

2ND DEC MEETING

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1 THE AMERICAN LEGION
2 DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA, INC.
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9 REGULAR SESSION

10 2ND DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (DEC) MEETING
11 H&H SHOOTING SPORTS, 400 S. VERMONT AVENUE, SUITE 110
12 OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73108

13 OCTOBER 19, 2024

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1 (Meeting called to order at 1000 hours.)

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All rise. Bobby
3 Stewart's not here today, so I'm going to go ahead and
4 present our opening prayer. Please remove your cover.
5 Remain uncovered through the POW/MIA ceremony. Please
6 bow your head.

7 Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day. Thank
8 you for the members that are here. Thank you for their
9 safe travels, and please look after them as they go home.
10 Look after the men and women that stand in watch to
11 protect your great nation. Look after those men and
12 women that are here that are sick, infirm. Look after
13 our members that have issues that cannot be solved by
14 their daily lives. Let us be an ever-guiding light to
15 these members of our organization and to our country.

16 In your precious son's, Jesus Christ's, name we
17 pray, Amen.

18 COLLECTIVE GROUP: Amen.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Resolution 288,
20 adopted at the 67th National Convention of the American
21 Legion calls for designating an empty POW/MIA chair at
22 all official meetings of our organization.

23 At this time, Curtis, if you would please, there's a
24 flag in front of you. Unfortunately, there's not a
25 chair. Will you please open it up and lay it in front?

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1 Correction. Here comes a chair.

2 (WHEREUPON, the POW/MIA chair cover was placed.
3 Thereafter, the following transpired:)

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Let us be ever
5 vigilant to ensure that those POW/MIAs still missing and
6 unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the
7 United States --

8 At this present time, I would ask for a moment of
9 silence.

10 (WHEREUPON, a moment of silence was observed by
11 all. Thereafter, the following transpired:)

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I would ask that
13 you join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

14 (WHEREUPON, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited
15 by all. Thereafter, the following transpired:)

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Please re-cover.

17 MR. MCNEAL: Commander, might we salute the
18 Colors, sir?

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes, we can.

20 HAND SALUTE. TWO.

21 Thank you, guys. At this time, let's recite the
22 preamble of the Constitution of our American Legion in
23 unison.

24 (WHEREUPON, the preamble of the American Legion
25 Constitution was recited by all. Thereafter, the

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1 following transpired:)

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Please be seated.

3 I apologize if I get a little hoarse. I'm fighting
4 a sinus infection right now.

5 I now declare the second regularly scheduled meeting
6 of the Department Executive Committee for the 2024-2025
7 year convened for whatever business that comes before us.

8 Adjutant, call roll, please.

9 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Commander Hayden
10 Woods.

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Present.

12 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Senior Vice
13 Commander Woody Alexander.

14 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
15 Present.

16 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Vice Commander East
17 Patricia Kerr.

18 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR: Go
19 Army. Beat Navy.

20 (Laughter.)

21 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Was that "present"?

22 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR:
23 Present.

24 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Vice Commander West
25 Shirley May.

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1 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER WEST MAY: Present.

2 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: NEC Committeeman
3 [sic] Charlie O'Leary.

4 DEPARTMENT NECMAN O'LEARY: Present.

5 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Judge Advocate Dale
6 Haynes.

7 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: Present.

8 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Finance Officer Sam
9 McPherson.

10 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Present.

11 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Sergeant-at-Arms Ed
12 Lager. Ed Lager. Ed Lager.

13 District 1A Commander Karen Ritter.

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER RITTER: Present.

15 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 1A DEC
16 Rich Conn.

17 DISTRICT DEC REP CONN: Present.

18 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 1B
19 Commander Karen Cruice.

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Present.

21 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 1B DEC Ron
22 Bunch.

23 DISTRICT DEC REP BUNCH: Present.

24 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 2A
25 Commander Tom Russell.

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correction. Kayla
2 Rector.

3 DISTRICT COMMANDER RECTOR: Present.

4 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 2A DEC Jim
5 Quinn.

6 DISTRICT DEC REP QUINN: Present.

7 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 2B
8 Commander Art Corrales.

9 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Correction. Ken Rose.

10 DISTRICT COMMANDER ROSE: Kenneth Rose.

11 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 2C [sic]
12 DEC Curtis Deer.

13 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: 2C?

14 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Did I read it
15 wrong? 2B, you are. Correct?

16 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Yes. Yes, I'm here.
17 Present.

18 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 3A
19 Commander Garry Pierce.

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER PIERCE: Present.

21 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 3A DEC
22 Robert Chisolm.

23 DISTRICT DEC REP CHISOLM: Present.

24 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 3B DEC --
25 I'm sorry. District 3B Commander Jack Sikes.

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1 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Present.

2 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 3B DEC
3 Amanda Current.

4 DISTRICT DEC REP CURRENT: Present.

5 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 4A
6 Commander John Bloxom.

7 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: District 4A
8 commander is Tom Snodgrass. John Bloxom is the first
9 vice. And John Bloxom is present.

10 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 4A DEC
11 Michael Kerr.

12 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: Present.

13 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 4A [sic]
14 Commander Sequeeta Potter is excused.

15 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: No. There is no
16 4B.

17 PDC MARTIN: 4 is one.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 4 is one entity.

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Point of order on
20 that. That has not been voted on by the membership.

21 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: That was voted on
22 by the membership in their district conference, was voted
23 on by the DEC and approved in the last DEC meeting, sir.

24 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Excuse me. No more
25 interruptions to the roll call.

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1 PDC MARTIN: Point of order. If there's a
2 discussion on who or who is not on the roll, we need to
3 talk about it.

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct.

5 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: We can do it after
6 the roll call is complete.

7 District 4B DEC Brandy Bevers.

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Not present.

9 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 4A [sic]
10 Commander Michael Harris.

11 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: 5A.

12 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Thank you. 5A
13 Commander Michael Harris.

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Present.

15 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 5A DEC
16 Melvin Hopkins.

17 DISTRICT DEC REP HOPKINS: Present.

18 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 4B [sic]
19 Commander James Height.

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER HEIGHT: 5B. Present.

21 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: You know, you think
22 I could read.

23 (Laughter.)

24 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR:
25 It's work in progress.

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1 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: (Laughter.)

2 District 5B DEC Stephen Worley.

3 DISTRICT DEC REP WORLEY: Present.

4 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 6A
5 Commander Grant Brower.

6 DISTRICT COMMANDER BROWER: Present.

7 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 6B --
8 pardon me -- 6A DEC Don Kuntze.

9 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Present.

10 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 6B
11 Commander Jim Rees.

12 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Present.

13 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 6B DEC
14 Larry Watson.

15 DISTRICT DEC REP WATSON: Present.

16 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 7
17 Commander Elmo May.

18 DISTRICT COMMANDER MAY: Present.

19 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 7 DEC Doug
20 Hale.

21 DISTRICT DEC REP HALE: Present.

22 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 8A
23 Commander Joe Kingery is excused.

24 District 8A DEC Tina Kilmer.

25 DISTRICT DEC REP KILMER: Present.

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1 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 8B
2 Commander Wayne Flowers.

3 DISTRICT COMMANDER FLOWERS: Present.

4 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 8B DEC
5 Jack Day.

6 DISTRICT DEC REP DAY: Present.

7 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Non-voting members.
8 Adjutant Rick Redden, I'm here.

9 Alternate NEC Michael Taylor.

10 DEPARTMENT ALTERNATE NECMAN TAYLOR: Present.

11 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Chaplain Bobby
12 Stewart.

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Excused.

14 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Historian Wayne
15 Flowers we know is here.

16 DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN FLOWERS: Present.

17 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Surgeon John Loose.

18 DEPARTMENT SURGEON LOOSE: Present.

19 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Rep to the Vets
20 Commission Brett Martin.

21 DEPARTMENT REP TO OVA MARTIN: Present.

22 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Are there any past
23 department commanders present? If so, please stand and
24 be recognized.

25 PDC KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, Post 353.

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1 PDC O'LEARY: Charlie O'Leary, Post 142, Hominy.

2 PDC TAYLOR: Michal Taylor.

3 PDC QUINN: Jim Quinn, Post 20, Fort Gibson.

4 PDC TAYLOR: Michael Taylor, Post 12,

5 Bethany-Warr Acres.

6 PDC MARTIN: Brett Martin, Post 12, Bethany-Warr

7 Acres.

8 PDC SMITH: Tim Smith, Post 20, Fort Gibson.

9 PDC BLOXOM: John Bloxom, Post 126, Bristow.

10 PDC HARDISON: John Haridson, Post 105,

11 Bartlesville.

12 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: One moment, please.

13 Commander, the roll call is complete. We have 34 of
14 the DEC present, voting members. And I didn't count the
15 number of posts, but I will include it in the record.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I now declare a
17 quorum.

18 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Point of
19 clarification.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes?

21 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Can we put to rest
22 what's going on with 4? The district voted for it. The
23 DEC voted for it. But it never went to the floor of our
24 membership of the American Legion. Where do we stand
25 with 4?

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Whenever you stand
2 to speak and you're being recognized --

3 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Sorry.

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: -- please state
5 your name and your post or your position.

6 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Sorry. Karen Cruice
7 District 1B Commander. I would like some clarification
8 on where we stand with 4 just so we can put it to rest.
9 I know the district voted for it, for it to dissolve into
10 one. The DEC voted for it to dissolve into one. There's
11 question on whether our constitution and by-laws states
12 that it had to go to the floor of our full membership.
13 If we could just get this clarified and put to rest.

14 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: Mike Kerr, DEC 4.

15 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR:
16 Turn it on.

17 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: Mike Kerr, DEC 4. The
18 membership did vote to merge for a three-year trial
19 period. It was brought before this body for a three-year
20 trial period, and that was approved. Until it is
21 finalized, the constitution and by-laws does not have to
22 be updated. In three years, it will go back to the
23 membership. If they wish to still be one entity, then it
24 will come back before this body and then will go in front
25 of the membership for final approval and modification of

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1 the constitution and by-laws according to a resolution
2 that will have to take place at that same time, unless
3 I'm mistaken.

4 DISTRICT FIST VICE BLOXOM: Correct.

5 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: That's what we discussed
6 last time.

7 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: So, as of this time, for
8 three years from the summer convention, 4A and 4B have
9 been merged. Any other questions?

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Any other
11 questions?

12 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: Any other questions?
13 Thank you.

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: (Crosstalk.) Can we
15 have the minutes from that DEC meeting and from the
16 convention available to review?

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Not at this time.

18 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: She needs your name,
19 Jim.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We do have --

21 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B
22 Commander.

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: There was a tape
24 recording of those minutes. We can review those, but
25 it's an audio. It has been transcribed over to a Word

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1 document. The unfortunate problem is that there's a lot
2 of garbled words that -- when you say "ten," it says
3 t-i-n, not the number ten. That's being cleared up. I
4 apologize that has not been given to you yet. But as
5 soon as it is, I will send those out to all of the DEC
6 members as soon as I have them. Even if we're not having
7 a DEC or meeting, you will get them as soon as I get them
8 in my hands and they're clean. I do not want to send
9 them out with errors on there, because if I do, I know
10 what's going to happen, and the fight's going to begin.
11 And I -- we need to -- we're going to talk about this
12 shortly, but we're going to end this fighting.

13 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Commander?

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: It's got to come to
15 a stop.

16 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: May I be
17 recognized?

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Stand to be
19 recognized.

20 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Steve Thomas,
21 Detachment Commander, SAL. Not only the DEC, sir, but as
22 a non-voting member, if I can get that as well for the
23 detachment as we had business that was part of those
24 minutes for us to separate our bank accounts, I would
25 appreciate it. Thank you, sir.

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1 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: Dale Haynes,
2 Judge Advocate, Post 301. I'm going to address two
3 issues. First of all, I think those minutes was in DEC
4 4, if I'm not mistaken, not 5. They are on the website,
5 but I will send them to you, Mr. Rees. If anybody else
6 wants them, give me a call and I'll send them to you
7 also, because we do have the minutes. And I do think
8 they were accurately described.

9 Second of all, point of clarification for those of
10 you who may have seen the actual minutes. The Sons and
11 the Riders are not members of the DEC. That will require
12 a change to the constitution, as we've pointed out a
13 couple of times.

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So, at this time,
15 I'll entertain a motion to not read the minutes.

16 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: I'll make the motion.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Curtis Deer makes
18 the motion to not read the minutes, currently.

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Second.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Seconded by Mike
21 Harris. Is there any further -- is there any further
22 discussion?

23 (No response.)

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All in favor, say
25 aye.

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1 MAJORITY GROUP: Aye.

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All opposed, same
3 sign.

4 (No response.)

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The ayes have it.

6 At this present time, if you sit on a department
7 committee -- or, correction -- department office, and you
8 have something that you would like to put out, I will
9 take your reports at this time.

10 DEPARTMENT MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEEMAN
11 KERR: Mike Kerr, Media and Communications. Do you want
12 me to face this way or the people?

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Face me --

14 DEPARTMENT MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEEMAN
15 KERR: Okay.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: -- when you address
17 the floor.

18 DEPARTMENT MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEEMAN
19 KERR: So, at National -- on the media and
20 communications, we just got back from National. For the
21 first time, ever, the American Legion will be sponsoring
22 and is the sole veteran service organization to sponsor
23 the Army-Navy Game.

24 Every post with a written address will be sent
25 marketing material and information. It's a big event for

1 the American Legion. They will be hosting and being a
2 sponsor of the Army-Navy Game for the next five years.
3 No other veteran service organization will be able to
4 sponsor the Army-Navy Game for five years. There is an
5 option to continue after that time. All of this stems
6 out from them IndyCar sponsorship that has been very
7 successful.

8 During these events, they will also have VSOs that
9 will go help veterans that are in the stands to up their
10 service connection or be enrolled in the VSO Program.
11 That's a pretty big deal.

12 Revenue for the magazine. If you'll notice, the
13 magazines had a change of paper. They did that change of
14 paper because it was over \$97 a pound. So now it's about
15 \$47 a pound for stock paper. We have a new paper
16 supplier -- it's out of Arkansas -- who has promised a
17 six-year contract. So that should have gone in front of
18 the committee at National, as well. So that part's very
19 good.

20 Media and communications for the department, unless
21 anybody has any questions on National? We've got a
22 new --

23 Each page of that magazine that you see, by the way,
24 is \$24,000. So to put an ad in our magazine is \$24,000.
25 And we're still the number one read magazine in the

1 country, period -- Wall Street Journal, you name it --
2 for age demographic 18 to 46 among males. We're number
3 eight among females. That's a pretty good deal for the
4 National.

5 For the state, marketing [sic] and communications.
6 Our adjutant now has access to the website. He has
7 access to the Facebook page. Our commander has access to
8 both. And I have access to both. So, if you need
9 something on Facebook or the website, please contact one
10 of us three individuals, and we'll be happy to make that
11 happen as soon as we can. I updated it three times this
12 morning, and I'll update it as we go through the day. So
13 marketing is pretty good on that -- or, the media and
14 communications is pretty good on that.

15 Any questions on media and communications for the
16 state?

17 (No response.)

18 DEPARTMENT MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEEMAN
19 KERR: Last question [sic]. Every time I've gone to a
20 district meeting, I've requested information from your
21 posts and your districts to put on our Facebook page and
22 our website of what you're doing in the community. We
23 are the best-kept secret in Oklahoma. We need that
24 information. You need that information on the Facebook
25 page so, as you do your CSRs, you already know what

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1 you've done for the past month, and it helps the 1889
2 newsletter. They can pull from that.

3 So any questions on that?

4 (No response.)

5 DEPARTMENT MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEEMAN

6 KERR: No?

7 Fundraising. I'll let somebody else go, then I'll
8 come back up.

9 VE&E COMMISSION OFFICER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
10 District 1B, VE&E (phonetic) Commission Officer. It's
11 time that if one of your posts was an award winner at
12 summer convention, those packets have to get to fall to
13 be sent in so that my committee, the VE&E, can vote on
14 them. And we don't want Texas to win at all again, so
15 make sure you get it to fall. So talk to your posts if
16 they had a winner at summer convention.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: And if you didn't
18 do anything, make something up.

19 (Laughter.)

20 NATIONAL GUARD LIAISON COMMITTEE CHAIR

21 MATHES-KERR: Patricia Mathes-Kerr, National Guard
22 Liaison Committee Chair. I have reached out to our
23 adjutant general's office and am awaiting a response for
24 us to meet up and to determine what our relationship is
25 going to look like. There is a lot of activity on the

1 Guard side right now with state active duties and
2 deployments.

3 So I wouldn't mind if you guys want to reach out to
4 me, as a membership and leaders within this membership,
5 to let me know what you envision our relationship to look
6 like so that I have a lot of ideas to run with. I know
7 what I have, and I know what my co-chair has, but I would
8 like to know what you have.

9 That ends my committee report for that one. I have
10 one more if you'll let me.

11 Patricia Mathes-Kerr, Women Veterans Committee
12 Chair. I have engaged with the Women Veteran Program
13 manager from the Oklahoma City VA, and she has agreed to
14 come speak at our Women Veteran event during our
15 mid-winter convention. I just need to find some times
16 and give her the times so that she can come.

17 And we do have a lot of big changes. As you know,
18 I'm in the VA. The WVPM just happens to be my boss, so
19 it was easy to get her to say yes. I will be retiring
20 from the VA at the end of this next week, but we will
21 still stay engaged. We have a lot of changes in the
22 women veteran world for ODVA, which is the Oklahoma
23 version, and the big VA. We'll be presenting all of
24 that, and she will be using this opportunity as a focus
25 group.

1 So please pass the word like a bad rumor that we're
2 going to have this and we would like to have the
3 participation so that -- she answers directly to the
4 director and the chief of staff, so she can take all of
5 this straight forward. And they do listen to her. So
6 this is a good thing.

7 Any questions, concerns, feedback for that report?

8 (No response.)

9 WOMEN VETERANS COMMITTEE CHAIR MATHES-KERR:

10 Thank you for your time.

11 OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN MARTIN:

12 Brett Martin, Chairman of the Oklahoma Veterans
13 Commission, also chairman of the Governor's task force on
14 veterans suicide. Monday we did a press conference at
15 the Senate, kicking off our Be the One for Oklahoma
16 campaign. Daniel Seehafer, Past National Commander from
17 last year, gave us the go-ahead and green light on this.
18 It encompasses working with the state of Oklahoma. We
19 have a series of eight round tables coming up this coming
20 year. The first one being hosted at Post 308 with Bob
21 Coffey and company. But it's not just for our American
22 Legion people, it's for everyone in the state of
23 Oklahoma.

