

# The American Legion



*For God and Country*

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## **Department Executive Committee Meeting February 18, 2023**

Meeting Began at 1:00 PM

Commander Noonan: With the colors of our country being in the proper place, we will render the right-hand salute. Two.

At this time, Chaplain Marvin Harper will offer the invocation. Please uncover.

Marvin Harper Department Chaplain: Let us pray, Oh lord for letting us gather here the main thing is that we want to keep Patty Clark Headquarters Secretary in our prayers so that she can get along well and be back in 8 weeks or so. I would like to say the George Washington Prayer for America. I now make it my earnest prayer. That God would have the United States in his holy protection, that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to Government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have serviced in the field and finally that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with the charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Devine Author of our blessed Religion, and without an humble imitation of who example in these things we can never hope to be a happy Nation. Amen

Commander Noonan: Please remain uncovered, Resolution 288 adopted at the 67<sup>th</sup> American Legion National Convention calls for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings of The American Legion as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIA's still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America. Accordingly, the POW/MIA flag has been placed on the empty chair as a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor!"

Commander Noonan: Please remain uncovered and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Please remain standing for the Preamble of the American Legion Constitution:

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100-percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy

of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Commander Noonan: Be seated. Welcome to the Spring Meeting of The DEC. I remind everyone 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, you mention your name, give your district, and speak clearly and loudly so the recorder can hear you. Only one person will speak at a time.

Adjutant Finley – Jackson: Roll Call

Commander Rose Noonan -- Here

Sr. Vice Commander Mark Clark -- Here

Adjutant Lowry Finley-Jackson -- Present

Zone 1 Commander Brian Sapp -- Here

Zone 2 Vice Commander George Shepherd -- Present

Zone 3 Vice Commander Cue Conway -- Excused

Zone 4 Vice Commander Norman Gentry -- Excused

NECman George Scarborough -- Here

Alt Necman Kerry Boardman -- Here

Immediate Past Cmdr Gary Grigsby -- Here

Past National Commander Joe Frank -- Excused

Judge Advocate Christine Sapp -- Here

Dept Finance Officer John Buckwalter --Here

Department Chaplain Marvin Harper -- Here

Department Historian Jerome Goolsby -- Here

Dept Sgt -- at -- Arms Darlene Coats -- Present

Dist 1 Commander Norman Goforth -- Here

Dist 2 Commander Phyllis Campbell -- Here

Dist 3 Commander Edward Weaverling -- Here

Dist 4 Commander Charles Chester -- Jim Jones sat in

Dist 5 Commander Michele Batliner -- Here

Dist 6 Commander Alex Slocum -- Here

Dist 7 Commander Stephen Olson -- Present

Dist 8 Commander Christine Sapp -- Present

Dist 9 Commander James Arflack -- Absent

Dist 10 Commander Steve Dodson -- Art Wilson sat In

Dist 11/12 Commander Darlene Coats -- Present --

Dist 13 Commander Harry Barnes -- Here

Dist 14 Commander Kevin McMeel --Here

Dist 15 Commander Mark Maples -- Excused

Dist 16 Commander David Shafer -- Here

Dist 17 Commander Mark Reed -- Here

Past Department Commanders

Joe Frank -- Excused

Joel Hauck -- Excused

David Voyles -- Here

Clark Pointer -- Excused

Richard Heigert -- Here

Dave Shafer -- Here

John Neger -- Excused

Dave Jennemann -- Excused

Marvin Harper -- Here

Charles Goodin -- Here

Lynn Dorrell -- Excused

Kenneth Goth -- Excused

Arthur Wilson -- Here            Thomas K Goodin -- Excused    Dennis Woeltje -- Excused  
George Scarborough -- Here    Elizabeth Gonzales -- Here    Cary Kellett -- Here  
Kerry Boardman -- Here        Hallie Williams -- Here       Gary Grigsby -- Present

Lowry Finley – Jackson: Commander we have a quorum

Please note that there is a closed DEC meeting after this DEC session.

Commander Rose Noonan - At this time, I would like to have approval of the Previous, DEC meetings as published?

Motion to approve previous DEC Minutes – George Shepherd – Zone 2 Vice Commander

Mark Clark – Senior Vice Commander - Seconds

Commander Noonan: I have a motion and a second. All those in favor? ALL: Aye.

Commander Noonan Any opposed? (No response.)

Commander Noonan: Motion passes.

