The Department Executive Committee meeting was conducted on April 18, 2020 beginning at 10:00 am via GoTo Meeting.

**Executive Committee Members Present:**

Dept Commander Walt Richardson  
Dept Adjutant Nick Diener  
Dept Historian Russ Cantrell  
NEC Michael Strauss  
Alt NEC Bob Scherer  
Imm PDC John Britt  
Dept JA Stephen Lewis  
Dept 1st Vice Cmdr Roberta Poulos  
Dept 2nd Vice Cmdr Ron Price  
Dept 3rd Vice Cmdr Robin Rucker  
Dept 4th Vice Cmdr Jim Kvam  
D-1 Cmdr Jim Jarvis  
D-3 Cmdr Bridget Lewis  
D-4 Cmdr Wayne Southworth  
D-5 Cmdr Jack Smith  
D-6 Cmdr Bill Simpson  
D-7 Cmdr Michael Calcutt  
D-8 Cmdr Chuck Shaffer  
D-9 Cmdr Robert Sweet  
D-10 Cmdr Tommy Sinclair  
D-11 Cmdr Jack Lonergan  
D-12 Cmdr Charlie Davis  
D-14 Cmdr Mike Brandt  
D-15 Cmdr Jamie Rumbaugh  
D-16 Cmdr Jim Defrehn  
D-17 Cmdr Jim Thrailkill  
D-18 Cmdr Larry Pouncy  
D-19 Cmdr Bob Gibbons  
D-20 Cmdr David Mills  
PDC/PDA Jim Hawk  
PDC Joe Lysaght  
PDC/PDA Jim Hawk  
PDC Joe Lysaght

**Absent:**

Dept Asst JA Anthony Livoti  
Dept Asst JA Cody Mitchell  
D-2 Cmdr Chuck Blankin  
D-13 Cmdr vacant  
Dept Sgt-at-Arms George Oxner

**Also Present:**

Legree Oswald, Dept BB Director  
M. May, Dept Exec Director

Cmdr Richardson: Alright, thank you. I just want to thank everybody for attending. This is of course the April 18, 2020 SC DEC meeting and this is a first. This is the first teleconference DEC meeting that I’m aware of that we’ve ever had here in SC. This could be an indication of exactly how things are going to go in the future. Quite possibly cut down on a lot of travel for all of us. So if this goes good, then hopefully it will be indication of things to come. Like Nick said, one of the things that you have to do is so we can keep good records, is you have to identify yourself before you speak, that’s going to be so very, very important. A couple of things I want to talk to you about. Number one is the CPR’s. In one of my updates I mentioned to you that we were number one in the nation in turning in CPR’s. Well, we’ve dropped down to second place. And the worst thing about that is the reason we dropped down to second place is because we only had nobody turn in an additional CPR. We’re still at 39, we’re still at 39. So we need to contact your post, contact your post Cmdrs & Post Adjutants. Please get them to go ahead and start filling out the CPR’s. That’s very, very important. Next thing is the importance of this vote. The vote that we’re going that we take today might be one of the most important votes we ever
take here at the DEC. All of you were provided with a copy of National’s Resolution #3. I’m confident that all of the voting members have studied it and you have come prepared to make a vote based on what you feel is best for The American Legion Dept of SC. Remember, this is why you were elected. The posts in your district believe that you will be able to make a decision based on what they wanted. Anybody, anybody can make the easy decisions. This is why you were elected. You were elected to make the hard decisions. And that’s what we’ve got to do today.

Commander Richardson called on Department Chaplain Richard Mullinax for the invocation and Adjutant for the roll call. Department Adjutant Diener called the roll and announced there was a quorum to conduct business. He verbally confirmed the non-voting members of the DEC present, Judge Advocate Lewis, Chaplain Mullinax, PDC Lysaght, PDC Hawk and Dept BB Chairman Oswald.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you very much. We have to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, do a have a motion?