24 Very shortly, at the end of November, I have to turn
25 my report in to Congress on the veterans suicide, where

1 we stand. There is a great chance that sometime after
2 the legislation comes back and then it gets voted on that
3 you'll see Be the One on billboards and Be the One
4 stickers on buses and everything else. But the bottom
5 line is it's moving forward.

6 We're working in conjunction with Tony Cross from
7 National, talk to him on a daily routine. He is the Be
8 the One coordinator. And we will have a whole new
9 plethora of Be the One swag to give out here shortly.
10 That's my report, sir. Thank you.

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

12 I want to add on to that. Chloe University has a
13 program that's open that you can go online and take that
14 training for free. As district officers, I would expect
15 that we would all, all, have done that training and
16 passed this on to our posts.

17 This is one of the biggest issues we have that we
18 need to address. We did the GI Bill. We did the Legion
19 Act. We did the PACT Act. Now we need to do what we
20 claim to be doing. Let's save lives by strengthening our
21 country by strengthening these veterans. If you are not
22 part of this Be the One campaign -- or, correction --
23 program, you need to get on board because it's not going
24 away. And I fully endorse that.

25 Thank you, Commander Martin.

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1 Anyone else?

2 DEPARTMENT ALTERNATE NECMAN TAYLOR: Thank you,
3 sir. Michael Taylor, A. NEC. The fall meetings, I was
4 able to sit in at the Convention Commission. A couple of
5 years ago, Oklahoma put a bid in for 2028 to host the
6 national convention. We lost out to Columbus. During
7 those meetings, I was approached, and it was suggested
8 that Oklahoma take another shot at 2032. 2031's kind of
9 crowded. I believe Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and
10 Atlantic City are all bidding next spring for 2031. So
11 the years after that, we had the opportunity to take an
12 offer and possible bid for 2032.

13 It's all in the works. A committee will be created
14 here in the next couple of meetings, and I would be
15 honored to be part of that again. Thank you.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: If you are
17 interested in that, make sure you get with Mike Taylor to
18 get this done. We want this in Oklahoma.

19 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Mike
20 Kerr, Fundraising Chairman. If you'll notice on our
21 website, we've taken off a couple of the issues. The
22 raffle, that was successful, I believe. Pretty
23 successful. We can only do four raffles a year, though.
24 That's all we can do. We're limited statutorily to four.
25 Okay? We still had some stuff on there. However, we're

1 not just sitting laurels because we can. If we just rely
2 on membership, we're not going to make it.

3 So how many people are familiar with the 1919
4 Society, for National?

5 (Hands raised.)

6 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Okay.
7 1919 Society is an initiative by National to seek
8 sponsorship from its members and states. Oklahoma is
9 listed twice for donating \$10,000 twice. We have our two
10 urns, as well, but we're on the board twice. Theirs is a
11 little more extensive. They go up to \$100,000 and above,
12 \$50,000 and above. But why can't we have that in
13 Oklahoma?

14 So you will see something coming up at the winter
15 convention for the Four Pillars of Oklahoma. We're going
16 to have a board. We're going to have sponsorship. It
17 starts at \$500. It goes to \$2,500 then \$5,000 and
18 \$10,000 and above. So you will see that coming out.
19 That will come out with perks similar to the 1919
20 Society. The names will be etched on a memorial wall at
21 our department headquarters. It is moveable. You will
22 be getting a medallion to wear, a lapel pin. You will
23 sit at the commander's table for the summer convention.
24 So you'll see that coming out.

25 We're going to start pushing legacy donations. How

1 many people are familiar with legacy donations?

2 (Hands raised.)

3 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Okay.

4 Legacy donations is when you put in your will a
5 percentage or a dollar amount, after you pass away, for a
6 post or an entity, whoever. National has them, but they
7 don't push it. We never really had that. We're going to
8 start pushing it. I know somebody that have \$5,000 for
9 the department and \$10,000 for their post in their will.
10 Their kids don't need it. Okay? But the department, it
11 does. Because it's about helping the veterans. So the
12 legacy that that person's going to leave is for
13 scholarships for future people that aren't even born yet.

14 Ten thousand dollars creates an annuity, a
15 self-funding, perpetual annuity. Five hundred dollars.
16 That's a pretty good scholarship. That's what I went to
17 school on, and I only got it once. So we're going to
18 start pushing that.

19 Corporate sponsorships at the convention have been
20 kind of slacked. We've engaged an individual who does
21 this all the time, and he is good. He is really good.
22 And he's willing to help us out. So you're going to see,
23 hopefully, some more sponsorships, corporate level, at
24 our conventions.

25 The rifle raffle is finally out. If you do not have

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1 your raffle tickets and posters, there's some in the
2 back. I encourage everyone to grab some and push those.

3 Mr. Bloxom did a great deal by setting us up at
4 Tulsa County fair -- or, Tulsa Fair. We sold a lot of
5 tickets. My post itself sold \$300 worth of tickets. Not
6 too bad. We got some memberships.

7 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: (Indicated.)

8 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Four
9 hundred? Thank you, sir.

10 So that was a great initiative. It helps the
11 Legion. It helps Oklahoma. So he did a great job
12 setting that up. Hopefully, we can expand on that next
13 year. We have not been able to get into Oklahoma City,
14 but we're working that. We want both. Now, it does cost
15 the department -- \$1,200 --

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yeah.

17 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: -- to
18 have that booth. But it's a triple threat because we get
19 raffle tickets sold. We get membership.

20 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: You can't
21 sell raffle tickets at the Oklahoma --

22 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Well, you
23 know, we do raffle tickets.

24 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: You cannot call it
25 a raffle -- (crosstalk.)

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1 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Okay.

2 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: It's a drawing.

3 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: It's a
4 drawing. I apologize.

5 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: You
6 cannot --

7 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: I stand
8 corrected.

9 (Crosstalk.)

10 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: You
11 cannot sell a -- (crosstalk.)

12 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Point of order.

13 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Point of
14 order.

15 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Please come to the mic
16 and be identified for the....

17 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: I
18 apologize. Okay. Sam McPherson, Department Treasurer.
19 Whether you call it a raffle, drawing or whatever, at the
20 Oklahoma State Fair, you cannot charge for it. You can
21 have a drawing, but you cannot charge for it.

22 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: I do
23 apologize. I retract my statement.

24 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: John Bloxom, Post
25 126. At the Tulsa State Fair, you can have a drawing.

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1 You cannot have a raffle. It violates their policy. The
2 contract we signed specifically says we can approve
3 members and we can sell drawing tickets.

4 DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN KERR: Again,
5 Mike Kerr, Fundraising. I retract that statement and
6 apologize.

7 Let's see. In addition, we are working with four
8 companies, that we will get with this membership later,
9 for corporate sponsorships on a higher level.

10 That's all I have for fundraising unless anybody has
11 any additional questions.

12 Constitution and By-Laws. On the constitution and
13 by-laws, we have been working with the JA. If you're on
14 that committee, you're going to start seeing some stuff
15 coming out to you. I apologize we didn't get that list
16 till late, so we had to start e-mailing people. So we're
17 hoping to have the first, probably, telemeeting within
18 three weeks, because I'm gone for two. And we will start
19 holding those meetings about every two to three weeks,
20 depending on what the committee decides upon. There are
21 some issues we would like to tackle.

22 First off, the resolutions have been passed to
23 modify the constitution and by-laws, but, two years ago,
24 those were not incorporated yet. The ones that were
25 passed during the summer have not been incorporated yet,

1 and we need to update the constitution and by-laws for
2 that incorporation.

3 For instance, District 7 merged many, many years
4 ago, but the constitution and by-laws was not updated to
5 reflect that, and that needs to be updated, as well. And
6 he's already mentioned the Sons and Riders. So we're
7 working on all of those. And we'll meet, the
8 Constitution and By-laws Committee, and then I'll get
9 that out as soon as I get back off vacation.

10 Any questions on that?

11 (No response.)

12 DEPARTMENT MARKETING & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

13 COMMITTEEMAN KERR: Lastly, Marketing and Public Affairs.
14 Marketing's been slow because the rifle draw. Okay?
15 That's not just -- again, it's not just about membership.
16 It's about getting out in the public and marketing the
17 American Legion, what we can do for you.

18 Commander Martin is doing a good job at the state
19 level, getting us out there. I think he's --

20 Are you in charge of three states, sir?

21 PDC MARTIN: Yes. And I'll give a report on the
22 liaison for MP&A [sic] in Oklahoma here shortly.

23 DEPARTMENT MARKETING & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

24 COMMITTEEMAN KERR: We still have a good reputation in
25 this state, especially because of our VSOs. That's why

1 we need to push our VSOs. There are other service
2 organizations, veteran service organizations, some not
3 veteran that tries to help the veteran, and they were
4 bragging about being number eight in the state -- I think
5 it was number eight in the state -- for helping veterans.
6 Well, guess who's number one? Best-kept secret.

7 So we need to push that out there, if you could, on
8 public affairs and marketing, as well. So every time you
9 go out to an event, wear your hat. Wear your shirt. You
10 are marketing for the American Legion. You're helping
11 the veterans in the state. But if you go out without a
12 hat, without a shirt, they may tag you as a veteran, but
13 they don't know you're American Legion. That's passive
14 marketing, and we need that. Passive marketing is tens
15 of millions of dollars a year, and people pay for passive
16 marketing. By wearing your shirt and hat, you're doing
17 it for free. Thank you.

18 And that's all I have for marketing and public
19 affairs unless somebody has anything.

20 Thank you, Commander.

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Any other committee
22 report? If not, we'll move on to receive the reports
23 from the department officers.

24 NECman Charlie O'Leary.

25 DEPARTMENT NECMAN O'LEARY: Good morning,

1 everyone. We just got back from the fall national
2 meetings in Indianapolis, and everything went pretty
3 well. The traffic up there and back was the usual thing.
4 I bring you greetings from the national commander, Jim
5 LaCoursiere, from Connecticut. He's a former Air Force
6 E-4 that has been active in the Legion for years and is
7 now our national commander.

8 One of the big things that they stressed was the
9 Columbia suicide prevention program. There are handouts
10 available on that. It is a series of six questions that
11 can be asked if you get a phone call or have contact with
12 a veteran who is imminently considering suicide. You ask
13 them the first three questions. They need to get help
14 from the a mental health or medical professional. The
15 last three questions are outlined in red. If they answer
16 yes for that, this person is thinking of committing
17 suicide quickly and you need to call 9-1-1 and get them
18 to a medical facility where they can get help. So this
19 is something that the -- I'm giving these out at the
20 district meetings for the commander to give to all the
21 posts. Every Legionnaire needs to have one of these
22 cards so that they will know what to do if someone calls.

23 Another thing that was brought up at the national
24 convention is the Legion is now sponsoring a
25 Compassionate Contact Corps. This is a group of

1 volunteers, usually affiliated with a VA clinic or a VA
2 hospital, of people who will come in and randomly call
3 older veterans who may be widows or widowers and talk
4 with them. Because a lot of the scientific studies have
5 now shown that loneliness and depression is the number
6 one factor in people committing suicide and, also, is a
7 detriment for cardiovascular health and respiratory
8 diseases that occur. So that's a new thing. And I've
9 got the information on that, and that's going to be a
10 long-term project that we may be able to do at the
11 department level and also in conjunction with the
12 Oklahoma City VA, Muskogee VA, Tulsa, and even the
13 smaller clinics in Clinton and Stillwater, across the
14 state.

15 The news from the Finance Committee is that
16 Personify is going to go away. The American Legion is
17 working on a management IT platform that they're
18 anticipating will come online within two years, possibly
19 quicker. So all of us who have had difficulty with
20 Personify, there's light at the end of the tunnel.

21 The final thing would be Legion.org/action. Keep
22 this in mind. You can take your phone in, go to Google,
23 type that in, and once you register, the different bills
24 in Congress that the American Legion supports are right
25 there. You can click on that, and that will send a

1 message to the staffers of our two national senators,
2 Lankford and Mullin, and then the representative from
3 each area. For example, I'm in northwest Oklahoma. It's
4 Representative Fields. So this is the -- last month,
5 whenever the VA was in trouble when they lacked funding
6 to give disability checks starting in the month of
7 October, through the Legion.org/action, Congress received
8 44,500 e-mails within a one-week period, and the bill was
9 passed. So that tells you, even though you think this
10 doesn't work, it does work. It influences Congress, and
11 we need to do that to help our fellow veterans.

12 Mr. Commander, that completes my report.

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

14 Give you a little update on that 44,000. I got to
15 see the numbers from each department. Oklahoma was just
16 under 900. We can do better than this. It's only five
17 minutes. Bring your phone up in the morning while you're
18 having your coffee. Vote on this stuff. It's our --
19 it's our responsibility to represent all veterans in our
20 state.

21 Judge Advocate.

22 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: Dale Haynes,
23 Judge Advocate, Post 301. I want to start off on a
24 positive note. I've had a couple of C&BLs sent to me
25 from a post. So far, they've been very well written.

1 Most of them are using the template that's been put out.
2 That has a few errors in it, a few things that have to be
3 corrected, but they're very minor. It does help when a
4 post is writing their constitution and by-laws to do
5 that.

6 I've also had a couple of calls from posts and also
7 from the district commanders. I can assure you that
8 they're out there working and they're out there doing a
9 good job. And we've got a lot of things going on out
10 there.

11 Now, kind of on a negative note, I need to talk
12 about some other things. Basically, what I would like to
13 talk about is a little bit about the discipline. There's
14 actually three kinds of discipline that I see in the
15 constitution and by-laws.

16 First of all is at the post level, posts taking care
17 of themselves. I think, if you'll look at your national
18 constitution and all the guidelines that have come out,
19 that is the preferred thing to happen. If you have a
20 problem at the post, the post needs to take care of it.
21 The district commanders need to work with them, and we
22 need to stay out of it as much as possible at the DEC
23 level.

24 The second thing we have is at the DEC level.
25 There's actually two different types of discipline that

1 we're responsible for at the DEC level. The first is the
2 post charter. We have a uniform code of procedures put
3 out by National, and we have rules of DEC that pretty
4 well follow that. When you go back and compare them,
5 there's a few things that need to be updated on the rules
6 of DEC to be consistent with the uniform code, but it's
7 pretty good. And we need to work on that.

8 When we get down to the membership, it's a little
9 bit different. When you look at the national, I find
10 very little information about the DEC taking action on
11 members. It is covered in our constitution. It is
12 covered in our DEC -- DEC rules. Unfortunately, when you
13 go through it, you have to work at it to try to put it
14 all together.

15 Simply stated, if we have a problem with an officer
16 and we need to go in and do discipline on that officer,
17 the way the rules read, the way I read them, is it starts
18 off with Article X, Section 4 of our constitution. And,
19 basically, that gives us the authority to do it. Then
20 there has to be a charge. This is in our rules of the
21 DEC, page one and two. That charge is presented to the
22 commander or the adjutant. Then there will be an
23 investigation. That's covered in the by-laws under
24 Article X, Section 3.

25 After the investigation, then there's a

1 recommendation to the DEC. This is covered in Article X,
2 Section 5, again. At which time, the DEC has to make a
3 decision. Do you want to have a hearing or do you want
4 to dismiss it? A hearing can be kind of complicated.
5 Once we have the hearings, then there will be punishment.
6 Okay?

7 Now, if you've noticed, I've jumped around from the
8 constitution to the by-laws to the rules of DEC. I don't
9 think anybody disagrees we need to do some work on that.
10 I'm going to be working to try to update the rules of the
11 DEC, working with the IA chairman, and we'll see if we
12 can get that smoothed out a little bit. Okay? The
13 reason we're going to start with that is because it's
14 easier than changing the constitution because it does not
15 have to go before the convention but it does have to go
16 before the DEC.

17 When it gets down to the punishment, that gets to be
18 another interesting article. It's covered in our rules
19 of the DEC, but I got hung up when it talked about the
20 appeal, so I called National. The national JA liaison
21 was a little bit put off that we were even doing that
22 because, when it comes to suspension and expulsion, he
23 claimed we didn't have the authority to do that, although
24 we've done it many times. I sent an e-mail asking for
25 clarification on that because, when I read the national

1 constitution, it says a trial at department or post. So
2 I asked for clarification on that. He did not respond.
3 I sent him a text asking if he got my e-mail. He wanted
4 to know when I sent it. I told him. Okay? I'm going to
5 continue to pursue that because we need to look at our
6 rules of DEC. We need to get them smoothed out, and we
7 need to get them consistent with National.

8 The bottom line on it, though, is all of the rules,
9 everything I read, from Robert's Rules of Order to
10 national to our constitution is, if we have problems, we
11 need to have a hearing, a fair hearing, and we need to
12 also respect the privacy of the accused until they are
13 adjudicated. Okay?

14 One other thing I forgot. I need to back up just a
15 little bit. When we're looking at the charter of a post,
16 if we have a problem with the charter of a post, the way
17 I read the rules, the first thing it does is, again,
18 starts with a charge. There's a little bit of
19 discrepancy between who does that charge, between
20 national and our rules. But the bottom line is that
21 charge needs to cite what part of the constitution they
22 are violating. When you look at our constitution, that
23 can be an obstacle for us because our constitution does
24 not cover a lot of the things that a lot of us would
25 think to be a chargeable offense.

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1 So the bottom line on it, we need to be looking at
2 our constitution. We need to be looking at our rules of
3 DEC. I'm going to be working on that. If anybody has
4 any questions, comments, feel free to give me a call. Do
5 you have any questions now?

6 (No response.)

7 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: Thank you.

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Where's Sam at?
9 There he is.

10 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Sam
11 McPherson, Fiance Officer. I know you haven't had a lot
12 of time to look over this. A couple of questions I've
13 had before this meeting were about some of the accounts,
14 like the Sons account. As we said earlier, we're kind of
15 waiting on minutes. As soon as we get the minutes, we'll
16 transfer those funds into the Sons account.

