she's 14 years old. I was the Commander of Post 71 and I'd keep that girl in a carrier right underneath while I had the meeting. Thank goodness she never cried (laughter). She was always quiet during the meeting.

It was kind of crazy, at Christmas that year my wife got sick and in fact she wasn't going to work, they fired her, that was right at Christmas.

That was a rough time for me at that time. American Legion Post 71, I didn't go and ask them for anything but I think they kind of knew, I had a newborn baby and my wife was sick in the hospital.

My wife lost her job, I had a newborn baby and needless to say I was probably pretty screwed. But my post had my back. A lot of the fellows found out that I had a streak of bad luck there and they came through for me. A lot of them got gift cards, a lot of them just came up and just handed me cash.

My wife got another job after she was done being sick, no paycheck, no job. But they got me through that hard time. It made me think that The American Legion's got my back. It made me very loyal to my post, Post 71. And I'll never forget that.

I know a lot of people throughout the state, I was active in the State at that time and they helped me out too. I'm very, very grateful for that and I'll never forget you guys had my back, and girls had my back.

That's why my theme this year is going to be "We got your six". I've been in the military, you all have been in the military, and you know your six o'clock is behind you so you got my back. So you've got my six. So we've got to let the veterans know out there The American Legion has their six. It might be if there's a sick veteran at the hospital that we go up there and meet with the sick veteran. That's something we need to do some more. We need to let the veterans know that The American Legion has their six just like you guys had my six. That's why our theme is "We got your six". So hopefully we'll gear our stuff towards The American Legion programs, Boys State, Law Cadet, I think we're just going to have a great year and I look forward to working hard for you. That being said, do we have any business for the Good of the Legion today? Alright, are we ready to wrap it up today?

Vice Cmdr Britt: One thing the district commanders need to know, you can go on the national webpage, there's a letter already out there, you put in your post, it will print the name with the members name on it, all you got to do is get your commander sign it. Just go to the webpage. It's a good tool.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Yes, on mylegion.

Dept Membership Chairman Rucker: Please get those cards to your post within 30 days. Last year we had posts that didn't get them for 90 days.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Yes, one thing you should do after the convention is first, take your shoes off (laughter). Number two, get on the phone and find out who the commanders are. They have a list. Communication as PDC Gene McDaniel used to say, the Communication Train. We want to keep that train going but if we don't know who the officers are, reach out to the old commander and find out who the new post officers are.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: One thing for the new district cmdr's, when you get an e-mail from the Department explaining some of the programs, please make sure it gets passed down to the posts so they know. I heard from some posts today that they never hear anything. So it comes to you first so make sure you are part of that train.

Imm PDC Scherer: I want to let NV Casper know that the Department of South Carolina appreciates your time here and we're not done yet.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: We wish you safe travels, Commander. We appreciate you.

PDC Hawk: Congratulations once again, Mr. Commander, on your election. We didn't talk about the delegates to the National Convention. Somebody needs to make a motion so our Commander, Commander Scherer since it's his convention, so that all the Legionnaires that attend the National Convention will become delegates until we use all of our allotted delegates. Anybody over our quota will be alternates.

Imm PDC Scherer: I make a motion that we are allowed to appoint the delegates and allow the department's discretion on who the alternates will be.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Second.

**Dept Cmdr Strauss: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion? That's a pretty typical motion there. All in favor say aye, any opposed? Ayes have it.** Very good. Any other good business for The American Legion? Any unofficial business? Any jokes (laughter). That was for (PDC) Dick Walsh, he always had a joke. I had to mention old Dick.

NEC Hennis: If I could get everyone to stand and let's give our NVC a round of applause. (applause).

Dept Cmdr Strauss: We are truly honored that you're here today and thank you for your kinds words this weekend.

NVC Casper: Thank you.

Commander Strauss called on Chaplain Quarles for the benediction.

Dept Cmdr Strauss: Until we meet again, let us ever be mindful of The American Legion and its programs and that community always be at the forefront of what we do. This meeting is adjourned.

For God and Country

Nick I. Diener  
Department Commander

ND/mm