Report of the subcommittee -- NECman George Scarborough

No Report

Adjutants Report – Lowry Finley -Jackson

Adjutant Finley-Jackson: Commander, the following post are recommended for cancellation: District 11/12 Anheuser – Busch Co's Inc Post 299 - District 3 Opdyke Post 176

Motion to close posts by Kerry Boardman – Alt Necman

Second Jerome Goolsby - Historian

Commander Noonan: All those in favor, signify with an aye. ALL: Aye.

Commander Noonan: Any opposed? (No response.)

Commander Noonan: Motion passes.

Membership Report - Senior Vice Commander Mark Clark

The report that came out yesterday we are at 84.21% as the Department, we are short of the 85% goal.

Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 15 & 16 are all at or above the 85% goal, Districts 5, 10, 13, 14, and 17 are below the goal.

16<sup>th</sup> district leading the way in membership. It is okay to be ahead.

11/12<sup>th</sup> district is doing a great job – Darlene is working hard to make the goal for her district.

Next goal is March 15 should be at 90% Its okay to push a little bit to achieve the goals.

Zone 1 is getting ready to hold a revitalization next weekend, if you have not had a revitalization and would like to see what it looks like it will be at Post 202 in Columbia come over and take a look at the process. Revitalizations work.

Timely submission's is key to meet goals, keep doing what you are doing. We can get there if we try, if there is anything that you want me to do, I am willing to help.

The Department is in 21<sup>st</sup> place with the Organization. Delegate Strength is based on end of June's membership report.

Does anyone have any questions for me?

Alex Slocum 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander I would like to make a motion that The American Legion Department of Missouri reduce their dues by \$5.00 for the period of March 15 to April 14, 2023, for new and renewal members.

Motion second by Mark Reed – 17<sup>th</sup> District Commander

Alex Slocum – 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander When I was a post commander/adjutant 2010-2013 National reduced the per capita for a short period of 2 weeks around Veterans Day. What are we looking for money or membership?

Kerry Boardman Alt NEC – I hate to start a precedence that reducing dues and then all members will wait until April when its \$5.00 cheaper you are never going to get your numbers.

Alex Slocum – 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander - just this year not every year.

Mark Clark – Senior Vice Commander – I think Kerry Boardman's perspective is that if we do it this year, we will have to do each year from now on.

Michele Batliner 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander – going with Alex on this she has heard that the dues are too high, and a lot of the older members are not renewing because they do not have the funds to renew.

Brian Sapp Zone 1 Vice Commander – If people are complaining that dues are too high drop the \$5.00 at the post level. Every meeting we have it always comes down to budget issues.

Michele Batliner 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander– Alex, are you saying your district or across the board with the Department.

Charles Goodin Past Department Commander– It always has been a rule with the Legion to never discount dues.

Vice Commander Mark Clark: All those in favor, signify with an aye. No Response.

Commander Noonan: Any opposed? All : Nay

COMMANDER Noonan: Motion failed.

Vice Commander Mark Clark – Any questions for me?

Edward Weaverling 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander– Having National at a revitalization, transfers are done immediately by National Personnel.

Vice Commander Mark Clark – I am interested to see how the Zone Revitalization works; it is a first of its kind.

Brian Sapp – Zone 1 Vice Commander - I have been talking with all of the district commanders and the post commanders from all of the districts. Nick Arnett from National will be here with the lists and his computer and he will be able to do the transfers immediately.

Commander Noonan: Any unfinished business that we need to bring before this meeting? No response

Any new Business

Jerome Goolsby Historian– I would like that \$250.00 be moved from the History book account to the Historian Travel account.

Terry Lanning Finance Committee Chairman– DEC has to approve it; I do not have a problem with that.

Brian Sapp Zone 1 Vice Commander Motions

Norman Goforth – 1<sup>st</sup> District Commander - 2nds

Commander Noonan: All those in favor, signify with an aye. ALL: Aye.

Commander Noonan: Any opposed? (No response.)

COMMANDER Noonan: Motion passes.

Finance Report – John Buckwalter Finance Officer

Just a couple of quick notes, you have a couple of extra financial reports than what you normally see in your packets, you have a year end balance sheet as of 7/31/2022, so that is the year-end report.

The audit has been completed; the three reports reflect the adjustments that were recommended. The taxes have been completed and will be sent in on Friday. We do not owe any money.

At the fall conference, upon the advice the financial advisor, we closed both of the certificates of deposits and we have invested in treasury bills. Which will provide a greater return.