17 Also, we have the separate account at Chase that
18 includes the Sons account. Basically, as soon as we get
19 minutes, we'll be able to either set up a CD for our
20 building fund money or put it into a savings account.

21 Because, even though in our balance sheet -- this
22 is -- like, in that first top section of the balance
23 sheet, "1110 BancFirst" and "12103 Building Fund," those
24 are actually in the same account. It's just separated so
25 that we don't dip into that money. As soon as we get the

1 current -- or, the minutes from the last DEC, we'll be
2 able to change our officers, and then the officers on
3 that will be able to say, yes, we need to set up either a
4 savings account or a CD for that money.

5 The reason we want to do that is if -- you can see
6 that number is real close to what the cap is on the FDIC
7 insurance. Two hundred and fifty thousand per account is
8 basically how it's set up. So I don't want to bust that
9 and move the money from the Chase account in there and
10 have money that's not protected. But as soon as we get
11 the minutes, we'll be able to make those changes and make
12 those moves.

13 Basically, everything else -- nothing that I see
14 looks crazy out of order yet. It looks -- I put a lot of
15 time -- some of the QuickBooks entries and stuff are in
16 strange places sometimes. So I did some work and moved
17 things around.

18 The one thing is taxes. If you go look underneath
19 where we usually have the salaries, that's the first line
20 of expenses on page -- the easiest one's on page seven,
21 about the second quarter of the page in expenses. It
22 starts with salaries. If you go down to the very bottom
23 there, they're all zero as far as how much goes into
24 Oklahoma unemployment, FICA and Medicare, and federal
25 unemployment. The way QuickBooks does it, it puts it all

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1 in one line, and I don't think I'm going to be able to
2 separate that out, and I don't think we really care what
3 goes to which as long as we know X amount goes to taxes.
4 I don't think we care. But I just have to see if I can
5 separate those out. If I can separate those out, I will
6 to give us that better information. If I can't separate
7 those out, I'll just have one line there for taxes paid.

8 I think that is about it. Does anybody have any
9 questions?

10 PDC MARTIN: Brett Martin, Past Department
11 Commander. Have we done a line item budget review for
12 this year?

13 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: For this
14 year, no. We did one previous to the budget that we
15 presented at convention.

16 PDC MARTIN: Well, case in point -- Brett
17 Martin, Past Department Commander -- if you go to page
18 one, you've got our company vehicle asset value at
19 \$70,000. The vehicle's not worth \$70,000. That's why we
20 need to do a line item budget review every year.

21 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Yes. On
22 that, I was told that that information is changed by our
23 accountant. And since we don't have the audit for this
24 current year, they haven't changed that number. I mean,
25 I can go in there and change the number. It's not that

1 big of a deal. I was told to wait until the accountant
2 made those changes.

3 PDC MARTIN: Once again, Brett Martin, Past
4 Department Commander. It's just good prudence to being a
5 steward of the pocketbook to do a line item budget review
6 every year. I think you would want to as the department
7 finance officer to make sure that each line represents
8 correctly how the funds are going to be spent this
9 upcoming year. And now we're already four months into
10 the process and we haven't done one yet.

11 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: Dale Haynes,
12 Judge Advocate, Post 301. I just have one comment to add
13 onto your money, like, in the building fund. I recently
14 had an experience with that. I don't know what you're
15 getting on your savings account. I'd be willing to bet
16 you it's probably nothing or close to it.

17 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER: Yes.

18 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: We just
19 rolled over, in one of the organizations I work with,
20 into a CD, and right now it's running about four percent
21 interest. So, when you've got \$138,000 laying there and
22 doing nothing, it's kind of foolish to take a half
23 percent interest when you can bump it up to about four
24 percent. So I would highly recommend you look at CDs on
25 that, at least six months, maybe a year unless we think

1 we're going to spend it.

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER WORLEY: Steve Worley,
3 Commander, Post 184 in Moore. I agree with needing a
4 line item review for your budget report. One of the
5 things in particular that I noticed the last couple of
6 reports is the oratorical expenditures. The state gives
7 out \$1,000 to first place, 750.00 to second, and 500.00
8 for third place. And the program manager, he out of
9 pockets the plaques that he presents to the first place
10 winner. Your line item review only shows that the total
11 oratorical expenditures is \$1,280. Which, that needs to
12 be corrected. Because you need to account for the
13 out-of-pocket expenses that's being expended by the
14 oratorical chairman for the state. That's my -- thank
15 you.

16 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: I don't
17 know if I find that line number right off the top of my
18 head, but that expense, the \$200-some, that includes the
19 amount of money that -- we got a -- I don't know
20 previously. I know this last year I told them to send me
21 receipts, and we cut him a check, and that's what we did.

22 I do know that, yes, we haven't put in -- we're
23 working on getting the figures for all the scholarships
24 that we may potentially owe in the future and having that
25 money set aside. Because right now they're just setting

1 aside the total number of scholarships for that year so
2 they're not used that year. So they may not be used for
3 three or four years and then one year we might get hit
4 for four scholarships for two or three thousand dollars,
5 as well. That would be over what we fund for that, so
6 we're trying to adjust that. But, yes, the scholarship
7 fund, they only put, like, 2,250 in there. This year we
8 had, I believe, 1,000 come out for that.

9 But the expense, that \$280, that was from the
10 receipts we got from the oratorical chairman. We did pay
11 that. So he shouldn't be coming out of pocket for
12 anything on that.

13 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: Dale Haynes,
14 Judge Advocate, again. I might point out that what
15 you've got in your budget is for the scholarships. If
16 you're going to start paying the out-of-pocket expenses,
17 I think you need to go back and adjust your budget. You
18 can't just pay it and say, "Well, we'll just go ahead and
19 add that to it." So you need to go back and look at your
20 budget and increase your budget.

21 We've talked about it in the past. These past
22 scholarships that we owe for, they should not be counted
23 against this year. They should be accounted as money
24 that's already owed. So we've talked about before that
25 should be a balance sheet item, not an expense item. And

1 then once the year is over, then that goes into money
2 that is payable and not current budget.

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Basically, whatever
4 we do for the scholarship should always -- that money
5 should be there, just like we do for Paid Up for Life
6 members. That stays in an account that we, whenever it
7 comes time to pull from it, we can. And I agree that we
8 should not only just have it in that account, we should
9 have it in an account that's going to give us a little
10 bit of money on top of it. That way, we keep this thing
11 going perpetually.

12 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: And just
13 to point out, oratorical did have \$300 budgeted for
14 oratorical expense, and we paid out 280. So it is
15 budgeted for the other expenses, not just for the
16 scholarships.

17 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: I was just
18 looking at your budget where it shows 2,250. And 2,250,
19 if I'm not mistaken, adds up to the scholarship amounts
20 of 1,000, 750, and 500.

21 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Right.
22 But the line above it, 6375, is oratorical expense. It's
23 budgeted for 300. It's got 280 in there.

24 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Very last page.

25 DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE HAYNES: Okay. Thank

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1 you.

2 DISTRICT DEC REP CONN: Richard Conn, District 1
3 DEC. We just went through a budget with a company that
4 I'm working at, and one of the things that they did were
5 expenditures, such as plaques and things like that, for
6 our budget for next year, they added in five percent.
7 But we're looking at the cost of material and everything
8 coming up 2.5 percent. So that is something else that we
9 really need to look at and be knowing that it's going to
10 come. Especially with all the devastation in Florida and
11 North Carolina and Tennessee, prices on material is
12 fixing to skyrocket. So, if you're building a porch, get
13 your stuff now.

14 PDC MARTIN: Past Department Commander Brett
15 Martin. So when are we going to be able to approve the
16 budget for this year? Because, as of right now, the
17 budget has not been approved.

18 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: It has
19 been approved.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Incorrect. It has
21 been approved. At DEC 1, at one hour and I want to say,
22 like, eight minutes into it, the budget was approved.

23 PDC MARTIN: Based on no audit, no --

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The audio.

25 PDC MARTIN: -- budget line item review?

1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct. Does that
2 alleviate us of the responsibility of doing a line item?
3 No, it does not. But, again, it was approved.

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris,
5 District Commander, 5A. The biggest thing that I see in
6 just scanning through this, since we got this five
7 minutes before, if you look at the back page, payroll
8 taxes, you have \$1,037.54 in total. You have nothing in
9 the budget. So that tells me you're not going to pay
10 payroll taxes this year. Really? If you move that over
11 to your budget, you immediately throw this budget into
12 the red. Thank you.

13 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: If you
14 would go to page seven, starting at -- it's probably
15 about the middle of the page, a little above the middle
16 of page, 5020, unemployment taxes, 5021, FICA and
17 Medicare, 5022, federal unemployment taxes, there is 275,
18 12,150, \$225.00. I said that QuickBooks does not
19 separate it by those items as we were doing previously
20 with ADP. I'm not sure if I can pull that information
21 out. If not, I'll have to combine those into one item of
22 taxes paid, but it is in the budget that the taxes are
23 covered. I'm sorry if I wasn't clear on that earlier.

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. At this
25 time, it has been ten minutes. I will have to end this

1 conversation. The conversation should continue, but what
2 I would encourage you to do is the next time we have a
3 Finance Committee meeting, whether it be via online or in
4 person, be there. Make your concerns known.

5 I have told you and I will continue to tell you, I
6 am not the commanders of the past. I am the commander
7 right now and what, hopefully, will come in the future.
8 But you drive this. If you're not engaged, well, we're
9 going to wind up going back to the years of 2012, 2013.
10 And for some of us in here, we know we don't want to go
11 there. You've got to ask these questions. I let you
12 have these questions because they need to be asked. We
13 need to know. But you drive this. Show up at the
14 finance. Show up when you're supposed to. Thank you.

15 Thank you, Sam.

16 Department Adjutant Rick Redden.

17 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: First of all, I
18 would like to say thank you for selecting me as the new
19 adjutant. I am an Oklahoma native, born at Fort Sill.
20 Now that we have a national cemetery, I know where I'm
21 headed.

22 (Laughter.)

23 MR. MCNEAL: I've got you covered.

24 PDC MARTIN: Literally.

25 (Laughter.)

1 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: I grew up in a
2 military family, so it was expected that I would serve.
3 And after high school, I went in the Air Force. I was a
4 medic assigned to the flight surgeon's office. That
5 means we only treated pilots. Medics in the flight
6 surgeon's office also do what's called local-based
7 rescue. I did four years, a year of that in Cam Ranh
8 Bay, the rest of it in Germany. I've been in the South
9 China Sea more than once pulling people out. It was
10 exciting.

11 I spent 45 years in the computer software, business
12 consulting arena. The last ten, I worked for myself and
13 had a small group of about 20 employees who were all
14 contract employees. We worked with companies all over
15 North America helping them install new software,
16 training, all the things going along to making that
17 switch. If I had been in charge of the switch to
18 Personify, that would have never had been so bad.

19 (Laughter.)

20 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: The other thing, I
21 was a 15-year member of the American Legion. Most of
22 that in Texas. I moved back to Oklahoma three years ago.
23 In Texas I was a finance officer, an adjutant, a first
24 vice, and a commander. I'm currently the adjutant of
25 Mustang Post 353.

1 I am committed to being the best adjutant I can be,
2 servicing the folks here in Oklahoma. In terms of the
3 office, I want us to be prompt in responding and
4 satisfying your requests, both of the posts and of the
5 districts, and keeping National happy, which is not
6 necessarily the easiest thing, I'm finding out.

7 The other thing is controlling costs. I understand
8 you approved a switch in telephone and internet providers
9 at a DEC -- which one was it? Anybody remember?

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Four.

11 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Four?

12 Well, we're executing now. There was a pause as we
13 changed adjutants. But over the next weeks or so, we'll
14 make that switch and start testing. That should save us
15 some money and give us better equipment to work with.

16 I'm also in the process of reviewing all of our
17 equipment leases and making what changes seem to make
18 sense to save us money but keep the productivity up.

19 As you know, we're in the market for an
20 administrative assistant. And I kind of wanted to tell
21 you what I think would be kind of an ideal candidate. It
22 might be hard to find. I must remind you that the
23 salary's \$35,000 a year. I think that means we want to
24 find somebody who doesn't need to rely on that as their
25 sole source of income. I'm not sure exactly what that

1 means. It could be somebody on disability. For whatever
2 reason, though, you can't live on 35,000, so it needs to
3 be a supplement. We posted the job this week on the
4 Oklahoma Job Match, actually got, already, one resume
5 that way. So here's my ideal candidate, a veteran under
6 55 years old. By the way, as you can tell, I'm not under
7 55; right? Somebody whose background is in office
8 management, and in service, that's base personnel or
9 maybe the orderly room or a business office. I want
10 somebody who could become the adjutant. It makes more
11 sense to train someone and bring them up so that we don't
12 have the lapses we've incurred over the last some months
13 and that is smooth transitions.

14 I don't plan on being there 20 years. I met Bill
15 West sometime ago in Texas. He's been an adjutant for 28
16 years in Wisconsin and Texas. I don't think that's me.

17 The last thing I wanted to mention was the number of
18 posts who are using MyLegion to do membership and other
19 things, reporting. We need to increase that. If we're
20 going to keep the staff size down in the department, that
21 needs to move to the posts, and it's not difficult.

22 I have heard the complaint or the statement that
23 there's not the computer literacy or there's not even the
24 computer available. I understand. I might want to
25 suggest to you, though, that there are people available

1 to you. It may be your 15-year-old grandson, but there
2 are people who are available who you can utilize. The
3 adjutant can supervise someone else. I'm perfectly fine
4 with that. But let's see if we can't get the utilization
5 up, keep the costs at the department down. And by the
6 way, when you control your own life, things happen
7 faster.

8 So that's my report, Commander. I do request an
9 executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

10 (Applause.)

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: And I will remind
12 everyone he is new, so there are things going on, just
13 like you saw earlier today. I know it's frustrating.
14 You would think that things would be happening quicker,
15 but we're trying to get them done as quickly as we can
16 while dealing with other things that are happening in our
17 department. So please bear with him. I've watched him,
18 over the last couple of months, do some great things.
19 He's going to be a great asset to our department.

20 Vice Commander West Shirley May.

21 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER WEST MAY: Good
22 morning. I apologize for the voice. The allergies are
23 killing me.

24 I would like to say that all the district
25 conferences in the west have met. We had some very good

1 conferences, a lot of good information that came out, a
2 lot of feedback back and forth, I believe, from the
3 district to their posts.

4 I want to thank all of my district commanders for
5 what they're doing, how well they're doing it with what
6 limited information that we've had from time to time.

7 The other thing I would like to just briefly mention
8 is, if you've not had the opportunity to look at your
9 rosters to find those Korean veterans who served, boots
10 on ground, in Korea, please do so. The Korean ambassador
11 for this area, Cho Hyun-dong (phonetic), is putting
12 together -- well, he presents the medals. But we've put
13 together and we have attended three ceremonies. They can
14 get very emotional for the veteran to know that he's
15 being recognized for what he did way back then. I know
16 that District 7 is working on putting on -- getting some
17 more information together and putting another one on out
18 there. There is one coming up in Tulsa on November 2nd.
19 I don't know exactly the location of that, but I do know
20 there is one then. And families appreciate it. The
21 veterans appreciate it.

22 So what I would say is keep on doing what you're
23 doing. And if you need help with any of that Korean
24 information or how to go about it, contact either Kim
25 Vincent, Elmo May, or myself, and we'll help get you

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1 started on all of that.

2 Commander, that's all I have.

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Patricia
4 Mathes-Kerr.

5 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Point of -- I'm not
6 sure what. But we've been here for over an hour. Can we
7 get a 10-minute break, or five minutes?

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: No.

9 (Laughter.)

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes. Let me check
11 my clock again. Let's meet back here at 11:20.

12 All rise. HAND SALUTE. TWO.

13 (WHEREUPON, a recess was held from 11:11 to
14 11:25. Thereafter, the following transpired:)

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: PRESENT ARMS. TWO.
16 Please be seated.

17 All right. We left off with Patricia Mathes-Kerr,
18 Vice Commander East.

19 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR:
20 Patricia Mathes-Kerr, Vice Commander East. I want to
21 actually support what Vice Commander West Shirley May
22 said. I know that Post 64 is in the process of
23 identifying Korean veterans so that we, too, can take
24 part of this celebration and appreciation event.

25 My uncle Joe Dodson (phonetic) happened to be a

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1 POW/MIA during the Korean era. So I will be getting his
2 information, and working on that, as well. My mom
3 doesn't know yet so don't, anybody, tell my mom.

4 Also, it just so happens, as I was meeting our new
5 adjutant and connecting, I was born at Fort Sill, as
6 well. But I joined the Army, not the Air Force. So we
7 were able to connect to our Fort Sill ties, and who
8 knows. Fort Sill keeps trying to pull me back in. I may
9 end up there with --

10 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: We all can't make the
11 good choice.

12 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR:
13 Right. (Laughter.)

14 So here's the updated report for our east side. So,
15 at summer convention, if you are in the east side and you
16 attended summer convention and went to the district
17 training, please stand up.

18 (Several people stood up.)

19 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR: So
20 we had a real good turnout for a convention.

21 Thank you guys. I wanted to recognize you for that.

22 Communication improvement has been my number one
23 topic. That was our biggest concern was in
24 communication. We established several communication
25 streams upon which information gets pushed out, and it's

1 a two-way. It's not a one-way. So they can push
2 information up. I can push information down.

3 We had the first district officer installment via
4 virtual means. It was awesome. Yes. Karen Ritter, over
5 in our district, helped set that up. So we had a really
6 great meeting. We had first timers to technology on this
7 meeting. They did a wonderful job. We gave them the
8 space to be anxious about it and the space to mess it up
9 and come back to us if they needed to. It worked out
10 well.

11 Districts 2, 3, and 4 have had their meetings. As
12 far as I'm concerned, they were productive. I haven't
13 heard anything negative to the counter yet. We talked a
14 lot about membership. I did discuss Dr. Blackaby, if you
15 guys know him on Experiencing God. His son spoke to my
16 seminary class, and he said something about churches that
17 resonated with me on our American Legion. He talked
18 about, if you were to be the church you choose to be,
19 size-wise, if you think like a small church, you will
20 remain a small church. If you think like a large church,
21 you will become a large church. I thought, What about
22 our posts? Are we the same way? If you think like a
23 small post, will you remain a small post? If you think
24 like a big post, will you become a big post?

