The Department Executive Committee met on August 17, 2019 at American Legion Department Hdqtrs, 103 Legion Plaza Rd, Columbia, SC 29210.

Executive Committee Members Present:

Dept Commander Walt Richardson
Dept Adjutant Nick Diener
JA Stephen Lewis
Asst JA Anthony Livoti
Asst JA Cody Mitchell
Department Historian Russ Cantrell
NEC Michael Strauss
Alt NEC Bob Scherer
Imm PDC John Britt
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
PNEC Bud Hennis
PDC/PDA Jim Hawk
PDC Cecil Phillips
PDC Joe Lysaght

Absent:

D-2 Cmdr Chuck Blankin
D-11 Cmdr Jack Lonergan
D-12 Cmdr Charlie Davis
D-13 Cmdr Jimmy Wilson

Also Present:

Darlene Walton, P-130
Exe Dir. M. May
Bruce Donegan, P-111
Peter St. Onge, P-15
D. Brad Munn, Cmdr P-132
Kenneth Porter, P-22

Steve Reck, P-12
Grady Richardson, Dept Const/Bylaws Chair
John McKnight, P-22
Robert Lee, P-22
Kenneth Porter, P-22
Kevin Joy, P-71

Dept Cmdr Richardson: We want to welcome everybody to the, to the DEC meeting. For a special welcome, we have one, two, three, four, we have five of our past commanders in the back. Gentlemen, welcome, glad you could make it. If you would please.

Dept Cmdr Richardson called on Vice Cmdr Rucker for the invocation, Vice Cmdr Poulos for Resolution 288, Vice Cmdr Price for the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Cmdr Rucker for the Preamble.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: Welcome. Appreciate ya’ll coming. Want to extend a warm welcome to our newest member, Bill Simpson, from Post 166. He is the new District Six Commander, welcome aboard.

Alright, we are the DEC, we are the Department Executive Committee. We’re the governing body of this organization between conventions. That being said, that makes us ultimately responsible for everything that happens at this Department. Now, because you’re elected there’s about a 95% chance that you are a type A individual. You’re strong, you’re opinionated, and you’re going to speak your mind. Which is exactly what we want. We want you to come in here and speak your mind to fight what you think is right and go from there. Controversy is good. Don’t let nobody tell you controversy is bad. Controversy is good when you can stand up and speak your mind and make your point. The problem is what you do after the controversy is settled. So, we what we want now is, if you got questions, if you got a, if you got a point you want to make, I expect you to stand up and make your point. Remember, we’re all in here because we believe we want to do what is best for The American Legion. And as long as everybody keeps that in mind, we will do fine, we’ll do great, no problem. Adjutant, will you call the roll please.

Dept Adj Diener called the roll and informed the Commander he had a quorum

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, we’re going to try to keep this thing rolling as expeditiously as possible. We want to be out of here just as we can possibly can and we don’t want no messin’ around. Alright, first item on the (inaudible) is we’re going to old business, we have a tabled motion, do I have a motion to take this motion off the table?

Dept Adj Diener: You have to do the minutes first, call for a motion.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok, I forgot to turn the page. Ok, alright, we got to do the minutes.

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

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: All in favor say aye, opposed? Alright, very good. Now, alright, alright, very good. Alright, first order of business is we have a tabled motion. Do I have a motion to take this motion off the table?

D-14 Cmdr Brandt: I make a motion to have the tabled motion come back on the board.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Do I have a second?

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I have a motion and a second, the motion is now off of the table. Just so we can remind everybody, Maggie, do we have a copy of the, of the motion?

Exec Dir May: It’s in the minutes.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: It’s in the minutes.

Dept Adj Diener: I can pull it up.
The motion is “I’d like to remove Jim Hawk and Joe Lysaght from the Constitution and Bylaws Committee”. Now do we have any discussion?

NEC Strauss: I have some discussion.

NEC Strauss: I did have a, if you recall in that same discussion that we had last time, I asked for a ruling from the Judge Advocate who was not present. So first I would like to address that. I asked the Judge Advocate to make a ruling, I presume that was passed onto the Judge Advocate for a ruling, so I’ll yield to the Parliamentarian.

JA Lewis: It’s actually in front of you.

JA Lewis: Oh, they don’t. Ok, Anthony and I looked at that and Cody as well, looked at this question. And I can boil it down for you. Actually Anthony wrote the opinion, it’s a page and a half opinion, I’d be happy to give you any copies. The bottom line is that we don’t believe that a motion, that an officer, back up, it gets a little bit complicated. Here’s the bottom line and I’m happy to field any questions. Our constitution and bylaws state that a person who is appointed to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee is appointed for a fixed term. According to Robert’s Rules of Order, because neither our Constitution nor Bylaws provide for a mechanism to remove a committee member you have to go to Roberts Rules of Order. And Roberts Rules of Order is clear that if a committee member is appointed for a fixed term than that committee member can only be removed for cause. And similar and in fact, identical to the removal of officers. And our Constitution does provide for removal of officers. And basically charges need to be brought and then a trial or a hearing needs to be held. So we do not believe that simply by a motion, because this committee is for a fixed term, committee positions for a fixed term, we believe Roberts Rules of Order is clear that a motion cannot be used to remove based on just a majority vote of this body. There has to be charges brought and you have to go through the process just like an officer being brought up to be removed from his position as officer of the Legion. That’s hopefully a short, sweet opinion but I’ve got it in writing if anybody needs to take a look at it and look at the specific sections of the Constitution and Roberts Rules of Order.

NEC Strauss: I’m satisfied with that opinion.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Any further discussion. Mr. Sinclair?

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: Do you want me to come or not?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Come up.
D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: It was my motion, so I feel like I need to kind of defend it. You use the term ruling but I think you’re more of an opinion and not a ruling, ya’ll don’t issue rulings, I don’t think. There’s a couple of places in elections where I think you’re specifically charged with rulings but (inaudible) opinions.

JA Lewis: It’s my understanding I can do both. I can both do a ruling and give an opinion.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: Ok. The basic question is does the DEC have the authority to do this? If the answer is no, then we’re through. If the answer is yes, then you have a vote. In my reading, section VIII, Section 1-4 of the National Constitution absolutely vests the DEC with the authority to create intermediate groups. Section 4 specifically says the DEC has the power to define the power of the intermediate groups. For example in the 2nd of December meeting, our Adjutant, in reference to amendments and bylaw changes, says this body has the power to allow amendments, late submission of the March 1st established deadline.

I agree this body has the power; it is the governing body. I don’t want into discussion of the constitution, and certainly Stephen can do better at this than me. But a guide often times in organizations (inaudible) 10th amendment to the Constitution that says if those powers not reserved for the higher body, they delegate it to the lower body, for example, state. So if you read the Constitution, it does not restrict the DEC from delineating membership to the meetings. It doesn’t allow it or restrict it. And I’ll agree with the comment that they’re not officers, they’re appointees. They’re not elected by the body, just appointees. The recommendation of the Commander validated by this body, the ruling body. If we talk about officers, and I started this motion by saying, the confusion, the chaos, the contention of that entire weekend was basically overturned by the blue hat voters, very strongly twice. So if we don’t learn from that, you’re doomed to repeat the mistakes that you make. But, but, but back to the Officer business. Even those elected Vice Commanders have to be validated the next year to move on up. Those are elected people that have to be reaffirmed, if you will, every year. So it doesn’t seem unreasonable that committee members are subject to reaffirmation of the body that elected them. Ok? Now, as I think through that, and my motion would certainly have been different if I hadn’t been aware of this at the time I made the motion. Back to what the point I’m trying to make is that those officers have to be reaffirmed by vote each year to move on up. The initial motion out of the block was and, and, and, and, and you had a hard job there, Stephen, to try to run that election because I remember back and forth, and it took a long time. Was to cause the current Commander to be reaffirmed as First Vice up to Commander and it was said then, Jim, that your name was going to be removed from the ballot. And Nick was going to explain why, as to why, and I was informed there was another document that was being circulated that had a whole new list of potential officers which caused that first vote, I think. I understand then Jim, why your name was removed. But anyhow, the point being, we spent about an hour or so on that first vote just reaffirming with the whole body, do we want this thing to roll on up. So it seems to be that the idea of reaffirming committee appointments falls certainly within that concept of reaffirming elected officers because they have been elected by the entire body of the blue hatters. And I’ll close with this, the blue-hatters spoke pretty clear that day, and they’ve echoed it since then and if we don’t take the offensive, we’ll have it again more contentious. And, ah, that will be my comments, ah, to the idea whether it started within this group and whether it’s rulings or opinions.

Dept Adj Diener: Commander, may I comment?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Yes, Adjutant Diener.

Dept Adj Diener: One comment that I would like to make back on this. This body does have the authority to remove a committee member. That is not the question. The question is does whether it can
be done by a motion or whether it has to be done by the procedures for removing an officer which means file charges and hold a trial, ok. So it’s not that this body does not have the authority to do it. One of the other differences in what Commander Sinclair just said, when we do the elections, ok. The Officers that are elected at the convention were only elected for one-year terms. The Committee members are appointed for three-year terms, and therein is the difference of why they aren’t reaffirmed every year for those because they’re appointed for a three-year term.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Is there anything else? Commander Defrehn?

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: I guess my question is with this motion is, my understanding that officers, are like, he said it, and the committee people are appointed. Unless there is just cause, I don’t see how we can remove them from a position. So I mean, as a committee and or officers, there has to be a reason why. There has to be cause before we can bring charges. And from my understanding, I don’t know what it would be. That’s all I’ve got to say, thank you, Commander.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Any further discussion? Any further discussion? We’ll now vote on the motion.

Dept Adj Diener: Commander…

NEC Strauss: Mr. Commander?

Dept Adj Diener: ….you have to make a ruling of whether the motion, he challenged whether the motion was legal.

Dept Cmdr Richardson; Oh!

Dept Adj Diener; You have to make a ruling of, as Commander, whether it’s in order.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright.

Dept Adj Diener; or that it is out of order.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Based on previous rulings Judge Advocate…. based on previous rulings by the Judge Advocate, this motion should have been made immediately following the motion. In other words, I don’t believe that it is right, I don’t believe that it is legal, I don’t believe that there is anybody in here, we can make a motion, we can second the motion, we can discuss the motion, we can table the motion, we can two and a half months, we can come back, we can bring it off the table, we can discuss it and then declare it illegal! That just doesn’t seem right. We know that if when you appeal something, it has got to be done immediately, as per the Judge Advocate’s opinion. So, with that being said, I find the motion is valid and we’ll vote on it. Yes, sir?

