



Department Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
November 5, 2016



The Department Executive Committee met on Saturday, November 5, 2016 at American Legion Department Hdqtrs, Columbia, SC 29210.

Dept Adjutant James Holland  
Dept Assistant Adjutant Nick Diener  
NEC Bud Hennis  
Alt NEC Gary Mitchell  
Dept 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Cmdr John Britt  
Dept 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Cmdr Walt Richardson  
Dept 4<sup>th</sup> Vice Cmdr Roberta Poulos  
D-1 Cmdr Jim Jarvis  
D-3 Cmdr Clyde Mabery  
D-4 Cmdr Stew Koontz  
D-6 Cmdr Jim Kvam  
D-8 Cmdr Bill Wade  
D-9 Cmdr Isaac Miller  
D-10 Cmdr Russ Cantrell  
D-12 Cmdr Charlie Davis  
D-13 Cmdr Carlton Patterson  
D-15 Cmdr Ron Price  
D-16 Cmdr Jim DeFrehn  
D-17 Cmdr Jack Lonergan  
D-18 Cmdr Larry Pouncy  
D-19 Cmdr Grady Richardson  
D-20 Cmdr Robin Rucker

**Absent:**

D-2 Cmdr Dwight Cargile  
D-5 Cmdr Jack Wright  
D-7 Cmdr John Coaxum

**Excused:**

Imm PDC Lysaght  
Dept Historian Matt Gooden  
Dept 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr Mike Strauss  
D-11 Cmdr Richard Lackey  
D-14 Cmdr Mike Brandt  
J/A Stephen Lewis  
Asst J/A Anthony Livoti  
Sgt-at-Arms George Oxner

**Also Present:**

PDC/PDA Jim Hawk  
PNEC John Palmer  
Darlene Walton, P-130  
Fred Mullis, P-90  
Tim Taylor, P-174  
Ed Baker, P-186

(Recording begins with Jay Lindsay, Auditor for The American Legion Dept of SC)

Jay Lindsay: .....what it is and on the second page in my opinion they fairly represent all material aspects, financial positions at that point in time, statement of changes in net assets and cash flow for the year then ended. Exhibit A is the Balance Sheet or statement of financial position. Really not a whole lot of change, the only thing I want to point out is Accounts Receivable went down by \$50,000 or so and the reason is primarily is the end of 2014 was on account the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the enhancement was in effect and some people were taking a little bit longer to get on board with it. Obviously it ultimately it was collected and receivables at the end of 2015 were down to \$10,000 and that's basically shows the enhancement, although pleasant, was required and has performed it's function and I think all the posts are pretty much on board and I think James said you're shooting to get it all collected before the end of the year this year, so that's positive. Nothing else really changed on the 1<sup>st</sup> page, fixed assets, pretty much the same, you didn't add anything new. Second page, the only thing of note really is your mortgage balance went from \$1,611,111 to \$1,348,344 which is a \$260,000 reduction, a large part of that was money that went to Post 34 to pay down on their debt and my understanding is that obligation has been satisfied this year. The Dept did borrow some money from South State Bank but that's going to be paid off shortly so you'll probably pay down another \$250,000, \$300,000 this year so the Dept is in excellent financial shape this year. You've got an equity of \$492,638 at the end of 2015. In large part that's because you've got the fixed assets and equipment. You still owe a lot of money but you're in a place right now that you can service that debt, I believe, without any other problems and that's very positive. I'll go over Exhibit B just a little bit, that's basically the income statement for you. This year the statement of change is \$147,000, basically you made \$147,000 last year, the large part was used to pay debt off but you can see the Post enhancement, \$107,921 and \$108,240. You will note the membership dues went down a little bit because the dues to National went up and ya'll's did and that's the effect of paying National more but still you're fine, as of right now. Fundraising pretty much the same, you see rental income was down. That's because you didn't have a tenant there but you do have a tenant who signed a lease in August or September and it looks like they're getting ready to dance over there and hopefully that will continue on for years to come. It's a five year lease with options to renew. That's been a hard space to lease but they've finally found someone who will lease it all and it appears that it's financial longevity, the tenant has been around for awhile. I don't see anything else that I really need to point out, everything is going well. James and Nick and Maggie, as always, are always cooperative and helpful going through the process. Some people analyze like it's going to a dentist. We don't like to think of it that way but hopefully it will continue to be a clean check up. I talked with Walt about the rifle raffle that you're going to start and you're going to have the controls you've already got in place to make sure all the money is accounted for, it's just very positive. Everything is kind of going in the right direction for ya'll and if you've got any specific questions I'll be glad to help you with them or try to. I'm a little stale on it but I might be able to help you.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: On sheet 5 it talks about notes and lease payments, and then it says principal payments due for the following years. Can you tell me so I'll understand a little bit about that?

Jay Lindsay: The reason the 2016 number is so big, the \$300,472, that's because the note to Post 34 was due that year and basically relies on what the normal monthly principal payment is and if they're made in an orderly fashion and as the notes are drawn that's what will be paid down.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: And on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, it says \$828,411.

Jay Lindsay: That should have said thereafter. Although technically that is correct because the large note with State Bank, if you go back to page four, it does have the balances due April 30, 2019, the unpaid balance, and it is obviously, I say obviously, hopefully it will be able to be reduced, that is the intent. On commercial loans they typically don't want to stretch them out too far and they have renewal options and whatever.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Ok, I was just curious about that.

Jay Lindsay: No, that's it, so in reality that's due that year but in reality the plan is to get it renewed.

Cmdr Scherer: Any other questions?

Jay Lindsay: Again, it's been an honor to work with ya'll all these years and a pleasure and I hope to continue. Hope ya'll have a good meeting.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: I skipped over the reading of the minutes so the auditor could do his thing today. Could anyone make a motion to not read them and accept them as presented.

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

**D-20 Cmdr Rucker: I second the motion.**

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: There's a motion and a second to approve the minutes as published. Any discussion? All those in favor say aye, opposed? Carried.** Mr. Grady Richardson, would you like to talk about the budget, please?

Finance Chairman Richardson: Alright, we're down for the budget and the financial statement but probably coming in between, I'm going ahead and do both of them in the essence of time. The first thing I'm going to do is go over the finance statement from September 30, 2016 which is the last one that you have. We had a finance committee meeting on Wednesday and we talked about this. One of the big items in the finance committee meeting, if you look on the back is side is we are \$5700 in the red. We questioned James about that. He said there was not one single item that did that. But there were many items that for some reason that just came in over budget and when you have many items that are a little bit over budget, it looks like there's one big item but it's just a lot of small items that came in over budget. A couple things to point out, one thing that we did, that we did not, well a couple things, have budgeted for but I think it's going to be a positive effect on the department. We got membership promotion for a little less than \$1,000. If we can get the members that we're projected to get off of this membership promotion, that will be money very well spent. And if you'll go up a little bit, realtor fees, that's \$1370.00, that's the Pamplico Property, right?

Dept Adj Holland: Right.

Finance Chairman Richardson: We've got the property in Pamplico that's just sitting there and if one of ya'll would like to purchase it I'm sure we can make a deal on it. But we got property down there, we got to pay a realtor to list it, we got to pay insurance, we got to pay taxes on this, as an expense. We got the property, we got two CD's on it but it's still an expense that we have to pay each month for this. On the front page, I know I'm jumping back and forth, if you go to conventions and conferences, the Ntl Membership meeting has now become a line item in the budget. He said this has always been paid out of general operating funds but now it is a line item and it will be in next years budget. Other than that, I didn't really see anything that really stood out. However, if you have a question about the financial report, now the time to ask.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Ok, the \$5,000, we'll be able to make that up with what we're doing up with membership if all that comes in, correct?