25 So we started that line of thought processing. It's

1 not going to happen over night. Expectation management
2 is a skill of mine. So we work on the timeliness of
3 that. What do you want your post to look like? Just
4 because it's not happening now does not mean it won't
5 happen in the future. Let's look at all the veterans in
6 our communities and see where we're at.

7 District 1 meeting will be happening November 9th.
8 I encourage attendance. I will be in Rome. So I will be
9 sending a letter or a video or both to my district leads
10 so they can present that if wanted or trash it. You
11 know, whatever they want to do. That would be up to
12 them. It's their meeting; right?

13 (Laughter.)

14 DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER EAST MATHES-KERR: So
15 I'm also encouraging mentorship movement. We have
16 actually started taking advantage of our tool kit for our
17 district leadership meeting. We are now having first
18 vice, which is collective; right? But we can appoint
19 second vice, third vice, fourth vice. So we're not
20 taking our large geographic areas and we're appointing
21 additional vice commanders to help cover those areas
22 because east side felt disconnected. We're so large. So
23 we started connecting. And that was one way to do it.
24 It has been positive. So far, we've liked it.

25 Relationships. As I've said, again, I'm all

1 about relationships. You will not necessarily see
2 grandeur or big accolades, but when you establish that
3 relationship, you can build that trust, and that ties
4 right into Be the One. It's about relationships. We're
5 all veterans. I'm a spiteful veteran, and I'm a mental
6 health therapist; and even I don't trust a lot of people
7 to talk to them, so I don't expect others to, as well.
8 So building that trust is important. That's what we
9 worked on.

10 And one last thing, I am recruiting for vice
11 commander east for the next year, 2025-2026. If you are
12 interested in taking my job, I will work with you on
13 campaigning. So please let me know if you're interested,
14 even if it's not this year. Like I said, mentorship is
15 our thing. I will help mentor you. So just let me know
16 what you're interested in, and I will work with you with
17 every bit I have to help you meet your goal.

18 With that, that's my report. Thank you for your
19 time.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

21 I had a request during break, so I'm going to ask
22 Tina Kilmer if she would like to come forward.

23 DISTRICT DEC REP KILMER: Tina Kilmer, 8A DEC
24 and editor of the 1889. I want to ask for patience from
25 everyone that the 1889 has not come out. At the end of

1 last month, my mom fell and broke her femur, and we have
2 been dealing with hospitals and surgeries and rehab and
3 sleeping on my mom's couch. So I will try to have it out
4 by the end of this month, but I am having to redo it. So
5 thank you for your patience.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I also have a saved
7 round and alibi for our adjutant. He wanted to make sure
8 that I explained to you that when he told you about the
9 age that it was a joke. It was a joke. Okay? I don't
10 take him literally half the time. He's got a dry sense
11 of humor. It's pretty funny.

12 Next up, Senior Vice Commander Woody Alexander.

13 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
14 First thing coming out of my month will be membership,
15 membership, membership. Back in the military, we used to
16 do health and welfare checks on soldiers that didn't make
17 formation and stuff. This is basically what you're doing
18 to your membership, checking on them and making sure of
19 their welfare. People, we've lost too much money, we
20 lost too many people. We need to get our veterans back
21 in here. We need to take care of our Legionnaires. We
22 lose our membership, we lose our funding. We lose our
23 funding for some of the things we want to happen --
24 oratorical, the health of Boys State, things like this.
25 We can't afford to lose that. That's taking care of our

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1 youth. We need to focus on taking care of our youth.

2 And to do that, we do that with membership.

3 So, please, when you're talking to the membership --
4 and I'm talking to a lot of the leadership out here. You
5 have the ability to talk to the young ones and inform
6 them of what's going on. Tell them what they're going to
7 have to look forward to. Some of these people don't know
8 how the VA works up there and how the government gets
9 into pieces and things. So, please, get out there and
10 talk to the membership. We need to get it up. As far as
11 these membership reports, they will come at you hard and
12 serious pretty quick. I finally got squared away.

13 Thank you, Don.

14 Do you have any questions?

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B
16 Commander. Do you know what our current goal is right
17 now? Our percentage, where we're supposed to be at.

18 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
19 I've got the one we've got here with --

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Fifty-five.

21 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
22 Fifty-five?

23 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: And how are we doing?

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Forty-seven.

25 PDC MARTIN: No. Percentage-wise.

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1 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
2 Percentage-wise.

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Forty-seven.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Yes.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Give me the mic.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 50.95.

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We need to end this
9 right now.

10 I apologize for interrupting Vice Commander
11 Alexander. DEC 1, DEC 1, I stood on that podium and I
12 told you -- did I not? -- that the national information
13 that we get is not what this department is going to do.
14 There have been people trying to undermine that. There's
15 people been trying to go around that. There's been
16 people trying to do over that. No. The department
17 numbers that you see -- again, the department numbers.
18 If it does not come from Alexander or myself, they're not
19 real.

20 Now understand something. Inside MyLegion, we put
21 the membership numbers in there for three percent. That
22 is not our goal. Our goal is 15 percent. When you set a
23 goal, you set a minimum. This is what you want to strive
24 to at the very least. If you've been to one of my
25 district meetings, what have I told you? Every member of

1 the American Legion inside the Department of Oklahoma is
2 a recruiter. No ifs, no ands, no buts, no discussion.
3 That's it. I get to make that policy as the commander.
4 Now, the next commander can have another one. The
5 commander before me had another one. I'm telling you
6 what my policy is. Everyone is a recruiter. So that's
7 100 percent. That's 13,800 people that we should be
8 recruiting this year. Is it impossible? No.

9 The other number that you've been seeing put out is
10 4.91. That's the percent of our push into the 13th hour
11 of 300,000 veterans in our state. That means that over
12 95 percent of our veterans in the state have not been
13 contacted. Some of you are good. You're going great.
14 No problem. I understand that. Some of you are in
15 larger cities, it's harder for you to do because you have
16 a concentrated set of veterans in your area. But from
17 Tulsa, Oklahoma City to Lawton is where most of our
18 veterans are located. The northeast and the southeast --
19 or, correction -- the northwest and the southeast is
20 where we've having problems. The reason being is because
21 they're so dispersed.

22 I've got a post that has seven members in it, and it
23 covers almost the entire county. So what does that tell
24 you? Well, according to the ODVA, there's over 800
25 veterans in that county, but they've got seven. So is

1 that a city post or is that a county post? That is a
2 county post.

3 Now, if you live in Tulsa, Sand Springs, Warr Acres,
4 Moore, Lawton -- what's the other little down there near
5 you guys? -- but if you're in that metroplex area type
6 thing, yes, you're going to have a hard time reaching
7 them. I get that. But that doesn't alleviate the
8 responsibility of everyone in this Legion to go out and
9 do that.

10 So let's say you get 6,000. That's 150 percent if
11 you can get your retention up. Do you know what National
12 would do if we did this -- if we did this in the state?
13 Maybe call a WTF meeting and have me explain what illegal
14 action I'm trying to perform. Is it impossible? No.
15 Hard? Yes. I'm not going to tell you it's easy.
16 Nothing's ever easy that you work for. If you get
17 something that's easy, it's probably not worth it.

18 So understand the numbers that we're talking about
19 is the department numbers. We're not talking national.
20 We want a minimum of 15 percent.

21 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Commander?

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes?

23 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: I'm going to ask
24 that -- you guys are talking your numbers, and you keep
25 saying we're running two different sheets. Brett's

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1 pushing something out.

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Uh-huh.

3 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: You guys are talking
4 about something. How about posting a graphic and putting
5 it up to all the district so we can see it and push it
6 down to our posts? I got that Woody's had computer
7 troubles. I understand that because it took me two
8 months to get in to be able to see stuff, but we need to
9 see something. We need to have numbers, tangible, a
10 pretty picture, a pie chart, a graph, something that
11 we --

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I can do that.

13 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: -- can go back to our
14 posts and say, "This is where we want to be. Here's
15 where we need to be. Here's our goal." That will be
16 very helpful.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I can make that
18 happen.

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Thank you.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Actually, I can
21 make the adjutant make that happen.

22 (Laughter.)

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Please continue.

24 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: Any
25 other questions?

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1 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Yes. Don Kuntze, 6A.
2 In years past, we've had our membership suck as bad as it
3 does right now, and we've done revitalizations and
4 organized with National. What's your plan?

5 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: I
6 thought the districts would tell me what they need.

7 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: We know what they
8 need. We've got to get a plan.

9 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
10 I'll be here all day.

11 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: John Bloxom, Post
12 126, Bristow, District 4. Are you attending the national
13 membership meetings monthly?

14 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
15 Yes.

16 PDC MARTIN: Brett Martin, Past Department
17 Commander. No, you're not. We've had two with Vice
18 Commander Kellogg, and you've not dialed into either one.
19 No leadership, except last night with Rick Redden, has
20 dialed in.

21 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: I
22 did not know about them, I guess.

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: No. Don't worry.
24 (Crosstalk.)

25 PDC BLOXOM: Are you publishing monthly

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1 standards of where we are, our results, by post?

2 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: It
3 took them two months to get me squared away on that site
4 to be able to put that stuff out.

5 PDC BLOXOM: Are you pushing --

6 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: I'm
7 going to start --

8 PDC BLOXOM: -- them out?

9 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: --
10 doing that. Yes. Monthly.

11 PDC BLOXOM: Okay. I have yet to receive one.
12 We supposedly have a communications -- we have a
13 communications problem. It's not occurring. We need
14 your help. If you want to do a revitalization, don't
15 leave it up to the district to decide they need to do it,
16 because they don't know what it is. You've got to put a
17 package together and put it out. And if you don't know
18 how to do that, give me a call. I'll help you.

19 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
20 Will do. Thank you, John.

21 MR. LARSON: Lance Larson, Post 120. I'm just a
22 peon here.

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Do not put that in
24 there.

25 (Laughter.)

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1 MR. LARSON: I've got a question. On October
2 16th, with 51 percent, that put us at 13.49 percent
3 behind X months ago. Instead of worrying about this 15
4 percent, shouldn't we just be worrying about getting to
5 the goal next month?

6 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
7 Well, I've checked online. We've got about 26 posts out
8 there that have a little over 40-some-odd transmittals
9 that haven't been processed yet.

10 MR. LARSON: Have you sent us an e-mail out to
11 tell us that yet?

12 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: No,
13 I did not send that out.

14 MR. LARSON: Did you send us an e-mail in
15 September? August? October?

16 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER: No,
17 I did not.

18 MR. LARSON: Why not? You're the senior vice.
19 (Three raps of the gavel.)

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. Let's
21 stop.

22 DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER ALEXANDER:
23 Thank you, Lance.

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Are you done? Let
25 me have that.

1 The very last line of our preamble, devotion to
2 mutual helpfulness. Every time I come to one of these
3 things over the last five, six years, this is what it
4 breaks down to, finger pointing. Let me remind you of
5 something. Every time you point a finger, there's three
6 of them that's pointing back at you. Now, what does that
7 mean? Yes, Commander Alexander has had some issues.
8 Yes, it has taken more than one phone call to National to
9 get it straightened out. We just recently got our new
10 adjutant and everything straightened out for him.
11 National is running behind, but I'm not blaming National.
12 I'm not even blaming our guys. It's the nature of what
13 we're doing. So let me ask you this. Which is easier?
14 To knock down a building or to build one? And I expect
15 an answer.

16 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Knock it down.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Knock it down.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Knock it down.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: That is exactly
20 what's going on here. There have been e-mails sent
21 representing this department. They do not. There's been
22 e-mails sent representing my commander's assistant. I do
23 not have one. I do not need one. I do not want one. No
24 assistance is required or desired.

25 So, when you see these things, why are you giving

1 them credence? I don't. You give them credence by
2 bringing them forward to this meeting. You give them
3 credence by passing them along. One of the easiest
4 things to do in this department is to start a rumor. I
5 have been told that I'm going to tax everyone. Can't do
6 it. It's not in the constitution and by-laws.

7 And I told you at summer convention -- did I not? --
8 that I would follow the constitution and by-laws no
9 matter how much it hurt. I have done that, and I will
10 continue to do that. I have told you that I will tell
11 you the truth. I have done that. I have told you that I
12 would invite the department heads of our family. I have
13 done that. I have held leadership training, leadership
14 meetings. I have done that. I have done everything that
15 I told you that I was going to do, and I have yet to
16 complete all my tasks, but I will. I am a man of my
17 word, and I live to my word. I was brought up that way
18 in the Navy. I was a chief.

19 And for those that were in the Navy know what I'm
20 about to show you. This is a chief's coin (indicated).
21 Over 15 years out of the Navy, I still carry my chief's
22 coin from 2005. And it says on here, "Ask the chief."
23 There's a reason you ask the chief. Because he will get
24 it done no matter what it takes, how he has to go about
25 doing it. If it takes a number ten can of mixed nuts,

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1 I'll find me a number ten can of mixed nuts and get it
2 done.

3 So this bickering and arguing and everything else
4 we're doing inside this room and inside this Legion needs
5 to come to a screeching halt. But like I said, I will
6 not give them credence. I will not respond to them, and
7 I will not give them acknowledgement. I will not do
8 anything. So who's supposed to do that? Peer pressure.
9 You. When you see these things, shut them down. Blow up
10 their e-mail. Make them stop.

11 I know for a fact there is a post right now, and I
12 have talked to them twice, that are sitting on over 200
13 membership cards. You want to know why?

14 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Why?

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Because they don't
16 know what's going to happen next.

17 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: What do you mean?

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Who's in charge?
19 Who's really doing this? Who's putting out these
20 numbers? Who's doing that? The questions are crazy. I
21 said, "Is my name attached to it?" "No." "Then throw it
22 in the trash." Bring them to the department. I'll put
23 them in personally. If I have to stay until midnight, I
24 will stay to midnight. If I have to sleep on the couch
25 in the office, I'll sleep on the couch in the office.

1 You nominated me for this position. Granted, no one
2 got a chance to vote for me. I told you then all that
3 does is put a big bullseye on my back.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No it doesn't.

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Anytime we have
6 someone elected by acclamation, a previous commander,
7 anyone else, when that happens, that puts a big bullseye
8 on your back because then you can say, "Well, I didn't
9 vote for him." Yes, you did.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, you did.

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Your silence is
12 compliance. And trust me, I am not quiet. As many of
13 you have seen over the years that I have been sitting in
14 the DEC, I have no problem stepping up to that mic and
15 making a statement, letting my opinion known. Whether
16 it's a good opinion, bad opinion, well that's left up to
17 you guys, but you will hear from me. I fully expect that
18 from you. There are several people in this room that I
19 fully expect to call me if I screw up. And I count those
20 guys as my friends. Why? Because I know they've got the
21 best interest of this department, just like I do, at
22 their heart.

23 So I'm tired of the negativity. Find a way to help.
24 What the old expression when we were growing up in the
25 70s and earlier? Either you follow or get the blank out

1 of my way. Well, that's what I'm asking. Help me to
2 lead or follow but do not interfere.

3 Commander Alexander just recently got his
4 information updated. As we found out, what had happened
5 was they made him a profile, but they forgot to turn it
6 on. I did not know there was such a thing. We sat down
7 and had a phone call, and we finally got that turned on.
8 It is now up and running.

9 There are things that are happening. I've got a man
10 sitting in front of me today that I know for a fact has
11 been trying to get his account straightened out, and we
12 still can't get it straightened out. We don't know why.
13 But I haven't given up, and neither should you.

14 Because the information that you're receiving about
15 membership is this: Shoot for the minimum. Shoot for
16 the minimum. Shoot for the goal of this. Here's your
17 goal, if you want to be number one in the district, you
18 want to be number one post in the state of Oklahoma, give
19 me 200 percent. If you fall short, great, but I will
20 guarantee you this, you will surpass the minimum goal.
21 Would you not?

22 Logic dictates what we do, not feelings, not
23 emotions. Now you're thinking to yourself right now,
24 Well, he seems pretty upset. No, I'm not. Like I said,
25 I will not give people credence that don't deserve it,

1 that haven't earned it. If they're not helping me build
2 this department, they don't need credence. I'm not going
3 to acknowledge them. Why should I? Why should I give
4 them that benefit? My time is precious. I don't know
5 about yours.

6 There were certain questions that were brought up
7 just recently about are you doing this? Are you doing
8 this? Let me explain something to you. I don't live
9 within 45 minutes. Because that was what was required of
10 the adjutant, within 45 minutes of the department in
11 order to be selected to be the adjutant. I live two
12 hours and 15 minutes, two hours and 30 minutes, depending
13 on the traffic, one way.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're speeding.

15 (Laughter.)

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I wasn't going to
17 go there, but yes. My wife tells me, "You've to slow
18 down. The cops are up there." I'm like, "Yeah, I've got
19 to get home."

20 But understand something. If I'm willing to
21 sacrifice five hours just to come to an office to work
22 for free, you can't sit there and go, "Oh, you didn't
23 make this meeting, and by the way, it starts at 6:00.
24 You left at 4:00. You're still 15 to 20 minutes, maybe
25 even half an hour still on the road." Now, do I know

1 what happens at those meetings? Yes, I do. Mr. Kellogg
2 and myself talk regularly because that's my job. My job
3 is to know what goes on inside this department. My job
4 is to broadcast to National what goes on inside of this
5 department, and I do that. There are certain individuals
6 that I contact pretty routinely, and they seem to like to
7 contact me, too. Which brings me to the next topic.

8 When I was in New Orleans, I had a great time. I
9 learned a lot of stuff. Brought some things back. We're
10 trying to do them here. Again, this is the membership
11 goal, because that's one of the things we talked about.
12 I talked to the IAs. I talked with our national judge
13 advocate, Mark Seavey. He had a lot of questions about
14 our department. Now, we do think -- I gave him a
15 two-page report. That kind of surprised him because I
16 guess he's never received a report from anybody else
17 before. But he took it. He read it.

18 So when it comes down to this in October when we
19 went to the adjutant-commander's training, I was pulled
20 aside for a little while. He asked me some questions of
21 why we're doing this, why we're doing this. And I
22 explained to him. I said, "Well, some of this stuff
23 dates back to 2012. There was individuals that did
24 things." "Oh, yes, I remember that case." I said,
25 "That's why we do them." He said, "You know you don't

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1 have to do them?" "Yes, I know what the constitution and
2 by-laws say. I understand that I don't have to, but my
3 membership asked me to do it. So I will continue until
4 my membership tells me to no longer be worried about
5 that."