NEC Strauss: Mr. Commander, I’d like to appeal that decision.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I understand that completely. Alright, NEC Strauss has appealed the decision and then the appeal will go to the governing body.

D-6 Cmdr Simpson: Commander, I would like to appeal the motion.

Dept Adj Diener: It has to be two people.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: It has to be two? Ok, we have two people that appealed it. So we will go to the, we’ll go to the appeal. Alright, here’s what it’s going to be. We’re going, just um, yes?

Vice Cmdr Rucker; I’d like to have a roll call vote.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok. Alright, it is….

JA Lewis; Commander?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Hold on.

JA Lewis: Would you please explain what we’re doing?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Yes.

JA Lewis; You’ve moved on with appeal and I’m just not sure, you’ve ruled the motion is proper.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Proper.

JA Lewis: Ok.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: He appealed my ruling.

JA Lewis; He’s appealed it.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: And now we’ll let the body, the voting members decide whether it’s legal, excuse me, illegal or legal.

JA Lewis: So we’re voting now on your ruling?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: On my ruling.

J/A Lewis: That it was legal?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Now, if you vote, if you vote yes, that means that you believe that my ruling was correct and that we’ll continue with the vote. If you vote no, that means you believe that NEC Strauss’ appeal is correct and then it will be declared an illegal motion, even though illegal motion is only (inaudible). But anyway, are there any questions? Make sure we understand it.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: My question, I guess is, that I thought we already got a ruling by our Judge Advocate that it cannot be done, it’s an illegal motion.

Dept Commander Richardson: The Judge Advocate…. 

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Is that what the understanding was with you? And how, so you’re overruling the Judge Advocate?

Alt NEC Scherer: Yes. We can.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Ok.
PDC Lysaght: On Commander Rucker’s motion, I may stand to be corrected but I think that requires a two-thirds vote, not a simple majority.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No, a motion requires a majority vote.
NEC Strauss: Not for this one.

Dept Adj Diener: To do a roll call.

PDC Lysaght: To do a roll call. Commander Rucker asked for a roll call.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok. Oh, I’m sorry, ok. Um, we got a roll call vote. I didn’t think we’ve ever voted to have a roll call vote before. Ok, alright, all in favor of a roll call vote.

PDC Lysaght: Excuse me sir. A roll call vote, I believe according to our Constitution, requires a two-thirds vote by this body.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No.

PDC Lysaght: It does not?

Vice Cmdr Rucker: Simple majority.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No, no, a majority vote. A simple majority.

PDC Lysaght: So that will be put in the record?

Dept Cmdr Richardson; (inaudible). Alright, voting members only please. A roll call vote, if you want a roll call vote, raise your hand.

Dept Adj Diener: Raise them high, please.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Up high. Alright people, up high please. Ok.

Dept Adj Diener: I got 16.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, if you would please, stand up. Alright, opposed to a roll call vote, please stand.

Dept Adj Diener: Eight.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Eight, it will be a roll call vote. Alright, Adjutant?

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis; Reiterate what a yes and a note means?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, yes means you side with my opinion, that it is a legal motion. No means you side with…..

NEC Strauss: The Judge Advocate.
Several members said the Judge Advocate.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No, the Judge Advocate (inaudible) the motion. You made the motion. Alright, so no means you don’t believe the ruling is legal, is that alright? The motion is out of order.

Vice Cmdr Price: What motion?

Asst JA Livoti: So the way I’m understanding is, and this I may need to get some clarification. But the way I’m understanding is that Commander Sinclair at the DEC meeting made the motion that this body remove Commander Lysaght and Jim Hawk. That was, a motion was made to table that to seek an opinion from the Judge Advocate, that tabling was prudent, correct? The matter was submitted to us for an opinion, we came here today, a motion was made to bring it off of the table to consider it, you ruled that his motion was proper, despite the ruling, the opinion that we gave.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Correct.

Asst J/A Livoti: Alright. So now, this vote is on whether your decision that it’s proper is correct.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Yes, alright.

Asst J/A Livoti: Ok. I just want to make sure. So then a yes vote is agreeing with you, a no vote is agreeing with the opinion of the Judge Advocate that Commander Sinclair’s motion was out of order. Is that right?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Correct. Adjutant?

Dept Adj Diener called the roll.

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Dept Adj Diener: Thirteen (13) yes, ten (10) no.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Excuse me, the vote was in the affirmative, it was thirteen (13) yes and ten (10) no. The motion is ruled proper. Now, that being said, we will now vote on the motion to remove Commander Lysaght and Jim Hawk from the Constitution and Bylaws committee.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Can I be recognized? Thank you, sir, Commander. Two things, Commander….
Dept Cmdr Richardson: No, no, no, we’ve already stopped the discussion. Please sit down.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Oh, you ended the discussion?

Dept Cmdr Richardson; Yeh.

Dept Cmdr Defrehn: Oh, ok.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright. Alright, we’re going to take a vote now and the vote will be an affirmative yes, means that they will be removed, a negative, no, means they will not be removed. Is there any questions?

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons; I do.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Yes, sir.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: This doesn’t seem like anything is coming before us as a just cause or….

Dept Cmdr Richardson; We’ve already discussed that.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons; So it seems as though we’re going against our committees and our legal counsel and our NEC ‘man on some issues, our blue-cappers are going to be totally confused on the way we are heading at this time, it seems. That’s my comment.

**Dept Cmdr Richardson:** Thank you, one again, yes, an affirmative means they will be removed, a no, a negative, means they will not be removed.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: What do we have to do to make this a roll call vote?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ask for it.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis; I want a roll call vote. I want to know who says what.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, make a motion.

**D-1 Cmdr Jarvis:** I make a motion that we have a roll call vote.

**D-19 Cmdr Gibbons:** I second it.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: You second the motion? Alright, once again, raise your hand, do you want a roll call vote? Alright, we’re doing a roll call vote.

Dept Adj Diener: You have to ask for the nos.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, raise your hand? Very good. Adjutant?

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, NEC Strauss?

NEC Strauss: Can you restate the yes and the no’s….
Dept Cmdr Richardson:  Ok. If you vote yes, affirmative, they will be removed, if you vote no, negative, they will remain.

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Dept Adj Diener: Thirteen (13) yes, Ten (10) no.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: The count is thirteen (13) in the affirmative, ten (10) in the negative. They are removed from the Constitution and Bylaws committee.

NEC Strauss:  Mr. Commander?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Yes?

NEC Strauss:  I’d like to get a ruling on that, please, from the Judge Advocate. The appointment of those were done by the Executive Committee, of those two members were done by the Executive Committee. I believe that it needs two-thirds to overrule an Executive Committee decision, so I don’t believe that it has passed so I’m asking for a ruling to see if it is two-thirds to overrule a DEC ruling.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: I second that.

Dept JA Lewis:  I’m going to have to look at that.

NEC Strauss: Can we recess while we look at that?

Dept Cmdr Richardson:  You’re up next, can you do yours while they do that? And then we’ll go from there. Yes?

J/A Lewis:  Where can we go so, we don’t interrupt ya’ll?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: The Conference room is down the hall, and we’re going to go ahead.

JA Lewis:  Yes, if ya’ll need us call us but we just don’t want to interrupt ya’ll while we’re talking.
NEC Strauss: Just for the record, we’re getting into the Distinguished Public Servant and Legislator of the Year awards?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, hold on, Mike, hold on. Yes?

PDC Hawk: By this action by this committee today, which is based on a lot of what everybody heard, what precedent have you just set on Michael Strauss’ committee appointments, John Britt’s committee appointments, Joe Lysaght’s committee appointments. You just overturned their committee appointments, which no action was taken on any of them. You just set a precedent where any Commander can come in and tell this body what to do and get people to support his decision to kick people off of various committees because they just don’t like them. People shaking their head no? I don’t know half the new board; they don’t know me. All they’re listening to is people that telling them yes or no. But if ya’ll ruled, that’s fine, that’s fine. But just think about what you did for the future committees of this department.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: That was their intention, that was their intention.

NEC Strauss: They set that precedent.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you, sir.

PDC Hawk: Wait a minute.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Oh.

PDC Hawk: He said that wasn’t their intention?

Exec Dir May: No, he said it was.

PDC Hawk: It was their intention? So ya’ll here have got to make a decision.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: The decision’s been made.

PDC Hawk: I’m not saying it hasn’t, I agree. I go along with the decision, it was democratically done, to a certain degree….

Dept Cmdr Richardson: …Commander Calcutt.

D-7 Cmdr Calcutt: I’m one of the new ones, we don’t know each other. I made some brief comments on Sunday after the Convention. When I got to the Convention, I intentionally went in unbiased, I didn’t get any opinions from anyone. And what I saw those two days and I’ll use this word, Cluster. I don’t know you guys, I don’t know who was to blame, what the cause was. But as I discuss and I listen, and more importantly went back to my District. And we had approximately 40 blue hats there. And I listen to these guys, 20, 30-year Legion members. They explained what happened and where they say fault so at my District meeting on Thursday, I said, when I go on Saturday, I’m not here to do what I want to do. You guys tell me what you want me to do, how should I vote on this motion. That’s why cast my vote. We don’t know one another, I’m new (inaudible) but I was elected to represent District 7, District 7 said do this, that’s why I done it. Thank you, Commander.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you, alright, Commander Strauss, now we’re going into the Distinguished Public Service award and the Legislator of the year Award.

NEC Strauss: I have a hand-out. I made some copies here, I was unceremoniously tasked with this at the last DEC meeting so I just went back and looked at some of the stuff, you can make judgements for yourself. But on page one there, you’ll there that the Adjutant the Department, who is now our Department Commander a letter in 2018 just basically showing at which time was the First Vice Commander, who was responsible for his duties, ok? You go to page three, you know, we talked about in the minutes, just to refresh your memory, at the top of that page, there was a quote from Commander Richardson about the Public Service Award. So below there I cited in the Constitution and Bylaws, who is responsible, ultimately, for the oversight of the Distinguished Public Service Committee. And the oversight person in charge was Commander Richardson. And he said, you know, that “how many people here know what that is, that’s unacceptable, we’re the DEC, we’re the governing body of this Department. And we don’t know what kind of award we’re getting; somebody tell me about this.”