Finance Chairman Richardson: We've got now until December 31<sup>st</sup>. I've asked and the finance committee has asked the department to watch spending until the end of the year to try to make up as much as this as possible. Will we make all of it up? We can only hope.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Any other questions? I'd like a motion to accept the finance statement as presented.

**D-3 Cmdr Mabery: I make the motion.**

**D-17 Cmdr Lonergan: Second.**

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: Any discussion? All those in favor say aye, opposed? Carried. Financial statement as presented from September 30<sup>th</sup> is accepted.**

Finance Chairman Richardson: Now, the budget for next year. The finance committee, as I told you, met Wednesday and we have hopefully finalized, depending upon the vote of the DEC today, the budget for next year. You should have a copy of it in front of you, we have changed the form that you'll receive at each meeting. We think it will be easier to interpret. Not that there was anything wrong with the previous form but we felt this would be a little bit easier to interpret. Now, if you'll look at page one, we've got all of the income separated on separate lines so where you can immediately look down at the form and see, yep, this is where we are on the income. As it comes in, it will be listed under actual income and it will show the percentage of the budgeted income that we have received. All this is based on the figures given to us by the Department. If you'll look down, a couple things to point out, the Department Convention, we went with a two year average on the income in order to get that figure. We averaged the income for the past two years and that's the figure we came up for income. The same thing for the fall conference and the Ntl convention. That's simply the income. We have also added the rifle raffle on here. Ladies, and gentlemen, that \$77,000, I hope and I pray that is a very, very, very conservative figure and I think it will be. Everybody that I have talked to, I tried to get my tickets early because I have people that want to buy them four or five at a time. But we couldn't do them early, everybody gets them at the same time and that will be after the meeting today. And then you got the sweepstakes fundraiser income. As you know the sweepstakes is going on now. The drawing is when, James?

Dept Adj Holland: The 7<sup>th</sup> of December.

Finance Chairman Richardson: So I'll be up here getting my money on the 7<sup>th</sup> and the rest of you can be behind me. This does not include any money that was paid out because it costs us to do this sweepstakes raffle. Now, if you go down below that, department expenditures. Once again in here, we got expenditures from the rifle raffle of \$27,000. That gives us a profit, we're hoping on this rifle raffle, of \$50,000 profit. Like I said, personally, I think that's very conservative. It's got sweepstakes expense taken out of \$45,000. We're going to bring in hopefully, in our two sweepstakes next year, we do one in the Spring and one in the winter. We hope to bring in \$96,000 and it's going to cost us \$45,000 to do this. So you're spending \$1.00 to make \$2.00. You can't go wrong there. Most businesses would love to do 100% mark-up on everything that they do. On page two, everything here is basically the same with one exception. This year the National Convention is in Reno, Nevada. Now, you can't budget the same amount of money for a trip to Reno as you can for a trip to Charlotte or Indianapolis. It's going to cost a little bit more, common sense tells you that so we upped the expense. Hopefully that will cover the total cost of the National Convention. Along with the income that we have budgeted. The banquet at \$900, we left it the same. You look on the 3<sup>rd</sup> page, if you go down about a fourth of the way down, there's a line item in there for leadership development. That is an unbudgeted item. There were some concerns, and we talked long and hard about this Wednesday. This is the Legion College. We felt that in order to grow our Dept we have got to educate our leaders but with the budget being tight, by April or May, we'll know where this money is. And I hate to keep going back to the rifle raffle, but there should be enough money left over based on my hopes and prayers and dreams to be able to fund two people to go to Legion College next year. That's what that line item is. Also, we had this year, we had a National Spring meeting and we had a Washington meeting I believe was in February. We put a line items in for both of those so where I leadership can attend. If you go down under office building expenses/upkeep, if you'll notice there's a significant increase for next year on this. I believe the previous one was \$3600. Next year we've got it listed at \$26,000. The reason for this, we've got a brick wall that we've got to replace and we've got problems down here at the Baseball facility that we've got to address with the drainage. James has got the basic bids on fixing those two items and that caused the increase up to \$26,000 to get those two things fixed. The 2018 budget hopefully we won't have to have major fixes like that so it will go back to around \$3600 after next year but this is something to fix those two items that we've got to have fixed. And the last thing, according to our constitution and bylaws we are required to put \$2.00 per member into a savings account. If you'll look at the bottom of page three, membership savings account, \$32,370.00. We're able to do that next year. That money will go into a savings account and it will only be spent by a majority vote of the DEC. Now, all this said and done, if you'll see some subtractions here, we're approximately \$24,000 to the black. Approximately. That doesn't mean we have \$24,000 to spend next year people. The rifle raffle is where a lot of this money is coming from. We're only receiving money from that from January to June of next year. We'll start giving the rifles away the first week

of July 2017. We'll give them away until the last week in June 2018. We will not start selling tickets again until January of 2019. So we're not going to have any rifle raffle money coming in during the year 2018. So this \$24,000 has got to be put away and not touched to where we can have it to help with our budget in 2018.

Once again I think that's going to be a much larger figure. So if it is a much larger figure, until we get settled with the rifle raffle and other things are going to go with the money we've got coming in, we can't go willy-nilly and start spending money. We've got to be conservative with our expenditures, we have got to be conservative with our expenditures. This \$24,000 has got to stay in the bank for 2018, there's no way around it. Ok? And that's, you know, like I said, hopefully that will be more and we're going to continue to do the two sweepstakes raffles that are going on and hopefully that will bring in the same amount of money. And that being said, I'd like to thank Ron Price, a member of the finance committee, and Leroy Williams, who is not here, who is also a member of the finance committee. We worked long and we worked hard and we had some sometimes heated discussions about different things in here but we came out and we feel that we've got a good solid, easy to read document that people can look at and see where we are. Now. I know there's questions. If I can't answer them, Ron can.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: I wanted to talk to you first of all the maintenance, we've got to fix the gate. I understand and I may be corrected on this, that when the accident happened whoever did it, we didn't have insurance to cover that, correct?

Finance Chairman Richardson: Right.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Has that insurance been enhanced now so it will be covered?

Finance Chairman Richardson: In the future?

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: In the future.

Dept Adj Holland: No it hasn't been but we interviewing insurance, there are a couple of other things that we don't like about it.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: So we will have that again, hopefully.

Finance Chairman Richardson: Hopefully.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Equipment leasing. Is the equipment that, that we've got any for upgrades, is that consistent with if you have something go our or you've got a computer that needs upgrading, is that involved in that equipment lease or not?

Dept Adj Holland: Well, the equipment that we have on lease, that's the equipment and maintenance agreement.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker; So if like, your computer goes out and you need to upgrade, do we have any money in here for that?

Dept Adj Holland: No, not for the computers.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: I think that's something the finance committee probably needs to consider as much as we use computers in there with all that's done that we need to be able to upgrade and replace. You don't want a surprise down the road and they will go out on you, quickly, as I know.

Finance Chairman Richardson: Thank you, Commander. Any other questions? Yes, sir?

PDC Hawk: You said if I recall, National membership meeting in July, 2017 would be a line item? Is that the annual National membership meeting in July?

Dept Adj Holland: Yes.

