

**ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION KINGSWAY BRANCH #175**  
**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING**  
**TUESDAY 22 JULY 2025**

The President opened the meeting by ritual at 6:39 p.m.

The meeting was chaired by Comrade Torrie

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** R. Etmanski, C. Wills, J. Hyshka, W. Hyshka, O'Brien, Walsh, Deugau, Werner, Foote, Torrie, Criss, Wiebe, Luce, Wills R.

**Excused:** Leben, Matheson,

**Absent:**

**LAST POST**

|                   |                 |             |            |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| Earl Bridges      | Ordinary member | Jun 08 2025 | 91 yrs old |
| Margaret Chalmers | Associate       | Jun 22 2025 | 99 yrs old |

**MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA:**

Motion to accept the agenda as made by Comrade Wills  
Seconded by Comrade Foote

**CARRIED**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**TREASURER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORTS:**

No report

**WAYS & MEANS:** Comrade Matheson

Ways & Means Report

1. 50/50 Raffle – Total tickets sold \$17,225.00. We sold lots at the Canada Day Event. Thanks to Bill for being our roving salesperson!
2. Shared folder: I created a shared folder in Microsoft 365 for storage of documents/information that would be handy for all of us to have access to. So far I have only uploaded the executive contact list but having it stored here will make it easy to update as needed. No one is obligated to use this shared folder but for those of us who prefer to access some of the information remotely, please add a folder for your committee/responsibilities. I will also begin updating a 365 calendar with event info weekly using the events binder once I return from vacation.

3. City of Edmonton Funding: I have had a couple of conversations with Councillor Paquette's senior advisor regarding the building. Councillor Paquette and his staff are quite keen to try and help the Kingsway Legion stay in its current location. I have looked through the available city grants and there a couple that apply to us and the councillor's office will work with us to ensure we receive approval. However, the grants are closed to applications for 2025. The smaller grant that is used for ceremonies and festivals, so potentially useful for Remembrance Day, may open back up in the next fiscal quarter if there are unspent funds.
  - a. I have a phone meeting with the grant administration team tomorrow morning, 23 July 25, so may have more info then.
  - b. I have opened a Kingsway Legion Grant Portal account (required for all grant applications) and have mailed a copy of our certificate of incorporation to the city.
4. Province of Alberta Funding: The province has two related grants we can apply for. The Community Facility Enhancement Program Large - \$125,000 to \$1 million, and the Community Enhancement Program Small – up to \$125,000. Application window is closed on the Large grant (but it can be looked at for next year) but there is an application window for the Small with a 15 Sept deadline. These are matching grants, the funds can be matched through cash, other grant monies, donated labour, donated materials. I propose that by **5 Aug 25** we:
  - a. Identify the most pressing projects with cost estimates. (If there are already quotes for some of the projects please send them to me. If there are not, I volunteer to contact contractors for quotes).
  - b. Get an update on the budget with monies not yet spent or committed identified.
  - c. Identify what donated labour we can use towards the matching funds.
  - d. Propose to the membership that donations to the Legion for necessary maintenance and to meet these matching requirements would be very much appreciated?
  - e. Once I have points a. and b. sent to me, I will reach out to Home Depot and Rona to see what materials they may be willing to donate (Home Depot for sure has a program for non-profits).
5. Other suggestions to increase profits etc.:
  - a. Create a position on the executive (maybe using the vacant 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President position), for an Event Planner/Sales position. This could take some pressure off Flo to focus on the other aspects of Manager/Admin/Staff Supervisor/All-round person who takes care of us. It will also give us someone who do active sales work to increase rental revenue. My suggestion for this role is Cheryl Taylor who is an Event Planner with the City of Edmonton and has a ton of experience in this area.
  - b. Have we considered holding the Friday and Saturday dances in the Maple Leaf or Wild Rose rooms when they are available instead of the Canteen? If this is a shift that can be considered, this will leave the Canteen open to be promoted as a local pub/hangout where people can drop in for food and drink, play pool etc. I can use some of my contacts at the base/MFRC/Public Affairs/Messes to promote it as such. The bands and entry fee do discourage a casual drop-in. We could also consider a

price increase on food and drinks in the canteen with this change. Prices for food and drinks for the dances could remain the same given that there is an entry fee.

c. Suggested to me by Cheryl Taylor:

- i. Investigating whether local businesses would be interested in purchasing a small ad space on our monthly newsletter.
- ii. In house casino night fundraisers (Entertainment committee to find prices for casino equipment rentals etc. Once executive agrees, I will contact ALGC regarding any additional licensing requirements).