Well, here it is in the Constitution and Bylaws. It does state that Commander Richardson was responsible for the oversight of the Distinguished Public Service Commission, committee, excuse me. And then also below, of course I didn’t want to put all the Bylaws in there but the parts that pertain to it, it was the responsibility of that person to familiarize himself with the duties and responsibilities of that committee and sub-committee.

Next page, Legislator of the Year. There’s another quote from the, which was the Commander at the last DEC he was saying “The next thing, I am sitting up in the statehouse and the American Legion is awarding the legislator of the year, and hell, I am the first vice commander and I don’t know what in the world is going on. And I asked my other vice Commanders and they don’t know what’s going on, so we needed to know is how is this one selected and how the criteria is. You know, what’s going on once again.” Ok, I put a little history of the Legislator of the Year just below that and went into the bylaws to look at that. And the person that has oversight of the Legislator of the Year with Trophies and awards, was the First Vice Commander, Walt Richardson, who had oversight of the Internal Affairs Commission.

Next page, I went back to the Connector. You know, there was some people that said it wasn’t put out to the people, that they didn’t receive notice about the Legislator of the Year. So I went back to the Connector from January/February and I did not see any report from the First Vice Commander in the Connector. I did see in the Connector from January/February, and I put an arrow next to it, where our Adjutant did mention who was getting the Legislator of the Year awards prior to that happening. I went onto Facebook, and there was also photographs from March that have pictures of the awardees receiving their award from the National Commander and State Commander Britt at the time.

Next page, is the itinerary printed in the Connector with the arrow pointing to members of The American Legion, inviting them to come the address to see those awards, we also had notice of that. That morning we had a meeting of the Commanders and Adjutant’s that were all invited to that meeting.

Next page is the Internal Affairs Commission report from Commander Richardson that was reported to the Department Convention. I’ve made little notations. This is the Internal Affairs report and you’ll see the parts where I put little asterisks by that are related to Internal Affairs. And I underlined, and he stated in his report, and I quote, ”I would like to report that all committees and sub-committees are functioning as needed. I have attended many meetings and witnessed the results of others or
have spoken to the Chairman of the committees.” So that was related to Internal Affairs, but I put a notation down on the bottom of that. There’s no mention report of Internal Affairs Sub-committees. Constitution and Bylaws, Membership and Post Activities, Resolutions Committee, Trophies and Awards Committee, Distinguished Public Servant Committee, or Finance Committee, which had oversight over.

Next page, I put a note on the top, on the last pages of his Internal Affairs Report at the Department Convention, the Commander, he said again, “I attended many meetings, witnessed the results of others or have spoken to the chairman of the committees.”

And I point out in the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, from the last meeting where I said, “It’s up to the first vice commander to have contact with the chairman of the constitution and bylaws committee.”

Commander Richardson said, “I was never informed when they met, not the first time."

And I replied: “Did you contact who was the Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, Jim Hawk, and ask him any of those questions of when the Constitution and Bylaws meetings were? And at any time did you contact Jim Hawk?”

Commander Richardson’s reply was “No, I didn’t.”

He never did contact, although he said in his report that he contacted him, he said in the DEC that he didn’t contact him, never contacted him, according to my conversations with Commander Hawk, PDC Hawk, excuse me.  Next page, which is number 27, that’s straight out of the bylaws. It says the general chairperson was supposed to call a meeting within 30 days, and he did not call a meeting, so the Chairman did call that meeting.

If you go ahead two pages, this is from the National Executive Committee Authorization from the Constitution and Bylaws, Addendum A, it was highlighted but didn’t come out very good in the copy but it says “if a Resolution is held for further study, rejected or disposed of, administratively, then it’s noted.” And that’s just authorization from the National Executive Committee that says they were authorized and all they had to do is note it.

There’s no guidelines on our Department level, that actually say what they’re allowed to do or what not to do, it’s something we may want to change in the future. But it does say that they have that authority to just note it, not go back to the post and not go back and not go back to those people and tell them why they rejected or anything to that nature. To the best of my ability I looked into some of those things that happened at the convention, you can make your own decision on, you know, the validity of those things. But the common denominator is you have an Internal Affairs Commission, they have oversight. The 1st Vice Commander has oversight of those groups, if you look it up in our Bylaws. Unfortunately the Constitution and Bylaws, you know, when he has his opportunity to stand up in front of the audience and explain it, he did not. And I wish that he had done that. We had a Vice Commander that sent an e-mail out, even though had no authority to do so, he sent an e-mail out. It was confusing, as you heard, the 4th Vice Commander did not have authority.
He had oversight over the committee and oversight belonged to Commander Richardson. So it either should have come from the State Commander or the person with oversight of that committee that would have knowledge of that committee. And that’s basically my report, if you have any questions.

D-8 Commander Shaffer: Are you referring to this letter that was passed out by Commander Rucker about Bylaw changes?

NEC Strauss: Yes.

D-8 Cmdr Shaffer: I’d like to, if I could, ask the Department Commander, if he knew that Commander Rucker sent this letter and if he gave him permission to send it out to the Commanders and the Posts? I did not see it until I got to the convention. And I know if this got out to a lot of the Post Commanders and Adjutants, which it did, it would have been very confusing on how they would have wanted their Commanders or Posts or whatever to vote during the convention. So I personally think that this caused a lot of problems. I don’t know about the rest of you guys but we’re sitting in here talking about punishing two Past Department Commanders, I think we need to take a look at this. And if you would….

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Can I answer your question?

D-8 Cmdr Shaffer: Yes.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Did I know he was sending it out? Yes, I advised him not to send it out. As a matter of fact, I asked him numerous times that I did not think it was a good idea.

D-8 Cmdr Shaffer: Thank you, Commander.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: The Convention was screwed up, we all know that. But I do have a question about committees. Why do not the committees not have to post their meetings on the calendars like we do in case we would want to attend one if their open. And why do we not get committee reports? Even if it’s just a paragraph, like we met, we’re discussing this because we have a lot of problems in committees. And I think it would be good if we heard a little bit from these committees because we all hear Baseball’s messed up, and this one’s not doing this, blah, blah, blah.

NEC Strauss: It was quoted by you, Mr. Commander, just for the record, that you were going to do that at the last meeting.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: And we tried to but there’s many of them, that we caught flak from the Department.

NEC Strauss: You are the Department, Commander. You are the Department.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No.

NEC Strauss: Yes, you are, you’re the State Commander. You are the Department.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No. No, I’m the spokesperson. The Department, NEC ‘man Strauss…

NEC Strauss: You are a State Officer.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: The Department, NEC ‘man Strauss, is the blue hats, right here. That right here is the problem that we had the past ten or twelve years. That everybody thinks that the governing…that the governing body is the Department. No! The Department is made up of made up of 1900 blue hats that got damn sick and tired of what was happening at that convention and they said we ain’t going to take it anymore! You know that, everybody in here knows that! Why? Because they wouldn’t even let us vote on daggum amendments and resolutions! Case closed! End of discussion! Sit down! No!

PDC Hawk: I am not going to sit down.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Sgt-at-Arms, please remove him.

PDC Hawk: In defense of the committee, in defense of ….

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Please remove him.

PDC Hawk: … what’s been heard here….

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Sgt-at-Arms, please take him out.

PDC Hawk: Number one, the Constitution and Bylaws committee was not the fault of Friday. The Constitution and Bylaws committee was not the fault of Saturday as explained by some people in here.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Commander Hawk, if you would, please, exit.

PDC Hawk: On what grounds?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I’ve asked you to sit down twice and you refused to sit down.

PDC Hawk: You don’t give….

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Please leave.

PDC Hawk: You don’t give me a chance to voice my opinion?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I just…discussion on that is closed.

PDC Hawk: You didn’t call on the people…..

Dept Cmdr Richardson: The discussion on that is closed.

PDC Hawk: that you accused of being removed?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Closed. You had a chance.

PDC Hawk: You didn’t call on them for explanation?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Sgt-at-Arms, take them out.

PDC Hawk: You’re covering up your mistakes.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, fundraisers.

PDC Hawk: And being a bull-dog Marine.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, we’ll now have a report from our fundraising ad-hoc committee, Commander Sinclair.

D-10 Cmdr Richardson: We met twice and reported back to the finance committee. If I could digest it down to a few comments (inaudible). There’s two basic questions, how do you add to the revenue stream, based on the history of what happened. For some years, the sweepstakes raffle was pretty productive. It’s come to crossover point where it takes about a dollar and a quarter to raise a dollar, if that makes sense to you. There’s a lot of administrative costs that are used, the department full-time people invest a lot of time in it. Our discussion back and forth on it was can we get help to do this sweepstakes mailout. Now, what would be the benefits of it? The sweepstakes mailout, we think, has probably reached a point of diminishing returns. The folks that are going to invest in it is not going to increase. The Rifle Raffle has been pretty successful for two years. We think it ought to become what I call, institutionalized, if you will. You’ve seen Shriners on the street selling peanut rolls and you’ve seen Civitan doing Pancake days, you’ve seen everybody doing those kinds of institutional things. The best way for the Rifle Raffle, American Legion institutional Fundraising event that can be counted on every year. If you want to make, and we don’t have an (inaudible) for this and there’s a lot of internal comments that I’ve been cautioned not to share, and that doesn’t taste good to me to have a committee meeting and then be cautioned not share the comments. But the Auxiliary rent from us, they want a lower rent price, one of our dialogues was what if we could get the Auxiliary to help us with the sweepstakes.

Dept Adj Diener; I’m sorry, Mr. Commander, that has nothing to do with the assignment of this committee.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: It has to do with fundraising.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No.

Dept Adj Diener; It comes from the finance committee.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: The consideration was is there any way we could get help from the Auxiliary and going to try to meet and have a trade-off. Apparently, that’s not the right thing to discuss right now. So by taking away the sweepstakes, I don’t have a real (inaudible) for that. It’s at the point of diminishing returns, we do think the Rifle Raffle ought to become an Institutional American Legion event, annual event, that you can count on every year.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, the Judge Advocate has returned.

JA Lewis; I’m yielding to Anthony, who’s done the research on this.

Asst JA Livoti; So the question is, did the vote to remove Commander Lysaght and Jim Hawk require a two-thirds vote. So essentially what was being done was a motion to rescind or amend something previously adopted. And what was previously adopted was the DEC appointment of those two guys to those committee positions. So under Section 35 of Roberts Rules of Order, a motion to rescind something previously adopted requires a two-thirds vote, unless the motion to
rescind had been given previous notice. Commander’s Sinclair motion to rescind was taken up at a DEC without prior or previous notice. That’s what the, that’s what we all took up this morning. So the motion requires a two-thirds vote. Since it’s thirteen (13) to ten (10), that’s not a two-thirds vote, so the motion fails.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, very good. The motion….