PDC Hawk: If that's the case, that's not listed. And for ya'll that don't know. That's where we go and meet with the incoming National Commander and get our Department membership quota for the next year. And you said membership promotion is \$1,000? Now, that's going for the membership committee to use on pins and whatever they need, is that correct? To help promote our Department membership campaign?

Dept Adj Holland: Right.

Finance Chairman Richardson: Yup.

PDC Hawk: So the only thing looking at meetings, Grady, you've got everything else listed, Arlington, Ntl Spring Meetings which is always in May, I'm assuming that's what you're talking about, and then the leadership development, which you've covered, Washington meetings, but there's nothing in there about the National Membership meeting in July.

Finance Chairman Richardson: We had talked about that and for some reason it wasn't put in, I will make that adjustment.

PDC Hawk: I think you said \$1,000 each one for membership promotion and the workshop?

Finance Chairman Richardson: We'll look at that and put those figures in the budget.

PDC Hawk: That's not going to reflect in the end result that much but...

Finance Chairman Richardson: But it's going to be a budgeted item, yes.

PDC Hawk: Ok, Thank you.

Finance Chairman Richardson: Alright, that's going to affect the bottom line from (inaudible) to somewhere around (inaudible). Ok. Any other questions?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: I was looking at accounts/income, you have post membership at \$15 for \$210,350.50, that equates to 13571 members, you have PUFL's at 1743 members. Both those together are 15,254 mbrs, but on the back for membership savings you have \$32,370, that equates to 16185 members, a difference of 911 members. Where is the discrepancy?

Finance Chairman Richardson: These were the numbers given to us by the Adjutant for the post membership and the PUFL.

Dept Adj Holland: Now what was his question?

Finance Chairman Richardson: The difference between post membership and PUFL and the membership savings account membership.

Dept Adj Holland: Ok.

Asst Adj Diener: The dollar figures in there, and Commander, I'm not sure where with your addition there, but that was based on the same 19,362 members that is our membership goal for this year. Like the PUFL's is 1700 members, there's no easy number to divide the numbers by because those come in at different rates.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: I do want to keep the DEC informed that on the purchase of the rifles, we talked with Palmetto State Armory and they gave us a price for those rifles. That was not a price that was locked in. You understand the price of weapons goes up and it goes down. Now, after reading and talking and visiting Palmetto

State Armory, they said because of the political climate right now, there's a very good chance that after the election, that the price of the weapons is actually going to increase. Therefore I would like the DEC to authorize paying for these weapons, here it comes, as expeditiously as possible. So, what I'm saying is what we need to do as soon as the money comes in to the account, we need to go ahead and cut a check to Palmetto State Armory and pay them for the rifles. If it's only a 10% increase, that's roughly \$2500. Does everybody understand what I just said?

Finance Chairman Richardson: We're going to have to have a....

Vice Cmdr Richardson: I'm just asking for authorization for the finance committee or the adjutant, if whatever money is available in the rifle raffle, cut the check and go down and pay them so the cost will be as low as possible.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We might as well make that as a motion. And I make the motion that we pay expeditiously pay Palmetto State Armory as the money comes in so we can try to reduce this increase.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Wouldn't we do that in new business?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: We were talking about the budget and now I think we can put it with the budget.

D-15 Cmdr Price: I second that motion.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: There's not one made yet because I haven't asked for it.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Well, I was asking the question so I made the comment and it might as well be a motion.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Do we have a motion that we pay for the rifles as the money is available?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I'm not going to get up and repeat myself.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Well, don't then.

**D-15 Cmdr Price: I make the motion that we go ahead and pay for the rifles as expeditiously as possible.**

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

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Any discussion?

Finance Chairman Richardson: Yes, I got discussion and I understand Walt's point in getting this paid off as soon as we can. But, if the money is in the budget to pay for these things, the Adjutant can pay for them the time the money comes in. Why do we have to have a motion to spend money that's budgeted for. That's my only question. I mean, the time as it comes in the Adj can write a check, and I'm sure you'll stay on him about that. I mean, do we need a motion?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We have no idea so why not just make one? It doesn't hurt it.

Finance Chairman Richardson: Well, if we approve the budget, the money's there.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: It just keeps it above board too. We don't want it come on Mr. Holland as to why he paid the money.

PDC Hawk: That just becomes another bill that has to be paid just like any other bill. And the Adjutant and the finance committee...and what Walt's trying to do is get it in the sequence of events that bills that need to be paid should be paid. Again, the money still has to be there to be paid. So basically the motion is not a motion because you get it on the record that the finance committee approves it and then according to the const & bylaws, you just

enhanced their ability to pay. It's just going to be another bill but you've got to have the money in the bank to pay the bill. What's Walt's trying to say when we get it and all others have been paid then you pay for the rifles. So basically you get down the nutshell, this budget is based on how many members?

Dept Adj Holland: 19700.

PDA/PDC Hawk: 19700, so that's everybody's goal. We may think he's (inaudible) but everything Grady has to worry about we don't have to worry about. Same with James paying the bills.

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: Any further discussion? All in favor say aye, opposed? Carried.**

Finance Chairman Richardson: We need a motion to approve the budget.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Do we have a motion to approve the budget with the additions and corrections?

Finance Chairman Richardson: With the membership meeting of \$3,000 added to it.

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis; I make a motion that we accept the budget as proposed, the 2017 budget as amended.**

**D-15 Cmdr Price: I second that motion.**

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: Any further discussion? If not, all those in favor say aye, opposed? Carried.**

Finance Chairman Richardson: Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Asst Adj Diener: Grady, without the other budgets, the SAL, the Riders....

Finance Chairman Richardson: We've also got a SAL budget, a Law Cadet budget and there should be an ALR budget. This year we had several requests come in for permission to spend money. The finance committee talked about this and we decided that if the SAL, the Law Cadet, the ALR, and others Americanism and all that, and the money they want to spend has been budgeted, they would not have to come back to us to spend the money. What I'm asking is we've got an ALR budget, we've got an SAL budget, Law Cadet and what I'm asking is the DEC, and they made these budgets, we didn't make them. So what I'm asking is for the DEC to approve those budgets.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: You've had a chance to look at them, just like anything, it's their money, their programs, all we're doing is approving their budget. Do I have a motion to accept all three as presented?

**D-8 Cmdr Wade: I make a motion to approve all three as presented.**

**D-9 Cmdr Miller: I second that.**

Asst Adj Diener: One comment that I would have on the Law Cadet budget, as part of that budget, there is an additional program that is in that budget for doing a scholarship for this year so my recommendation for this would be that their budget and that scholarship be voted on separately. Because you can't approve the budget without approving the scholarship.

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: Bill, do you want to amend that motion to just say ALR and SAL?**

**D-8 Cmdr Wade: Yes.**

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: Isaac?**

**D-9 Cmdr Miller: Yes.**

Dept Cmdr Scherer: **Ok. So we're just voting on the SAL and ALR budgets. All those in favor say aye? Opposed? Carried.** Now on Law Cadet there is a budget there for them but there is a stipulation in there that when they reached a certain amount of money which the finance committee agreed upon, we had a long discussion with Law Cadet Director Steffonie and her crew and Mr. Diener has been working very hard with them. We now have the money available for a scholarship for one male and one female, is that right? So when we approve this budget we are approving the scholarship.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Did you say for one male and one female?

D-8 Cmdr Wade: So we just increased the budget by \$2,000?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: That's their budget, not ours. They set their budget on what they can make and what they can spend, we really don't have a lot to say about it.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: So you're asking us if we agree with the scholarship idea before we agree with their budget?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Both together. This is something they've worked out together, they've met on with them, the committee has met with us and that was Russ and his committee and this is what they've come up and they are in agreement that they can do this and it should be done as a program to move forward and enhance it.