D-20 Cmdr Mills: I have a motion that we approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: We have a motion from David Mills and a second from Jim Defrehn that we approve the minutes of the previous meeting as sent out. All in favor say aye? Hold on, any question? Very good. All in favor say aye? All opposed? Very good, minutes are approved.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: We have no old business, but we do have some new business. Our first is going to be a finance report by our Finance Chairman, Jim Jarvis, Jim?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yes sir, hey, this is going to be a little bit different. I’m not going to give you the normal, you’ve got the March statement. As you will expect, the income has taken the biggest hit and that’s in two areas. Presently our only income is membership. So kind of as the membership team of tying both the membership and finance together. Membership is the only thing we’re going to have for an income coming up. And we need to hit that hard. It’s not so bad now, we’re sitting with about $120,000 or so in the operating checking account. We’re moving but membership has come to a standstill. What’s going to hurt us most though is once July comes around, we start with the 2021. That’s where we need to make sure we get off running on, that’s the only way we’re going be bringing up income. We have no Rifle Raffle, our rental income is Nil, we have two areas vacant, Baseball and where the Auxiliary was and as you can also imagine, the dance studio, they’re struggling right now and we don’t want them to go under because she’s a very good tenant. So we’re watching her closely. Nick and I are, and the finance committee, are watching the expenses. The expenses are decreasing. The normal stuff, water’s going to be less, electricity’s going to be less but we’re watching this very carefully, so far, we’re alright. It could go south quickly if we don’t kick off this 2021 membership. Any questions? I’d like to turn the last part of the finance, the finance committee has made the recommendation, wants to make the recommendation to the DEC but Nick is going to, our Adjutant will give this (inaudible).

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, thank you Jim. Yeh, any of ya’ll that have hears on the news, Congress has passed the CARES ACT, which is the small business assistance act. One of the things, and The American Legion does quality for that but what it requires, but basically you get the money starting out as a loan. We would be qualified to be able to get that for eight week’s worth of our salaries and the interest on our mortgage, you know, the interest portion on our mortgage, as well as our utilities. As I say, it starts out as a loan and as long as you use the money for that, then they will forgive the loan. So it
turns into a grant. But in order for me to apply for that, you know to get what we can to try and help us, and by the way, that number works out about, around approximately $20,000 that we could get help for in the Department. But in order to do that, I actually have to apply for a loan to start with and I have to have ya’lls permission to apply for that loan. So what I need is the authority to go out and apply for it, just in the amount that we feel will be forgiven and apply for the loan.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: I make a motion to give Nick the authority to apply for the loan.

Department Finance Chairman: I second that motion.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, we have a motion to give Nick the authority to apply for the loan of $20,000, it was made by Jim Defrehn and seconded by Jim Jarvis. Is there any discussion?

D-7 Cmdr Calcutt: I understand that those funds in the SBA portion of that have been depleted at this point. Are you aware of that? I’m assuming you have not applied since we haven’t voted yet.

Dept Adj Diener: Yes, and I have not applied. What we’re counting on here is the second phase of that comes in. Because until I could get a vote, we couldn’t apply but they are out of money right now, I should have said that. But they’re anticipating that Congress is going to pass a second portion. If they pass that I need to be able to jump on it when they pass it.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: Nick, basically when you’re applying, you’re going to be applying the electricity, basically your utilities, wages, right? And mortgage? You’re going to stay on that, on that line?

Dept Adj Diener: Yes, that’s all I’m going to be looking at because that’s the portions that they’ll waive it as long as you use the money for it. So what I’m looking at is only getting the amount for what turns it into a grant.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Any questions? Hearing none, I’m going to take a vote. All in favor say aye? All opposed? Alright, motion carried. Alright, thank you very much. Alright, next, is our NEC Resolution # 3. Ya’ll received that Resolution in the mail, I hope you’ve had a chance to study it and do some serious thinking about it. The way we look at it here, we have one of four options on this. # 1 is to follow the recommendations of the NEC. # 2 is to ignore the recommendations of the NEC and go ahead with our conventions and our elections. # 3 is to cancel the convention and hold the elections. # 4 is to postpone the decision that we have to make today to a future date. Do we have any discussion on this?

Vice Cmdr Poulos: We can’t have any discussion until we have a motion. I’d like to make a motion that we accept our option # 1, follow National’s lead with the convention, officers and committee appointments to be carried over until 2021 when all of this is finished.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Commander, I make a second to that.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, a motion has been made by Roberta Poulos and a second has been made by Jim Jarvis. Do we have any discussion?