Asst J/A Livoti: To remove them is failed. Because it required a two-thirds vote. The motion to remove Lysaght and Hawk from the committee failed because it did not meet a two-thirds vote.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: The motion to remove them failed because it did not meet a two-thirds vote. Please make that adjustment in the minutes. Ok, gentlemen. Alright, yes, Commander Strauss?

NEC Strauss: We just heard from a fundraising ad-hoc committee Chairman. I would like to know who gave the authority for the Fundraising ad-hoc committee? This is a new committee; I’d like to know…this body has to authorize that committee.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: For an ad-hoc Committee?

NEC Strauss: For the Fundraising ad-hoc committee. It’s an annual thing that has got be voted on annually, and it has not been voted on.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: An ad-hoc committee is a committee, until, for one year only, until they (inaudible) the purpose (inaudible).

NEC Strauss: This body is the one the one that can (inaudible) and ad-hoc committee.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I was told that I could do it.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: My understanding is an ad-hoc committee is an appointment by Commander. But this Commander needs to, re-affirm it, that Commander Britt appointed Commander Sinclair, Lonergan and Commander Mills. You have to vocally, whatever, say that. I don’t think it requires a vote.

D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: If the history is correct, it was actually done by the previous Commander, (inaudible) about two weeks before his year was out. It’s got to be reaffirmed by you. It was done under the previous Commander.

NEC Strauss: A previous Commander’s ad-hoc committee would expire with a previous Commander’s year and if we want to form an ad-hoc committee, this body is the body that would do it.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok, alright, we’re going into new business. Right now we’re going to have the membership committee report, the Rifle Raffle committee report and the Health Administration, Benefits and VA Committee report. Commander Walton?

Dept Chairman Walton:

Membership: Thank you, Sir. I appreciate being promoted already to Commander. Good morning, gentleman. Let’s get down to business. Membership, the lifeblood of this organization. If we don’t all carry a positive attitude out of this room today, we are going nowhere, we will be dead in the water. The National Commander has brought out a new slogan for this year, Foundation for the future. And our
Commander, has his motto is “informed means involved”. Reminder, like I said, the membership is the lifeblood of this organization. Last year, we did a decline. We were doing well, but boy we bit the bullet last year, we fell short. We needed to get 183 more to show a growth, we needed 338 to reach 100%. We only got 98.29%. This year, our goal is for one more. Every post has been put out a goal that means one more member than what they had last year. And really the membership Team would like to see that 20,000 show up again. With the new Legion Act that has been put out there, we have over 400,000 veterans in this state so there is plenty to work from. And for those of you that are not aware of it, the new Legion Act that was passed by Congress, allows us to recruit people from Pearl Harbor Day forward with Honorable Discharge. That means Active Duty, Coast Guard, Reserves, we need to get them in guys. They need us, we need them. Also, I asked some of you, I sent out a memo asking you for you to appoint a membership person in your district. And I received a couple of e-mails back saying, well isn’t that micromanaging? I know that all of you guys have got a life, I’m hoping. And you’ve got, some of you’ve got jobs. What we were simply asking is for you to have someone who knows your posts in your district to assist you, to assist the membership team in bringing in and helping these posts with their issues. Out of these twenty (20) districts, I actually had eight (8) of you, which I thank you very much for, and the membership team does also. So think about it, I know that there’s someone out there that can work with you to help. You go on a vacation, who is keeping up with the membership? I’m going, sir. Ok, there again, like I said, we need the enthusiasm. Ok. Also, I would like to see how many of your districts can go for a new goal district wise, 103% to 105%? Remember, we need to keep it moving.

**Rifle Raffle:** Ok, I’m going to shift gears because I’ve been asked to give you an update on the Rifle Raffle. And I will have to tell you, we did very well. I’m very proud. The only problem we had is some people didn’t read their literature to know when the cut-off date was. In 2017, our very first Rifle Raffle, $228,085 was made. That we sold 9,155 tickets. This year, because we did the change of giving posts the opportunity to bring more money in, we did $230,670. We sold 9255 tickets, that gave us a difference from the first one to the second one of 97 tickets. So I think we did very well. And we’re hoping to change up a few things, some tweaking, which has to be done when you are working a program like this. But I tell you what, a lot of our posts really made a benefit, a lot of them got over $4,000. In fact Chapin and Inman were two top producers as far as earning money for their posts.

**Health Administration, Benefits & VA:** Now, switching over to the VA. We are a veteran’s organization, we’re veterans serving veterans, supporting veterans, We have a lot of guys out there that are having issues concerning the VA, the VA is constantly changing things. One of their latest things is called the Mission Act. The Mission Act is actually to where if you guys cut a finger or you have a cold or whatever, you don’t have to go the VA. You can go to the Doc in the Boxes, the Doctors Care and those places. If you’ve got your VA card, they will treat you. So you’re not having to run to the VA constantly.

(unnamed person) Any of them?

Dept Chairman Walton: Yes sir, if you are a card-carrying veteran from the VA, you can go to any of them.

Alt NEC Scherer: There are certain ones that are listed that you gave out.

Dept Chairman Walton: Yes, I gave out the ones for the western part and Wayne is getting the ones for the eastern part. All veterans, no matter what, if they have a service-connected rating on January 2020, you’ve got 10% rating on your card, where is says service-connected rating, you will be able to go and
shop at the commissaries and exchanges. You will also be allowed to use their recreational things on their posts. Now, we’ve also….

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Will our cards change, or we keep the same card?

Dept Chairman Walton: You’ll have the same card, as long as it says service connected on there, you can get in the gate. Ok. we’ve got agent orange. Agent Orange has not been expanded to veterans that served on the DMZ, Korea. They can now, if they have health issues, can be treated for the Agent Orange. Because they said there was enough drift of Agent Orange that affected our veterans sitting over there. Also, one of the things is, you will lose your VA card, hear me straight. You will lose your VA card if you aren’t seen by a VA doctor at least once every two years. I had a couple that went into to go the VA and they pulled their cards and they’re calling me saying what’s going on. I said when was the last time you were there? Well, I think it was back in 2,000. So there again, these are some of the things. And any of you have questions come about, you have VSO Officers in every county of this state. Now, I know, I’ve heard rumors there are some VSO Officers out there that are collecting a check and not doing what they’re supposed to do. Let me know about it, we can do something about it but until someone turns them in, only then can something be done. And they can also your adjoining counties will accept them. So don’t let these guys get discouraged, but there again, if any of your guys have issues that you don’t know the answers to, I don’t know it all, but I know the people that we can get in touch with. Both here in Columbia, Charleston, Augusta So please make sure we’re taking care of our veterans. One last thing I want to tell you, promote to your post, if they don’t know anything else to do, if you have a VA clinic in your area, get together some snacks, take over crossword puzzle books, magazines, things like this, they need these things to keep going. Also the facts that there again, know places that you can take your clothing and things like that to help our homeless veterans. We’ve got to make sure someone’s out there lending a hand. And your posts are out there in the middle of these communities, you know what you have, work them. Make it a project within these posts to move out on. That’s all I have; anybody have any questions?

D-3 Cmdr Lewis; Thank you for all that you do. (Applause).

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Commander Jarvis, finance report?

Finance Chairman Jarvis : Thank you Commander. The finance statement profit/loss for January to July is being passed out right now. We are still basically on the same level as what we were in June. As far as our General Savings and Membership Savings account, $198,179.03. We’re moving in a positive direction, slowly but surely but we’re moving. And we’ve been able to do this for three years in a row. Our income and expenses for the first seven months are basically on track. Income wise, we had a banner Rifle Raffle as you all heard. Sweepstakes continues to decline. The statement is pretty self-explanatory, but I’d like to go through a few of the items that could be confusing. The first one’s on the first page, don’t be deceived by that sweepstakes income. When you take out the expenses, we netted about $15,000. $15,000 is $15,000, yes, we’re going down but $15,000 is $15,000. One thing though, we still have a $1,000 ticket that we have to give out. He’s never responded to letters or phone calls so we’re going to try to go a different route with the post.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: I think that was me.

Finance Chairman Jarvis; No, it’s not you (laughter). So it’s really $14,000. The LIT insurance was a windfall this year. That’s what kept that income up this year. We normally get about $25,000 a year, we got $65,000. Of that $65,000, we’ve already given out $3,000 to kind up Commander Britt’s project, that was voted on at the Convention. And at the following DEC, the next day, we voted to put $25,000
towards the principal of the mortgage. So we were able to use that somewhat. You’ll also notice the National Convention income is slightly less than budgeted. What’s happened there is we fell short when it comes to the National Convention, and the State convention, we have what they call room nights. We obligated by nights, and for the National Convention, we fell four short, so we’re going to have to pay that to bring us up to the 70% of our estimated guess. But we still have an option, well, we’re still hoping. If overall National gets 70% of their expected, then they all go to 70%, then we’re alright. But that’s still up in the air, we’ve got our vacant nights. On page two, I just wanted to let you know that the van, you’ve noticed is out there. It was stickered at $39,500, we got it for $29,200. The wrap was less than $1700, I was expecting somewhere in the neighborhood of $2,500 to $3,000 but it was less than $1700. What are they called?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Wrapabull.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Wrapabull. But I thought they did a really good job. I was up in Indianapolis for the membership workshop. I walked around the garage one night because I was bored. I looked at all the vehicles that were there and none of them touch it. So I think that all turned out well. On page three, trash pick-up, it’s about 2/3rds of the way down there. You will notice that we are budgeted for $2200 and right now, we’re at $2,193.95. The part to get alarmed about is we’re only six or seven months into the year. So we’re in the process of looking elsewhere. We’ve got to keep them until we find something else. But we’re working on that to try and get that down. That will be a doubled expense. And the last thing I think they’ll be a question. You’ll notice on the very last item, the Law Cadet expense. And you’ll also notice there’s no budgeted spot for that. That was a tax issue and the tax issue, we paid, the Law Cadet budget’s going to bring it back into us so that will go away next time around. We’re in the process of that happening so it doesn’t show up on the statement until then but that one will go away. Any questions? I think the rest is pretty self-explanatory. Our incomes are on, because of LIT, the expenses, other than that trash is following the trend.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: The question is for you, but we may need some input from the Commander, too. Some of the people at my post ask to see this, it’s ok to promulgate it, correct?