Finance Chairman Richardson: What the finance committee did last year was the Law Cadet Academy submitted a proposal to us and asked us what would be the minimum money they would have to in order to do that and the finance committee and the DEC said if they had \$10,000 left over in their account, and they have the money above that to pay the scholarship, then it would be approved. As long as after the scholarships were paid, we still have \$10,000 in the budget. In looking at this, they will have \$11,573.51 in the budget after the two \$1,000 scholarships are offered.

D-10 Cmdr Cantrell: I make a motion we approve the scholarship and the budget.

Asst Adj Diener: As the Chairman of the committee, he can't make the motion.

**D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Well, I make a motion that we accept the recommendation that the \$2,000 scholarship and the budget on Law Cadet.**

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I second that.**

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: We have a motion to accept and a second. All those in favor, any discussion? All in favor say aye, opposed? That means carried.**

Finance Chairman Richardson: Thank you.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Did you want to step up first, Nick, on membership?

D-16 Cmdr DeFrehn: At our district meeting we were talking about the oratorical contest, the department was going to give out some prizes for the winners this year? Was that money going to be a budget item or where does that money come from?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: That comes out Americanism and we always give them out, a total of \$3,000. \$2,000, \$1000 and two at \$500.

D-16 Cmdr DeFrehn: That's at Quadrant?

Vice Cmdr Poulos: No, that's at State.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: But like I said, all the Quadrant winners that participate at the State finals get something.

Asst Adj Diener: If they show up.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: If they show up. Ok, we're having fun today. Robin?

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Good morning, hope ya'll are doing well. I'm glad to see our NEC'man back and all those that have been sick that I don't know of, I'm glad to see ya'll back. We had a very interesting meeting this morning with the committee. I'm going to go over a couple things with you and then I'll answer your questions. Pin distributions. We're down to about 150 pins, the key is having the form filled out correctly. And I don't have one in front of me, hold on just a second, do you got one? What we're getting is all this is filled out but down here where it says the post commander and adjutant, ain't getting signed. Where it says the district cmdr signature it's not getting signed. I can't fulfill that obligation without that being signed. Especially with the district commander, we had a bunch that had post but it didn't go through the district. The district cmdr, you, need to know what's going on. Ok? Thank you. Please send them in, we'll get the pins out to you. Next you'll read the reutilization report on Spartanburg and Greenville, Nicks' handing that out, we'll come back to that in just a minute.

Membership calendar. I have a membership calendar on the state website. If you have a membership drive, you don't have to call it a membership drive. If you have something that you're promoting membership, please send it to me and I will put it on the calendar. We haven't had any updates since the middle of October. Alright, Nick, you want to touch base on national revitalizations for Spartanburg/Greenville and then talk about Charleston?

Asst Adj Diener: Many of ya'll know National came down and we held a revitalization, we held two of them at the same time, we held one for District three and district five, I have to commend all the districts for all the posts that showed up. Both reutilizations were very successful, a lot of workers came out, made a lot of calls. Bottom line to it, the numbers haven't been totally finalized but it's going to be close to 200 members that we transferred to into posts from...the National DMS into our local posts. Ok. Almost a 10% increase for each of the districts on their memberships. One example, post 115 in Greer, last year had 26 paid members in their post. As part of the revitalization, they transferred an additional 28 members into their posts. They almost doubled the size of their post by doing the revitalization so it was very successful. And that was through the hard work of all the volunteers from each of the posts that came down and sat there all day long making telephone calls but it works I guess is what I would say. The Charleston revitalization that we had scheduled, the hurricane interrupted that. WE have looked at trying to re-do it and re-schedule it the first part of December, that does not look like that's going to work either. Ok. But we still want to try and do one of them. But for future revitalizations, National, they were supposed to get back with me yesterday, but we weren't able to match up and get some dates. But all it takes to get them into your district to do the same type thing is we need to establish dates and request national to come. Ok. There wasn't, Commander Mabery, you were one of the district commanders that participated, but other than getting your district, the post to have a couple of people to come down and volunteer to come down and make telephone calls and one post to host it, there's not a lot of logistics to putting one on and they are very beneficial.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: I'm going to let District three, Clyde, you said you wanted to say a few words, I'm going to let you have the opportunity.

D-3 Cmdr Mabery: I participated in that personally. I got a hold of 39 households, out of that 39, 3 was deceased, 3 were not interested in changing, I got 27 new members for post 123 and that's out of 33. So the percentage is good. And I asked the question to Nick, why can't we do this all the time. He said it's because the DEC wouldn't vote for it because they was afraid somebody would cheat.

Asst Adj Diener: That's on the member data form.

D-3 Cmdr Mabery. I said if they're going to cheat they're going to cheat. I said why can't we call over the telephone like we did for the revitalization. A cheater's going to cheat, you cannot legislate morality. If a person, he's going to do it and Nick can't verify every signature. If I sent three, you can, if I sent a hundred in, you're not

going to call a hundred. If it works that one weekend, I'd love to see it all the time, I'll sit at my phone and transfer them. If we'll do that, our purpose is to grow our district, and in order to grow our district, we grow our posts.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I just want to make sure everybody understood, these are names that aren't in our numbers. These are totally from National, and it works with our 172's. I called 38 names on our 172 list and I got 22 members so it works and most of the time all you got to do is ask. Ok, And we got to also bring up something that we hope will streamline this and hopefully make it a little easier.

**D-20 Cmdr Rucker:** Ok, we'll get to it in a minute. First of all I want to get with Barnwell County. At the previous meeting it was brought up that we had talked about pulling the charters of some of the posts in Barnwell County and maybe the department hadn't done it's due diligence. If you'd like to see the letters that was written all the way back to 2014 to that area, district 7, that we were talking about in the DEC to close them down or pull their charter. I got them. However, we're going to move forward in a revitalization on the 19<sup>th</sup> at Post 91. If any of you would like to help, use phones, I would certainly appreciate it, please see me after the meeting. Now Department revitalizations that was successful in Spartanburg and Greenville, I have come the membership committee with recommendation. **That the Department and I want to put this, if I can Commander, put this in the form of a motion. The Department will accept verbal approval from a member via phone conversation as substitution for a member's signature to transfer into a post on the member data form, as National does every day.**

Dept Cmdr Scherer: You heard the motion that you've been presented with so I'm not going to go over that.

D-3 Cmdr Mabery: I make a motion...we can transfer....

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: You second the motion.

**D-3 Cmdr Mabery: I'll just second.**

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Second. Ok. Any further discussion on the matter, yes sir?

D-17 Cmdr Lonergan: I do, sir. That's to transfer a person out of 172. What I'm worried about if we get people who at the post call people and say they want to transfer.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: How are you going to stop that?