D-8 Cmdr Shaffer: I just have one question, sir. For our Department Convention, if we decide to go with # 1, are we still going to be stuck with the $20,000.00 or whatever the cost is for the Marriott?
Dept Cmdr Richardson: I’ll let our Adjutant answer that, Nick?

Dept Adj Diener: Ok. There is a possibility that we could be. You know, if we vote to cancel the convention one of the things that I will immediately have to go the hotel with is, is see how I can negotiate that down, what we can do to carry it over to another meeting or another convention but I’m going to have to look at that. But as the rules stand right now, they could hold us to that and it would be around $20,000.00 but I feel pretty confident that they wouldn’t do that. But it’s speculation right now but that is a possibility.

D-8 Cmdr Shaffer: I just thought maybe that would be something we ought to look at. I’m agreeing on #1, but with our financial circumstances and everything, are we going to be able to afford to eat that $20,000.00 without having a convention. Thank you.

Dept Adj Diener: Chuck, that is going to be a, that would make it tight if we had to eat the $20,000.00. I mean, yes, we do have the, right now we have the funds. And thank goodness we have the reserve fund back there. Like I say, hopefully we could knock that out. Because one of the dangers is if we went ahead and had a convention and we don’t get good attendance, we’re still going to get penalized and still be spending a lot of that money without any attendance. So it is a danger and I think if we had to do it, and eat the $20,000.00, you know. Do we have the money that we have in the reserve fund? Do we have it to where we could cover it? And the answer to that is yes.

Alt NEC Scherer: The states that I have talked to, they said the hotels said we just extend our contract for one more year. Maybe we could look at that possibility. But also if we start too soon, I would hate to be the one to say yes and then somebody catch the virus and die because it’s not over with yet. (Inaudible).

Vice Cmdr Poulos: One thing I would like to say, National completely closed down everything for convention, everything, without any penalties. So we can always use that as a little bit of leverage with the Marriott because we’ve been with them for so long. It’s not something that we perceived so it could be they would honor us to just move it to another year.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: I know that everyone is talking about the virus, but I haven’t heard anybody say, you know that we had a storm, tornadoes come through South Carolina? I’ve had a couple of my Commanders that have called me, and I apologized for not being able to answer my e-mails because they had no power for four days. You know, I go along with Nick, if you wind up having it you could end up with very low attendance because there are people out there that are still trying to get back together from the storm. Plus avoid the pandemic.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Yeh, I agree for my history going back years trying to have conventions and stuff, sometimes it’s a local, the Marriott, which you have a great relationship with, I noticed. But if have an issue with them you could also go to National Marriott themselves as an American Legion. And I’m going to tell you right now, you’re not going to have much of a problem. I mean, I can almost guarantee that.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Can we just go ahead and move it to Fall Conference? I mean, we’re looking for someplace now?

Dept Adj Diener: Of course the other thing is we also have a contract for Fall Conference but we’re doing lots of speculating right now on here. To go in and cancel it, I think I’m going to be able to get the hotel to work with us on it, but I’ve actually got to go over and talk with them. Like Bob said, one
of the possibilities is to offer up and go ahead and sign another year’s contract with them. So there’s several of the things there that we have the option to do and once I talk with the hotel and negotiate something, needless to say, we would be coming back to a meeting like this so you all got to see the results and approve the results, especially if I’m going out and making other contracts.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: All this speculation is everything we’re already considering. We can’t do anything until this group of people tell us, go for it. So that’s what’s, you’re going to ask all kinds of questions. Every question that’s been mentioned has already been talked over by Nick and myself. We need the permission of the DEC before we make any steps, so I call for the question?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Are there any other questions?

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Can’t we just deal with the headquarters of the Marriott and deal with them?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Larry, Jim Defrehn already brought that up. Jim Defrehn brought that up, that’s a real good idea, I hadn’t thought about that. I’m sure if we don’t get what we want through here in Columbia that Nick will take the steps to get what we need.

Dept Adj Diener: That’s correct.

Vice Cmdr Rucker; Do we know how many other states have already cancelled their convention?