Finance Chairman Jarvis; Yes. I take mine with me to my District meeting and put it out.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis : I e-mail mine out.

NEC Strauss: It’s ok to show it once they’re approved, is that correct?

Dept Adj Diener: The finance statement does not have to get approved.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: It’s just a tracking… it’s just what’s happening. It’s not like the budget, now the budget can’t go out until it’s approved. Ok? Commander, I have four motions and one what the heck.

The finance committee makes the motion that the Department purchase a pop-up for the membership committee and general use of the Department and that we do this now because of the lead time with Emblem Sales.

NEC Strauss: At a cost of what?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: $750. I looked at three of them and it’s about $500 and I’ve actually put my hands on it.
Historian Cantrell: I make a motion.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Second it? Because I can make the motion.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: All in favor of buying the pop-up, raise your hand? Opposed? Passed.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: The finance committee makes a motion that the DEC modifies the Riders budget by adding $5,000 to that budget so that they can donate that to the Legacy Ride total. This is their money, we’ve talked to them, it should be in their budget next year, but we got to take care of it this year. They want to give $5,000 to the Legacy Ride.

D-14 Cmdr Brandt: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: All in favor, raise your hand, opposed? Passed.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Ok, the finance committee makes a motion that we include, we need to do this now, you’re going to think this is weird, and we’re going to put it in the 2020 budget. The finance committee makes a motion that we include in the budget a new line item for $2500 as a District Commander’s monetary award or reward for 100% membership and 100% CPR, the District Posts turning it in. First awards to be given out our next Convention. $100 for the 100% membership of the District and $25 for 100% of the posts in that Districts submitting CPR’s Any unused monies will remain in the pot for the next time around.

Alt NEC Scherer: I second it.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Alt NEC Scherer seconded that.

NEC Strauss: I want to be clear on the start point of that will be the 2021 convention?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: The one coming up.


NEC Strauss: 102nd Convention?

Finance Chairman Jarvis; The next one, is that the 102nd Convention?

Exec Dir May: Yes.

Alt NEC Scherer Yeh, you’re getting old, aren’t you?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: All in favor, raise your hand, opposed? Passed

Finance Chairman Jarvis: The next one is possibly a motion. The finance committee has talked about this on several occasions. We’re thinking, our thought process is, the awards luncheon initially was, the one that we have on Friday, was costing us. It was $47.50 a plate, we’re collecting, this year, or this past year, we collected $30 so we’re taking a hit on that. But our second thought is that only about 200
people can be in there. So what we were thinking about, based on what we saw at last convention on Friday evening, was a reception. Not in that small room, that’s why we got to vote on that, we would like to see an awards reception where everybody can come. Now the problem was, we initially said, well, a reception vs a luncheon, we’ll be saving money. Well, we’re not going to be saving money. We were charging $30 so we were getting some income for the luncheon. For this, we’ll be doing a good thing, camaraderie, getting together socially, have the awards in front of a much larger group and that was our intent. So…

Alt NEC Scherer  What would be the cost difference?

Dept Adj Diener: About $5,000, net.

Vice Cmdr Price: Doing away with the luncheon?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yes, yes, and that way, instead of 200, and actually, it’s not 200, because a lot of them are the awardees. And it might be easier for the awardees to come in the evening, then it is, and we would have this very early on, we haven’t come up with the right logistics yet, we would have this very early on at the reception. We’d have to have some place for everyone to sit and eat but we want to have the awards and we would still have the awards the same way, but we have it in a reception environment instead of a luncheon environment.

Dept Adj Diener: Some of this is an ongoing discussion, I’m not trying to throw Commander Jarvis under the bus, here. The reception we definitely we want to do. But another consideration on that is still doing the reception but change the awards and do the awards on the actual floor, ok? That way we are recognizing the firefighters, the Legionnaire of the Year, in front of our entire body. That would then change it though. We still need to do a reception because, quite frankly, after the last convention, we need to do something for our blue-cappers that builds some camaraderie so we’d still do the reception on the Friday night and we’re bound to still have to do something because our contract with the hotel, we have an approved minimum that we have to spend. So we can’t just do away with the luncheon, we have to spend money on food someplace. So we’d just do that at the reception. But the biggest we have to bring this up now even though the budget hasn’t been approved because to get the room from the hotel on a Friday evening, if we don’t go check with them right now….  

Finance Chairman Jarvis: We got to do that now.

Dept Adj Diener: A few days ago we still had it, we may not even have it now, so we need to be able to go make that change in the room.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: So is this a motion or do we need to make a motion?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Now I am going to make a motion that we do away with the luncheon part for the awards, and shift to a reception on Friday evening.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, any questions?

Alternate NEC Scherer: I’ll second it.

NEC Strauss: I have discussion, it’s a pretty big change, and I have no problem with the change but has this gone through the trophies and awards committee for their suggestion on it?
Finance Chairman Jarvis: We mentioned that, but we didn’t see any reason for that. I mean, this is a financial, basically when you come down to it, it’s a financial difference. We have to spend the money. So if we want to shift the awards around, that’s one thing but we need to, we wanted to get rid of the luncheon and get more people involved, that’s why we came up with the reception idea.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, any questions? All in favor, raise your hand, opposed. (passed).

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Ok, now my what the heck. For several years I’ve been talking about a quadrant oratorical awards system, because we don’t have one. And in my opinion, the oratorical, at least on my end and from what I’ve seen, has problems, we’ve got to entice them to come in there. One of the ways that I could help, in essence, as a finance chairman, well, why don’t we have a monetary award and I’ve been throwing this around for about three years. At the last finance meeting we were talking about that again because we were working on the 2020 budget trying to figure out how we were going to get that in there. We’d have to increase Americanism and everything. Well, somehow, that all left that room. All that we talked about left that room, classic example of why you have closed meetings.

But it got out of the room and it’s starting to snowball. Our intent as a finance committee is to offer awards, not to exceed what the department does, because we have post, quadrant, state, but was to offer money up to the oratorical committee. Well, I haven’t been able to get invited to one of their meetings yet, so we went ahead with it anyways. **The motion from the finance committee is that we offer four oratorical, four awards. $500 for first place, $300 for second place, $100 for third and $100 for fourth.** And we get that, they should have already sent the information out, but they haven’t, that’s the motion that the finance committee is making.

Unidentified speaker: Is this for the quadrant?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: For each quadrant, and the money not spent stays in there. And then we use it, kind of recycle it.

Alt NEC Scherer: Every quadrant has somebody in it, right?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Every quadrant has something, yeh. And one of the things I guess we could even say, I’ll add this to the motion, **is that the first place be awarded, the first-place winner gets his award or her award, moved up and added to what they get at the state.** Because there’s four of them and they all four get something. That second, third and fourth actually get a monetary award on the spot. That’s a recommendation.

Alt NEC Scherer: That’s $1,000, so $4,000?

Vice Cmdr Price: Per quadrant, so $16,000, in addition to what the State does.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Four quadrants, $4,000. Yes sir?

Post 132 Cmdr Munn: First of all, can we give children cash money?

Dept Adj Diener: We can’t.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: We can’t? Ok.
Post 132 Cmdr Munn: Is that going to become part of the scholarship?

Dept Adj Diener: They become professionals.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: And when you say cash, that includes checks, correct?

Post 132 Cmdr Munn: Anything outside a scholarship.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Ok. I stand corrected on that. I’ll modify my motion that the awards all go in as scholarships. The $100 one, I thought that’s we said what we said.

Dept Adj Diener: I just need to make a comment, truth in lending. The oratorical had sent one that he wanted to do the breakout of $750 to the first place and $250 to the second place and that was it. So that differs from there, but I at least need to inform you of that.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: I’m a member of that committee, the oratorical contest committee. I think the move to give some money is a very good thing. However, I don’t know how many are cognizant of how much money it takes to go to college but it’s a lot and to tell you the truth. If you give these second and third...the recommendation that I made to the Chairman was that we give just one award for first place. That’s a significant amount of money that could be used for scholarship purposes. If you start giving a small amount, it really doesn’t amount to anything. I mean, I’m glad to do it however ya’ll want to do it but…

Finance Chairman Jarvis: The finance committee talked that one over too but our whole goal was entice more people and we thought if there was money, more than one, we would get it and that’s why we came up with what we came up with.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet. Ok, well, I think that’s a move in the right direction.

Alt NEC Scherer: I’ll second that.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Any other questions, all in favor, raise your hand, opposed? (passed).

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Finally, the finance committee concerns. We’re making progress folks; we had a great Rifle Raffle. But nobody in this room, can tell me, as finance chairman, that we’re going to have Rifle Raffle number three. Nobody can. So we’ve got to work on a budget until somebody can tell me that we’re going to have a Rifle Raffle, a third one, the finance committee’s going to be going very careful. Right now, the part that upset me at the oratorical is at the point we’re at now, our expenses are more than our anticipated income. We’re in the process of working that all in and working that all down so nobody can tell me that we’re going to have a third. FN said no, PSA has already said no. Now, we’ve got some ideas, we’ve talked some things over but there’s nothing that says we’re going to have a third one. So just be aware of that. That’s a major concern for us because if we don’t have that Rifle Raffle, we’re back to ground zero. The sweepstakes isn’t doing it and we got to, it’s my job. It’s the committee’s job to be smart about our money so that’s what we’re going to do.

Dept Adj Diener: Commander Jarvis, can I interrupt you real quick here? On the vote that we did for the oratorical. Nobody seconded the motion.

Finance Chairman Jarvis; Yes, he did, he did.
Exec Dir May: Who?

Finance Chairman Jarvis; He did.

Dept Adj Diener; You’ve got to speak up to where we can hear it.

Alt NEC Scherer: Everybody saw it.

Exec. Dir May : Wait a minute, you made the second to the motion to do away with the reception?

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Yeh, he did.