D-17 Cmdr Lonergan: I get it, that's why I say, not out of your neighboring post.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: If I may comment, first of all, if you've got a commander or and adjutant that's doing that and you catch them doing that, they can be brought up on charges. Secondly, if you falsify a document by law, you can be charged with that in law enforcement. Now, if we can't have faith in our leaders in this state as a department American Legion to do the right thing, we're in poor shape.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: It's not going to be perfect.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: It's not going to be perfect.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: But it's pretty close to it. We need to streamline the process. The process right now, you mail it out and most of the time you're not going to get it back so we've got to deal with it on the spot and the only way we can do and suck up any losses that we have and fix if we have somebody going between...going after a post. We need to fix that immediately.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: One of the things that you'll find, district commanders, like down there in District 16, there's five posts within a radius of 20 miles of each other. They're all in the same county, so does he live across the street from me or does he live across the river from me. So that's been our determination for who goes in which posts until they get going. So that would be a kind of a touchy thing because 172, you've got the address, see, you've got

to determine and maybe that would be the determination of the gentlemen and ladies in this room that know the districts and those are the district commanders. So they would kind of say, alright well, this person lives here so that would be this one, this one here, this one here. So when you get that stack you kind of have to determine so you have to kind of know your area and that would hopefully would kind of eliminate taking it from one post because it was by mistake because it was given to post Beaufort where really it should have been post Bluffton or so on like that. Because you're not quite sure because they have the same zip code. And you have five posts that have a zip code that's within one number of each other, that's what I was saying. They all have the same (inaudible), they all have the same post office.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis; You're making it awful hard here.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Not at all but what I'm saying is that if somebody's overstepping someone it could be completely innocently done.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Well, yeh.

D-15 Cmdr Price: Yeh, and hopefully the district commanders will...

Vice Cmdr Poulos: And that's what I...the district commanders can take care of that.

D-15 Cmdr Price: You're going to have a lot of issues when you got posts that are close to each other but that's no reason not to go after them and get them moved.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Please remember that Maggie's not here and she's just hearing words if you don't identify yourselves.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Cut right straight to the chase. What we have here is we have to make a decision, are the benefits worth the risk? That's the decision you've got to make. You can cut it anyway you want to. Do the benefits outweigh the risk? (inaudible)

Post 130 Mbr Walton: I'll just say this because I've worked very closely trying to build my membership. If you look at your membership list from 172. If you know anything about your posts in the area, you should not have that situation arise. And if you do, you should know your post next door to you enough, to where you can confer with them and say hey. Because you're come across people that are going to say I don't want to belong to your post, I want to belong to that one, who do I go talk to.

D-3 Cmdr Mabery: I have that problem and it's not a problem. I have four posts in the same area of Greenville County. And we pull from all Greenville County. What I suggest (inaudible) the last report I got from the district when you gave me the veterans from the county. Greenville County had over 34,000 veterans, that's well enough, and I understand what you're saying because we have to be careful but like you say, if this one says, I want to be a member of this post. But you have to preach to your posts, don't go after another post members if they live in your area, that's what I'm doing up there in Greenville and it's working so far.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: And also too if that post is going to sit there and do nothing and you're out there working the 172 post. Who goes after them gets them, just like fishing.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Can I call for the question.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: All those in favor say aye, opposed? Carried.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Timmonsville temporary charter, it was given back to the membership committee to look into this. And what we found was that Timmonsville Post 18 put in for a temporary charter last year and never signed up but eight members, Ok? The recommendation from the committee is to write a letter telling post 18 that we're

going to pull their temporary charter and we'd like to meet with them before we do that to see if we can rectify any problems. Along with that, Timmons ville Post ...

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: 47.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: ...47 is in the same boat but they have a permanent charter so what we'll do is write them and write their members and say they're in danger of losing their charter and we want to meet with them to see if we can rectify their problems and at least get them to their 15 members and that's the recommendation from the membership committee, is that correct, Jim?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Almost, we'd also decided we wanted them to meet with them together.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Meet together, yes, correct. And we will write letters to do that, we'll have a meeting in Timmons ville, hopefully I will try to do that next month, ok?

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: I'm the district commander for Timmons ville, I've been trying to get the two posts to meet together, post 81 has a (inaudible) get together. Then I talked to the Commander, his name is Woody, supposed to meet together and one said I don't have this time, (inaudible) said it would be hard, waffle house. One show, the other one don't, Timmons ville 81, I haven't gave them their charter yet because that they just have eight members yet and I said once you get the other seven you can receive the charter, he said ok. Last week, week before last, he was to the doctor, I went on (inaudible) he said I'm ready. I can't get no response out of neither one of them, it's just a fight. Timmons ville is just a small town, Timmons ville 47, they have a post and someone vandalized it so I tried to get them where both of them can get together and have just one post and they said ok and I'm kind of waiting for them to get together.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker; If I may, Commander, if you will get with me and Ms. Darlene after the meeting, we'll put together and we'll try to set that up so we can at least finalize this and get it back to the DEC.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Ok. No problem there.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker; So we're going to do this administratively, just to let you know where we're at on that, ok? Let's see, you will...district cmdrs, you may be receiving a call from some of the membership team, we've asked them to call you up to see if we can be of any assistance in your area. If there's any additional training that you need or anything that we can do for you. You should be hearing from us in the next couple weeks, any feedback that you have will certainly be appreciated.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Another thing, Nichols. Two posts, they're going to merge but this Hurricane Matthew come in and just swamped them up. I took them some applications to get some help and everything so it's going to be awhile for those Nichols posts to get together because 80% of them lost their homes.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Right.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: I went to some of the members house and water was up to the ceiling (inaudible) water still everywhere so it's going to be a time but the two posts in Nichols to get together and everything but they're going to merge. They got to get.....

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: ....back together. I understand.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Yeh, the water and everything.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis; Can you give us a list of posts, how do I word this,,,

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: That were affected by the Hurricane?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: That have problems like that so that we're not trying to do something that they're not ready to do so can we get a name and a listing of the posts that are being affected?

D-20 Cmdr Rucker; We can do that, can't we?

Asst Adj Diener: Yeh.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Alright, the last thing that I have and most of ya'll may know this. War era clarification, Granada/Lebanon 8/24/82 to 7/31/84 and Panama 12/20/89 to 1/30/90. All those person's that served in the National and Guard and Reserve doing those eras are eligible for membership in The American Legion even if they didn't serve on active duty except for training. There were some questions, I had some questions on that but it's been clarified. All National Guard Training, basic and AIT has been on Federal Title 10 orders since 1976 so the only war eras that affect us are Grenada/Lebanon and Panama. Last thing that I want to leave you with is we're here to help you, don't find fault, find a remedy. That was (inaudible) by Henry Ford, strong message to live by. Instead of placing blame and pointing fingers, let's get out there and do what we need to do as Legionnaires. Let's get motivated. Right now we're sitting at an average of little over 70% for most districts. 85% is where we need to be next Friday. That's the goals we set. Be all in and I know some of you are not big Clemson fans but one thing about Dabo Swinney, you're all in when you play for him. You know if you every watched him before the game, they go up there and drop that chip in the bucket. That means they're all in, they've done everything they're supposed to do to go out there and win that ballgame. And they might lose today but right now they're undefeated. And that's what we need to be here is undefeated. We need to stop the slide, when I went to The American Legion College (inaudible) that was one thing that was talked about was South Carolina and Stop the Slide. I need your help. You are the boots on the ground, the district commanders. Whatever you do is whether your district is going to be successful or not. Our department don't work from the top down, it's supposed to work from the bottom up. But you are the link between the posts and the department. You, so whether we fail or whether we make our quota is on you. And I'll help you, every bit I can.

Unidentified Individual: (Inaudible)

D-20 Cmdr: (inaudible) Thank you sir.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: I have one question to ask you, is that enough time, 14 days, to let Blackville know....