Foundation Report – David Voyles – Past Department Commander

Last October the foundation had \$913,045.00 and we now have a little over a million dollars. Right now, we are doing pretty good. The goal is to have 1.2 million that way we can donate \$30,000 back into the Department for scholarships.

Lowry Finley Jackson Adjutant – The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee had a surplus and \$9,000 is being donated to the foundation, check was presented to David Voyles and \$2,527.00 will be donated to the WWI Memorial.

David Voyles Past Department Commander – go out to the post and ask them to put an amount into their budget to donate to the foundation. We want to stay private and not public, so we do not have to pay taxes.

Judge Advocate Report – Christine Sapp

No Report

National Executive Committeeman Report – George Scarborough

The Department of Missouri was asked by National to make a donation for the Veterans and Children's Foundation and the goal was set by National, the Department donated \$59,205.29 and we have met our goal with that you should be proud that the Department of Missouri is doing their part, The department is 1 of 10 departments that has made their goal.

A letter was read from the National Commander by NEC-man Scarborough.

Lincoln Pilgrimage Feb 11 & 12 2023 along with several other Departments in the area.

National Washington Conference is scheduled for February 26 – March 1, 2023, and we will have representatives there from the legislative commission, Aero-Space Committee, National Security Council, National Cemetery committee. Call – in's should have been received by now.

National Spring Meetings May 8-11 be advised spring meeting call in letters will be emailed.

Lastly, I urge you to conduct Buddy Checks on Legion's Birthday March 15<sup>th</sup> and Veterans Day.

In your packet you will find Resolution XX which is Veterans Affairs – Home Loan Guarantee – National is looking for a way to extend the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 to include eligibility of the veteran's dependent spouse or child or the surviving spouse and child.

George Scarborough NECman - Motions

Kerry Boardman -Alt NECman - 2nds

Commander Noonan -Motion has been Made and Seconded

Commander Noonan: All those in favor, signify with an aye. ALL: Aye.

Commander Noonan: Any opposed? (No response.)

COMMANDER Noonan: Motion passes.

Legislative Report – Charles Goodin – Past Department Commander

Pact Act – Contacts to senators and representatives 34,000 email. The Pact Act has passed.

Sign up for Legion Alerts from the National Legislative Webpage.

We will be going to the hill during the Washington Conference on 2/28 to see our senators and representatives.

Guard and Reserve GI Bill – If honorable discharge you are eligible.

MAVO Priorities

Tell senator/representatives to make all short comings to preserve the Veterans Commission with General Revenue. The only source of income that the Missouri Veterans Commission receives comes from the VA.

Honoring our Veterans – allows legal gaming machines into our clubs. Only money from gaming is from the boats – by admissions, the majority of the money from the machines in the rest stops or anywhere else goes to education.

Edward Weaverling – 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander – When you sign up for the National Legislative site – you get emails back the system knows who your senator and representatives are. The Mental Health website has a free suicide prevention presentation where they will come to the post and make a 90-minute presentation.

American Legion Riders Report – ALR Director Brian Sapp

We had our ALR spring meeting this morning. At the fall meetings it was voted on to suspend several chapters for not following the constitution and bylaws. There were four voted to be revoked, I will notify the Post Commanders to let them know. Additionally, there were seven more suspended.

Legacy Ride is June 23 – 25 in the Branson area, we are teaming up with the Department of Arkansas Legion Riders on Saturday. All three nights will be at the same hotel so the riders will not have to pack up their stuff each day and go to a different hotel.

It was approved at the Fall Meeting that the ALR Chapter will carry their own liability insurance for the legacy ride.

Boys State Report – Kerry Boardman – Alt NEC

Boys State this year is the last week in June and will end on July 1.

Volunteers are needed.

If you have any questions, give me a call.

Media and Communications Report – John Buckwalter

The criteria and application for Toot Our Horn award have been published on the website as well as the monthly mailing. The 2023 Newsletter competition has been updated and there is one change this year we dropped the digital category so we are back to the original categories based on the size of the post, if your newsletters are submitted in digital form, that is fine they will just be judged with the paper ones.

For those of you who are used to getting the American Legion Dispatch in the mail once a month, if you are missing it, that is because it has become online only. The mailing of the Dispatch ended in December.