Dept Adj Diener: I do not have a total; I’ve talked with four other Departments. They of them have cancelled theirs. The other was still determining it, they haven’t had their meeting like this. I think you’re seeing a lot of them that are cancelling. Some of them are cancelling and doing alternate elections, some of them are leaving in place. They’re all doing just what we’re doing right now.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: (Inaudible) around 20 or something that’s already cancelled.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: That’s the number I have.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: That’s what I have too, it’s over 20.

Alt NEC Scherer: I have over 40 because I called them and got (Inaudible) 42.

Dept Adj Diener; Yeh, you just have to be careful, some of them that’s what they’re planning to do but they haven’t all taken the vote.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: I think I called for the question.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: The call for the question does not supersede the right to discuss. Is there any other discussion? Very good. Seeing no further discussion we’ll now take a vote. This will be a roll call vote. Adjutant?

Dept Adjutant Diener called the roll:

**NEC Strauss: Aye.**
**Alt NEC Scherer: # 1**
Dept Adj Diener: Ok, yeh, just to be clear, what we’re voting here is cancel the convention and leave the officers in place for a year. The Department Officers, that does not include the District Commanders. Ok.

Imm PDC Britt: Aye
Dept Historian Cantrell: Aye
1st Vice Cmdr Poulos: Yes
2nd Vice Cmdr Price: Yes
3rd Vice Cmdr Rucker: Yes
4th Vice Cmdr Kvam: Yes
D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Yes
D-3 Cmdr Lewis: Yes
D-4 Cmdr Southworth: (let it be noted that he held up a sign that said yes)
D-5 Cmdr Smith: Yes
D-6 Cmdr Simpson: Yes
D-7 Cmdr Calcutt: Yes
D-8 Cmdr Shaffer: Yes
D-9 Cmdr Sweet: Yes
D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: Yes
D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: Yes
D-12 Cmdr David: Yes
D-14 Cmdr Brandt: Yes
D-15 Cmdr Rumbaugh: Yes
D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Aye
D-17 Cmdr Thrailkill: Yes
D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Yes
D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Yes
D-20 Cmdr Mills: Yes

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, Commander, the vote was unanimous. As cancelling the convention and leaving the officers in place.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: I know you said we had a quorum but I’m kind of writing notes down. How many people are actually present and then how many are absent?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Are you talking about the voting members? I think we have 27, 27 of the 28 are here.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: So we have 27 and one missing, one absent? Thank you.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We have one vacant one too so that will be two missing.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Oh, that’s right, thank you Jim.

Dept Adj Diener: We have 27 present, one vacant and one missing, absent.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Then we have 26.

Dept Adj Diener: 26, that’s right.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok, by unanimous vote, the vote to follow the NEC Resolution # 3 is carried. Alright, next on our agenda is our special code of procedures. I don’t know if we need to go into that because we’re not going to have a special election. So I think we’re just going to skip over that and go right on to the next one. Do we have any questions about that? Alright hearing none, let’s talk about baseball. Ok, baseball, we received a report from our baseball committee that they were in favor of postponing our decision until May the 15th. Now, what we have here is, Legree, are you still on?

BB Sub-Cmte Chairman Oswald: Yes, sir Commander, I’m here.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, Legree Oswald’s the chairman of our BB Cmte and we wanted to give him the chance to speak.

BB Sub-Cmte Chairman Oswald: Thank you Commander and thank you committee for allowing us to come before you today and give you the reason that we’re asking for a postponement on any decision on SC American Legion Baseball until May the 15th. We all know that the World Series and the Regionals have been cancelled due to the Covid Virus and we were off to a really good start this year. It looked like we were going to have 85 to 90 teams, Juniors and Seniors. And again, as you well know, we heard you talking earlier about membership. And the money that comes in from Baseball, you know that helps in other Americanism Committee endeavors throughout the year. Some of that money’s already in the bank, and you know, if baseball in South Carolina is (inaudible) through a process that National has declared that we should use, it go back to the people that paid money for their teams. So we’re asking for May the 15th for any final decision and we can start The American Legion season, according to the coaches and the committee and the athletic officers on July 1st because you don’t have any deadline to get through with timeframes for the Regionals and the World Series. It just goes up no farther than the state of South Carolina. We realize that are a lot of (inaudible) circumstances around groups meeting and baseball and any other endeavor and we certainly understand that. But as we look at the different groups in America now, the President himself and other people talking about the economy coming back and getting the country back jump started and all and they’re looking at (inaudible) opportunities and us having a (inaudible) postponement until your group decides how that would be handled. That’s all we’re asking for at this time is to possibly give us to May the 15th as a date to reconvene with you folks to see if indeed baseball will go on this summer on the state level or if it’s going to be cancelled. That’s the simple process that we’re asking for. That’s all I have, Commander.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you Legree, we appreciate the information. Now, we still have to decide about baseball.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: I make a motion that we allow Mr. Oswald and the committee to extend their time to May 15th to make a decision.