6 There will be other investigations opened up due to
7 some things that have happened. I know there are people
8 sitting in the audience today wanting to know about all
9 of the investigations we've got going on. Here's my
10 issue: Who decides the punishment, who decides the
11 repercussions of anyone or any post in this department?

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The DEC.

13 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: The DEC.

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Who is it? Come
15 on.

16 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: The DEC.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The DEC. So, if I
18 start talking to you about the investigations that we
19 have going on, other than the number, would that not be
20 tainting the judge and jury?

21 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Yes.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Yes, it would.

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: That's the way I
25 read it in the constitution and by-laws.

1 Now, I will tell you this. And I know some people
2 got upset with my judge advocate, but I agreed with the
3 judge advocate. We had a breakfast. It was like a --
4 what? -- two-hour discussion one day. We have six active
5 investigations going on right now, and I don't have the
6 bodies for all the investigators to be sitting on those.
7 And it looks like there's two more coming down the pike.
8 So where do I get these bodies? I can't use you. You're
9 the judge and the jury. So we have to get people. And
10 he sent out an e-mail. And all I heard was, "Why are you
11 doing this? There's people doing this." There was so
12 many crazy excuses that it's not even funny.

13 (Cell phone rang.)

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's five dollars.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: That's five dollars.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Somebody's going to
17 get a good lunch out of this.

18 (Laughter.)

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: But understand
20 something. I warned you. I told you. We will follow
21 the constitution and by-laws no matter how much it hurts.
22 And if it hurts, what are you going to do about it?

23 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Change it.

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Change it. That's
25 right. Write a resolution. Get it up to us.

1 When I took the job, and you can ask Dale, I asked
2 him what his five top concerns. He told me. I said,
3 "Okay. We need resolutions." He went to the Resolutions
4 Committee, had the Resolutions Committee, with the
5 chairman, reach out to ten, 15 posts and see if they
6 could not [sic] write these five resolutions. I sat at
7 every district meeting with the exception of one,
8 District 1. The vice commander sat at the others. Not
9 one resolution has come forward. Silence is compliance.

10 Yes, I understand I am a different commander than
11 what we've had in the past. I will do things different.
12 I told you that. I have priorities. My priorities is to
13 advance and to make this department stronger and better
14 than it has been.

15 For those of you in the Navy, you understand what
16 I'm doing. Before I can get you to move, I've got to
17 disturb you. I have to make you understand that there
18 are issues. I have been very fortunate, believe it or
19 not. The men and women that you see sitting before you
20 today have given me great advice. They have done their
21 jobs well. I have not had to go out and pound on
22 somebody. Because, make no mistake, I was a navy chief.
23 You can hear me all the way down a pier if you upset me.
24 We'll go with that word. But I don't want to do that.
25 We are a volunteer organization. And I told you, I told

1 you, if you're wearing the blue and the white and the
2 white hats, you are no longer a volunteer. You are a
3 paid or unpaid employee of this department because you
4 were elected, just like I was, to do this job.

5 And I want to thank every one of you. Because I
6 want you to know something, too. I am very proud of you.
7 I am very proud of every one of you that showed up today.
8 I fully did not expect to see a whole group of you like
9 this. Because last time we had a special, I had one
10 person extra to conduct that special DEC meeting. So
11 thank you.

12 So, see, everything's not all bad. There's a lot of
13 good out there. We are pushing the numbers. We are
14 doing our job. Our VSOs are outstanding. We're getting
15 things done. Now do you see everything? No. Let me
16 correct that. Do you see things from me all the time?
17 No. You don't need to see me. You need to know who I
18 am. I would prefer that when I walk into a post, "Oh,
19 hey, that's the commander." But who should you be
20 seeing? Who should the posts be seeing?

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The membership.

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: No, not the
23 membership. Who should they be seeing? What faces?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Us.

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The districts.

1 That's right. When I was a district commander, I had
2 visited every post. Every post knew who I was. Every
3 post got at least two of the three visits every year from
4 me. That's how it's done. That's how you move from
5 fourth, fifth, sixth place in your district up to number
6 one and number two, going to the posts. Why? Because if
7 you're not at that post and you're not visiting them,
8 guess what they do? They go back to their old ways. If
9 you surprise them and you show up at their post, "Oh,
10 well, we've got to do this now. We've got to make sure
11 we're doing this all the time."

12 And I want to thank Patricia Kerr. She said two
13 things up here that I have pushed for years. I want to
14 thank District 1 because they're doing it. In fact,
15 that's the example we should be looking towards. I know
16 me and Karen, we sometimes go at each other, but that's
17 all right. I respect that. I like that.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Which one?

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER RITTER: Which Karen?

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Well, is there a
21 difference?

22 (Crosstalk.)

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So here it is.

24 Vice East put out have multiple, multiple, multiple vice
25 commanders. The first one has to be elected. The others

1 can be appointed. There should be a vice commander for
2 every three posts. National says that. National says,
3 "Hey, you need to have more vice commanders so they can
4 go out there and visit."

5 There's a young lady by the name of Casey Nash. She
6 won, raced to the top two years in a row. The reason
7 she'd done this is because she went out and visited every
8 post as a district commander. I do not advise that. But
9 to have three, four vice commanders, yes. That is what
10 needs to happen.

11 You think like a small post, you will be a small
12 post. I would like for each one of the districts that
13 has all four of the family to please stand. If you've
14 got a post that's got all four of the family, please
15 stand. You know, Riders, the Sons, Auxiliary, and the
16 PAL (phonetic).

17 (Several people stood up.)

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Take a good look at
19 them, ladies and gentlemen. There's not that many.

20 Mr. Deer, how many people do you have at your post
21 that has that?

22 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: How many people?

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Uh-huh. How many
24 people do you have? 100? 200?

25 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: I think our membership

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1 is, like, 40, but we only --

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Forty?

3 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: -- about one-third of
4 that shows up.

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Right. I mean all
6 four of the family. You've got the Riders and everybody
7 there.

8 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Oh. Well, that would
9 be --

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Two of them are 18.

11 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Yeah.

12 It would be way over 100.

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Over 100.

14 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: If we had everybody
15 there that was actually registered.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Over 100. I am
17 proud to say that in my district, my 3B district, I have
18 a post that has 70 members in it. They have all four of
19 those families.

20 If you think like a small post, you will be a small
21 post. If you think like a small department, you're going
22 to remain a small department. Get it out of your head.
23 Because that's all the problem is, guys. It's inside
24 your head. Like I said, I know there are issues, but
25 there are ways to overcome them if created.

1 The last thing I want to talk about it -- and I will
2 render the floor for any questions that are out there --
3 the constitution and by-laws must be followed. No ifs,
4 no ands, no buts. When I sat down with the national
5 judge advocate, the biggest comment that he repeated to
6 me was Oklahoma does not follow their constitution and
7 by-laws. I cannot deny that. I have to agree with him.

8 If you're wearing the blue and white hat, the white
9 hat, and even the red, we have to follow -- we have to
10 know what it says. If you have not read that in the last
11 week, I suggest you do it. Put it on PDF so you can word
12 search if you have to. I have told you and I can prove
13 to you that I have it on all three of my devices sitting
14 up here -- the constitution and by-laws, rules of the
15 DEC. I have National's. I have all this stuff up here.
16 Because when I'm out visiting a post and I get asked a
17 question, I better know the answer. Otherwise, I'm not a
18 very good commander, I obviously don't know what I'm
19 doing. So, make no mistake. I do know what I'm doing.

20 Last year, we came very, very close. Some issues
21 came up. We lost. But we were on our way, well on our
22 way, to getting that 100 percent. But, again, that was
23 not our goal from last year, believe it or not. Past
24 Department Commander and myself sat down and said, "Yes,
25 we're going to shoot for higher than that."

1 The goal that you're seeing right now at 15
2 percent -- and this is it and then I'm done -- is not
3 from last year, not from the year before, but from the
4 year before that. If we were able to get 15 percent, we
5 would sit back -- or, get back almost three years of
6 membership. Commander Alexander brought it up. What
7 does that mean? That means money in our coffers.

8 Who knows what the Department of Oklahoma sells as a
9 product? Take a wild guess. Our VSOs. That's it. The
10 money we get comes from our members. That's all. Yeah,
11 we have a few things and we've got a couple of more
12 things on the horizon coming up. I want to get the 50/50
13 back open. I need bodies to help with that. I cannot
14 put it all on the adjutant. So we are progressing. Make
15 no mistake on that. The only issue is time. I'm trying
16 to get it done as quickly and as efficiently as I
17 possibly can without breaking the rules.

18 Because I know there are several out there that
19 would love for me to do something stupid. I know because
20 they have asked me, literally, to violate the
21 constitution and by-laws. Yeah. I've been asked. Not
22 going to happen. Not today. Not tomorrow. Not in the
23 future. So bear with us. But keep us honest and ask us
24 questions.

25 My soon-to-be, hopefully, parliamentarian position

1 that I've got sitting up here has made sure to remind me
2 that if you're coming up, make sure you get acknowledged
3 before you do. Make sure you speak. Give your name,
4 post, all the proper information. If you have
5 questions -- if you have questions that should be brought
6 before this body or before the DEC, please pull me aside.
7 I will answer you. I will talk to you. But I will not
8 do it in an official capacity. I cannot do that.

9 Thanks to Tim Smith -- love the guy to death -- he
10 invited me to an NEC meeting. And I read the books. I
11 know what the NEC is supposed to do. I know how they're
12 supposed to do stuff, blah, blah, blah. But until you
13 see it for real, all that stuff clicks in your head, like
14 "Man, we've been doing this so wrong." That's what I
15 need. That's what you need. You need people that you
16 can trust.

17 Like I said, I'll listen. Trust me, I'll listen to
18 everything you've got to say. But, ultimately, it's my
19 decision because if we fail, it's my fault. If we
20 succeed, congratulations, you did it, not me.

21 I will take any saved rounds or alibis.

22 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
23 District 1B. I didn't know we were completing with
24 membership. So I want to go back to that if that's all
25 right. So I completely agree that the negativity needs

1 to stop. I'm not on Facebook, but I get it sent all the
2 time as a district commander. It's tiresome. It brings
3 down our posts. Our posts don't want to renew. They
4 don't know where things are going, and that's the news
5 we're getting. So we need more guidance and information
6 from this head table. We're not getting it. So, when
7 you say that it's our job to shut down this other
8 negativity, it's all that's out there, and that doesn't
9 work. It's y'all's elected positions to be getting the
10 information out to us that we need to know to motivate
11 our teams.

12 The 4.19, I'm not sure, but I will say maybe you're
13 directing that at me. I am the largest district of 18.
14 I am a math teacher. I play numbers. I've sent messages
15 to the three of you that are in my leadership chain.
16 When you say 15 percent, 15 percent, maybe, is the
17 average, but it's not what you're giving to me for my
18 posts. When I have 25 percent for some of my posts, that
19 doesn't work. When my commanders are ready for their
20 entire leadership team to walk out, that's a problem, and
21 I've told you that. I've told you we need to form a
22 membership committee. You want ideas. I've sent ideas.
23 We need to have a membership committee that all helps
24 motivate. We need to be a motivation.

25 I have 62 new members at my post this year. I'm all

1 about the numbers. Post 1 is on fire, but we don't get
2 any recognition. Nothing is ever said. We didn't do the
3 whole family -- whoever got 100 percent family. We
4 didn't even recognize it at summer convention this year.
5 You're not motivating us to motivate. And that's your
6 job.

7 I am not beating you up. I understood that you
8 couldn't get into Personify, but you know what? You had
9 past department commanders that could and were sending
10 numbers out to certain people. Shame on them if they
11 weren't willing to share with you, and shame on you if
12 you weren't willing to ask them for that information.
13 That's what our past department commanders are there for
14 is to help guide us. If we want a younger military to
15 run this American Legion, we need good guidance and not
16 negative and not talking behind people's back. But
17 that's what's happening. And then our members don't want
18 to renew.

19 In my district, we will go with 4.19, and you know I
20 have your back. But when every year we're going down and
21 all of our Vietnam vets and our Korean vets -- I have one
22 World War II vet left, and I'll probably lose him this
23 year. All my senior people, my 65 years, my 60 years,
24 have died over this year. When they're all dying and you
25 tell us that we're supposed to get 15 percent over last

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1 year, well, first we have to get to 100 with new members
2 because we have so many dying. I know how to play these
3 numbers. And I want us to be great. But when our
4 numbers aren't motivating to our small posts, when
5 Ralston only has 17 vets in the town, you're not going to
6 get 15 percent over 100 percent of everybody already
7 signed up.

8 So let's form a committee. Let's motivate. Let's
9 find out ways. Let's have competitions. Let's, at every
10 district meeting, have awards. There's lots of great
11 ideas. You want ideas. I've said let's form a committee
12 and I've got ideas.

13 But we need to work together, and I completely agree
14 with you. The negativity of the public Facebook posts
15 that have been going on for a year and a half have got to
16 stop. You don't represent the DEC if you're one or two
17 people sending those posts out, but you have an audience.
18 So you are the voice, and you are going to kill the
19 American Legion in this state.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Clarify on a couple
21 of things there. The 4.91 percent, that actually not --
22 it's a percentage, but it's actually penetration in our
23 department to the 300,000 vets. National only put out a
24 three percent goal.

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: That's not accurate.

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Say it again?

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: What we made 100
3 last year and what they goaled us this year is not three
4 percent for our state. It's 4 point -- (crosstalk). I
5 don't know what the state is saying -- or, that National
6 is saying, but 100 percent of what we ended last year and
7 the new goal is not three percent for Oklahoma. It's
8 4.19.

9 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The numbers they
10 took were from June 30th.

11 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: I have those
12 numbers.

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So do I. And I
14 know that that's what they put across to us. But when I
15 got those numbers, myself and Commander Alexander both
16 went and looked at them at 15 percent, and those numbers
17 are correct. I'll give you an example. The 17 that
18 you've talked about in Ralston, they need one member.
19 They need 18 to get 15 percent, 115 percent.

20 But you're right. You're absolutely right. I'm not
21 arguing with you. I'm just telling you what the facts
22 are. I agree with everything that you put out there.

23 Yes, Tim?

24 PDC SMITH: Commander, quickly, I'm not going to
25 touch the membership thing.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Who are you?

2 PDC SMITH: Tim Smith, Post 20. The number one
3 thing I want to mention, you can use members of this body
4 for investigations. The only thing you can't do is use a
5 majority of them. But two or three members of the DEC
6 can be an IA committee. That's completely legal. If
7 anyone is telling you at national headquarters you can't
8 do that, national headquarters does the same thing when
9 they investigate Oregon, Washington, Colorado. Members
10 of the NEC are on those committees. So two or three of
11 us could be on an IA committee, and then you've got two
12 or three of the most experienced Legionnaires we have
13 doing the investigation to come to this body and give a
14 recommendation. So the only thing you can't do is use 21
15 of us for the investigation. But, please, don't discount
16 this committee that they can't be on an IA because they
17 can be. And national headquarters does the same thing.
18 That's the one point I wanted to make, sir.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: He's absolutely
20 correct, again, with the numbers he brought up, and
21 that's what we're looking at. If I have seven to go, and
22 I have three, that's 21 members of this IA -- or, the
23 department. But, yes, I can assign one or two to let
24 them lead and then try to have other members. But,
25 again, our pool for doing that is very, very small.

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1 Don Kuntze.

2 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, 6A. I
3 think all the griping and complaining comes down to lack
4 of communication.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Amen.

6 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: We're just not getting
7 the information we need out in the field.

8 And Karen mentioned a membership committee. Here's
9 our membership chair (indicated). Let's get things
10 rolling. Thank you.

11 DISTRICT DEC REP DAY: Jack Day, Post 19,
12 Woodward. So I'm really new to this body. I've just
13 joined it, I guess. Just got elected. And I'll tell
14 you, it's super frustrating to come in and see the
15 infighting. I thought we were supposed to be about
16 veterans. And I feel like we are so distracted from
17 trying to posture, and I don't know any other terms to
18 put it in. But I'm going to echo a lot of what Karen
19 said and what --

20 I'm sorry. I didn't catch your name.

21 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze.

22 DISTRICT DEC REP DAY: Don Kuntze over there.
23 I've been frustrated from the standpoint of that. But,
24 Commander, however, I've also been super frustrated with
25 the lack of communication. I think that's the biggest

1 part.

2 I've been asking for an agenda for this committee,
3 for this meeting, since August 19th. And then I
4 finally -- I mean, Rick responded fairly quickly when I
5 again asked, two and half months later or whatever that
6 is. "One will be out tomorrow," or, "today or tomorrow."
7 Didn't get it until, you know, the last second. Like
8 you, I'm driving two and a half hours from Woodward, and
9 I need to have -- I want to make informed decisions. I
10 don't want to just show up, you know, and have a balance
11 sheet thrown in front of me five minutes before the
12 meeting and then I have to make -- we have to make big
13 decisions based on two minutes' worth of looking at
14 something.

15 So I echo. I'm rooting for you. You know, I am. I
16 want to see anybody in leadership succeed. Like you, I'm
17 a Navy chief, too.

18 But communication has to happen and is not
19 happening. And it's super frustrating. And then, when
20 you don't have communication, then you leave a void. Now
21 you have a vacuum, and now that's why we have what we
22 have. So I don't know what we do differently, but even
23 if we don't have an answer, at least communicate to us
24 that, "Hey, we're having problems with Personify," or
25 whatever.

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1 Do we have a group -- I've asked this -- do we have
2 a group e-mail for the DEC? I would sure like to know
3 what it is. I would like to be included in it.

4 I don't know where the minutes are at. I'm pretty
5 resourceful on websites. I teach for a living at a
6 technology center, so I've been around a computer for a
7 little bit, and I cannot find a ding dong thing. And so,
8 as a new member coming into this, as far as part of this
9 committee, I need to have some -- I need to look in the
10 rearview mirror and see where we've come from because I
11 don't know what you guys voted on in the last three, four
12 DECs. But yet, I'm supposed to make decisions based on
13 what I know now which is zero.

