



*For God and Country*

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## **Department Executive Committee Meeting July 13, 2025**

**Meeting Began at 11:48 AM**

**(3 RAPS OF BELL)**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Face the colors. With the colors of our country being in the proper place, we will render the right-hand salute. Two. Uncover. I call for the Department Chaplain to offer us an invocation.”**

**Department Chaplain Rachel Merlos – A prayer was offered.**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Please face the colors and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.”**

**The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Cover.”**

**(1 RAP OF BELL)**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Welcome to this meeting of the Department Executive Committee. To every one of the new members here, I hope you enjoy the experience over the next year. For the people who are returning, thank you. I appreciate your service, and I hope you have another good year. I remind everyone that this is an open session, and all Legionnaires are welcome to attend. To speak on any matter, however, you must first obtain permission from their District Commander. I'd also like to remind you when speaking, please mention your name and District number and speak loudly and clearly for the recorder so everyone can hear you. One person speaks at a time, please. I now ask for the Department Adjutant, Lowry Finley-Jackson, to complete a roll call.”**

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

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – Here**

**Sr. Vice Commander Alex Slocum - Here**

**Zone 1 Vice Commander Daniel Sauer – Here**

**Zone 2 Vice Commander Edward Weaverling – Here**

**Zone 3 Vice Commander Mark Reed – Here**

Zone 4 Vice Commander Kevin McMeel – Here  
NECman George Scarborough – Here  
Alt NEC Kerry Boardman – Present  
Immediate Past Cmdr John Buckwalter – Here  
Judge Advocate Christine Sapp -- Present  
Finance Officer Brian Sapp -- Here  
Chaplain Rachel Merlos – Here  
Historian – Chris Wallingford - Here  
Sgt – at – Arms Albert Jackson – Here  
Past National Commander Joe Frank – Excused  
Adjutant – Lowry Finley-Jackson - Present  
Dist 1 Commander David Blickhan – Present  
Dist 2 Commander Phyllis Campbell -- Here  
Dist 3 Commander Ricky Volkmann – Here  
Dist 4 Commander Mark Hummer - Present  
Dist 5 Commander Thomas Tanner – Here  
Dist 6 Commander Gary Grigsby – Present  
Dist 7 Commander Stephen Olson – Excused (sitting in: George Shepherd)  
Dist 8 Commander Paul Backues - Here  
Dist 9 Commander Roger Gansmann – Here  
Dist 10 Commander Arden Jordan – Absent  
Dist 11/12 Commander Christopher Schwartz – Absent (sitting in: Michael Klingeman)  
Dist 13 Commander Paul Kohm – Here  
Dist 14 Commander James Walton – Excused (sitting in: Rick Sanders)  
Dist 15 Commander Milo Daniel – Absent  
Dist 16 Commander Charles “Ron” Jones – Here  
Dist 17 Commander Barb Riggles - Present

**Past Department Commanders:**

Joe Frank -- Excused	David Voyles – Here
Clark Pointer – Here	Richard Heigert – Excused
Dave Shafer – Excused	John Neger -- Excused
Dave Jennemann -- Excused	Charles Goodin – Here

Lynn Dorrell – Excused

Thomas K Goodin – Excused

George Scarborough -- Here

Cary Kellett – Excused

Hallie Williams – Excused

Rose Noonan – Excused

Kenneth Goth – Here

Dennis Woeltje – Here

Betty Gonzales – Here

Kerry Boardman – Present

Gary Grigsby – Present

Mark Clark – Excused

**Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “Commander, we have a quorum.”**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Thank you. It is now my privilege to appoint Lowry Finley-Jackson to the position of Department Adjutant for the 2025-2026 program year.” Finance Officer Brian Sapp – makes motion; Judge Advocate Christine Sapp – 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. It has been properly moved and seconded that Lowry Finley-Jackson be appointed as Department Adjutant for 2025-2026. After vote, it is so ordered.”**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “I now ask that Past Department Commander Charles Goodin come forward and announce the disposition of the Resolutions that were brought up in Convention.”**

**PDC Charles Goodin – Chairman of the Resolutions Committee – “Passed five resolutions and we declined two. The two that were declined had to do with the changes to the Preamble to the American Legion Constitution. Fourteen people were present for the meeting. Two districts were not present at the meeting.”**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Chairman will entertain a motion to approve the report.” 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> District Mike Klingeman makes motion; Zone 3 Commander Mark Reed – 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion passed.**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “I now call District Commander Gary Grigsby for changes to Constitution and By-laws.”**