The 2023 scholarship applications have been available since the fall. The deadline is April 20. Forms are available online. Talk to members of your post especially younger members and encourage them to apply for the Commanders scholarship, we have two \$1000.00 scholarships each year for people who are prior service. There is no need to be a member of the Legion, but it probably helps.

Scouting Report – Jerome Goolsby

BSA Committee is meeting March 3 to pick the eagle scout of the year for 2023. The deadline for submissions is March 1 and I hope we get some because last year was a disaster, because we did not get any.

I know that the information is out. I asked that the District Commanders go to their local newspapers to have it published. We send information to the major newspapers.

Please encourage the post in your district to report all of the work with BSA on their CPR for National. This information is used for an end of year report that is filed with National and it used to award the Belgrano trophy each year. We won this award last year and we have won it the last four of the 6 years.

Any questions about how to report BSA on the CPR, please contact me and I will tell you how to put it on the CPR correctly.

Brian Sapp – Zone 1 Vice Commander - Does the documentation go out by email; do you do that for all of the councils?

Jerome Goolsby – BSA Committee Chair – No, the hardcopies are sent to the councils.

Brian Sapp – Zone 1 Vice Commander - You may want to start sending it out by email also.

Baseball Report – Russ Klicker/David Voyles

We are representing Tom Rhoads who could not make it here today. I want to start off with Baseball being a gateway to membership, baseball is a great way to bring in new members.

5 years ago, we had 150 baseball teams in Missouri, last year we had maybe seventy-three.

So, we looked into the business plans these clubs, travel teams do to get players, we figure we are going have to match or do things better than what they are doing. The baseball program has been operating as independent teams within each post, we need to have some unity across the state. We came to the realization that for an example we developed about 1300 ball players, so part of what we are doing is reestablishing all of our relationships with the high schools and colleges.

We have a business plan that we have put together that includes a game at Busch Stadium. We have met with the Cardinal front office a couple of times, and they are really big on helping veterans and The American Legion. This fall one of the things we are doing we are going to recognize All Stars at the District Level and identify the best players in the state. We are going to put the top players on the field at Busch Stadium on August 6 the Cardinals play at 1:00 when that game is over, we are taking the field and we have challenged Illinois. To do that we have to sell tickets, they are giving us tickets at the face value of \$17.00. We are adding some fundraiser onto that we are going to sell two tickets for \$30.00. They are giving us eight hundred (800) tickets and we are going sell across the state. I am hoping I can get your support from your posts across the state to sell these tickets.

The purpose of doing this is it will bring American Legion Baseball back into the spotlight. We have Steve Clark from National supporting us; we have had Ohio contact us and want to know what we are doing, this is a national problem, but I think we have our fingers on the solution to this. At least its going to help us bounce back and as we do this Adjutant Lowry is involved and she is going to be attending the next meeting with the Cardinals. Possibly have a membership drive as we are doing this.



Cary Kellett – Past Department Commander – Does the price of the ticket include the Cardinal game also?

David Voyles – Past Department Commander - Yes, it also includes a hot dog and a coke.

Michele Batliner 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander - Where does the \$17.00 go?

David Voyles – Past Department Commander - That will go back to the Cardinals.

Michele Batliner – 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander - I have one more question, you said there were eight hundred (800) tickets allotted.

David Voyles – Past Department Commander - Yes, 800 for Missouri and 800 for Illinois

Art Wilson – Past Department Commander - What was the date for that again?

David Voyles – Past Department Commander - Sunday August 6, 2023

Lowry Finley-Jackson – Adjutant - We are going to have a couple of booths out for membership purposes with the Department of Illinois. We are going to need volunteers and having a service officer's out there as well in case someone needs help with any issues.

David Voyles – Past Department Commander - Any money that we spend is not department money, it is baseball funds.

Russ Klicker – Baseball Commission Member - Our goal is to turn around Baseball and grow American Legion Membership.

David Voyles – Past Department Commander - Lowry is working on getting the National Commander to be at the game.

Russ Klicker Baseball Commission Member - I have one more thing, the Cardinals have made August 6, American Legion Day at the Ballpark. And they are going to be advertising that, we are working with them to get some American Legion representation on the field.

Michele Batliner – 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander - How is the information concerning the game going to be sent out? Information will be sent to Adjutant Lowry, and she will send it out via email.

Past Post Commanders Club – Kerry Boardman - There will be a golf tournament at Convention this summer. July 13, 2023, Rivercup Golf Club in Springfield. We need participation, golfers, hole sponsors. The money from the golf tournament goes to the Commanders fund.