14 So I think communication is super important. That's
15 what's got to get better. I know it's a full-time job.
16 Trust me, I have a full-time job, but I'm also a part of
17 this, but I also am the post commander for the VFW. So
18 it's -- I get it, but communication is super vital.

19 So that's all I've got to say, Commander. Thank
20 you.

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

22 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris,
23 District Commander, 5A. I am sick and tired of every
24 meeting that I come to that I hear rank and everything
25 you've done. I'm going to echo Mr. Roosevelt back in

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1 1909 [sic] when the American Legion was born.

2 DEPARTMENT ALTERNATE NECMAN TAYLOR: 1919, sir.

3 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: 1919. Thank you.

4 Check your rank at the door. We are all veterans,
5 and we don't need to hear every time we come to one of
6 these meetings what you've done other than you've been in
7 the military for X amount of years. I don't care if you
8 were an E-4 or a lieutenant colonel or a captain in the
9 Navy. You're a veteran. That's all these people need to
10 know. Thank you.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hear, hear.

12 (Applause.)

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Mike, I would also
14 add onto that what your plans are to help the department.

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Do what?

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I said, I would
17 also add onto that what your plans are to help this
18 department. Because you're absolutely right.

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: To help this
20 department?

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yeah. What the
22 commander, what the vice commander, what the NEC, what --
23 whoever is sitting up here, they need to add that to
24 that, what you're going to do to help the department.
25 Thank you.

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1 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Can I speak from
2 here?

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yeah.
4 (Crosstalk.)

5 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: The first thing you
6 need do is quit separating this stinking department into
7 two different departments. Right now this department is
8 Department of Oklahoma east and Department of Oklahoma
9 west. I'm sorry, we are Department of Oklahoma. We
10 don't need to hear "This is the best half of the state."
11 This is one department.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Amen.

13 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: And it needs stay
14 that way.

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Again, thank you.

16 Any other questions? Any explanations? Safe rounds
17 or alibis?

18 Yes, Curtis?

19 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, DEC, 2B,
20 Post --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can't hear you.

22 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Post 153, 2B DEC, Curtis
23 Deer. I have one statement and then a question. The
24 statement I have is if you make a complaint, always
25 follow it with a suggestion of how to fix it, at least

1 one or two possibilities. I mean, that's how I was
2 taught how you're supposed to function. Not just make a
3 complaint and drop the ball. That aggravates me. And
4 I'm just saying that for my personal sake. That's my
5 comment.

6 My question is, are we going to talk about, at some
7 point, what the computer status is for the posts? I'm
8 curious where that's at. Is that going to be in session
9 or is that here? Anyway, that's all I had to say.

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Please put this
11 out. Currently, your commander, myself, as far as I'm
12 concerned about the computers, they are over. They're
13 done. It is a nonfunctioning -- it's a nonissue. So, if
14 you're needing computers, please let the department know.
15 We can see what we can do to help. But as far as being
16 able to get you computers, no, we will not be able to.

17 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Where's the
18 investigation at? That's what I want to know.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The investigation,
20 I'm not sure even which law agency. No one's been able
21 to explain to me who's been doing what.

22 PDC SMITH: For what?

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The investigating
24 officers, what agency is doing the investigation on the
25 stolen computers.

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1 PDC MARTIN: It was OSBI.

2 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: That's what I needed.

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Do we have a case
4 number?

5 PDC MARTIN: I can get a case number. But the
6 insurance has already paid the benefactor off. The
7 benefactor is not going to buy computers again because of
8 comments made by leadership about trying to shove
9 computer technology down posts. He got very discouraged
10 by comments he heard coming back from senior leadership.

11 So, as you said, Commander, it's a done deal.

12 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, 6A. This
13 is my point from before. Why didn't this stuff get
14 communicated? People are asking about things, and you
15 had the answer but nobody knows about it.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: If the department,
17 the current leadership, is not informed of that, they
18 don't have the information. That would have been the
19 previous. But, again, done deal. I am not going to
20 concern myself with something that has no -- is not going
21 to have any bearing on this department.

22 DISTRICT DEC REP CONN: Richard Conn, District
23 1A DEC. I'm going to kind of change the --

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Atmosphere?

25 DISTRICT DEC REP CONN: -- subject here that

1 we've got going on. We all understand where we are at
2 with the computers.

3 But one of the things you may not know we need that
4 helps us out in the field, a couple of things that was
5 just brought to my attention that we do not have, and I
6 agree with it, is a committee assignment list. Can we
7 get that e-mailed to everybody? And an updated master
8 comm. (phonetic). If we can get these to where we know
9 who to contact over what subjects, it would be a lot of
10 help to us out in the field trying to get everything up
11 to snuff.

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: You're looking for
13 a committee list, or the chairmen?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Chairmen.

15 DISTRICT DEC REP CONN: Chairmen list and who's
16 on those committees.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes. That is on
18 the master comm. We can get that to you. I would advise
19 you, though, from National, that list, that information
20 cannot be widely disseminated. What I mean is you can
21 give it to the commander of a post. You can take it
22 yourselves. But it's not to be used by the general
23 public. What we do in the department is, let's say if
24 Karen Ritter calls up and says, "Hey, I need Curtis
25 Deer's phone number," dah, dah, dah, dah, dah. "Okay.

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1 Give me your phone number," because you have to ask
2 permission first if they can give your phone number.
3 They have to ask permission. You get that information,
4 then you contact Curtis Deer and say, "Hey, Karen Ritter
5 wants -- here's her phone number. She would like to talk
6 to you about this subject." And that's what you do.

7 National has sent out a memorandum, about six months
8 ago, making sure that we are not putting out information
9 that might lead to other e-mails and things being
10 compromised. They were concerned about that.

11 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Which is exactly what
12 you did with my conversation I had recently.

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Any other saved
14 rounds or questions?

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER BROWER: Grant Brower, Post
16 24, 6A District Commander. I like what Don touched on a
17 while ago about the membership, if we can get a graph or
18 something like that that we can take and show to our post
19 members, I can take to post commanders. Because we tell
20 them we need membership. They walk out the door. Well,
21 they've forgot about the recruiting. We're the -- our
22 commander said earlier, we're the recruiters for the
23 American Legion.

24 I read on that balance sheet there a while ago where
25 it said "corporation, American Legion Corporation." This

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1 is a business. My dad said business is like a
2 wheelbarrow. It's not going to go anywhere if you don't
3 push it. Thank you.

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

5 All right. We're going to move on. At this present
6 time, I see they've got feeding back there. I would like
7 to let you know that, if you would like to donate to
8 that, we're looking at a \$20 donation, but if you want to
9 give less, you can. The department is going to pick up
10 most of the tab on that.

11 We will break for an hour, and then we'll come back
12 and finish up. We have Old Business, New Business, and
13 then we've got a couple of speakers that need to talk,
14 and then we are out of here. So eat quickly.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Before dark.

16 (Laughter.)

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Hey, they've got
18 headlights on those new modern cars that I've seen you
19 driving.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We've got Unfinished
21 Business, too.

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So, all rise. With
23 the Colors of our nation in place, HAND SALUTE. TWO.

24 (WHEREUPON, a luncheon recess was held from
25 12:25 to 1:30. Thereafter, the following transpired:)

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All rise. With the
2 Colors of our nation in place, HAND SALUTE. TWO. Please
3 be seated.

4 Real quick public service announcement. If you
5 received an e-mail or something from me, please ignore
6 it. I am still being spoofed. I will not send you an
7 e-mail requesting vacation days, money, a green card, or
8 whatever. That will not happen.

9 (Crosstalk.)

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. Let's
11 continue on. I'm going to give you one last chance for
12 saved rounds and alibis of the last discussions that
13 we've had since this morning. If not, we're going to
14 move into Unfinished Business. Seeing that there's no
15 movement, we'll continue into Unfinished Business.

16 (Cell phone noise.) (Crosstalk.)

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. There's
18 a couple of things I need bring up. Ryan Post. This
19 information is in progress. I will let the expert on
20 that discuss that for you -- Jim Rees.

21 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: I might be a little
22 slow because that pie's going -- (crosstalk). Jim Rees,
23 6B Commander. So Post Ryan, after I was appointed
24 agent-in-fact, I went down on the 21st of August. I met
25 with the city of Ryan town hall folks, and I asked for

1 access to the property. And they told me the property
2 was theirs and American Legion had nothing on it.

3 So, after I spoke with him, I went down to the
4 Jefferson County courthouse, and they provided me a copy
5 of the deed that was transferred. The past post
6 commander, Griffin (phonetic), and there was two other
7 names on it, they actually signed the post over in
8 December of 2020. (Cell phone noise.) The city of Ryan
9 transferred it to themselves, finally, in May of 2024.
10 (Cell phone noise.) I did walk around the building on
11 the outside, and it's in bad shape.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I can't turn it off.
13 It's medical.

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: I called -- or went --
15 (crosstalk) -- and visited with a couple of past members
16 to ask what they were doing, and I also called the past
17 post commander and asked how they transferred it over.
18 And he stated he had DEC approval at that time. So I've
19 been trying to find out if there's any records anywhere I
20 could find from 2019 to look at the DEC meeting to see if
21 that actually happened.

22 The building's in bad shape. They had rented it
23 out, leased it out to the post office a long time ago and
24 another medical company. The medical company had the
25 roof fall in on them in 2018-2019, and they couldn't find

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1 anybody to repair the building. So that was part of that
2 post decision to transfer the property over to the city
3 of Ryan and gift it to them.

4 There are past due real estate taxes on it, and they
5 were being charged real estate taxes because they leased
6 it out to businesses. I went and spoke to our lawyer,
7 Jared, which he's not here. And since the building was
8 actually signed over in December of '20, we don't have a
9 dog in that fight, and the city's got to figure out when
10 it comes up for sale.

11 So I sent all the paperwork to turn the charter into
12 the adjutant. The adjutant said we had one question we
13 had to answer yes today. So everything is up at
14 National. And I guess we'll find out in the spring if
15 it's all done.

16 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: It will go to the
17 spring NEC meeting for action.

18 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Okay. So, subject to
19 any questions?

20 (No response.)

21 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Okay. So we're going
22 to consider that post action completed, up to the charter
23 piece being closed out.

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you, Jim.

25 We have another post. This post has already been

1 turned over. It actually belongs to the city. It's the
2 Arnett Post. It belongs -- it's on the fairgrounds.
3 That post is in the process of being finalized and closed
4 out, also. It was approved at the -- couple of DEC's
5 past. Simply put, it just needs to have our quiet deed
6 sent over to the city of Arnett and they will have the
7 piece of property back. Since it was contract with the
8 post that they defunct or closed or whatever, it will
9 revert back to the city. So that one's in progress.

10 We have one district left to do for a conference.
11 That will be District 1. I am definitely looking forward
12 to that. That will close out all of the district meets
13 for the year -- or, for the first part of the year until
14 we get into the spring, after mid-winter.

15 I want to thank you, all of the districts, for their
16 hospitality. I want to thank them for what they've done,
17 and continue to do your business. Continue to go out
18 there and do what you need to do.

19 We have one bit of unfinished business. I guess you
20 would call it unfinished. Our A. NEC, I have appointed
21 Mike Taylor, just after we got back from New Orleans, as
22 the alternate NEC.

23 Mike, if you wouldn't mind standing, please.

24 (WHEREUPON, Michael Taylor stood up.)

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Unless there is

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1 someone running against him or if there was to be a
2 nomination, I would request that the DEC approve my
3 appointment at this time.

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
5 District 1B Commander. I nominate Michael Kerr. He --
6 as you know from all of our committee meetings and
7 things, he's active. He's been to National Convention in
8 the spring and the summer the last three years. He's
9 been to Legion College. He's, again, active in a post.
10 And when we talk about the past and getting along and
11 what our image is at National level, he has a
12 relationship with Charlie O'Leary, our NEC. And I think
13 we need to have a good relationship with the two people
14 that we send to National. We have not had that in the
15 past year. And that's the reason that I think that he
16 should be nominated.

17 PDC SMITH: Point of order. Commander, there
18 was no announcement of elections.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: There is not. That
20 is correct.

21 As I requested, is to have my appointment approved.
22 I will let you make the -- second a motion. But as far
23 as I am determined, at this time we need to just simply
24 approve the appointment of Mike Taylor.

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER MAY: Elmo May, Post 146. Is

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1 that just for the remainder of this year?

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct.

3 DISTRICT COMMANDER MAY: Okay.

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So roughly nine
5 months.

6 Remember what I said, you guys drive this. You let
7 me know. I told you my opinion. I told you what I
8 wanted, but I cannot stop a nomination from the floor.

9 DISTRICT COMMANDER RITTER: Karen Ritter,
10 District 1A Commander. I'll second the nomination.

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you. We have
12 a nomination for Mike Kerr to become the alternate
13 NECman. Is there any other discussion?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Point of order.

16 (Crosstalk.)

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Mike Taylor, not Mike
18 Kerr.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I'm sorry.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Too many Michaels.

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Too many Michaels.

22 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Are we still in
23 discussion?

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Technically, yes.

25 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, 6A. I

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1 would like to also second Mike Taylor's nomination. Mike
2 has filled every position possible in his post. He's
3 been a department commander, and he's worked in every
4 capacity as a leader in our Legion. I would like to
5 second his nomination.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you, Don.

7 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Jack Sikes, 3B. I
8 didn't hear the nomination for Mike Taylor. I heard you
9 request acceptance of your appointment, and 3B is not in
10 acceptance of your appointment. I also recommend Mike
11 Kerr if is willing to take it.

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: In accordance with
13 the constitution and by-laws, if the position of the A.
14 NEC becomes open, the commander has the authority to
15 appoint and then bring before the next DEC regular
16 meeting to have that appointment approved. In accordance
17 with -- remember what I said. I follow the constitution
18 and by-laws.

19 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Is this an appointment
20 until winter conference?

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: It's an appointment
22 for alternate NECman until summer convention.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: For the rest of the term.

24 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: For the rest of the
25 term?

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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: For the rest of the term.

2 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Okay. Well, that's the
3 difference then if we're doing --

4 MR. MCNEAL: John McNeal, District 6B. Mine is
5 a point of order. Outside of an election by the
6 membership, the only way to get an NEC is through the
7 process we're going through now. The commander appoints
8 until the next DEC. The DEC will approve that
9 appointment or disapprove it. If it should be
10 disapproved, the commander goes back through his
11 appointment process, and we go to the next DEC. The only
12 way to become elected as an NEC, an alternate NEC would
13 be through announcement and convention membership voting.
14 That would be my discussion.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hear, hear.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you, John.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Call the vote.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Call the vote.

19 (Crosstalk.)

20 PDC BLOXOM: We've got two motions on the floor.

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Exactly. Thank
22 you, John.

23 We've got two motions on the floor. So, either, I
24 need a motion that's being removed -- (crosstalk).

25 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: The one

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1 motion was out of order because there's no election.

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Right. Then I --

3 (Crosstalk.)

4 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: Speak up. Please talk
5 in the mic. The reporter can't hear you.

6 (Crosstalk.)

7 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
8 District 1B. Dale, if you'll back that up then I will be
9 glad to pull mine back.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Back what up?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Back what up?

12 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: I think he's
13 flipping through it. If he says that that's right, then
14 I need to withdraw my nomination. (Crosstalk.) I'm just
15 waiting for Dale to say yes.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Right now we cannot
17 have two motions on the floor at the same time.

18 (Crosstalk.)

19 MR. MCNEAL: May I offer this, Commander? I
20 only heard one motion. The other was a nomination.

21 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Nomination. Right.

22 MR. MCNEAL: So, at the end of our discussion,
23 you call for the vote, sir, to approve Mike Taylor, or
24 disapprove.

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes. Thank you.

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1 (Crosstalk.)

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We have to deal
3 with the first one before we can deal with the second
4 one.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

6 (Crosstalk.) (Three raps of the gavel.)

7 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Come on. Pay
8 attention. Listen up. So, at this time, I am going to
9 call for the approval of my appointment for Mike Taylor.
10 All in favor, say "aye."

11 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

12 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Hold up, Commander.
13 Point of order on that. Everybody in here doesn't have
14 the approval to vote on this. It should be only district
15 commander and DEC --

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct.

17 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: -- not past
18 commanders. They have a voice but no vote. They
19 shouldn't be inputting their information.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct.

21 And as far as I can tell, there is no one that is
22 outside of the DEC or a past -- or, a present officer
23 sitting in front of me that has not made a motion yet --
24 or, a nomination -- an approval yet.

25 Karen, you had a question? No? Okay.

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1 (Crosstalk.)

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So, again, all in
3 favor of Mike Taylor as an appointment, say "aye."

4 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All opposed, same
6 sign.

7 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Raise your hands,
9 please.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: For which one?

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We'll have to do a
12 show of hands. All in favor of Mike Taylor, raise your
13 hand.

14 (Hands raised.)

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Put your hands
16 down, please. I need to write down the number.

17 All opposed of Mike Taylor as appointment as the A.
18 NEC, raise your hand.

19 (Hands raised.)

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Before I give the
21 results, I'm going to say something again. Your silence
22 is compliance. Mike Taylor wins the vote by 13.

23 (Applause.)

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Now, at this point,
25 I would recommend that all motions be ceased and that we

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1 continue on with our business.

2 (Crosstalk.)

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I can't do that. I
4 know.

5 PDC MARTIN: Point of order. Past Department
6 Commander Martin. There's no other motion to be made.
7 You've already handled the business at stake.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's done.

9 (Crosstalk.)

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. Next up
11 is New Business. We need to discuss our mid-winter.
12 Starting on November 1st, I would recommend that we send
13 out our mid-winter registration information, get our new
14 raffle fundraising for the summer convention, and our
15 mid-winter pricing.

16 At this time, I would like to discuss, or have you
17 discuss, what you want to do for the mid-winter raffle or
18 drawing, giveaway.

19 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: You mean
20 the --

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The ten-gun
22 replacement [sic] forms going out.

23 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: So
24 that --

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I do not want to be

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1 behind like --

2 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: That
3 would be for convention, not for mid-winter. The one
4 we're already doing right now --

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Is mid-winter.

6 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: -- is
7 mid-winter.

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct.

9 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: So we
10 want for the --

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: For the summer.
12 But I want that information now. I want to know what you
13 want to do. Do we want to do a ten-gun?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Do we want to do a
16 man cave, female cave? Do we want to do a hunt?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do a pronoun cave. Is
18 that what you're talking about?