**For consideration of the Executive** – Realizing that I didn't start in this role in time to secure funding for this year, I wonder if making a decision on selling the building could be postponed for a time to see if we can secure enough funding to get things back on track? Or can we add a third option to the vote at the special meeting next week to this effect?

Very sorry I am not there in person to discuss!

Comrade J. Hyshka so moves Comrade Matheson's report

Seconded by Comrade W. Hyshka

**CARRIED**

**MEMBERSHIP:** Comrade C. Wills

**MEMBERSHIP:** Comrade C. Wills reported that we have 1035 members for 2025 in good standing.

| Ordinary | Associate | Affiliate | Life Members |
|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| 389      | 402       | 219       | 25           |

I so move my report.

Seconded by Comrade Criss

**CARRIED**

**NEW MEMBERS:** Comrade C. Wills

10 New Applications   2 Transfers   0 Reinstatement

**New Members**

| Ordinary                 | Associate            | Affiliate           |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Facey, David             | Montgomery, Robert K | Arseneau, Joseph P. |
| Powell, Kathleen         | Stewart, Janet       | Arnold, Lyle        |
| Sears, Margaret (Maggie) | Stewart, Wesley      | Strachan, Anita R.  |
|                          | Woolgar, Kim Arthur  |                     |

## Transfer

| Ordinary                                   | Associate | Affiliate |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Keogh, Stephen P<br>Strathcona Br 150      |           |           |
| Stuckless, Dennis L.<br>Pasadena NL Br 068 |           |           |

## Reinstatements – 0

| Ordinary | Associate | Affiliate |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
|          |           |           |
|          |           |           |

For a total of 12

I so move my report.

Seconded by Comrade Wiebe

**CARRIED**

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Comrade

No report

## **SPORTS:** Comrade W. Hyshka

No report

Comrade Etmanski – drop in darts on Thursday night is done.

## **BUILDING & GROUNDS:** Comrade Torrie

Just routine maintenance and maintaining the lawn. If you have looked over to the backyard you will see that the City has rearranged the ditch and looks like they are continuing the asphalt pedestrian cycle path on the backslope of the ditch up against our fence.

Nordic was in last week and put all new filters on the roof and we have approved them to order the parts for the expansion tank on the boiler system.

I so move my report.

Seconded by Comrade W. Hyshka

**CARRIED**

**HISTORIAN:** Comrade Etmanski

We will start probably next month on the main display for Remembrance Day. We will get our medals and our mannequins and stuff that we were planning on setting up at that time.

I so move my report.

Seconded by Comrade O'Brien

**CARRIED**

**SICK & VISTING:** Comrade Wiebe

No report

**ENTERTAINMENT & SPECIAL EVENTS:** Comrade Luce

No written report provided

**WEEKLY DANCES:** Comrade O'Brien

No report

**POPPY:**

For those who do not know, Strathcona Legion is no longer a part of the Greater Edmonton Poppy Fund. They have opted to go out on their own and they have now received approval from Command.

**SERVICE OFFICER'S REPORT:** Comrade Walsh

I completed two requests for Poppy Fund assistance and referred three individuals to the Command Service Officer for additional support. Additionally, I provided three veterans with information regarding the documentation required by Veterans Affairs.

I was also interviewed by Dr. Cheryl Forchuk of Lawson Research Institute for a research project commissioned by the Royal Canadian National Command. This project focuses on Canadian Women Veterans experiencing homelessness, aiming to explore their current situation and develop guidelines for improved support.

I so move my report.

Seconded by Comrade C. Wills

**CARRIED**

**Motion by: Comrade Walsh** – to approve this request for Veteran's Assistance for Walmart cards for a total of \$400.00

**Seconded by:** Comrade W. Hyshka

**CARRIED**

**Motion by: Comrade Walsh** – to approve this request for Veteran’s Assistance for a total of \$791.39 for medical/dental

**Seconded by:** Comrade C. Wills

**CARRIED**

**HONOURS & AWARDS:** Comrade Torrie

No report

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Comrade J. Hyshka –

No report

**CADET LIAISON REPORTS:** Comrade Criss

No report

**KIPNES:** Comrade Deugau

No report

**SGT-AT-ARMS:** Comrade Foote

The Honour Guard will participate in a Graveside Ceremony at Beachmont on 14 Aug 2025 at 1430 hrs for Mr Sprague .