D-7 Cmdr Calcutt: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: The motion has been made by Jim Defrehn and seconded by Michael Calcutt that we allow the baseball committee to May the 15th to see if we can get a season on the record. Is there any discussion?

D-5 Cmdr Smith: I have quite a few posts in my district that support teams and they’ve been getting calls from parents and other school officials wanting a decision now on what they’re going to do, you know. If we’re going to be waiting, we need some way to get out to all the schools and tell them that, you know, that they’re extending, we’re waiting. But they want a decision now, thank you.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok. Legree?

BB Sub-Cmte Chairman Oswald: Yes sir.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: As far as a decision for now is concerned, what are we going to do about that?

BB Sub-Cmte Chairman Oswald: Well, I think when you look at anybody making a final decision based on what the (inaudible) Governors of the states come back with and decide. I fully expect baseball to go on July 1st and I think that we can do it but again to make a decision about a high school field or whatever until, you know, our state is not sheltered in place would be very difficult to do because you’d be making a decision against the Governor or whoever is (inaudible). You’re going to (inaudible). That’s why we’re asking for May the 15th. I think baseball could get (inaudible) this summer, on July the 1st and we would be more than welcome to put out a statement saying that we’re waiting on the DEC until May the 15th to give us a decision on whether we can. And if the DEC says we can then we’ll (inaudible) baseball.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok, Roberta?

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Ok, I just have a question of asking…the schools are gearing towards right now down here by us, in (Inaudible) I was at one of their meetings, they’re not going to have anybody using their fields or any of their stuff until the fall. Do we have anything in place if we’re going to do this? The other part of it, we just had eight more cases down here by us yesterday, hospitalized. So I’m just wondering if we’re putting people in jeopardy if we’re going to have a group like this. Don’t forget the people that are going to come and see it, they’re going to be our ages. And every one of us are at the high-risk category whether you’re a veteran and have health issues and younger or if you’re a senior citizen. Number One. And Number two, if we have at team, they’re in there, they want to win, they win the Department, but just think of the Seniors this year and they don’t have a prom, they don’t have a walk to get their diplomas, it’s a non-entity year for them. It’s such a let-down for 13 years of school that they don’t have anything. If we have a team out there that could win, our Department, our state finals, there’s no Regionals. There’s….the ultimate goal for every team is to go out there and win the World Series and be on tv, at least be in the World Series and be on tv, then they have another thing that they got another let-down. So I just want us to think about those things.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I have some serious concerns, I mean, I would be willing at this point in time to cancel baseball period. Starting in July is ridiculous. One child gets hurt, gets sick, even if he even spread it, that is on The American Legion. Baseball has got The American Legion name on it. I can’t support any baseball this year, period.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: If we got enough gumption to cancel a convention? Enough gumption to cancel Boys State? Enough gumption to cancel Law Cadet? We ought to have enough gumption to make this decision too, now.

Vice Cmdr Rucker: I’m going back to what everybody else has said but just looking at college and high schools that I have talked to, some local principals and all that. And they’re looking toward not doing anything until they go back to school in August. So I don’t, you know, the other thing about it, I asked about ball fields and that kind of thing, if we get one person sick, then that’s on us.

D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: I think the question is who’s going to work the games? Because my workers are, like veterans who are all either citizens or like me, the younger crowd with a lot of underlying medical conditions.
D-9 Cmdr Sweet: From a medical standpoint, this thing’s going to last a lot longer for those that are in jeopardy, older people, people with underlying medical conditions. I agree with people that would vote not for it now.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Commander, I’d like to make a motion that we cancel….