19 (Laughter.)

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: There's always one.

21 What happened this last time is between the office
22 that they had getting COVID, shutting down for ten days,
23 issues with the equipment, every time I went to the
24 building for a man-to-man press there was a Xerox truck
25 out in front of it. The young man that was doing this

1 felt so bad he apologized constantly. I said, "Dude, I
2 understand things happen. Don't worry about it. We'll
3 deal with what we've got." I do not like being in this
4 position. I do not like being able -- or, not being able
5 to get you guys what you need to do your job.

6 So there's a couple of things that came up. When
7 you do the ten-gun, another one, instead of outsourcing
8 the tickets, we take care of that inside the house. What
9 that means is we get, like, a business card type of deal
10 and we make our own tickets. I give you guys the
11 tickets. It's costs us a little bit of money, but it's
12 less than the \$1,997, -\$87 that we spent this last time.
13 It does take effort on our part.

14 So what I'm asking is what do you guys want to do?
15 What does the Department Executive Committee want to do?
16 Do you want to do a ten-gun? Do you want to do something
17 different?

18 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, 6A.
19 Putting another load on doing all of this stuff in-house,
20 we have a hell of time just getting the information out
21 of what we need. I don't know if it's wise to start
22 producing tickets. With 1,900 bucks for the last time
23 around, it's the cost of doing business, in my eyes.

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

25 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: What would be the

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1 estimated cost --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You've got to say who you
3 are.

4 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: -- for us doing it?
5 Curtis Deer, 2B DEC. I'm sorry.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Go ahead, Tim.

7 PDC SMITH: I was waiting to be called on,
8 Commander. Commander, I would highly recommend that if
9 we're going to do a drawing that the only drawing we've
10 done in the last 11, 12 years that's been cost effective
11 has been ten-gun drawings. That's our experience. If
12 there's an idea of going to something else besides a
13 ten-gun drawing, I would really like for someone to start
14 researching it now to bring it to convention next summer,
15 the idea. Because I don't want to do them both. I don't
16 want to do an ATV. I don't want to do -- (laughter) -- a
17 UTV. I'm not talking bad about anybody. It's just the
18 experience on those avenues.

19 Now, the only thing that did compare to the ten-gun
20 was having the four wheeler or ATV because it as there to
21 see it, touch it, feel it. But it still didn't have the
22 draw that the ten-gun drawing has. It's a niche market.

23 I've got a member of my post, he won't pay his
24 membership dues to save his life. But I'll sell him six
25 ten-gun drawings and charge him 100 bucks so I can get my

1 \$40 in membership every freaking year.

2 (Laughter.)

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Now, see, that is
4 being clever.

5 PDC SMITH: Right. But that's just my
6 recommendation. I would just be cautious of doing
7 something in-house, if we can even get it done. I don't
8 know the adjutant's abilities and skill sets, whatever.

9 But, man, I know this, if we had a ten-gun drawing
10 when we left the convention this year, my post would
11 probably be sitting at \$1,000, \$2,000 on it. We're
12 catching up now. We did 550 at the state fair.

13 But that's just my recommendation, sir.

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

15 So I'm looking for ideas. If you've got ideas, like
16 Past Department Commander said, we need to have them. Do
17 not rely on just one or two people. Remember, you guys
18 drive this. Come on.

19 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice, 1B
20 Commander. We talked about this at the summer
21 convention. There were ideas that were sent around.
22 Have they been looked into?

23 Michael, you're fundraising; right?

24 So we talked about this. And I completely agree
25 with Tim. The gun is what makes it. Unless we have

1 something ready to go right now -- and there's lots of
2 good ideas, let's say, a vacation package -- but if we
3 haven't researched it, then we just need to go with what
4 we know works and form a committee if we want to go
5 elsewhere after summer.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We do have a
7 convention committee. We do have a fundraising
8 committee. And you are right, they need to all get
9 together.

10 But, again, I need to let you know now that we need
11 to start looking at this. Do not wait until the week
12 before mid-winter. We need to look at it now.

13 DISTRICT DEC REP QUINN: Jim Quinn, 2A DEC. I
14 highly recommend that we spend the money for the tickets
15 because if we do them in-house, it's not going to be
16 professional, and I guarantee you that -- it's been my
17 experience that when you're selling those tickets, if you
18 have a professional ticket, they're more than willing to
19 buy the damn thing than they are just giving them a
20 little ticket like your 50/50 drawing.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Make the motion.

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: No, no, no. No
24 motion. No motion. I'm looking for ideas. I want you
25 to start thinking about this. If you don't start

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1 thinking about it now, it's just like what we did at
2 summer. The next thing you know, we're behind a month.
3 And then all the sudden COVID happens. And then all the
4 sudden this happens. We don't want that to happened, and
5 I want to be ahead. Whenever we go into convention, this
6 mid-winter convention for the summer drawing, we need to
7 have a plan in place so we can get it running right then.

8 DISTRICT DEC REP QUINN: We need to have those
9 tickets at the mid-winter.

10 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Right.

11 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Yes.

12 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Yes.

13 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: So do we have
14 another DEC before mid-winter?

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Exactly. We will
16 do it before mid-winter.

17 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Do we have another
18 DEC before mid-winter?

19 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: No.

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: So it has to be
21 today.

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: No, it doesn't. I
23 can always -- all I need is to request a special DEC or
24 an electronic vote, which I am more than willing to do if
25 I have the right ideas, if that's what you agree to.

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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Let's decide today.

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Right.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Let's get this done.

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: You've got to make
5 your decision then.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Then let's do it.

7 DISTRICT COMMANDER BROWER: Grant Brower, Post
8 24, 6A Commander. I will just throw a suggestion out
9 there that we do, instead of a gun raffle, maybe a saving
10 bond or something like that.

11 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Money
12 tree failed.

13 (Crosstalk.)

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yeah. He was
15 talking about a savings bond, stuff like that.

16 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Been there, done that.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: John, you have
18 something you want to say? John Bloxom.

19 DISTRICT VICE COMMANDER BLOXOM: John Bloxom,
20 Post 126. We've done ATVs. We've done boats. We've
21 done money trees. They failed miserably. We lost money
22 on all three of them.

23 I make a motion that we do a ten-gun raffle. And if
24 you want an electronic vote, that we do the electronic
25 vote.

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1 DISTRICT DEC REP QUINN: Jim Quinn, 2A DEC. I
2 second that motion.

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Outstanding. Now
4 we're cooking with steam.

5 Is there any further discussion on doing a ten-gun
6 raffle?

7 Doug Hale?

8 DISTRICT DEC REP HALE: Doug Hale, DEC, District
9 7. I applaud the raffle, and I think it's okay. I don't
10 know about you guys. The only why I'm going to sell any
11 tickets in my town is to get them out to Walley World.
12 Well, Walley World has made it extremely -- that's
13 Wal-Mart -- has made it extremely difficult to use their
14 facility nowadays for whatever you want to sell.

15 I don't know if anybody has looked at the process.
16 I tried it, and it's very difficult. The only one that
17 I've seen on there that's on there for the American
18 Legion is the Mustang Post.

19 But, anyway, the way I read it, you need the
20 501(c) --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- (3).

22 DISTRICT DEC REP HALE: -- number. And unless
23 the American Legion has that, I won't get past Wal-Mart's
24 doors.

25 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: We do.

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1 DISTRICT DEC REP HALE: That's the only way I'm
2 going to be able to sell tickets. I can sell tickets out
3 of Wal-Mart probably in the neighborhood of a couple
4 hundred tickets, but I have to have that number.

5 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: We do have that number.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We do have that
7 501(c)(3) number. We can get you that, and we can get
8 you the donation letters necessary to be able to do that
9 with them. Thank you, Doug.

10 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze. Something
11 that works for our post, the tag agency is selling
12 tickets for us every year. And at one time, our post
13 made 4,000 bucks on ticket sales.

14 (Crosstalk.)

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So any further
16 discussions?

17 DISTRICT DEC REP CHISOLM: Yeah, one comment.
18 Robert Chisolm, District 3A DEC. I agree with Commander
19 Smith. When we had the boat and we had the four wheeler,
20 you could touch, feel, sit on it, but we were carting
21 that thing all over the state, whether it was for a
22 district conference or the Tulsa State Fair, you know,
23 our spring conference -- or, mid-winter conference, our
24 summer convention, et cetera. So we were meeting
25 everybody halfway, you know, across the state to drop it

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1 off, so hopefully somebody has a trailer hitch, et
2 cetera. But the gun raffle, all you've got's a book and
3 a poster, and you're good to go anywhere you want to go.
4 That's all I've got to say.

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. So all
6 in favor of doing a ten-gun raffle, say "aye."

7 COLLECTIVE GROUP: Aye.

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All opposed, same
9 sign.

10 (No response.)

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Ten-gun raffle it
12 is. We will be calling for a special electronic vote
13 once we have the information.

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: I'd like to make
15 a -- Karen Cruice, District 1B Commander. I would like
16 to make a motion that we go with the pre-printed -- we go
17 with an agency to print the raffle tickets.

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Do I have a second?

19 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Second.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Jack Day.

21 Thank you, Jack.

22 Is there any discussion now on the tickets?

23 DISTRICT DEC REP CONN: Richard Conn, District
24 1A, DEC. On the pre-printed tickets, I have no qualm
25 with that. Are we reaching out to other vendors to make

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1 these tickets? How many tickets are we looking at? We
2 use a company that has treated the American Legion very
3 well in the past, and I would like to see some other
4 offers from other companies. Even FedEx, they'll make
5 raffle tickets as well.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

7 I do agree with that. I mean, one hiccup. I'm
8 sorry. We've been doing this, as far as I know, over ten
9 years. So one hiccup, I can't really fault the company
10 for that.

11 Is there any further discussion?

12 (No response.)

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: If not, all in
14 favor of doing pre-printed tickets from an outside
15 source, say "aye."

16 COLLECTIVE GROUP: Aye.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All opposed, same
18 sign.

19 (No response.)

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The ayes have it.

21 Now let me give you an idea of what's going to
22 happen for mid-winter. I know there's going to be
23 pushback. I do care. But I also have a plan. So now is
24 the time for me to tell you that plan since you've
25 already did what you needed to do. For mid-winter, the

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1 16th, 17th, and 18th of July [sic], we will be at the --

2 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: January.

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: January. I'm
4 sorry. What did I say? February?

5 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: July.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Sorry. Birthday
7 month.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commander, they both do
9 start with "J."

10 (Laughter.)

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So, in January, the
12 16th, 17th, and 18th, we'll be at the Armed Forces
13 Reserve Center in Norman, Oklahoma. I've already reached
14 out to them. We have the dates reserved. I'm finishing
15 up the RFP for that. I will be giving that to our
16 adjutant. We're also looking at an RFP for Shawnee at
17 the Grand Casino. I do not think that one's going to go
18 through. In talking to the young man that's in charge of
19 that now, he was not real thrilled about us coming back
20 the third time, I guess it is. We've been there twice
21 before.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indicated.)

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Five times?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Five times.

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yeah, they probably

1 kind of look bad at us. But that is out there. If it is
2 possible, we will look at that.

3 One of the reasons we're looking at this is to try
4 to -- cost savings. So the last event that we held at
5 the Embassy Suites costs us over \$20,000. If things go
6 right with this -- I'm hoping -- we're trying something
7 different. We're trying a little different training.
8 We're trying different things.

9 So what's going to happen is we're going to have
10 three days, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Saturday,
11 we'll hold our DEC meeting. Thursday and Friday, we will
12 hold VSO training. Well, conjunction training with that,
13 with the group. We're doing a symposium-type training.
14 What that is, if you've never been to TED Talks or other
15 types of trainings, we will all sit in a room just like
16 this. My thought -- just a thought. It's not what I'm
17 doing. It's what I'm thinking -- we'll do post training.
18 What that means is how to run a post, how to run a post
19 meeting, adjutants training, blah, blah, blah, all the
20 way up until about noon. At which point, we'll shift
21 over to district training so that district officers can
22 start getting the training that they need. You can sit
23 in on both. You can sit in on one. You can get up and
24 leave. The next day, we'll probably do about the same
25 thing except, as you've just heard from our vice east, we

1 need to pick a day -- and this is what I would like to
2 do, this is what I would like to see -- that we invite
3 experts, guests, people that actually know things other
4 than us to come and talk to our membership. That way we
5 get a better handle on what we're doing, being able to
6 get information out to do things differently.

7 I know this is not the way we've done things in the
8 past. But what's the first sign of being crazy? Doing
9 the same thing over and over and expecting to get
10 different results. Let's try something different. It's
11 mid-winter. It's only three days. It's not a crisis.
12 If it doesn't work, come summer convention, we can jump
13 into the way we've always done business. But let's try
14 something new. Let's try to get this going.

15 But, again, it requires your effort just as much as
16 mine or even the officers up here. You have to be able
17 to convince these posts that this is a good thing to come
18 and try it, to see it. Let's do something different.
19 Like I told you, I know you guys are not -- I'm a
20 different kind of commander, but again, you've only got
21 me for nine months and then you can elect somebody else.
22 You're good to go.

23 Any questions?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, no.

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Oh, no. Say that

1 right now. Jim Rees, 6B Commander. Will there be any
2 change in the cost of the registration fee since we are
3 paying much less for the facilities? Or, I'm assuming
4 they're free. And do they have a coffee place for us,
5 and is there a cigar bar?

6 (Laughter.)

7 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: They do have a
8 patio. We can do that outside. As far as the costs, it
9 has been \$35 for the delegate fee. I do not -- well, let
10 me put it up to you. It's your decision anyway, in
11 accordance with the constitution and by-laws. If there's
12 any voting, we'll have to have delegates. Normally, the
13 delegate fee that we have used in the past is \$35. Do
14 you wish to continue that or do you want to change it?

15 PDC MARTIN: Point of order, Commander.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes?

17 PDC MARTIN: Brett Martin, Past Department
18 Commander. There's no voting at mid-winter. It's not a
19 working conference. You save that for the summer
20 convention. So the delegates doesn't really come into
21 play.

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: That's right.

23 PDC MARTIN: So why are we talking delegate and
24 \$35?

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Because there was a

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1 question. I want to make sure everybody understands
2 that.

3 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: My question was the
4 registration fee.

5 PDC MARTIN: Yes, not delegate.

6 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Not delegate fee.

7 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Again, that falls
8 to you. Registration is supposed to be able to cover the
9 cost of the convention. Just like Jim said, well, if
10 it's free or if it's at a minimum cost, what should our
11 delegate -- or, what should our --

12 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Registration.

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: -- registration fee
14 be? I will tell you now this is \$1,000 a day, so \$3,000.
15 The meal will be an outside source, catered by some
16 individuals. Again, this is a working conference. This
17 is not to meet and greet like we do during the summer.
18 This is for us to get trained, do what we've got to do
19 and get out of there.

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Commander, could I ask
21 for a clarification? I said free, and now I'm hearing
22 you say \$1,000 a day. So it is not free?

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We don't know that
24 yet.

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Okay.

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: They're waiting on
2 my RFP, and then they'll make a decision. They want to
3 know about our status as a 501(c)(3) and (c)(19).

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: For the reserve
5 center?

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: For the reserve
7 center.

8 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Okay. Thank you.

9 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: That's why I've got
10 to get this done quickly.

11 Yes, Mr. Bloxom?

12 PDC BLOXOM: Commander, we're talking Thursday,
13 Friday, and Saturday?

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct. Summer's
15 the only time we spend a Sunday.

16 Any further questions?

17 (No response.)

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I fully expect a
19 lot of this information to start flowing out to you come
20 November 1st. The adjutant and myself have talked this
21 over. We are look at getting the form prebuilt. We are
22 looking at getting a spreadsheet that I have already, and
23 we will fill it out and start doing that.

24 Since we have already appointed Mr. Taylor, I'm
25 going to give him the opportunity -- he's not even here

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1 right now. There he his.

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris,
3 District Commander, 5A. Do we have any hotels lined up?

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: No.

5 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Are we going to have
6 any hotels lined up?

7 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes.

8 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Thank you. When do
9 we get that information?

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: November 1st, if
11 they'll work with me.

12 Mike, would you like to say something? Since you
13 are our newly elected -- or, our appointed -- approved,
14 yeah, you're approved. You're the approved guy now.

15 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Appointed
16 and approved.

17 DEPARTMENT ALTERNATE NECMAN TAYLOR: Thank you,
18 Commander.

19 And I thank you for the opportunity. I've always
20 been honored to serve the American Legion. I feel,
21 because there's been parallels, if you'll just bear with
22 me, I think I need to share my 31 years.

23 Of course, some of you know that I started in Post
24 88, Norman. For my first meeting, I was selected as the
25 adjutant. I took that with honor. Don Schulenberg was

1 glad that I did that. Flash forward a couple of years,
2 '97, I was going around. At that time, I lived in
3 Oklahoma City area, worked in the Oklahoma City area.
4 "Where's our district commander?" I put my name in the
5 hat. I was district commander '97-'99, and this is where
6 it gets real interesting.

7 At the end of that term, I had been called up to the
8 department headquarters, and that adjutant sitting next
9 to the NEC at the time, Lawrence Roy, I thought I was
10 going to be -- "Oh, do I get to run for district
11 commander another term, or do you want me to work up the
12 ladder?" Well, that wasn't said. They said, "Go home.
13 Raise your family. Come back after your career's over,
14 and we'll have plenty of work for you to do." Now, mind
15 you, I'm currently 55. So, technically, if I took that
16 advice, I'd still be at home doing my career.

17 Now let's flash forward. Leadership at the time,
18 there was an appointment made of the west side, and it
19 was a little bit different. We had department west and
20 department east, but then you had department vice west,
21 and you had department vice east. So the year I got
22 appointed, the next year I got elected for my full term.
23 So what they were doing then is the vice commander east
24 would run for commander one year, and then vice commander
25 west would run for commander the next year. Well, I was

1 department vice west, getting ready to run for another
2 term because it was department vice east's turn to run.
3 And I get a call on a cold winter night. That gentlemen
4 had a heart attack in his workshop, and the question
5 asked of me, "Are you ready to run?" And I said I was.
6 So that next year, I was department commander.