**District Commander Gary Grigsby – “The Constitution and By-laws met. No changes to the Membership, but there was one item that one provision should be added to the by-laws that if a provision of National By-laws comes into conflict with a provision of Department of Missouri Constitution and By-laws; then the provision of National Constitution and By-laws would automatically be included in the Department’s By-laws and Constitution.**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Thank you for your report. District Commander Tom Tanner makes the motion; Finance Officer Brian Sapp – 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Unless there is a discussion, all in favor say “AYE”; any opposed say “NO”. It is so ordered.”**

Commander Jerome Goolsby – “I would now like to announce who is on the Sub-committee. The Sub-committee will be made up of the following three legionnaires:

Steven Olson, Mark Hummer, and George Scarborough

Steve Olson will serve as the chairman of the Sub-Committee. Entertain a motion to approve the subcommittee. 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander Gary Grigsby – made the motion; Finance Officer Brian Sapp – 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote taken, motion passed.

Commander Jerome Goolsby - Thank you very much.”

Commander Jerome Goolsby – “There is no printout yet for who is on the Commissions. The following changes have been made:

Americanism – Replacing George Shepherd with Brian Sapp.

BSA Committee – Jerome Goolsby has been replaced by Gary Grigsby. Kevin McMeel is now the chair of that committee.

Boys State – Richard Heigert has been replaced by John Buckwalter.

Economic Committee – John Schwent has been removed from that committee. A replacement is pending. Mike Sweeney has been replaced with Bob Maddox.

Membership – There is one representative for every district. A district commander or whomever the district commander decides to send to the meetings. The Zone Vice Commanders are also members of the committee. The following members are also on the committee: Tom Tanner, Don Dillman, Thomas Goodin, Melanie Klingeman, and Mark Clark

ROTC Committee – Amber Withnell is replacing Vice Commander Alex Slocum on the committee. Darlene Coats has been replaced on the committee by Mark Reed.

Legislative Committee – John Kramer is replacing Richard Heigert.

VA&R – George Hill has been replaced by Scott Hunt.

There is no change to the special appointments of the Ad-Hoc committees except for updating the positions that were held by commanders. The chair will entertain a motion to approve the appointments stated. Zone 3 Vice Commander Mark Reed makes motion; Zone 1 Vice Commander Daniel Sauer – 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote. So ordered. (A donation to Boys Baseball will be made at the Fall Conference.) I’m also going to add to the Ad-Hoc Committee for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary: PDC Charles Goodin volunteered to head-up that committee. Thank you, Mr. Goodin. I appreciate that. I would also like to grant him the authority to pick six people to work with him on that. Chair will act on an appointment. Finance Officer Brian Sapp motioned. District 5 Commander Tom Tanner – 2<sup>nd</sup>. Hearing no discussion,

so order. Thank you, Charlie for stepping up for this. Any support you need, just let me know. If the adjutants or districts can help him out, please do so.”

Commander Jerome Goolsby – “New business. I would like to the chairman for the Finance Committee to come forward, Terry Lanning, to present the year 2025-2026 budget.”

Chairman Terry Lanning – “The report of the Finance Commission is Department Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson has 199,000 miles on her van. The Finance Commission is recommending buying a new van for the Adjutant because of the mileage. The proposed budget for 2025-2026 was printed in the Legionnaire. The budget shows a loss of \$85,217. At the Finance Commission meeting, this was increased \$8,655 for adding an additional employee on the health insurance plan and giving the Chaplain \$1,100. So, this increased the budget loss to be \$94,972. Some of the other main differences from this year’s printed budget and last year’s budget are as follows:

Salary Raise – last year the cost of living increased 2.5%. Recommending giving the employees a 3% raise, this will cost an additional \$12,515.

Assumed a 5% drop in membership

Increased Employee Health Insurance 5%

Increased LIT revenue by \$14,328

Increased state Grant money by \$17,002

Increased Department Legion College expense \$1,200. Last year there was no budget for that. PDC Mark Clark asked that we give him some money to cover that.

The total revenue increased \$50,316 between this year’s budget and last year’s budget.