Alt NEC Scherer: Everybody saw it when I said it, I apologize.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: Finally at the end, with all that said, we’re getting to be at least aware, that we’re getting…..I’ve had one post call that wants $6,000 or part of $6,000, an email sent to us, that wants $6,000 or part of $6,000 for Championship rings for the Junior baseball team. I’ve had one post volunteer for the Riders luncheon, my post has done that in the past, we paid for it, the post paid for it. When they do their legacy ride? Well, they’re asking for $2400 to fund something that they’ve asked for, volunteered for. I’ve had, well, what we decided on, I’ve had one person ask for $500 for the Blue Star in support of a Gold Star honoring, to help with their catering. We’ve already talked that one out but we’re getting hit with these nickel and dime, that’s what I call nickel and dime stuff and we’re being very careful on that. And if you haven’t heard about that Blue Star thing, please, we can make that $500 with this room, and that, you’ve got an e-mail, some of you may have ready it already but he’s got a jar that’s big that will take a lot so anything we can get will help these people out.

D-20 Cmdr Mills: And we take checks too.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you, sir.

Finance Chairman Jarvis: No charge cards, checks and cash. That’s my report, Commander. Any questions? Yes?

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: As far as the Rifle Raffle, has anybody gone and looked at Daniel Defense?

Finance Chairman Jarvis; We haven’t looked at anything, but we need inputs though.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Because they just opened a plant up in Ridgeland. They’re headquartered in Georgia.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you, sir. Commander Lewis, social media, brief.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: Go to Facebook. Hello everybody, I know we’ve been here awhile. I guess we’re doing well, you guys need to tell me if it’s better or worse. If you want to put anything on social media, or your posts, you got to get it to your vice commanders, they all can do it or have them send it to me. Be happy to get it out, any events they have, if they’ve done something in the community, a fair, you know. So any questions on social media? Anybody?

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: It’s on Facebook? I’ve heard a lot about Facebook and the question I have is it going to persist? Is it even going to be in existence in the future?
D-3 Cmdr Lewis: Well, we do Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, so it hits all three.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: Aren’t they all sort of the same?

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: Well, they’re kind of the same but not the same.

D-9 Cmdr Sweet: I mean, I don’t participate in that.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: Twitter’s where most of your younger people are at, they don’t do Facebook. Facebook is for the older crowd. I’m just keeping it real guys, sorry. So we’re trying to hit up the Instagram’s and the Twitters because that’s where your younger veterans are at.

Dept Adj Diener: Can I make one quick comment to all of ya’ll if you’re posting on there, because I’ve noticed this on a lot of posts. Please watch how you spell the word Legionnaire. I don’t know how many times on the posts coming from our, you all and our folks, that we’ve misspelled Legionnaire so watch how you spell it when you type it in there.

D-20 Cmdr Mills: What about the website for the posts that are not on Facebook?

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: We’re working on it.

D-20 Cmdr Mills: Because a lot of people go on the website vs those other things.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you, dear. Chairman Richardson, Constitution and Bylaws.

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: Thank you, Commander. First of all, I want to apologize for my appearance, we’re in the process of moving and I didn’t feel like going through 105 boxes to find my hat and everything. Towards the end of June he had asked myself, Peter St. Onge, Commander Poulos and himself to meet to revise the form for amendments and resolutions. That’s being passed out now, this is what that committee came up with. And as soon as everybody has it. Alright, alright, everybody have a copy? It’s been… it’s been my understanding as the Chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws committee that the amendment change form has never been approved by the DEC. I don’t know. We’re trying to change that and get an approved form by the DEC. If you’ll look on the first page of this form that was sent out.

Number one. Amendment change form will be placed on the Department website as soon as possible, after approval by the DEC. Number two, all amendments to the Dept of SC Constitution and Bylaws must be at the Department no later than March 2, 2020 in their final version including those amendments sent back to the posts for review or change. Any form received at the Department after March 2, 2020 will be sent back to the post. The Department will accept Constitution and Bylaws forms from the posts beginning September 3rd. Posts will be notified by the Department Adjutant when the form is received at the Department. The Department Adjutant was with us when we did this, that’s who the other one was. Number five, no additional notification will be sent to the posts, unless the Constitution and Bylaws committee is going to recommend disapproval or rejection of the amendment. When the amendment is received by the committee is received by the committee and they vote to disapprove a rejected amendment, it will be returned to the post, along with an explanation for action, provided there is sufficient time to correct and return to the Department by March 2nd. This date will be decided on and placed on the Department’s calendar as well. The committee will be meeting at designated times through the year to review each submitted form. The DEC will be final sole authority on the rejection of any
amendment submitted. If the Constitution and Bylaws thinks that an amendment change should be rejected, ya’ll will have to be the ones to say, yes, it’s rejected. The committee can only recommend, provided you approve this. If the post is not notified after initial notification than the amendment will be presented to the convention with the committee’s recommendation for approval. All changes must be on the current year form, if a previous year’s form is used, it will be returned to the post if time allows. Otherwise it will be returned to the post.

I sent, on June 28th, I sent an e-mail to the two members of the Constitution and Bylaws committee asking them for their input on this form, because they are the committee members. I received no input from either one. So, of course, they didn’t provide input, I assumed they approved this form. Let me finish.

Dept Adj Diener: Objection.

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: On the 25th of July, I sent another e-mail to the committee members asking them for a vote on this form. A yes vote, meaning they approve the form, a no vote, meaning they disapprove the form. I never heard from either one of them. So, with that said, questions?

Alt NEC Scherer: Excuse, on number ten, it says if a previous form is used it will be returned to the posts if time allows, otherwise it will be returned to the post, isn’t that saying you’ll return it twice? I mean…

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: No.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: If time allows.

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: What I’m saying is if, if Nick receives an amendment change on March 1st, it’s just going to be sent back to the post because they can’t get it and get back to the Department.

Alt NEC Scherer: Thank you.

D-15 Cmdr Rumbaugh: The only question I have, I have no problem with the form but when you put the years in here, we’re going to have to re-do this every year?

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: Yes, sir.

Alt NEC Scherer: Oh, yeh. We already do.

Dept Adj Diener: I’ll have to, and I’ll phrase this right, because one, I agreed with what’s in here but I have to do my job in that sending an e-mail asking for comments and getting no comments back does not constitute assuming that they approve it, ok? Sending one out for a vote, if there’s no vote in a committee, if nobody makes a motion and doesn’t vote in a committee, you cannot assume that that is a vote. This change, in my opinion, as it stands right now, the Constitution and Bylaws committee has never met to vote on this. We just picked on committee members….

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: There was no meeting?

Dept Adj Diener: There was no meeting. We just picked on two of the members and talked about how they did it and now we’re saying we’re assuming the committee approves this because they didn’t
answer back. And to my knowledge, the Resolutions sub-committee has not on this either for that committee to vote on it. Even though I agree with this, ok, I don’t know how this body can vote to approve this if those committees have not had a formal meeting and made a recommendation.

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: Did you not send me an e-mail saying we could do it by e-mail?

Dept Adj Diener: You did not get any answers back, that means there was no vote. A no answer back on a vote does not constitute a yes or a no. It means, it basically did not pass the committee.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I actually like the form. Could we possibly put something in here if you send it back to a post, if you have a documented date, ok, this was sent back to the post on this date and then you got the return in there. Because I had to do that a couple times with Resolutions, and I was marking them off to the side. It might be an idea. The other thing is, what’s your plan? Last year as Resolutions Chairman, I got eight (8) Resolutions. All March 1st and that was the deadline date so what do you do? Is there a plan for that?

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: Yeh, we’re going to meet on a date after that to look at them, if they’re going to be recommended disapproval, they will be recommended disapproval.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Ok.

Const/Bylaws Chairman Richardson: If they’re going to be recommended rejection, it will be sent to the DEC at a designated meeting of the DEC for your action. One other thing, if you’ll notice at the bottom of the form, bottom of page one, it’s got Post Use, Constitution/Bylaws Committee Use and then a little blurb at the bottom for the Department Adjutant. We took off the actual form, we took the post information off of that, so when the blue hats get this form to vote on, they won’t know who sent it. So where if, if Jamie gets one, gets it and looks at it and sees, hmm, Post 84, that’s that SOB Richardson’s post, I ain’t voting for it because of him. They won’t know who submitted it. They’ll be voting on the content of the form, not who submitted it. Any other questions? Commander, thank you sir.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Do we have a motion?

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: We can’t vote on it, can we?

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: The committee hasn’t voted on it.

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Can’t vote on it.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Does this just come from the chairman?

NEC Strauss: There’s no discussion, Commander.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Oh, I’m sorry.

NEC Strauss: We don’t have a motion. There’s no discussion on no motion.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Does this come just from the chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws and not by the members.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: It’s my understanding they were given two opportunities to put input in and they didn’t in, and they didn’t do it.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Ok, well, that’s not included so there’s no dates on here and so that was the question if the dates were in here it could be different but if not, that was my comment.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok. Comments? No motion?

D-18 Cmdr Pouncy: Can’t have a motion.

NEC Strauss: Motion to do what?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: A motion to…

NEC Strauss: Adjourn?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Oh no. (laughter). Alright, Commander, Pete?

Resolutions Chairman St. Onge: Good afternoon, Peter St. Onge, Sumter County. Pretty much everything Richardson said, same. The Resolution form is the same I gave them to the Adjutant and the Sgt-at-Arms to pass out. The e-mail I got from the Adjutant here said that he recommends that we send it to our committee and the Adjutant or our Judge Advocate for approval. I looked that as a recommendation, not a requirement. It was not a requirement, it was a recommendation, so…..I thought these are a tool passed down from the Department and the DEC to our committee so that’s why we’re bringing it to you to submit downward. I didn’t think that it was our committee submitting it upward. The Department Commander, the Adjutant, first vice, we were all pretty much in discussion of this and all of this (inaudible) is the form I thought we were going to take from here and goes down to our committee. So, other than that, the form reads exactly the same as the previous form you’ve seen from the Constitution and Bylaws except for the wording “Resolution” is changed. Is there any questions?

It’s a two-page thing, the second page didn’t print right for me, sorry about that. Second page is just the actual block on the bottom. The second page should look exactly like the constitution and bylaws, my printer is new and…

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: And you don’t know how to use it?

Resolutions Chairman St. Onge: I don’t know how to use it.

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: You need help?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, it’s obvious that we have, we had a misunderstanding, (Inaudible) So what we’re doing is instructing the Chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws committee and Chairman of the Resolutions Committee to meet with your committees to get this approved and we’ll vote on it at the next DEC meeting. Ok? Thank you very much. Chairman Joy?

Dept Adj Diener: Commander, can I add one quick comment?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Yes, go ahead.
Dept Adj Diener: I have one quick comment to just to keep everybody informed. The forms of those rules were submitted to the Judge Advocate and the Judge Advocate did not any problem with anything on either one of the forms.

