



For God and Country

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Department Executive Committee Meeting July 10, 2025

Meeting Began at 8:15 PM

(3 RAPS OF BELL)

Commander John Buckwalter – “With the colors of our country being in their proper place, we will render the right-hand salute. One. Two. Please uncover. I will ask Chaplain Rachel Merlos to offer the invocation.”

Department Chaplain Rachel Merlos – Offered prayer.

Commander John Buckwalter – Please remain uncovered and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Pledge of Alliance was recited.

Commander John Buckwalter – “Please cover.”

(1 RAP OF BELL)

Commander John Buckwalter – “Be seated, please. I remind everyone that this is an open session, and all Legionnaires are welcome to attend. To speak on any matter, however, they must first obtain permission from their District Commander. I would also like to remind you that when speaking, please give your name and District, speak clearly and loudly so the recorder can hear you. Only one person is to speak at a time. I will call on Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson to call the roll.”

(1 RAP OF BELL – PLEASE BE SEATED)

Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “Thank you, Commander. Good evening.”

ROLL CALL – ADJUTANT LOWRY FINLEY-JACKSON

Commander John Buckwalter – Here

Sr. Vice Commander Jerome Goolsby - Here

Zone 1 Vice Commander Marion ‘Lloyd’ Miller – Here

Zone 2 Vice Commander Calvin Bumgarner – Here
Zone 3 Vice Commander Alex Slocum – Here
Zone 4 Vice Commander Duane DeClue – Here
NECman George Scarborough – Here
Alt NEC Kerry Boardman – Present
Immediate Past Cmdr Mark Clark – Here
Judge Advocate Christine Sapp -- Present
Finance Officer Brian Sapp -- Here
Chaplain Rachel Merlos – Here
Historian – “We do not have a historian”
Sgt-at-Arms -- Albert Jackson – Here
Past National Commander Joe Frank – excused
Adjutant – Lowry Finley-Jackson - Present
Dist 1 Commander David Wood – Here
Dist 2 Commander Phyllis Campbell -- Here
Dist 3 Commander Edward Weaverling – Here
Dist 4 Commander Mark Hummer - Here
Dist 5 Commander Tom Tanner – Here
Dist 6 Commander Gary Grigsby – Present
Dist 7 Commander Stephen Olson – Here
Dist 8 Commander Paul Backues - Here
Dist 9 Commander Daniel Sauer –Here
Dist 10 Commander John Chapman – Here
Dist 11/12 Commander Christopher Schwarz – Absent
Dist 13 Commander Eric Norem – Excused (substituting: John Kramer)

Past Department Commanders:

Joe Frank -- Excused

David Voyles – Here

Clark Pointer – Here

Richard Heigert – Excused

Dave Shafer – Excused

Dave Jennemann -- Excused

Lynn Dorrell – Excused

Thomas K Goodin – Excused

George Scarborough -- Here

Cary Kellett – Excused

Hallie Williams – Excused

Rose Noonan – Present

John Neger -- Excused

Charles Goodin – Here

Kenneth Goth – Here

Dennis Woeltje – Here

Elizabeth Gonzales – Here

Kerry Boardman – Present

Gary Grigsby – Present

Mark Clark - Here

Adjutant Lowry Finley–Jackson: “We have a quorum.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “A quorum is present.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “I would ask for approval of the March 1, 2025, D.E.C. and Closed D.E.C. minutes as previously published.”

Sr Vice Commander - Jerome Goolsby – makes motion; Immediate Past Commander Mark Clark – seconds the motion; Motion is passed.

Commander John Buckwalter – “I will call upon Zone 3 Vice Commander Alex Slocum for the Report of the Sub-Committee.”

Zone 3 Vice Commander Alex Slocum – “No Report, Commander.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “There is no report from the Sub-committee. Adjutant, do we have recommendations for new post charters?”

Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “Commander, no recommendations for new post charters.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “Do we have recommendations for post cancellations?”

Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “Yes, Commander, we have one recommendation for post cancellation – Cross Timbers – post 0623; we have all of the paperwork.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “Are there any recommendations for mergers?”

Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “No, commander.”

John Buckwalter – “I would entertain a motion to cancel post 0623 – Cross Timbers. Senior Vice Commander Jerome Goolsby makes a motion; Finance Officer Brian Sapp – 2nd the motion; motion passes. I call upon Chairman Terry Lanning for the report of the Finance Commission.”

Chairman Terry Lanning – “Thank you, Commander. The Finance Commission recommendations are as follows to be paid out this fiscal year: Approved giving American Legion Auxiliary \$1,500. This is the approximate amount that the Auxiliary earned from LIT. Approved giving a donation to the Foundation of \$13,500. Approved giving a donation to the POW/MIA Museum of \$1,000. Approved giving a donation to the National Children’s and Veterans Foundation \$1,000. This is for the Legion Riders.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “I would entertain a motion to approve the recommendations made by the Finance Commission. Senior Vice Commander Jerome Goolsby makes motion; Judge Advocate Christine Sapp – 2nd motion. Motion is approved.

Commander John Buckwalter – “I’d like to call upon Past Department Commander and Past National Vice Commander David Voyles for a report on the Past Department Commanders Committee. We can throw Ad-hoc in there, too.”