Commander Noonan – Senior Vice Commander wants to make an announcement.

Mark Clark – Senior Vice Commander - I just want to remind everyone that the application for the National American Legion College needs to be to the Department by the end of June so that we can select our participant at the Convention in July. Lowry has to have all of that to National by July 31.

Legion college will be held November 12-17, 2023, at the National Headquarters.

Marvin Harper – Department Chaplain - I have a question, does a person have to be in office before they apply for Legion College. There is a misunderstanding that people have to be in an office to go to Legion College.

Mark Clark – Senior Vice Commander - No, they do not have to be in an office.

Commander Noonan - Are there any other announcement or any committee chairmen that would like to make a report?

George Scarborough -NECman

Distinguished Service Award Committee received no nominees for the award. We did not receive any meritorious nominees. We will not be presenting that award at the convention.

A letter for the upcoming National Commander went out in January for donations to help defray the costs of the leading candidate for National Commander and I want to commend this Department on your contributions to the leading candidate for National Commander, we have topped \$2200.00 and we will take that donation as well as the list of persons who made the contributions to the leading candidate Daniel Seehafer at the Washington Conference coming up at the end of the month. I am exceedingly proud to represent this Department and you.

Commander Noonan – The following positions on the Oratorical Committee expire this year, Larry Dufour and Dave Shaffer. Chairman Benton has requested that Larry Dufour and Dave Shaffer be reappointed. Bob Ravenscraft has resigned from the committee and Judge Benton has requested that Christine Sapp be appointed to that position.

Jerome Goolsby – Historian – Motions

Mark Clark – Senior Vice Commander – 2nds.

Commander Noonan – we need to ask Christine if she is okay with this?

Christine Sapp – Judge Advocate – I am okay with this.

Commander Noonan: All those in favor, signify with an aye. ALL: Aye.

Commander Noonan: Any opposed? (No response.)

COMMANDER Noonan: Motion passes.

Commander Noonan – I have one more thing, Registration for the Department Convention, I propose to increase the fee from \$5.00 to \$10.00.

Marvin Harper – Chaplain – Motions

Brian Sapp – Zone 1 Vice Commander – 2nds

Michele Batliner – Dist 5 Commander - What does this go toward?

Lowry Finley-Jackson-Adjutant - This goes towards the cost of the materials for the badges.

Commander Noonan: All those in favor, signify with an aye. ALL: Aye.

Commander Noonan: Any opposed? (No response.)

COMMANDER Noonan: Motion passes.

Lowry Finley – Jackson – Adjutant

You have information in your packets about the Department Convention, please be aware of the room cutoff date of June 12, 2023. I cannot guarantee you the price of your room at the contracted rate after this date.

The link will open on Tuesday for online registration, or you can do it by telephone.

National Convention information should be out by the end of the month.

Newspaper submissions are due by March 3<sup>rd</sup>. The newspaper that is coming out this time will be an online edition, the next one will be a paper edition.

CPR's – Start talking up CPR's we want to have 100% this year, they are due to the Department June 15<sup>th</sup> and due to National on July 1.

Cadet Patrol – Will not have Cadet Patrol this year, the Highway Patrol is short staffed this year and this is the reason we are not having it. We will have it next year. Chairman for Cadet Patrol is Frankie Adams, start talking it up.

Cary Kellett – Past Department Commander - Monthly mailing, is there anyway you can send that out at the beginning of the month?

Lowry Finley – Jackson – Adjutant - We will try to have the monthly mailing on the website by the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Commander Noonan – anyone else have anything?

Jerome Goolsby, Department Historian: I would like to motion that mileage be paid upon submission of the appropriate signed paperwork to department adjutant's office.

Brian Sapp, Zone 1 Vice Commander: Seconds the motion.

Commander Noonan: Any further discussion

Commander Noonan: All those in favor, signify with an aye. ALL: Aye.

Commander Noonan: Any opposed? (No response.)

Commander Noonan: Motion passed.

Commander Noonan: Colors of our country being in their proper place, we will render the right-hand salute. Two.

Commander Noonan: Please rise and uncover and Chaplain Marvin Harper will now offer the benediction.

Prayer said.

Meeting adjourned 2:51 pm.

Respectively Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Theresa Boss".

Theresa Boss, recording Secretary

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lowry Finley-Jackson".

Lowry Finley-Jackson, Department Adjutant