Vice Cmdr Poulos: They already know.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: Yeh, they were....already talked about. We just got to send the letter.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: I have one question....are we having....?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: I just want to make sure they say they didn't have enough time.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: And I didn't go over...I figure all of ya'll can read all the statistics.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Now, on this one here where there's information not reported, now, I know our District Cmdr DeFrehn brought the information for the Hilton Head where they changed the name for the post and there's a new, brand new commander and stuff. Are we having a problem? Do we need to start coming and helping and enter stuff into our paperwork here?

Asst Adj Diener; As far as....I do not, if there's been a mistake on it. He did it at the last DEC?

Vice Cmdr Poulos; Well, he did it himself at the last DEC.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: She brought it up Nick, not me.

Asst Adj Diener: Yeh, and I don't know. We'll have to check afterwards, All of them are in that I know of that we have received.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: I just want to know if we need more help or anything.

Dept Adj Holland: No.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: One last thing. That sheet lists your district from 1 to 20. Please go out and get your posts active.

Dept Cmdr Scherer. Any further old business to be brought up before the DEC? IF not, we'll move to new business. I see where we have Ron Price and Robin Rucker for a little talk on Legion College. Condense it, instead of a five hour speech keep it to about five minutes.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker; Ok. I want to read something to you that was given to us. Vision statement:

The American Legion, the Nation's largest wartime veterans organization service founded on the values, contributions and sacrifices of those who answered the nation's call to arms. Therefore we must: respond to the quality of life needs of all veterans and their families; Prepare each generation to meet it's citizenship obligations; maintain a strong national defense; this is all about what we learned. Perpetuate the principles of government embodied in the US Constitution as a values based organization committed to serve God, Country, community and every veteran today and tomorrow into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

We're here for the veterans. That's what we're here for. Ok? It's great to get a member, and that's what I been up here doing but if you can help that veteran, even if you don't get a membership that's what we're here for, that's what we put these caps on for everyday. That's what I learned. Communication. Communication, working with other people in The American Legion, ok. We did scenarios that you wouldn't....I'm glad that we don't have to deal with right now. We did resolutions that I'm glad that I don't have to write any more. I learned so much but the main thing that I learned is communication with other Legionnaires and veterans. That's what I learned. And being a part of an organization that does so much for veterans, you need to pat yourself on the back, look at where we come from since WWII and what we do, the great things we do for veterans. And some of them fall behind. That's what I learned at Legion college, was to be a leader who cares about veterans and knows how to be a positive impact on your community and that's what it meant to me. Ok.

D-15 Price: One of biggest thing I learned about was the school was great, the operations as to how The American Legion operates, that was a big eye opener. Because National raised dues \$5.00 last year and going to see their operations and going to see what they're doing gives you an understanding of that. I want to tell you that the National Commander's office and I had an opportunity to go in there and I also had an opportunity to go to the Geiger Center and see a lot of things. Their furniture, that myself as a director at Fort Gordon, that I'd throw out the window because it's trash. So it isn't like they're spending a lot of money on nice furniture, nice offices, they're not doing that. The equipment that they have operating their mail business, our mail business, the mail room is over six million dollars. When you see the operations, it isn't because they've got up to date equipment and they've got a lot of people in there because they don't. The American Legion is a big business, it's a huge business taking care of our veterans so the money there that is spent, from what I saw was very well spent. But one of the biggest things that I learned was that when you 're going out on a day to day on American Legion business, it's not about you. So when you remember it's not about you but instead it's about that veteran getting that veteran support that they need then you're doing the right thing. And I appreciate the opportunity of being able to go to that.

Dept Adj Holland: Thank you.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Thank you guys, I appreciate it and I know that you had a good time. Hopefully in the future and as well right now that it starts to pay dividends for everyone here.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: If you plan on going to American Legion College it's well worth it but you better come prepared to work. We stayed between about between 62 and 64 hours in the classroom or either in committee. We started two hours on Saturday, all day Sunday right on through Friday when we graduated. We started at 7:30 in the morning, we'd get out at 7:30, 8:00 at night. So when you go, be prepared.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Thank you. .

Dept Adj Holland: The hurricane has been mentioned and I want to stress to all your Commanders again, please let your people know about the NEF grants. I know we talk it all the time, we have brochures and the information's available but you have people that don't know. So we're still taking applications and last time, last year the window was open for 90 days. If you've got extenuating circumstances, they'll accept them after that. So far I've process 11 applications, four have been paid and I'm expecting a group of checks hopefully Monday so the system is working so if you have people that were dislocated...and there were hundreds of thousands of people that were dislocated, so they lived in hotels. Some people had to to two, three hundred miles to find a hotel because nothing was available in the midlands, the low country of SC. So let's tell them about the NEF and if they paid by credit card and don't have the receipts, we'll take the credit card statement when they get that monthly bill. So we'll work with them and try to get them at least some reimbursement. So please tell them, yes, we're still taking applications and if they had a loss, especially a dislocation, let us know. And we'll tell them exactly what they need to provide and if they have the documentation we can possibly get a grant. We haven't had a one yet, even last year, that was refused. Of course we review them here, we know who's sending them. We tell them the criteria, what documents so they can get it so we help them with that application.

As you know in six days it will be veterans day, the commander of post 1 in Florence wants you to know that you're invited a rededication of a WWI monument located at his post. You are asked to be there about 10:30 and the ceremony will start at 11:00. It would be nice for us to have as many people there as possible. The rededication of this monument has been two years in the making. The monument has been completely restored. If you can go and support post one in Florence, please do. Don Handley is the commander. And they will have the immediate past commander at post and they asked that we make that announcement so please support post one. . I'm sure that most of you are already busy with commitments for veterans day so please, that's a day, as Nick says, wear the funny cap, don't wear the baseball cap, and let people know who we are and what we do. Thank you.

In July I gave each district commander a packet that included a state map, a possibly realignment of the districts based on clustering instead of just the county boundaries and a more equitable distribution of posts within their districts. The span of control within districts range from four as in Commander Mabery's district, you used to have three but you came up with a new post, thank you. From four to sixteen, the number of districts will remain 20 as in our constitution.

My recommendation is that the commander appoint an ad-hoc committee chaired by Jim Jarvis to bring some recommendations back to the DEC at a future meeting. The way it is, the span of control between four and sixteen is great so we need to make it a little more equitable if we can.

Next the personnel committee was abolished by the DEC a little over two years ago. All organizations should have policies and procedures in place to manage the employees. I am recommending that the Department commander and vice commanders review the personnel manual and make recommendations to you for policies and procedures.

Signage. As you know there are four business operations here on business operations here on Legion Plaza. We need signs on Bush River Road that directs you to them. I talked with one of our tenants about it in September and at that time I went to Signarma and asked their exterior sign man about the possibility of giving us assistance and gave him a drawing. I went back to see him on Thursday after this came up again. He had done the survey, he did come down, he said yeh your wall is broken so I knew he had been here and he took pictures and he said he would pass them on to his design and layout man and get us some information back this week. That information will be what they suggest as far as signs and cost. So there will be a cost involved but we do need signs, I agree with that, on Bush River Road saying these businesses are down here. Because you can't see our building or our signs until you get on what? On Legion Plaza Road. You need to see it while you're on Bush River Road. Because we direct

people here and they can't see it and we tell them to turn into that little drive down there so we need some signage to help us here. Do any of you have any questions of me?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I had no idea I was on a committee.

Dept Adj Holland: No, we are asking.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We were tasked, we, this room was tasked to come up with something. Are you telling me I'm the only one that gave you an input?