Dept Cmdr Richardson: We have to deal with the motion on the floor first then we can have another one.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Commander, I would like to withdraw my motion from the floor, please

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, the motion’s been withdrawn ‘til May the 15th. Michael, what about your second?

D-7 Cmdr Calcutt: Agree, my second.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I’d like to make a motion that we cancel baseball, for the 2020 season, period.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, the motion’s been made by Cmdr Jarvis that we cancel baseball for 2020 and been seconded by Tommy Sinclair, Jack Smith and Bob Gibbons and Dave Mills. Do we have any discussion? I think we’ve had a lot of discussion so far.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: I don’t have discussion; I just take exception with Lonergan considering himself one of the younger guys in the room (Laughter).

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, we have a motion on the floor, hearing no further discussion. Once again, we’ll have to have a roll call vote.

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, the vote, again, just to make everybody clear, the vote is to cancel the baseball season immediately.

NEC Strauss: Aye
Alt NEC Scherer: Yes
Imm PDC Britt: Yes
Dept Historian Cantrell: Yes
1st Vice Cmdr Poulos: Yes
2nd Vice Cmdr Price: Yes
3rd Vice Cmdr Rucker: Yes
4th Vice Cmdr Kvam: Yes
D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Yes
D-3 Cmdr Lewis: Yes
D-4 Cmdr Southworth
D-5 Cmdr Smith: Yes
D-6 Cmdr Simpson: Yes
D-7 Cmdr Calcutt: Yes
D-8 Cmdr Shaffer: Yes
D-9 Cmdr Sweet: Yes
D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: Yes  
D-11 Cmdr Lonergan: Yes  
D-12 Cmdr Davis: Yes  
D-14 Cmdr Brandt: Yes  
D-15 Cmdr Rumbaugh: Yes  
D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Yes  
D-17 Cmdr Thrailkill: Yes  
D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Yes  
D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Yes  
D-20 Cmdr Mills: Yes  

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, you have a unanimous vote, 26 to 0 to cancel the baseball season, immediately.  

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Very good, thank you very much. Let it be known that as of right now the 2020 Department of South Carolina American Legion baseball season has been cancelled by a unanimous vote of the Department Executive Committee. Alright.  

BB Sub-Committee Chairman Oswald: Commander, can I say one more thing?  

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Absolutely, Legree.  

BB Sub-Committee Chairman Oswald: Ok, I respect the decision and do not disagree with the decision. We’re all in tough times and I appreciate everybody voting. We will go back to work for the 2021 season and try and maintain these teams and we’ll get the information out how they can get their money back. And again, I do not disagree with any of the vote. It was our job to present it and see where we’re at. We’ll present it in the right way to the teams have paid and to the teams in the correct way. So we’re looking forward to getting the announcement out next week, ok?  

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you. And Legree, please tell the members of your committee how much the DEC appreciates all the hard work that they’ve done and the way we’ve built this program the past couple of years. Thank you and tell them we all said thank you for a job well done.  

D-20 Cmdr Mills: Commander, may I address Legree?  

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Yes, David.  

D-20 Cmdr Mills: Legree, I just wanted to get with you on the money going back or getting it back to them and everything. One of the things that I did since we had to cancel Boys State and some of the other things.  

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Whoa, hold on, David, you and Legree can talk about that later, we want to keep this thing going. Alright, I hate to cut you off, but bandwidth is precious.  

BB Sub-Committee Chairman Oswald: I just wanted to say thank you.  

D-15 Cmdr Rumbaugh: There’s some posts out here that need some Vice Cmdr’s appointed. If we’re not holding a vote, I know it’s kind of a post decision but should we do something to let the posts know that they can appoint those positions?
Dept Cmdr Richardson: Post positions have already been sent out. We’re not going to start micromanaging 160 posts. We’re leaving the post elections up to the post leadership. So that’s up to the post leadership. Ok?

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: I have a question about baseball.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Baseball’s been settled but go ahead.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: Well, well just I have made some of you aware online there are several posts that say even if we cancel, they’re still going to have a season. Will there be something we can do to stop them or if they do, a penalty of some sort?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: They can have a season, but it won’t be under The American Legion.