I so move my report.

Seconded by Comrade C. Wills

**CARRIED**

**MANAGER’S REPORT:** Flo Werner

I just have some information, we have paid all the invoices from January to April. We still have Shaw. I just found out that Shaw hasn’t been paid because it was on Ron’s Branch credit card. We still owe Nordic and \$10,000 to EPCOR. We now need to pay for the food invoices that we have been charged.

Comrade W. Hyshka so moves the Manager’s report.

Seconded by Comrade Criss

**CARRIED**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. \$4,000.00 Bursary – no word about this bursary

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Motion by: Comrade R. Etmanski** – to approve this bursary of a grandchild of a veteran from the Greater Edmonton Poppy Fund for a total of \$2,000.00 for their continued

education towards their Bachelors Degree in Secondary Education - Section 402(vi)(a) of the Poppy Manual

**Seconded by:** Comrade W. Hyshka

**CARRIED**

2. **Motion by: Comrade R. Etmanski** – to approve this bursary of a grandchild of a veteran from the Greater Edmonton Poppy Fund for a total of \$2,000.00 for their continued education towards their Science Degree for medical school - Section 402(vi)(a) of the Poppy Manual

**Seconded by:** Comrade W. Hyshka

**CARRIED**

3. **Special Meeting Criteria – Comrade R. Wills**

Visibility Committee Report is attached.

**COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF KINGSWAY LEGION BRANCH NO. 175**

Comrade Walsh – I will be on vacation from August 9 to August 29, 2025

Padre Wiebe – I have been invited to by the Korea Vets Association to participate in their function that they have at the Legislature on July 27<sup>th</sup>.

The President closed the meeting by ritual.

Motion for adjournment made by Comrade Criss

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Next meeting Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 6:30 pm

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <br>Rick Etmanski<br>President<br>Kingsway Branch #175 | <br>Jackie Hyshka<br>Executive Secretary<br>Kingsway Branch #175 |
|---|--|



**ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION  
KINGSWAY BRANCH 175  
ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
THE FUTURE OF KINGSWAY LEGION (JULY 2025)**



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### Kingsway Legion Visibility Committee Mission

At the March 18, 2025, meeting the Executive Committee of Royal Canadian Legion Kingsway Branch # 175 recognized the need to assess the viability of the Branch to remain open in its current location.

An 'ad-hoc' Kingsway Legion Visibility Committee was formed consisting of President Comrade Rick Etmanski, Comrades Ron Wills, and Comrade Ron Charlet.

The committee is fact finding only and has been asked to present their finding to the Executive Committee by September 31, 2025.

The Kingsway Legion Visibility Committee will be discharged on completion of the presentation of their report.

After a brief review of the Branch's status, the committee felt there were three main options to consider;

Continue operating like we currently are.

Selling the building and moving to a smaller location

Leasing the west wing of the building

## Preamble

The Kingsway Legion Branch #175, like many community organizations, faces ongoing challenges concerning its financial sustainability and optimal utilization of its facilities. The recent formation of the Kingsway Legion Visibility Committee underscores a proactive approach to assess the viability of the Branch maintaining its current location or exploring alternative options. The committee's task, which is primarily fact-finding, culminates in recommendations aimed at ensuring the longevity and efficiency of the organization.

## Royal Canadian Legion History

Membership in The Royal Canadian Legion was originally restricted to ex-service members of Canada's Armed Forces and Merchant Navy. Today, that is no longer true, however, the reputation is still out there. The organization is now open to members of the public who support the aims and objects of The Royal Canadian Legion (RCL). This was an important decision as it enabled the RLC to increase its membership by over 20%.

## Kingsway Legion Mission

The Royal Canadian Legion, Kingsway Branch #175 is to:

- Serve Veterans, including serving military and RCMP members and their families, to promote Remembrance, and to serve our communities and our country.
- Raise the awareness throughout Edmonton and surrounding area that our facility is available to all people, including non-members.
- Provide an exceptional venue for both Branch league and non-league sports events including pool, shuffleboard, darts, crib, euchre, canasta, among others.
- Provide a variety of events and live entertainment for the enjoyment of our members.