Dept Adj Holland: You were the only one that gave me written any type of physical input, yes. I've heard people say telephonically or in conversation say why they don't like it, this or that. But yes, you were the only one.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I'm ashamed of all of you.

Dept Adj Holland: Ok. But since some people are still concerned about it, yes it's something that we should look at and I think the district cmdrs are the ones that really should have a better feel for it and should provide the major input.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Well, the thing is these inputs need to be for the betterment of... all I'm hearing is, well my district doesn't need this or I don't need....it's not about us, it's about the state.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: That's right.

P-90 Mbr Mullis: You mentioned the sign and if I remember right at one of the past DEC mtgs it was talked about possibly putting the signage on the side of the building stating that this was the office, and there was something said that we couldn't do that or something to that effect. And I wasn't up on why exactly why that was, could you explain that because....

Dept Adj Holland: No, I don't remember that meeting, no. I don't remember.

P-90 Mbr Mullis: Is there a reason why we couldn't get a big emblem, put it on the side of the building so when we're coming down Bush River you see The American Legion emblem and the signage on the side of the building because everywhere I go, I make extensive travel when I can. I see Posts, I see offices in other states, the side of the building is painted, you know, massive signs, that display the Legion emblem, proudly. But when you come here and there's nothing. You know, we should be more proud of that emblem than anything else. It should be flashing but there's nothing.

Dept Adj Holland: No, I agree with you. I had asked myself that question also. Why isn't there one on the other side of the building? But when it comes to signs, that's one reason we need the professionals, there's always codes involved in signage in all cities. And they are trying to reduce them, they're definitely trying to reduce them. I know in Aiken if one is on on your building you have much more leeway than you do than putting one on the street or in the easement. But anyway, they will look at the code and they will look at all the visible aspects of it as to whether it's visible from here or not, the contrast and colors and all that. But I can ask him that but they'll give us a written plan back and it will be brought back to you and we can go from there and there's cost involved too. But that....

P-90 Mbr Mullis: Seeing what's up and down, this is a road if it's not legal then how.....

Unidentified Speaker: They're grandfathered.

Dept Adj Holland: It's a recent thing and as you say, many of the places are grandfathered. You still see those big McDonald's signs but in almost every municipality they're grandfathered in. They couldn't put one in today, everybody is becoming aware of you know, signage and the way our communities look.

P-174 Mbr Taylor: I came to SC about 12 years ago, before this building was built. When this building was built there was a sign out front that said future sign of American Legion Hdqtrs and the building was built, the sign was taken down. This was before I came to join the Legion here. I thought they moved it someplace else because there was nothing out there, what is this place. And there's no sign directing us down the road here either. So if I thought that a lot of other veterans going by here thought the same thing I'm sure.

Dept Adj Holland: Right, I'll get you some layouts and designs and prices done by professionals and he's already working on it so he should have it by the next time you meet.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Two things I want to say. # 1, is it budgeted? No. # 2, one thing that I know for sure is that we have two problems in here. Two problems, I'm talking with this district realignment that nothing got done. Two things, # 1 is we have district's in here with four posts, we have districts in here with 16 posts, we also have districts with 1700 members and we have districts in here with 200 members. That's two problems. At our last convention, the convention gave us the authority to fix one of those problems by geographical location. Gentlemen and ladies, we were elected to make the hard decisions. Anybody can sit on their duff and say, let's do this. What's going to happen when the hard decisions have to be made. We have problems in there and if you think I'm joking now, wait until I give those tickets out and I've got one commander that walks out of there with two full boxes and another one that walks out with a handful of tickets. We've got a problem and we can bury our head in the sand if we want to but you better remember in June, our members gave us the authority to realign these districts, to realign these districts based on geographical location. (Inaudible) right now. One person has done that. One person. We sit back and do anything, what's going to happen when we go the convention in June and somebody brings up...wait a second...we're going to be standing there with our hands in our pockets and the marine corps doesn't allow you to put your hands in your pockets. I'm telling you, we better do something and we better do it as expeditiously as possibly, we owe it to ourselves, we owe it to the department and we owe it to the blue hats.

Dept Adj Holland: So we'll continue at that and we'll have a meeting and see how many show and see if we can get something working. That's why we need a committee because there's so many different things involved, as I said, these things are comprehensive and contentious so we need to see if we can't come up with a better solution.

I told some of you that I was going to resign at the end of the year, others of you have heard the rumors and they started asking. Well, here is the resignation. When I accepted the job I was idealistic and thought I could make a difference. I want to thank you for the trust and confidence that you placed in me. It is now two years and it's time to move on so effective January 6, 2017 I herewith resign. That will give us time to make a smooth transition. We are fortunate to have a very strong and experienced assistant adjutant. Nick is very loyal, competent, thorough. knows the job and knows you. And I strongly urge you to ask him to take the job. So are there any questions.

Asst Adj Diener: Thank you Sir.

Dept Adj Holland: You're welcome

Dept Cmdr Scherer: I don't know, do we need to accept his resignation as the DEC? Legally it's ok, right? Thank you Mr. Holland for clearing that up. Anybody that wants to be on the District realignment ad-hoc committee please see me, I've seen Jim's drawing and it's very.....

Vice Cmdr Richardson: I'll do it.

D-15 Cmdr Price: I'll do it.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: I'll be on it.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: So far we have Walt, Ron Price, Roberta Poulos.....

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: I'll be on it.

Dept Cmdr Scherer Then the four vice cmdrs and myself will look at the personnel manual and see about updating it.

Dept Adj Holland: All three of us have one.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: You do have job descriptions, correct?

Dept Adj Holland: Yes.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Two other things before we close. John Britt and I have talked and we've seen some problems that we need to address before January the 1<sup>st</sup> and that's with our baseball and baseball committee. We've had some problems last year that have come to my attention as well as others and I've had district commanders come up to me and complain, I've got e-mail. So with anything that you have out there concerning baseball that you'd like to see addressed, we're going to call a meeting with the league reps and the director before January 1<sup>st</sup>. The reason being January 1<sup>st</sup> the switch is flipped and everybody starts putting in for their baseball teams. We're not going to have the problem we did last year, we're going to solve it before it happens. We're going to solve the fighting problem we had, we're not going to have it this year. So, if you have any complaints from your area, please let me know or John know, we'll write them down and we'll address that committee. But we need to make our baseball committee and our baseball teams move forward and not backward or start arguing and fighting and with each other. We've had that in the past and need to get that stopped. This is a premier program that we have. Look at who won the MVP's at the World Series, The American Legion, so if you have any problems, please let me know.

Another thing, talking about signage. As you well know any business in the area and anywhere in the United States have signs on their cars. South Carolina Commanders in the past have had a habit of losing them, I don't know if they remember to take them off when they go through car washes. Some say they've blown off, I tell you guys, I've had them on my car for five years and have never had one scratch or have one blown off. Maybe because I'm smart enough to clean them and two, I take them off when I have my car washed. My truck has had vinyl on for three years, I can take the vinyl off, it doesn't change. My suggestion is that both cars have signs put on, buy vinyl, it will cost less than a hundred dollars and they'll be on there permanently. Mine cost \$110 but mine are colored (inaudible). We can put an outline of the state that says Commander, Department of SC, American Legion, whatever, that's all you need on the car. But then we don't have to worry about buying any more magnets or finding room on the filing cabinet or whatever. I'm asking somebody to make a motion that we put vinyl on our cars so wherever they go, whenever they go, there's The American Legion.