PDC David Voyles – “We had a meeting with the Past Department Commanders. Had a long discussion. We are trying to help our Service Officers and see what we can do to improve. There is an Ad-Hoc Committee, we are needing to do research. We did our research and checked with Kansas and how they manage their service officers, check with the VFW, and also checked with the DAV. Ad-hoc Committee should be resolved. Basically, we have the information we can get. What we are doing is the right way of doing it at this time. The ad-hoc committee that is coming up is not going to be needed for the next year. If I can answer any other questions about this, short and sweet, the past department commanders are there to help the department. If you have issues or something, we can do our research and see whether or not it can be done. We are spending more money than we are taking in. So, we have to look at the areas and see what we can do if anything. You all know what the finance situation is. We need to improve in that area somehow. We need to bring more income coming in. Last year there were 26,000 members. Ten years ago, you had over 40,000. That should bring up a red flag. We’re going to look into this. We’re not going to do anything. If you have something, we will bring it up at the D.E.C. We represent you guys. With that, that’s my report, Commander.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “For the record, please note that the Past Department Commanders Ad-hoc Committee is dissolved. District commanders should be on the front row for the opening of the Convention tomorrow afternoon. The opening is at 1:30 PM, please be seated by 1:20 PM. I will now call upon the Adjutant for the Convention Caucus Schedule.”

Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “Before I go through the Caucus schedule that are in your district folder, no alcohol into the conference area. Before the banquet tomorrow night, finish the Kickback over there, don’t bring it over to the

banquet. The Caucus Schedule, I had to get a little creative, as you can see, there are going to be people in the same room, but it is separated. There will be little signs, please look. Do not go to someone else's district. Ok? So, no ease dropping. We have a lot of things to discuss.

District 1 – Capaha / Cape Rock Left Front

District 2 – Capaha / Cape Rock Right Front

District 3 – Foyer between the meeting space and Hotel (along the wall)

District 4 – 8th floor Terrace Room

District 5 – Rose Meeting Room

District 6 – 8th floor Terrace Room

District 7 – Breakfast Area Middle

District 8 – Breakfast Area Rear

District 9 – Capaha / Cape Rock Rear

District 10 – Capaha / Cape Rock Left Rear

District 11/12 – Breakfast Area Front

District 13 – River Room

District 14 – Lorimier (where Dept office is)

District 15 - Foyer between the meeting space and Hotel (by fireplace)

District 16 – Capaha / Cape Rock Center Rear

District 17 – Capaha / Cape Rock – Center Front

All I would ask is if you have any meetings in the breakfast area, please put the chairs back and remove your trash. Any questions?"

Commander John Buckwalter – “Do we have any new business? None. Before we go further, I wanted to say thank you to all the district commanders, post commanders, past department commanders and all the others seated out here for your hard work this past year. Convention is the time to celebrate our success. I want to take a few minutes to talk seriously about where we are at. We are going to finish this year with 25,000 members. We did not plan for the impact of the \$5 dues renewal increase. That’s the bottom line. Look at our numbers. Look at National numbers. We only had 92% of our members renew this year. We need to look at this. We have 283 posts. We had an absolutely outstanding Boys State this year. We had 840 young men. Only 82 posts sponsored a boy for Boys State. Today, we still have 94 posts that have not submitted their Certification of Post Officials. They will not be able to pick up their cards. We have over a third of our posts who did not submit a Consolidated Post Report without assistance from the Department staff. Lowry, Theresa, and Rita started calling posts and speaking with Commanders and finished their CPR. We are one of a half-dozen departments that will have 100% compliance with the Certified Post Reports. The biggest problem is education. The district commanders have worked very hard

this year. We need to get the word out to the posts. A lot is expected of our post commanders and post adjutants. We have younger and older members in these positions who honestly do not know what they are doing. During Department Legion College, we did a good job of educating our future leaders. We should have close to 40 leaders next year. There are 283 posts out there and some of them are absolutely clueless. It is your job as District Commanders to educate them. I really appreciate what it takes to make a post, district, zone, and department function. So again, thank you very much and I appreciate all you have done.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “Do we have anything for the Good of the order? Nothing for the good of the order.”

(3 RAPS OF BELL)

Commander John Buckwalter – “Please uncover. I ask Chaplain Rachel Merlos to offer the closing prayer.”

Commander John Buckwalter- “I’d like to have a motion to approve mileage.”
Senior Vice Commander Jerome Goolsby – makes motion; Immediate Past
Commander Mark Clark – 2nd motion. Approved. “At this time, I will ask Chaplain Rachel Merlos to offer the Benediction.”

Department Chaplain Rachel Merlos offered Benediction.

Commander John Buckwalter – “Please re-cover. With the colors of our nation being in their proper place: Salute – One. Two.”

Commander John Buckwalter – “I now declare this meeting of The Department Executive Committee duly closed. Don’t forget you’ve got meetings early in the morning.”

(RAP OF BELL)

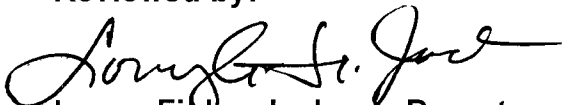
Meeting adjourned 8:40 PM

Respectively Submitted,



Rita Coleman, recording Secretary

Reviewed by:



Lowry Finley-Jackson, Department Adjutant