Dept Adj Diener: They cannot use The American Legion name or the post name or in any way involve The American Legion in that. If they go out and do something on their own, we can’t do anything to it. But it cannot in any way involve The American Legion.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Nor can they use the equipment of The American Legion.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Correct. Alright, Adjutant’s update. Nick?

Dept Adj Diener: Yeh, I have two real quick things. One, I just need to let the members of this committee know, the SAL, the Sons of The American Legion. They passed a Resolution that they are going to increase their dues this year by $3.00 to National. Our Department SAL Executive Committee has met, and they are planning on raising their dues by that additional $3.00. Just the $3.00 to cover to National so the SAL dues will be $18.00 a year. This committee doesn’t have to vote on anything because it doesn’t actually change their budget because the amount coming into Department, you know, for budgetary purposes, is still going to be the same. But I just wanted to keep you all informed of that. The second thing is, any of your district meetings, when we voted on these officers, you know, to keep the officers in place, basically the only ones we’re keeping in place are the white caps and the red caps, ok? If you’re a district commander and you haven’t had your elections, you still need to have your elections. Anybody that wants to do it using this GO TO Meeting, if you will call me and coordinate it with me I will set it up, a room for you to have a meeting just like this, especially if you have to hold elections. But we are open to doing that for you, a couple of you have already scheduled it. Commander, that is all I have unless there’s any questions of me.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: Question for Nick, on the SAL, the dues that we have to mail in is now $18.00?

Dept Adj Diener: Correct, as of July 1st.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Give him a phone call.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: I've got one more question. I was just going to ask him one more time? Who’s going to cancel our reservations? Do we have to cancel our reservations, or we got to wait until Nick negotiates with the Marriott before we cancel?

Dept Adj Diener: We will try to make there where all the reservations are cancelled. I would recommend everybody give us some time to do that. Once we announce it, if I was you all, I would double check it but, you know, just like when we changed the dates, they adjusted everybody. So for
right now do not do anything so because the more you do, the more it makes a chance of messing up the
records.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok, a couple things and we’re going to back on out of here. I just wanted to let
you know our membership as of April the 16th, according to National’s website, we’re about 172 ahead
of where we were this time last year. Now, we’ve already got two districts that are at a hundred percent,
we’ve got four districts that are above 99% And we’ve got 57 posts at a hundred percent. Now, the
big problem we’ve got is because this virus getting us it’s going to be awful easy, because we’ve got a
built-in excuse. It’s going to be awful easy just to sit back and do nothing. We cannot afford that.
Membership is our lifeblood. You’ve heard it a hundred times already, I’m sure. Now’s the time we
need to get out and really digging in our heels and getting these members. This is so very, very
important. You’ve heard from Jim, Jim Jarvis, about our only source of income. So we’ve got to have
these members. So if you would please, all you District Cmdrs, please call your posts and push them.
And tell them we’ve got to have these members and we’ll go from there. If there’s anything we can do
for you, you know, me or the four vice Cmdr’s, you let us know. In the rules that we’re playing with
right now, with the Coronavirus, that’s what we’ll do. We’ll do what we have to do. Also, I did want to
let you know that we’ve had our first Legionnaire to be diagnosed with the Coronavirus. He was from
Post 193, we’ll not release any names or any information but I feel that as the Leadership of this
Department, we need to be aware of the people that have come down with this because of the impact it’s
going to have on us. Now, I have asked Chaplain Mullinax, Chaplain Mullinax to keep track of all these
people that have been diagnosed or in quarantine. So if you have somebody in your District, please, and
you know of somebody that’s in quarantine or been diagnosed with this, what do you call it? COVID-
19, please give Richard a call, shoot him an e-mail and let him know. We’re not going to release any
information. We’re just going to keep these numbers up and when Richard finds out and he gets the
numbers he’ll give them to me and I’m going to send them straight out to you because I feel it is vitally
important that you be aware of the situation and what’s causing us to act like we’re acting.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: We’ve got two because I gave you a name, remember?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Oh, that’s right, there’s two of them. Larry, if you would, shoot that name to
Chaplain Mullinax and we can get it on the thing, ok?

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Will do.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Ok, don’t forget about our Buddy checks. That’s how you’re going to find out within
your post, your district, your quadrant, if you have somebody that has anybody that has anything like
this and then we can carry on from there but keep those buddy checks in mind and keep them in mind
for your membership.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: Would the Chaplain please raise his sign again because I have a member from Post
48.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I will send out his contact information.