## Kingsway Branch History

### Kingsway Legion Opens its Doors

The RCL, Kingsway Branch 175, was initially established on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1946, and located at 10425 Kingsway Avenue until 2010. That location had a good client pool of Business Professionals and great transportation connections for members without vehicles.

### Expropriation of Property - 2008

In January of 2008 our property was expropriated by the City of Edmonton to make way for the LRT expansion.

### Londonderry Mall 2010 – 2012

In 2010 the Branch moved into a retail space at Londonderry Mall while construction for our new building was underway.

This created some hardship for the branch as the space was small resulting in a limited amount of events we could hold.

In addition, the relocation from Kingsway Ave to Londonderry Mall resulted in a membership drop of approximately 27%.

### Present Location 2012 – Present

On November 11, 2012, Kingsway Legion official opened our new building at 14339-50 St.

Since its relocation, the Branch has invested in a sizeable, multi-purpose building capable of hosting numerous events. Despite its advantages, the organization faces financial strain, exacerbated by recent events such as COVID-19, rising operational costs, and stagnant membership levels. While the Branch's physical assets are substantial, the revenue generated from activities, rentals, and membership dues is insufficient to cover total operating expenses estimated at approximately \$71,400 monthly.

The committee feels that the Branch is strategically situated in North East Edmonton that allows it to cater to the various needs of our clientele. With easy access off Anthony Henday Drive, our 225 car park lends itself as a prominent feature to our rental venues. Our rooms appear to be the right size for most events. The price point for renting our halls is slightly less than other halls in our area. We offer more amenities than other including full audio & video service and partial to full catering services. The other competition is the Community Halls, which require the client to clean up after the event and caterers have to be brought in.

## Contributing Factors to Current Financial Status

### COVID 19

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the Branch's income, leading to reliance on federal and provincial aid, including interest-free loans and subsidies. However, fixed costs like taxes, mortgage payments (currently around \$16,000/month), utilities, building maintenance, and the line of credit have remained substantial hurdles. For example, annual utility costs have increased markedly, and maintenance expenses are projected to rise due to infrastructure aging.

With the Branch closed with little or no income coming in. We reached out to the federal and provincial governments for financial support. We took advantage of the interest free loan of \$60,000 offered by the federal Government Assistance Program.



We were able to pay off our loan on time for which the government permitted us to keep \$20,000. In addition, we were able to qualify for the and the Wage Subsidy & Rent Subsidy and received \$130,949 and \$196,596 respectively. We received an operating grant of \$15,000 from the provincial under the Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant Program.

The Restrictions Exemption Program ended on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, thus allowing us to fully reopen.

### City Taxes

Taxes for our original building averaged \$7,388 annually.

During our temporary stay at Londonderry Mall we were not required to pay taxes.

Prior to 2021, our taxes were based on a Property Use Assessment Class Status 100% Social/cultural community facility Non-residential Legions/Veterans/Allied Forces Exempt from All Levies 63.99% **Taxable 36.01%** or \$78,976

In 2021, AGLC reassessed the building floor plan and amended the square footage of our liquor license space. As a result we were granted a reduction from 33% to 46% for our city taxes. The new rate is Property Use Assessment Class Status 100% Social/cultural community facility Non-residential Legions/Veterans/Allied Forces Exempt from All Levies 83.29% **Taxable 16.71%** or \$36,362

We were under the understanding we could retroactively get some of our overtaxed money back. The AB Municipal Act is setup to avoid that 'risk' for municipalities. However, the city reimbursed the branch \$1,000 (the max allowed) as a tax credit.

Due to the lack of funds during COVID the Branch opted to defer our tax payments. By February 2022 we owed \$74,474 in back taxes and \$45,710 in arrears penalties. This resulted in the city placing on levy on our property with the Alberta Land Titles Office.

On June 7, 2022, members of the executive approach Edmonton City Council and requested a "forgiveness of debt" for the outstanding amount. The council partly approved our request by canceling \$48,040.96 of arrears and associated penalties leaving us owing the taxation amount of \$74,474. This was the amount we owed for our current year's taxes as well as the payments we were forced to deferred during Covid 19.

As of July 2025, the amount the city collects in taxes is \$3,326 monthly or \$39,919 annually.

### Mortgage

In October 1984, Kingsway Legion paid off the mortgage for the old location at 10425 Kingsway Avenue NW.