**NEC'man Hennis: I would like to make that motion that signs be added to the Department Legion cars, both sides, in plain lettering so it's obvious and very clear to people in the parking lots and when we're going down the road who we are and what we stand for. I've always said that and I think it's very important that be there, for no other reason than to sell membership, let people who we are.**

**D-19 Cmdr Richardson; I second that motion and because it's not in the budget I contribute \$10 out of my pocket and I'll challenge every member of the DEC to to the same thing.**

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Any further discussion on that? I know that other posts in this area, Cayce for one has got theirs's on, Congaree's got theirs on, Post 214 voted that all their Executive members have to have one on. So guys, it does work, visibility means membership.

D-20 Cmdr: Just make sure the car's not aluminum. I bought one for my truck.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Vinyl doesn't make a difference.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker; Yes, it does, not vinyl but....

Dept Cmdr Scherer: We're putting on vinyl. I would also ask that you give me permission to get the quotes and everything. **Motion and a second that we put vinyl on both cars, both sides.** And if it's ok with you, I will help go get the prices and find out when we can get them put on. Unfortunately the commander's car will have to wait a few weeks because it was in an accident, they tried to rip the whole side of the car off.

NEC'man Hennis: I don't think it matters how much it costs, I think that's one of the things that we're here for and I think that it needs to be done, regardless. It's like changing the filters in the air conditioning, that needs to be done.

D-19 Cmdr Richardson: We're getting the money, Bud, don't worry about it. We got the money.

**Dept Cmdr Scherer: No further discussion on it? All those in favor say aye, opposed? Carried. Now, is there any further business?**

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: I'd like to bring something up. Down in the low country right now is the Carolina Memorial Gardens off of Rivers Avenue, it's a display that's been put out. It started at the Gibbs Gallery in Charleston and it's moved to Carolina Memorial, it's called SC Fallen Heroes from the Iraq/Afghanistan War and it's going to be going throughout the state. So once I find out where it goes from Carolina I'll get the word up here but it is going to the upstate And it's a series of pictures and a display with flags and everything of our 88 fallen service members from South Carolina. It's done by a University in Oklahoma, they're making it for every state and it's going to be specific for every state and it's a beautiful display. So if you're down in the low country in the next week, I think it's going to be there for the next week or so, stop down at Carolina Memorial, it's outside their chapel, it's really nice.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Who can we contact (inaudible)?

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: I'm going to try to get hold of JoAnn Wagner and then I'll bring everything up and then I'll let everything.

Dept Adj Holland: You get it to me and I'll get it out. You get it in to me and I'll get it out.

D-6 Cmdr Kvam: Yes sir, I'll get it up to you. Thank you.

D-3 Cmdr Mabery: I've got a question, back to baseball. I was asked some questions that I couldn't answer. Who do I need to get in contact with to give me all the information on baseball for a post.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: I will give you the name and phone number of our Director for that.

D-3 Cmdr Mabery: Thank you, sir.

Unidentified Speaker: Here is \$150.00 for signage.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: \$150 for me to stand here, thank you. (laughter).

Vice Cmdr Richardson: I'm going to make the assumption you're about to wrap it up?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: I've got one more thing, but yes.

Vice Cmdr Richardson: Ok. Please understand we're about to pass out the tickets. I'm going to do this as expeditiously as possible. I don't want you to think I'm ignoring you but I'll get them to you as soon as possible.

D-20 Cmdr Rucker: I've had 19 different posts send me an e-mail about the post pamphlet that I did, if you want a post pamphlet then the outline is on Publisher. If you want that I'll send it to you, you can change the name and

make it your own little flier. The 19 posts that have contacted me said it's going great and they have sold their membership with this right here and it's Why I should Belong, ok.

D-9 Cmdr Miller: As ya'll know, I'm also the 1<sup>st</sup> vice cmdr for the SAL. The membership for the SAL is very low right. We had a teleconference, that's the most communication that we've had the last couple of years. But the Vice Cmdrs and the cmdrs of the SAL are meeting and we are holding telephone conferences so we can start a communication chain and hopefully have better communications to the squadrons. But right now I urge you district commanders as you do your post visits and your district meetings, please include the SAL and let the cmdr's know, the post cmdr's know the SAL needs to start turning in their memberships, get the membership in as soon as possible. We are the lowest state right now in the Southeast Region and right now that looks very bad for our selection for a vice cmdr for the national level for the SAL so we need to get the membership up to help SC and the SAL.

PDC Hawk: We have somebody running for that.

D-9 Cmdr Miller: Yes, sir. Mark Cannito.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: This goes back to the signage on the car. But at the convention... since I was elected 4<sup>th</sup> vice cmdr my husband bought me a little car. And at the convention I bought two of the magnets and I tell you what, I get stopped and asked about The American Legion everywhere right now. It only cost \$10 a magnet to get it through Emblem Sales. Stick one on your own car, for your own self, that's \$20 if you put one on each side. You know what, then it's spread out. That's 20 of us plus 24, 28, you know, there's a whole bunch of us then that are running around all over the state with the emblem on our car. My post, you'll get the paperwork this week, we have seven new members, brand new, brand spanking new just from having them on the car and things like that.

NEC Hennis: If I may, I'd like to say a few words?

Dept Cmdr Scherer: You may.

NEC Hennis: Some of the guys have left but what I want to do is say thank you for the cards, the letters and the phone calls that ya'll have sent me since I've been sick. And I really appreciate it. You just don't realize until you're sick how much it means to you so I do appreciate it. But I'm back to normal, I think (laughter). I do appreciate it, it was just a good feeling. Also, while I'm standing here I want to announce my candidacy for NEC'man for the years 2017-2018. I have full support of American Legion Post 178 and I just want to announce my candidacy.

Dept Scherer: Would you like to go to 2019 instead of 2018?

NEC Hennis: 2017-2019, I'm sorry. But anyway, I've got a few pictures of the new National Commander but anyway, I do appreciate it, it's just a good feeling.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Before we break I've got one thing that we forgot to talk about and that's the Centennial Committee. And of course you know that in 2019 our 100 years are up. Once we leave the Reno convention we'll go to Minnesota and start our 100 year celebration. This should have been brought up over three years ago by our department commander and it was not done. So I took the bull by the horn, I don't know what we're supposed to do or where we're going but we're going to do something for this state. So we've asked people to be on the committee and we have a committee form and Carroll Kelley from Post 214 and two other ladies are going to help him head it up. But we have a committee that you may be getting a call from. Give us some information about your post. Good grief, you know that South Carolina is one of the best in the nation. We have a history that goes way back. We have some people that made out brochures from the time they were formed and have a timeline and are handing them out and we've got nothing. We should have done this three years ago, we got a year and a half to get done what we should have done for three years. So I'm asking for your help. Anything that you have or you can get us on your posts and by the way, you're supposed to be putting that on the Centennial website. That's your website and you can put anything on it. Get us that information so when we go to convention in 2019 we can hold

our head up high and say yeh, we got something done, here's our history for South Carolina and not turn our back and not turn our back and say I didn't know we had to do it. Now you know you have to do it. And I'm asking your full support in putting SC back up to # 1 where we were for many years instead of 50 or 51<sup>st</sup> in the nation. That's all I got to say on the Centennial Committee. Anything else to be brought to this DEC?

Vice Cmdr Britt: This is up \$190.

Dept Cmdr Scherer: Let's do the closing prayer and we'll salute the flag. John?

Vice Cmdr Britt gave the benediction and Cmdr Scherer closed the meeting.

For God and Country,

James H. Holland  
Department Adjutant

JH/mm