Law and Order & Homeland Security Chairman Joy: Short, sweet and to the point. There’s four awards out there that we’ve been passing out to our local Law Enforcement and Firefighters to be turned in to us that we award at our National Convention. There’s four of them and after doing some research on them, we’re changing the submission date. If you go right online now, the submission date is February 15th. We have changed that date to January 15th. And the reason for that is if you look at the National website, their submission date is February 1st. So if you turn the awards submissions into us by February 15th, we can’t meet the National deadline. So as it stands right now the dates have been changed to January 15th.

The other award we’ve been looking at and we’re going to make a recommendation to the Trophies and Awards committee and that’s on The American Legion Public Traffic Award Citation. In order to get your EMS personnel and dispatchers included on that award, we had to change one word. And now it’s going to be called The American Legion Public Safety Award instead of Traffic Award. This way you can have your dispatchers and EMS personnel included in that submission.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: But you have not gone to the awards committee?

Law and Order & Homeland Security Chairman Joy: Right here, this is my recommendation going to the Awards committee.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Then why are we getting it?

Law and Order & Homeland Security Chairman Joy: So as soon as the Adjutant gives it to you, you look at it and take it from there. A letter was generated for the Commander to send out to all your Highway Patrol Association, your Sheriff’s Association and all these. There’s a lot of agencies out there that don’t know about these awards. There’s a lot of posts out there that seem to know about these awards but they’re not reaching out to the local EMS or Firefighters to let them know about it so that’s what we got to correct that. I’m the Chairman this year. Last year I was on the committee, I can tell you we only had eight (8) or nine (9) submissions. We had one firefighter and the other five or six were Law Enforcement. And that’s for the whole state of South Carolina. That basically tell us either we’re not reaching out to the EMS personnel or Law Enforcement or either they just don’t care. But the bottom line is the forms are on the website, we just have to reach out and let them know that they’re there. That’s my report, Commander

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Thank you very much. Commander Mills, you want to pass your bucket?

D-20 Cmdr Mills: This jar’s being passed around for a Gold Star event. The Gold Star, if you don’t know, is a deeper thing than the Blue Star mothers and everything. It’s something that we do in our post anyway, for Blue Star. But the Gold Star event I’ve attended three years in a row for the State of SC and the Governors Complex allows it to be taken place there. Last year we had the Department Commander and Vice Commanders that went along with the (Inaudible). I feel like it’s a state event, it’s a good showing for us and the Governor of SC has designated the last Sunday of September as Gold Star Family Day. And at the Lace House on the 29th of September, again, we will be there for the Gold Star event. Post 101 normally goes out there for set-up, works along with Blue Star Mothers and the SC National Guard and (Inaudible). So again, I invite of the Commanders of the Department to go and anyone else that wants to go. Seating is limited but the jar’s that’s being passed around, I asked for us to...
be able to donate because the Blue Star Mothers have their own non-profit portion that they do for other events, but for the Gold Star they don’t get any funds for that and I thought it would be great if, we did that gesture and gave money. So that is why I’ve asked for that, I know to start with before it got sent around there was $210 in it, so I appreciate it. I’ll give Bridget Lewis the final count so she can put it, put in there. The other issue, and again, thanks for that. But the other issue I had on there was a gala. This is not something that I dreamed up, it was other posts that asked if we could do something where we would come together, and we could do something fun and exciting. It wasn’t political, it wasn’t confrontational or something like that where we could visit and intertwine, share things about family, even family being invited and all that. This is something that I’ve been working on for over a year now, I’ve talked to other Commanders, I’ve talked lots of time to the Adjutant, we worked, we’re working with numbers and everything. Also have the emails from the Marriott themselves saying what we can do, approximately 200 people, it would be about $400 set up for the tables and everything. So, I just wanted to bring that forward and see if we can get something to do (Inaudible) put into it. I’m not asking for money, I’m just saying we want to do an event and then we give out what the cost of the meal would be to seeing about getting more people there, especially at conference time when we have less rooms that are, that are rented out.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Question. You made a comment about e-mails to the Marriott?

D-20 Cmdr Mills: I didn’t e-mail them. I just inquired and the they e-mailed me the costs of what set-up would be, the menu, that type of thing.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: When we deal with the Marriott, we deal with the Marriott through our Adjutant.

D-20 Cmdr Mills: Ok.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We’ve got to be careful; we don’t want every Tom, Dick and Harry going up…

D-20 Cmdr Mills: All I wanted was menus and stuff to work with, and that’s when (Inaudible) sent me the information and they also said it coincided with the actual event set-up. So it’s not…

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We just want to be careful with them.

D-20 Cmdr Mills: Right, but it’s not anything that I’m doing. And they know Nick Diener’s name was used in there. I said I’m working with my Adjutant; I’m just trying to get the information to backfill this.

Dept Cmdr Richardson. Thank you very much. Nick?

Dept Adj Diener: Ok, I’ll try to be, just update you on a couple of issues for you all. National Convention, as you know, is coming up, we will be leaving from the Department here, I will be in Monday, but I will be leaving on August 20th and won’t return until September 3rd. Maggie May will also be gone during that period; Jodi will be back there in membership but remember she is part time. She will be working on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday if you need to reach her. If you have any other questions that go on during that time or you need to get hold of us, we will be monitoring our e-mails so I’ll have my cell phone with me so if you need to get hold of us, please get hold of us. For those that are attending the convention, I’d just like to remind you that if you’re going to arrive after the announced packet pick-up times, please call me ahead of time and let me know and we’ll work it out and get you your credentials. I don’t mind working that out but helping but when I don’t know you’re going to call me at 9:00 in the morning, that makes it tough.
Fall Conference is going to be October 4th to the 6th. A tentative agenda has been mailed out and it’s also on our webpage. We’ve got a good agenda and I think some good training sessions planned, the leading candidate for National Commander, Paul Dillard from Texas, is going to also be our guest. For all that have met Paul, any time that he talks, he will be very interesting. One important session that ya’ll need to be aware of is that the Department Commander is going to have a question and answer session on Friday afternoon. He plans to open up the session to questions from any of our Legionnaires of ANY of our leaders. As District Commanders and Department Officers, at that point in the meeting, we will ask you to sit in the front rows and be ready to answer questions if they do get directed to you.

By the way, if you see on the agenda, it’s in there, but the explanation wasn’t there. Talking with the Commander, one thing to remember on all this, these are for questions and for us to give answers. Anybody that tries to make them personal attacks or something like that, they will be asked to sit down. We want to pass along information and answer questions but for lack of better terms, we don’t want to turn it into just a complaint session, ok?

Another item that is not on the agenda yet and we’re working on it to tweak and of where to put it in the agenda, is with discussions with Commander Richardson, we plan to allow any member that is running for office the opportunity to announce their candidacy to the attendees. As I say, we haven’t worked out, it will be on Friday some time. We haven’t worked out exactly where we’re going to fit it, it will probably be just before the question and answer session. Each candidate will be given three minutes to announce their candidacy. Commander Richardson has informed he is going to STRICTLY enforce the three minutes. Ok, so if you’re one that’s going to do it, make sure of your time because I don’t think he’s going to be bashful in cutting you off. In addition, if you’re going to run and you’re going to make an announcement, you don’t have to if you don’t want to. But if you plan to make an announcement, please let us know at the office no later than October 1st so I know how much time to allot in there. And what we will do, based off what we get in, we’ll do it just the same order that we do in the elections. And we’ll run down and let them do it and with different candidates for different offices, the order that we’ll go in is alphabetical order.

Last thing that I’ve got is a little discussion on the 2020 Department Convention. We’re already starting to work on this and ways we can improve it. One of the things that Commander has asked me to come up with is a better way to handle the elections and he has asked the Vice Commanders to assist me in that. We’re working that and I will be presenting whatever new procedures or proposed new procedures to you all at the 29th February DEC meeting so I would certainly welcome from anybody, not just the Vice Commanders but if anybody has an idea on the elections, I would certainly love to hear it and I’d love to entertain it. I will tell you that one of the things that we have looked at is trying to use voting machines and that’s almost impossible. The cost for programming them all, because they’re all set up to do one person, one vote. We have delegation chairman coming in and casting a group of votes and they can split that vote between the two candidates and to try and get that programmed is almost. You know, we could do it, but it would be very expensive.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: How about chads? (laughter).

Dept Adj Diener: As long as they’re hanging. But anyway, if anybody has any ideas, I’d certainly entertain them, and we’ll keep you informed as we do that. Commander Jarvis already covered on changing the luncheon and the last thing I have, and this is a very simple one. We have had a member that is looking at transferring to a post in SC, from one of the other states that is now living here. He is a Past Department Commander from the State of Massachusetts. One of the things that he has asked if when he transfers and gets his SC cat, can he have the words put PDC on his hat. In the past, it’s been
looked at one time, we can’t fully find the ruling, but we know that in past the answer has been no, but I wanted to bring that before this body because it’s not my decision. But my recommendation is that it’s a SC hat, if it says PDC on the side, you would assume that they’re a PDC in SC and he was not so my recommendation that he not be allowed to put that onto his cap. Can I get a motion?

**D-16 Cmdr Defrehn:** I make a motion that we do not accept out of state PDC’s …

**Dept Cmdr Richardson:** Second?

**D-16 Cmdr Defrehn:**…..within SC.

**Dept Adj Diener:** Cap.

**D-16 Cmdr Defrehn:** Cap.

**D-6 Cmdr Simpson:** With a SC cap.

**D-16 Cmdr Defrehn:** With a SC cap. Thanks Billy.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Ok, discussion?

NEC Strauss: If he agreed to Massachusetts PDC on there, would that be authorized?

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: No, it’s a SC hat.

NEC Strauss: He’s earned the respect for being a PDC I think and if he was, if it designated that it was Massachusetts, I really would not have a problem with that.

Alt NEC Scherer: He can put his Massachusetts PDC on it too and we can’t say anything about that.

Dept Adj Diener: Oh, his pin, he can wear, it’s the wording of PDC.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Mine was the same thing, instead of SC, if he put Massachusetts, that would be the only comment.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: If we’re going to do that, we need to change the motion.

Exec Dir May: You can put that wording on a cap.

**Dept Cmdr Richardson:** Who made that motion? Jim, amend your motion?

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Yeh, the state name is only allowed to go one side of the cap so how could he have a different state on both sides.