The total expenses increased = \$71,262

This decreased the budget by \$20,947 over last year (chaplain \$1,100)

There was a new law that affects us. The minimum wage increased to \$13.75 per hour for 2025 and \$15.00 per hour in 2026.

For the last several years the Department has had a surplus because of the 2020 dues increase. We are now showing losses and will use up those surpluses. Will not need a dues increase for several years though.

Request by the Baseball Commission Chairman for some money for baseball 100-year anniversary. The chairman is asking others besides just the department for donations. We approved a donation of \$1,000. This will come out of his year’s money, not next year’s budget. The chair requests a vote for approval.

**Motion made by Zone 3 Vice Commander Mark Reed. 2<sup>nd</sup> made by Zone 4 Vice Commander Kevin McMeel. Motion passed. It is so ordered.**

**Chairman Terry Lanning – “On a personal note, I’d like to say it has been a pleasure working with Lowry over the years, as Adjutant. If I needed something financially, she would happily give it to me. Nice working with you, Lowry.”**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Thank you, sir. I appreciate all your hard work. I’d like a call the Convention Committee Chairman Kenneth Goth for recommendations for future convention sites.**

**Chairman Kenny Goth – “Thank you, Commander. You guys heard that we need your approval. For three years 2028, 2029 and 2030, they guaranteed rooms for \$100 a night for rooms. You can’t beat that. \$10,000 for food and beverage for the three years. The second lowest for \$15,000. And with them giving us \$15,000 to do what we choose with it. There were some good hotels that gave us presentations, and they were good presentations, but we really appreciate that Alt NECman Kerry Boardman is on there, Richard Pack, Lowry was interested. The Auxiliary, Kathy, and Rose. We stayed about five hours and if you stayed in those chairs for too long, man, you get real tired. Commander, I would make a motion that we accept the three-year contract at Columbia Wyndam for 2028, 2029 and 2030.”**

**Alt NECman Kerry Boardman makes a motion, but he cannot since he is on the committee. The motion was made and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote was held. The motion is so ordered. Thank you, sir.**

**Chairman Kenny Goth – “Commander, that completes my report.”**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “The Adjutant has an announcement.”**

**Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “I am looking for someplace to move our Fall Conference except Capital Plaza. There is a conversation about us going back to a Spring Conference instead of a Fall Conference. We’ll get a better selection of places in the Columbia area or possibly the Lake of the Ozarks. We still have one more year at the Capital Plaza. I need some feedback on that.”**

**Alt NECman Kerry Boardman – “Are we going to have a fall conference and then a spring conference?”**

**Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “No, we are just going to flip it. We are going to have a fall one this year and next year. (still have a contract).”**

**Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Do you have something, Charlie.”**

**PDC Charlie Goodin – “Will we then move the oratorical back to Spring Conference?”**

**Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson – “Yes, that’s the plan.”**

Commander Jerome Goolsby – “I need a motion to approve what Lowry just said.” Zone 3 Vice Commander Mark Reed makes a motion; Finance Officer Brian Sapp – 2<sup>nd</sup> motion. Vote. It is so ordered.”

Commander Jerome Goolsby – “I’d now like to ask Senior Vice Commander, Alex Slocum, to come forward and present his 2025 – 2026 membership plan to us.”

Senior Vice Commander Alex Slocum – “Thank you, Commander. Everyone, with the exception of the Sergeant-of-Arms, has a thumb drive with the post 1000 list for each post within that district. I started with members 5 – 10 miles from each post. Sorted by name. Five years of continuous membership. You need to get those documents to your post commanders tomorrow. I will say this, if the commander does not have the energy to do this, then find someone who does. We can’t just sit back and put no effort into this, or we will not see our membership improve. I said in my speeches that I am very hands-on and when I was District Commander, every week or at least every other week, I was e-mailing what our current membership was and what we needed to do to move up. On the thumb drive is a schedule on what I want you to concentrate on.

July – post 1000

August – your current membership

September – so on and so forth

That’s what worked for the Sixth District two years ago. If you need me to come out, I’ll do it. For the posts and districts that don’t have post 1000s, I’d be happy to pull the roster. Just tell me the zip code and how many miles do you want me to run it. As we move into this new membership year, it will be free run to get people transferred in. Starting in January, I will increase the radius and maybe if this post couldn’t get them in, maybe another will. Any questions for me? Bring that thumb drive back to the Fall Conference. I’ll have my computer with me, and I can upload any rosters. I’m here for you. I want to sit up front. I’m tired of sitting in the back at Convention. Like Commander Buckwalter said, that shock of that \$5 increase is over. It is time to move on. Thank you.”

Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Thank you, Alex. Good of the Order. Since I am the Commander. Oh, I’m sorry. You have new business.”

Alt NEC Kerry Boardman – “Boys State over the years is reorganized with the input from myself, Lowry, John, Commander and 100 other people in Boys State. They asked questions of the Board and the Executive Board. The last person they had on the Executive Board was Jim Whitfield. They’ve restructured. They use to have 60-70 people on this board. Chairman – myself, Adjutant – Lowry, the Commander, and Senior Vice Commander automatically. The Executive Board has 20 members. We are authorized to have somebody on that board. It needs to be somebody that understands Boys State, worked Boys State, knows Boy State.

I spoke with the Commander and stated it should be Immediate Past Commander John Buckwalter. He knows Boys State. I'd like to entertain a motion that we elect Immediate Past Department Commander John Buckwalter from the Department of Missouri."

District Commander Gary Grigsby – I move that we elect John Buckwalter for that Executive Council; NEC George Scarborough 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote. It is so ordered.

Commander Jerome Goolsby – "Is there any more New Business?" Okay. Good of the Order. Commander pins are being ordered and will hopefully be available at Fall Conference. E-mail. We've been hit. There have been a lot of problems with e-mail. [JEROME@JEROMEGOOLSBY.NET](mailto:JEROME@JEROMEGOOLSBY.NET) If you receive an e-mail from an address other than this one, either block the sender or delete the e-mail. Don't call Lowry, she can't fix it. Don't call me, I can't fix it either. Is there anything else that anyone needs to bring up for the good of the order? A flyer on my homecoming will be sent to everyone. My homecoming will be at post 287 in Savannah, Missouri, October 25. We have a report from American Legion Riders."

Finance Officer Brian Sapp – "Newly elected Riders Director – Tony Rumbo wasn't able to stay for this meeting, but I do want to give you an update. They completed the Legacy Ride and raised \$50,756 so far. This year it will be split 75% VCF and 25% to the local VCF Foundation. There was a vote at the meeting that was voted on by the membership. Next year it will be a 50-50 split between the local Foundation and the VCF. There was also a discussion and a vote that we are changing our format for the way we do our ride each year. The last 11 years, we have done a 3-day ride around the state. We are losing riders, just like the Legion family is losing members. We are changing to a 3-day ride-in next year. If that works well, then we'll be looking into it for the next few years. Post 0624, Chapter 0624 in Sunrise Beach has volunteered to host that first year's ride-in. They hosted a National one about a month ago that turned out very well. People/Riders from New York, North Carolina, all over, came and it turned out very well. We are going to set the bar high and let everyone know what we are going to do this year."

Commander Jerome Goolsby – "Thank you, sir." There's one thing that I was going to bring up, so I'm going to bring it up. Mr. Jackson, I will do my best this year to not add any gray hairs to your wife's head. Anything else for the Good of the Order? Chair will approve a motion to approve mileage." Finance Officer Brian Sapp – motion to approve. District 8 Commander Paul Backues – 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chair would like to remind everyone that when you submit your reports, they must be signed and dated. It is so ordered.

(3 RAPS OF BELL)



Commander Jerome Goolsby – “All arise. Will the Chaplain come forward and offer a Benediction?”

Chaplain Rachel Merlos – “Uncover.” - Offered Benediction

Commander Jerome Goolsby – “Cover.” Please face the flag. With the colors of our country being in their proper place: Salute – Two. I now declare this meeting of the Department of Missouri American Legion Executive Committee now closed.”

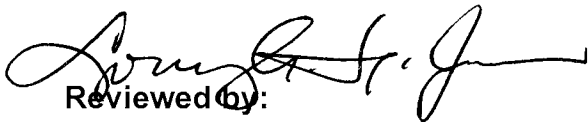
(RAP OF BELL)

Meeting adjourned 12:29 PM



Respectively Submitted,

Rita Coleman, recording Secretary.



Reviewed by:

Lowry Finley-Jackson, Department Adjutant