D-5 Cmdr Smith: I have a member of Post 48 that is in quarantine.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, well we don’t want in to all this right here because our Saturdays are
important. I will send out Chaplain’s contact information so you can get it to him.

D-17 Cmdr Calcutt: What about Fireflies Baseball Legion night, what are we going to do on that?
Vice Cmdr Rucker: The Fireflies, they are still negotiating what they’re going to do. But they said if they do not have a season, they would reimburse you or if they decide to have a shortened season, they can pick another day. I’m thinking that they will make a decision around May 1st so I will let you know as soon as I know but the National Baseball League is thinking about just having a closed season in Florida or Arizona with all the Farm teams and everything else and if they do that then the season will be cancelled. But we won’t know that…I think they’ll try to make…they’re going to try to make a decision around May the 1st.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, thank you. Alright, last thing and then we’re going to bug out. Is while we’re in this crisis mode, it is very important that we play in our organization by the rules that are set for us. But what we cannot forget is we have to have a plan for how we’re going to recover once this is over. So rest assured that we’re going to start working on our recovery plan. We want to be, when this thing is over with, we want to be able to hit the ground running. Now, there’s one thing that I know for sure that’s there no one person that’s smarter than everybody. So District Cmdrs, if you would please, contact your post Cmdrs and ask them for ideas. And then funnel that right up from the District Cmdr’s to your vice Cmdrs, and the Vice Cmdrs, whenever we meet to formulate this plan, we will have input from all the posts. If there’s one thing you can rest assured of is, that we will have a plan for our recovery of the Department of South Carolina. Alright.

Dept Adj Diener: Can I have an alibi, please? Just one quick alibi on this. On the hotel, for the convention, I would ask please do not contact them. Because the first they need to hear from this is from me on Monday and if they start getting a bunch of calls over the weekend cancelling hotel rooms that might hurt negotiating with them so please don’t do anything with the hotel on your reservations until you hear back from us.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Commander, I appreciate what you’re doing during this virus outbreak. Keep up the good work, thank you for the information you’re sending to us.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Bobby, I appreciate it. You’ve got to remember, it’s not just one, it’s everybody. Everybody, the Vice Cmdrs, the District Cmdr’s, the Department Staff, everybody’s working to make the best out of a bad situation.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: You’re our leader now.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I just wanted to let you know there’s some good people, we’ve got good people in the Department, all over. We’re going to be fine.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: And we appreciate the staff as well.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, last thing. Is there anything for the good of The American Legion, good going once, good going twice, Chaplain Mullinax?

Dept J/A Lewis: Commander, can I say something? This is Stephen:

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Oh, yes, absolutely? How’re doing?

Dept J/A Lewis: I’m good, I’m good, I hope everybody’s well. I just wanted to speak real quickly about Boys State. If everybody could communicate to their folks in the posts and District Commanders. We are still taking registration’s for Boys State. Mainly because we want to be able to recognize the young men that the posts have selected even if, despite the fact that we have cancelled this year. And we
are working on plans to try and recognize them and may be even have a one day event in a centrally localized somewhere in the state where we get these young men together and maybe have a mini-Boys State but not, but really just an opportunity to recognize them. Please encourage all your posts to continue to register boys so that we can, so that they can get the benefit of not only of being recognized as a Boys State delegate for 2020. But also, really the important thing is that they would then potentially be eligible for the boy’s state scholarships that a lot of the colleges and universities around the state give. And our understanding from most of those colleges and universities that we have talked to said that they will honor, if someone’s been officially selected by the post and gone through the normal lines of the selection process, they will be...they will still be eligible for these scholarships that the colleges and universities give out. That’s real important to a lot of the parents. So, please encourage your people to continue to register folks for the 2020 Boys State and we’ve extended the deadline to what the first day of Boys State was, supposed to be, June 7th. So that’s all I need to say for the good of the Legion and good of Boys State.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Chaplain, put one on us, short and sweet.

Chaplain Mullinax gave the benediction and Department Commander Richardson closed the meeting.

For God and Country,

Nick I. Diener
Department Adjutant

ND/mm