Exec Dir May: Look at Bob’s, it would say it on that side, on the other side. We can ask Emblem sales, there shouldn’t be a problem with asking them if he could PDC of Massachusetts on it.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: If we can do it, we can put restrictions on it. We have a motion to allow, all in favor of allowing the PDC from Massachusetts to put it on his hat, raise your hand. No, we’re voting to allow him to do it.
Exec Dir May: To put PDC Massachusetts?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No, no, no, no. If we vote not to allow him, he can’t do it. If we vote to allow him, then we’ll put restrictions on it, what he can.

Dept Adj Diener: It would be clearer if we change the motion.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, alright. We change the motion. Jim, with your permission?

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Ok, what we’ll do is. A yes vote, an affirmative vote, means that he can put it on his hat as long as he puts Massachusetts on the side. Massachusetts PDC.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: We’re in discussion, right? I would say is, if we’re going to open it up that way we would open it up to anyone that moved here from any Department so don’t just put Massachusetts in this one, you have to put their Department because if we have one of our Commanders that’s now in California or something, we’d like them to reciprocate.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: If you look at the Emblem Sales catalog under cap etiquette, it doesn’t allow it, only one state per cap.

Dept Adj Diener: But putting the initials on the other side and…

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Initials?

Dept Adj Diener: Well, one there’s not room.

D-16 Cmdr Defrehn: Ok.

Dept Adj Diener: And National has said putting PDC on there is a Department decision.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, motion to allow him, I think, to allow him to PDC from Massachusetts or any Department on the side of his hat, affirmative means he can, no means he can’t.

NEC Strauss: We need a second.

D-6 Cmdr Simpson: Second.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright, very good. Alright, all in favor of allowing him to put the state on the side of his cap as PDC raise your hand. All opposed, raise your hand?

Dept Adj Diener: Fifteen (15) yes, Five (5) no.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Motion passes. Alright.

Dept Adj Diener: That’s all I have Commander.
Dept Cmdr Richardson: Alright people, it’s going to be fast. Alright, first thing, Policies and Procedures Manual. At the last DEC meeting I asked everybody to send me ideas of what we can put in the Policies and Procedures Manual. What I got was and these are different chapters in the Policies and Procedures Manual. We got, of course, Policies and Procedures for the DEC, for the convention, for the conference, for the committees. Now on the committees, we’re going to break out and put names, and put each committee and have them write their own. After that we’re going to the social media, we’re going to an e-mail vote and then we’re going to have a standard format so we can have these Policies and Procedures all in the same format throughout the book. People, it’s very important that we get these things written down, very important we get them written down.

Next thing is Consolidated Post Reports. I got a report from National a couple of weeks ago and out of 55 Departments, South Carolina is ranked 44, we are 44 out of 55. We’re at the bottom, unacceptable. That’s what we’re trying to do with the monetary awards for getting your posts to submit the CPR’s. Make sure that your posts, as District Commanders, go through and make sure your posts have submitted their CPR’s.

Alright, my project for the year, anybody, anybody that has wanted to know that two of the cardinal principals of The American Legion is caring for veterans and education of children. My project is going to be the Legacy Fund. We’re going to kill two birds with one stone on this. Mainly because when we send a kid to college with the Legacy Fund, that’s what it is. What are we doing? We’re making sure the veteran understands that we care about his kids and there’s nobody in here that does not want the same thing and that is for their kids to better than they did. With the Legacy Fund what we’re going to try to reach that plateau.

Alright, the oratorical contest, we already talked about the money for the oratorical contest and what we’re doing is and while it’s still vice commanders that’s still going to have oversight over the oratorical contest, we’re going to have a chairman of the oratorical contest in each area. In other words, Roberta, living in Hilton Head, she has quadrant one up in Greenville. That’s counterproductive. So what we’re going to do is we’re getting somebody from that area to chair that particular oratorical contest, ok.

Next thing is the we were brought, I can’t remember, might have been Robin had mentioned something about Boys State Awards I can’t remember now. Now, Boys State Awards, Stephen, please correct me if I’m wrong on this. We have numerous number of, we have a lot of volunteers on Boys State that been there 50, 60 years. I feel that we need to do something for these volunteers. You know, if we just give them a luncheon, just to let them know that we appreciate what we’re doing. Now, we’re turning it over to the Finance Dept, that just FYI, your information, so we can start the ball rolling on this, if we approve it. We’re going to hear from the Finance Dept on this and then we’ll vote on it.

Next SC Legion College, we’ll have a meeting after this right here.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: Are you serving lunch? (laughter)

Dept Cmdr Richardson: No, the meeting won’t be very long. Everybody that’s graduated from the SC Legion College, we’re going to try and start one here in SC. And we’re going to do it in the conference room five minutes after this meeting is over with. And I promise you, we won’t be here long. Alright next, the Secretary for the Dept of Veterans Affairs. We’ve been asked to be on the Board to help select candidates for the future Secretary of the Dept of Veterans Affairs. To keep you informed, I think I put that in my update that I sent out to everybody, this is just to let you know that we are giving out packets and as soon as we get our packets given out, we will inform you of all has them, ok?
D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: What’s this packet, Commander?

Dept Cmdr Richardson: It’s a packet for the newly created Dept of Veterans Affairs.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: We still have time to make a recommendation.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Yes, next, one thing that we have been very, very poor in doing here is, ever since Bill Heil from 195, ever since Bill Heil passed, our Reconnect program has gone downhill rapidly. So what we’re doing is trying to get our Reconnect back with our Military Bases. I’ve asked Commander Britt if he would handle the Reconnect at Fort Jackson and he has graciously said he would do that. Now what we’re looking for, is we are looking for three other ones. I’ve got to have somebody in Florence, not Florence. In Sumter, I’ve got to have somebody in Charleston, and I’ve got to have somebody in Beaufort. Those are the four major areas where we have a military installation. So if you have somebody in your District that you think would be a good person to do that, please let me know and we’ll (inaudible).

Alright, we have to go into Executive Session. I need a motion. We have two items we have to discussion.

D-1 Cmdr Jarvis: I make a motion that we go into Executive Session.

Vice Cmdr Price: I second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Motion’s been made and seconded, all in favor, opposed? If everybody is not on the list to attend Executive Session would please leave, I would appreciate it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Do I have a motion to come out of Executive Session?

Vice Cmdr Rucker: I make a motion to come out of Executive Session.

D-15 Cmdr Rumbaugh: Second.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: All in favor say aye, opposed (passed). Open the doors. Do we have anything good for The American Legion?

Imm PDC Britt: I received a flyer from the State Fair Association that all active duty and retired military people can get in the State fair, Bridget, if you’d like to put it on….

D-3 Cmdr Lewis: It’s already on there.

Vice Cmdr Kvam: I’d like to take a couple minutes, from the Centennial Committee, we had a really successful Centennial and Centennial Celebration, and on behalf of the Centennial Committee, Commander Strauss, would you come up please, we want to present you with this small token of appreciation for everything that you did for the Department and all the stuff you did for the placemat and all of your history and you looking it up so this is a small token from the Centennial Committee as well as the Department. (Applause)

Dept Cmdr Richardson: Anything else?
D-10 Cmdr Sinclair: My old Battalion deployed last week, the whole Brigade deployed last week, the point is (inaudible), we may need some more people to keep them in line. (applause).

Resolutions Chairman St. Onge. Post 15 in Sumter is having their fair from September 24 to 29, it is open and free to all Legion members plus one guest, just show your ID coming, I have some fliers out here by the door if you’d like to take some back to your Posts and your Districts.

Vice Cmdr Poulos: Post 9 is having a fundraiser, it’s a turkey raffle, they have 25 turkey’s, tickets are $2.

Alt NEC Scherer: On September 21st we’re having a Fisher House fundraiser at the Harley Davidson in Greenville, we’ve got bands coming, we’ve got a lot of items for auction, especially a 20-year old Winchester from the military that’s never been shot, that’s one item but come out and support the Fisher House, September 21st 12:00 to 4:00.

NEC Strauss: Mr. Commander, we have a lot of new members of the DEC so I would just like to address a letter that I sent out a little bit earlier this year. Paul Dillard is becoming our Leading Candidate so basically that means he’s on deck to become the leading candidate for National Commander. Let me tell you that it’s extremely expensive to become the leading candidate for National Commander of The American Legion. You have to travel around the country, you have to travel to American Legion meetings around the country. There’s many special events in Washington, DC and if you’ve ever been to Washington, DC, it’s extremely expensive. Traditionally, at our Department, we send out a letter and ask the DEC to send a donation before the National Convention. Traditionally the National Candidate visits us during our caucus at the National Convention and we present him that check to help him during his candidacy for National Commander. I would appreciate any consideration that you would. You’re going to make the check out to the Department of Texas. There’s no suggested donation but they come anywhere from $20 to $100, generally, depending on well ya’ll feel, and some are higher. Any donation that you can consider, I would greatly appreciate it.

PDC Phillips: As a member of the National Constitution & Bylaws committee, there are two changes coming. Mainly type grammar type changes and gender specific, all that will be changed, so it can be either male or female. The second is the preamble to Ntl Constitution and Bylaws to change it from remember our Association in the Great Wars to Remember our Association in the Great Wars and all wars and conflicts. Those are only coming up that will be voted on coming up at the National Convention.

Historian Cantrell: I would like to commend Vice Cmdr Poulos for her efforts at the LC Academy. She hung right in there as a Counselor and she did a great job.

D-5 Cmdr Kelly: This past Thursday, Bob Scherer, was given the highest honor that SC can bestow on any citizen. We had a great crowd there.

D-20 Cmdr Mills: Russ, you also need to stand up, you were also presented with an award at Law Cadet, so I wanted to make sure everybody knew about that.

D-19 Cmdr Gibbons: I appreciate what you’ve been sending out your schedule to us, we see you working hard at it, we appreciate you doing that. But I have some inputs that some of the blue cappers are confused. If we could end up, as the DEC, work things out before it gets out to the field, I think it
would work out much better. But that’s the comment I’ve got from the District, there’s still some confusion out there and I’m trying to work it out.

Dept Cmdr Richardson: I appreciate everybody coming. I know it’s been long and contentious; we’ll try to cut it shorter next time. If you would please.

Cmdr Richardson called on Vice Cmdr Rucker for a closing prayer. He called for the salute to colors and closed the meeting.

For God and Country,

Nick I. Diener
Department Adjutant

ND/mm