With the purchase of new building, we once again assumed a mortgage. The original amount of the mortgage was for \$1,789,521 with Servus Credit Union. Our monthly payments consisted of \$14,850 interest and principal.

In June of 2023 we changed banks to BMO and renewed our mortgage in the amount \$1,520,000. The new payment structure is \$16,000 principal and interest.

As of July 15, 2025, our outstanding mortgage balance is \$1,408,534

### Line of Credit

When transferring to BMO we had a line of credit with Servus in the amount of \$80,000. This amount was added to the mortgage.

During the past few years, we have continually struggled to pay off the line of credit. On three occasions we have paid off the line of credit only to find ourselves maxing it out again.

As of July 15, 2025, the Line of Credit we currently owe is \$18,447.

### Utilities

In the past few years we have seen an increase in our utility fees.

| Year | 2025          | 2024           | 2023           | 2022           | 2021          | 2020           | 2019           |
|------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| \$   | <b>52,201</b> | <b>112,784</b> | <b>148,333</b> | <b>113,408</b> | <b>93,140</b> | <b>107,891</b> | <b>103,484</b> |

We forecast an annual increase of 10% in the operation of the building.

### Building Maintenance

As our building matures the cost of upkeep increases. Many of our infrastructure are reaching the "End of Life" and requires more attention to maintain. The majority of our repair costs include:

The Heating System

The Air Conditioning System

The Refrigerating equipment in the kitchen (including the main ice machine)

| Year | 2025   | 2024    | 2023   | 2022   | 2021   | 2020   | 2019   |
|------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| \$   | 55,345 | 107,639 | 80,482 | 90,481 | 45,995 | 55,000 | 42,447 |

We forecast an annual increase of 15% in the maintaining the building.

## Membership

Declining membership, from 1,334 to approximately 1,034 members, with only a fraction actively contributing, further hampers revenue streams. Attendance figures, while averaging nearly 120 visitors daily, have not grown sufficiently to support financial stability, especially considering the reduction in per-visit spend over recent years.

## Attendance

Our annual attendance is about 36,880 people.

Each person that walks into the canteen spends approx. \$5.13 on drinks. In 2018 we were averaging \$8.35 on drinks, a drop of \$3.22 per ticket

Each person also spent an average of \$7.31 on food. In 2018 we were averaging \$6.23 on food, an increase of \$1.08 per ticket

Our Cost Ratio for bottled and alcohol products is 31.6%.

Our Cost for Food Ratio is 31%.

## Fundraising Efforts

The Branch continues to received funds from fundraisers, donations, and grants which are all very helpful but seldom reliable, timely, or sufficient.

On February 17, 2022, we started a Go Fund Me fundraiser, during the event we were able to raise \$215,258. These funds enable us to pay back our taxes and complete much needed repairs to the structure of the building.

We are anticipating a chance to work a Casino in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2026. In the past this event has raised just over \$70,000 for the Branch.

The Branch is currently running a 50/50 Raffle with a goal to raise \$50,000 for the Branch. The funds from this effort will not be available until May 30, 2026 unless all the tickets are sold prior to that date.

As of Jul 15, 2025 we have sold \$16,635 worth of tickets

## Recommendations

Given these circumstances, the committee identified three main options:

1. **Continuing as is** – maintaining current operations at the existing facility. This approach, however, faces ongoing financial deficits unless significant new revenue sources or cost reductions are achieved.
2. **Leasing part of the building** – renovating a section of the property for lease, which could generate additional income to offset expenses.
3. **Selling the building** – disposing of the current property and relocating to a smaller, more manageable, and financially viable site aligned with current operational needs.

The committee's analysis suggests that pursuing property sale and downsizing may be the most sustainable approach. This strategy would reduce fixed costs and allow the Branch to maintain community services without overextending financially. Additionally, leasing part of the existing property could serve as an interim or supplementary revenue source during a transition period.

## Conclusion

The Kingsway Legion Branch #175 plays a vital role in serving veterans and the community. However, current financial pressures threaten its sustainability in its present form. A strategic reassessment, leaning toward property sale and downsizing, appears prudent. Acting swiftly to implement these changes will help mitigate further losses and position the Branch for a resilient future, continuing its mission of service, remembrance, and community engagement.

It is further recommended that whatever the Branch's decides that we move on it as soon as possible to mitigate the continuing losses.