7 And in '07-'08, the adjutant I don't like to refer
8 to, we butted heads a couple of times. And they
9 determined that the last part of my term as commander,
10 that they were going to leave me on the outs to the point
11 where, when I was past -- immediate past department
12 commander, they took steps to have me removed as
13 immediate past department commander, and they put in the
14 previous guy. Why? Because I butted heads with that
15 adjutant I'm not going to mention.

16 I do [sic] that because there's new people here. I
17 just want you to know that, through the years, we've had
18 some issues, and the issues we have today are nothing
19 compared to that. To the point where I was on the -- at
20 the time, they called it the War Veterans Commission. I
21 was appointed to that, served on it for two years. And
22 it got to the point where that adjutant had made moves
23 within this body, the DEC, and they were going to put me
24 unbecoming of a Legionnaire and boot me out of the Legion
25 if I did not resign from the War Veterans Commission.

1 So that's how dedicated I am. I went and took that
2 to the governor, and I resigned from that position to
3 keep my membership with this body. No matter how out the
4 realms those things are, I'm still here. And I think I
5 needed to share some of that.

6 (Applause.)

7 DEPARTMENT ALTERNATE NECMAN TAYLOR: And I
8 needed to share that past with you. I kind of feel like
9 some guy at A.A.

10 (Laughter.)

11 DEPARTMENT ALTERNATE NECMAN TAYLOR: I am
12 honored to serve. I went up to the fall meetings. We
13 have a lot of great going on. A lot of things are going
14 on at the national level. I'm going to be honored and
15 proud to help us get to that step of Oklahoma National
16 Convention 2023. I'm going to help with that. And I
17 hope you help me with that as well.

18 But at this point, Charlie, I'm your A. NEC. I'm
19 willing to serve. I'm willing to help. And I'm here for
20 that. And I thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I'd like to add
23 something real quick to that. When we were in New
24 Orleans, again, remember I told you I was talking to Mark
25 Seavey, the AI, and they were asking me about the

1 appointment position, the names that I had. And I gave
2 them the five names that I was looking at. They made a
3 recommendation. Again, I listen to people. They made a
4 recommendation of the names that I had. Three of them
5 were past department commanders. I walked out of that
6 meeting and I said, "Okay. Past department commanders."
7 I looked at them hard -- health, education, things that I
8 had seen that I had noticed, sitting in the same position
9 you are since seven, eight years ago. Mike Taylor was
10 the first one that popped out. So there was no doubt who
11 I was going to select. Not a personal choice. Not
12 because, "Hey, we've been together. We've shook hands a
13 couple of time." It had nothing to do with that. It has
14 to do with what's good for this Legion. I do believe
15 that Mike Taylor is what's good for our Legion at this
16 point with his A. NEC abilities to go to National.

17 So thank you. Thank you again, Mike.

18 At this time, I would like to ask a motion or
19 entertain a motion to go into executive session to
20 discuss a couple of -- go ahead.

21 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: Before we leave and
22 go into executive session -- John Bloxom, Post 126 -- can
23 we make a determination of source for the raffle so we
24 can start working that?

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: John, would you

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1 make a motion on that for the source that you would like
2 to use?

3 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: John Bloxom, Post
4 126, Bristow. I make a motion that we go to the
5 Shooter's Shop and get ten guns identified within the
6 next week and deliver them to the department
7 headquarters.

8 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
9 District 1B Commander. I second that motion.

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Is there any
11 discussion?

12 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Is that who we normally
13 do now? I'm sorry.

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Yeah.

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct.

16 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, 2B. Sorry.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Is there any
18 discussion?

19 (No response.)

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All in favor, say
21 "aye."

22 COLLECTIVE GROUP: Aye.

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All opposed, same
24 sign.

25 (No response.)

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: John, would you
2 please contact Shooter's Shop and get us ten guns,
3 please?

4 DISTRICT FIRST VICE BLOXOM: I'll have you a
5 list by Thursday.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you.

7 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
8 District 1B Commander. Before we go into executive
9 session, you asked questions, and I'm lost in it. And
10 so, you talked about do we need to decide on how much
11 we're going to charge for registration. I'm not sure if
12 you were asking for us to make a motion. Are you just
13 going to go with 35? Is that something you guys decide?
14 I'm lost with the conversation.

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: You guys make that
16 decision.

17 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: So, today?

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We can make it
19 today or we can do it at --

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: We've got to get it
21 on the web, and the people have got to know --

22 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Can you make that
23 decision today? Because we don't know how much it costs
24 to have that --

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: I know. There's --

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Exactly.

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: So there's a cost.

3 And I don't know what we're voting on.

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: So when are you
5 getting us a cost?

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Well, we don't
7 know. That's the whole idea. That's why I said we
8 probably have to do a special request or e-mail.

9 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Sam
10 McPherson, Treasurer. I worked in the office and
11 volunteered in the office for a number of years. I do
12 not remember the registration costs being discussed at a
13 DEC meeting. I think -- and I could be off. I think the
14 registration for convention was higher, like \$35 or \$30.
15 I believe mid-winter was much cheaper, like \$10 or \$15 --

16 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: I thought so, too.

17 PDC MARTIN: Twenty.

18 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: -- from
19 whatever --

20 (Crosstalk.)

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I think the one we
22 seen was 25 the last time.

23 (Crosstalk.)

24 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: So can you do that
25 yourself? Is that what you're saying, Sam?

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1 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: I don't
2 think the DEC's ever chimed in on it.

3 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: It's always been --

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: I mean, Auxiliary is
5 putting the information out today at their meeting that
6 this is when it is and this is where it's at, so I'm not
7 sure why it....

8 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: It's always been --

9 (Crosstalk.)

10 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Who gave them that
11 information?

12 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: -- what the cost was and
13 what they needed to charge.

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Curtis Deer.

15 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: I'm bad about that. I'm
16 sorry. I apologize. I'm bad about that. Curtis Deer,
17 2B DEC. As long as I've been here, and I've not been
18 here for ages and ages, that's always been the department
19 to make that decision of what the costs are and what we
20 need to have to cover it. I don't ever -- I never heard
21 of the DEC making that call. So it's kind of....

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Usually, the DEC
23 just does the registration. But I want to make sure that
24 you understand. So whatever we come up, and it won't be
25 me, I'll just approve it. But whatever comes up, that's

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1 what it's going to be.

2 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: But I do have one
3 concern.

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Fire away.

5 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: If the cost is so cheap
6 that, you know, you've set registration at \$10, next year
7 somebody's going to go, "Whoa, why is it 25 now?" You
8 know? We keep it even, we make a little money here, you
9 know, whatever, that's fine. We can allocate it
10 somewhere.

11 (Crosstalk.)

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. Again,
13 I will make the request to go into executive session. I
14 need a motion.

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Commander? Jack
16 Sikes, 3B. Are you planning on coming back into New
17 Business, or are we finished with New Business?

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Unless somebody's
19 got something else, we're finished.

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: I have.

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Okay.

22 DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: VSO Committee. You
23 brought VSOs up. I've heard scuttlebutt that there is
24 VSO training scheduled for March. I'm wanting to know
25 who, what, when, where, and why, and where's the

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1 committee.

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I have not heard
3 that.

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B. Where
5 are we at on the VSO SOP?

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: It's being reviewed
7 this week with Philip Dew (phonetic). If you don't know
8 who that is, that is our American Legion liaison out of
9 Washington who deals with Bourbon Moore (phonetic), which
10 is a law firm in order to get your Office of General
11 Counsel number, blah, blah, blah. It is being reviewed
12 by those. I asked that it be reviewed by someone other
13 than this department. If it works, if he's satisfied
14 with it, then I would have no problem signing it off, and
15 we would have an SOP for VSOs and this department. At
16 which point in time, then we would roll them into, what I
17 guess we're discussing ahead of time, the training which,
18 as far as I know, has not been put out to me or to the
19 adjutant.

20 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
21 District 1B Commander. Hayden, you were on the e-mail
22 where they responded to me and said it was March, so it
23 has been put out by the VSOs.

24 And I make a motion that we form a VSO committee
25 today.

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1 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Can I ask who that
2 e-mail went to? Because I certainly didn't see it as a
3 district commander.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, I didn't see it,
5 either.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: I didn't see it.

7 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: I made a motion, so
8 I don't know if I can answer that also.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 1: Yes, it's --

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: No.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 1: -- important
12 information.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 3: You can ask it in
14 discussion.

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: I'll ask it in
16 discussion.

17 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: So I'm waiting for a
18 second.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. I have
20 a motion.

21 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B. Second.

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I have a second to
23 make a motion to have a VSO council established. Is
24 there any discussion?

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: So, as district

1 commander, I have been, ever since summer convention,
2 trying to put together some kind of training on our side
3 of the state because everything is in Oklahoma City. I
4 had volunteered my veteran center. So it didn't go to
5 everybody. It was me, as a district commander, asking
6 the VSOs, and I always include Patricia, Woody, and
7 Hayden in communications, so it was just that group of
8 people, and it was by me.

9 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Shouldn't it be a
10 department effort?

11 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Well, I'm just
12 saying that it was me asking could we get something on
13 our side of the state. It was me asking what are the
14 levels of training, because we have questions. We need
15 to know what do you have to have done to get to the next
16 training. I hear there's VSOs that have been to all of
17 the training that still aren't certified. It was me
18 asking questions as a district commander.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Let me clarify.
20 That was an e-mail from a district commander to the
21 department and to the east side. Again, as far as Bill
22 Trice, as far as Mike Massey, as far as Don Pavletich,
23 the has been no discussion on that from the department.

24 (Crosstalk.)

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: I've got something

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1 else to say.

2 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: We're still in
3 discussion.

4 MR. MCNEAL: There is a motion on the floor.

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We're in the
6 discussion phase.

7 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: So we're offering
8 training (crosstalk) up the VSOs an opportunity --
9 (Crosstalk.)

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Say who you are.

11 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B.

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Silence.

13 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Say that again.

14 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Again. Again.
15 (Laughter.)

16 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B. If
17 there's training being offered in the department, we need
18 to open it up to all the department, not just the east.
19 Once again, we're separating it. If someone wants to
20 travel to the east side where it's being offered, then
21 they can drive over there. But you need to make that
22 opportunity, if we're using department resources, to all.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Amen.

24 DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: But if we're --
25 (crosstalk) -- talking about it for conversation and

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1 there's going to be an opportunity, sure.

2 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: But I don't think
3 there's been any.

4 DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: I'm Rick Redden,
5 the adjutant. As the supervisor of the paid DSO and
6 assistant DSO, I look forward to forming a committee that
7 I recommend that the adjutant, by title, not by person,
8 be made a permanent part of said committee.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Yes.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 3: I agree. Absolutely.

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Larry Watson?

13 DISTRICT DEC REP WATSON: Larry Watson, 6B DEC.
14 I don't think we need to vote on whether or not you can
15 form a committee. You can appoint a chairman. You can
16 select the committee. They can select the committee.
17 But that's not something we need to put to a vote.

18 When we do bring it to this body for a vote, we
19 should have some sort of curriculum for approval, and
20 then I think it would be incumbent upon us to be in
21 agreement on that, statewide.

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Correct. That's
23 why we're looking at getting an SOP signed -- or,
24 approved or looked at by the National Veteran Service
25 Officer Phillip Dew (phonetic).

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1 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Didn't we do a
2 resolution -- Curtis Deer, 2B. Didn't we do a resolution
3 in forming this committee at the DEC at the last
4 convention? There was a resolution that we voted on to
5 include this into the constitution that we would have a
6 VSO committee, if I remember right. You know, I've slept
7 a few times and had a couple of glasses of whiskey, so
8 maybe I've missed something.

9 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Curtis, at this
10 point, I would have to defer to -- let me check first.
11 Because I do kind of recall, but I cannot remember that
12 exactly.

13 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: I can't remember if --

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: So let me -- yeah.
15 Let me take a look at that, and I will e-mail everybody,
16 the DEC, what I find out.

17 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Okay. Because that
18 would resolve all of this.

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I don't want to put
20 something out that I may not know for sure.

21 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: And that would be
22 appointed by the commander and approved by the DEC.

23 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Currently, we have
24 a motion on the floor unless the motion want to be
25 rescinded.

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1 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: The motion is?

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: That motion is that
3 we form a committee of VSOs. If there's no further
4 discussion, we'll take a vote.

5 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: But the resolution
6 already says --

7 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Well, we don't
8 know. I don't know for sure. We'll have to take a look,
9 like I said.

10 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Do I pull it back?

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: You can if you want
12 to, but I can't force it.

13 (Crosstalk.)

14 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: Mike Kerr, DEC.
15 Section -- Article X, Section 6: The Department
16 Executive Committee shall appoint such subcommittees as
17 may be required by the department constitution or as may
18 be deemed necessary. The Department Executive Committee
19 shall also appointment from among its members a
20 subcommittee for fundraising activities. Such
21 subcommittee shall be chaired by the department senior
22 vice commander.

23 The important part is the Department Executive
24 Committee shall appoint such subcommittees as may be
25 required by the department constitution or deemed

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1 necessary.

2 MS. MYERS: And if I understand, he can appoint
3 the chairs.

4 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: That is correct.

5 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Say that again,
6 please, for the record.

7 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The commander will
8 appoint the chair, based off of that information, for the
9 veteran service officers.

10 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: She wants to get your
11 name for the record.

12 MS. MYERS: Oh. Sue Myers, Parliamentarian.

13 DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: So, again, that was
14 Article X, Section 6.

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Karen Cruice,
16 District 1B Commander. I'll rescind my motion with the
17 preface that we've got to get these committees formed.
18 July was a long time ago. There's a lot that needs to
19 happen. And we need a committee list that you approved
20 because some of us volunteered, but I'm not doing
21 anything with what I've volunteered because I've never
22 seen if I was appointed as the chair. We've got to move
23 forward.

24 MS. MYERS: Why would she rescind that motion?

25 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: Because you're

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1 saying that he appoints it.

2 MS. MYERS: No.

3 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: No, no.

4 MS. MYERS: No, no, no, no, no.

5 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: He appoints the chair.

6 DISTRICT DEC REP KEER: So, again, Mike Kerr,
7 DEC 4. The Department Executive Committee shall appoint
8 subcommittees. So this body is responsible for approving
9 subcommittees. Of which, the one you requested, would
10 require approval by this governing body.

11 DISTRICT COMMANDER CRUICE: But we don't know if
12 they were already approved.

13 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: The commander appoints
14 the chairman of that committee.

15 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, 2B. The
16 resolution was that we would include, as a subcommittee,
17 the VSO committee. So that falls under that category.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But we don't know if --

19 MS. MYERS: I was just stating that he appoints
20 the chair of such committee.

21 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER CRUICE: With us not having
22 minutes from the last meeting, then I'll keep my motion,
23 or my whatever.

24 (Crosstalk.)

25 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER CRUICE: No, I don't want

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1 to withdraw it.

2 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We need a VSO
3 committee. I am all behind what she's saying. Do not
4 think that I'm not. Do not think that I'm trying to
5 subvert this.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Call for the vote,
7 please.

8 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Call for the vote.

9 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We have discussion.
10 Is there any further discussion?

11 (No response.)

12 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All in favor, say
13 "aye."

14 COLLECTIVE GROUP: Aye.

15 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All opposed, same
16 sign.

17 (No response.)

18 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: The ayes have it.
19 We will have a committee, and I will appoint it. You
20 will have that information by the end of next week.

21 Any New Business? Anything else before we move on
22 and go into executive session?

23 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: What
24 about a break?

25 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: A break?

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: You want a break?

2 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Before the executive
3 session. Or do you want to do that motion before?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can restroom in five
5 minutes.

6 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: I'll give you ten.

7 All rise. HAND SALUTE. TWO. Ten minutes.

8 (WHEREUPON, a ten-minute recess was held.

9 Thereafter, the following transpired:)

10 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All rise. With the
11 Colors of our nation in place, HAND SALUTE. TWO. Please
12 be seated.

13 I will now entertain a motion to go into executive
14 session.

15 DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: I make that motion.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Motion made by Mike
17 Harris, Post 1340.

18 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, 2B.

19 Second.

20 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: We do not have a
21 sergeant-at-arms. If you are not a member of the DEC,
22 you must leave the room, with the exception of two
23 people. That would John McNeal and Steve Harris --
24 Thomas.

25 (WHEREUPON, the DEC entered executive from 2:45

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1 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and then a brief recess was held from
2 4:00 p.m. to 4:10 p.m. Thereafter, the following
3 transpired:)

4 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: With the Colors of
5 our nation place, HAND SALUTE. TWO. Please be seated.
6 We're out of executive session.

7 DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER MCPHERSON: Sam
8 McPherson, Department Treasurer. I would move that we
9 increase the assistant department service officer's
10 salary from \$30,500 to \$32,500, an increase of \$2,000.

11 DISTRICT DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, 2B DEC. I
12 make a second on that.

13 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: There will be no
14 discussion. All in favor, say "aye."

15 COLLECTIVE GROUP: Aye.

16 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All opposed, same
17 sign.

18 (No response.)

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Motion carried.
20 Thank you very much.

21 (Crosstalk.)

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. At this
23 time, does anyone have anything good for the Legion? The
24 membership shall be permitted to make suggestions of any
25 kind, character, or description, save religion, or

1 partisan politics.

2 Believe it or not, this is actually choreographed.
3 It may not seem like it.

4 DISTRICT COMMANDER MAY: Elmo May, District 7,
5 Post 146. I'm going to bring some good news to y'all,
6 though. The last time I came and talked to you, we were
7 going to close Post 117 in Hobart. That's not going to
8 happen. We went down. I sent letters out in June. I
9 got some response back on it. We had a meeting on
10 September 12th. I had four members of ten, three
11 members, one non-member, but he was a veteran. He said,
12 "Listen." He said, "So what can I do?" We already got
13 the paperwork sent up to get him to be a member of the
14 Legion. As soon as we get that back and he's a member,
15 I'm going to get with him and mentor him, get him to
16 either be the commander or the adjutant, whichever one he
17 wants to be. I'm going to let him choose that. Give him
18 ideas on both of them, and get him going on the right
19 track. He said he's already got four people to sign up
20 as soon as he gets everything done. So, hopefully, we
21 get Hobart back on track and they start meeting like the
22 posts do and doing what they're supposed to in the
23 community.

24 And then, as soon as we get that done, we have to do
25 something about the building down there. That building

1 is -- there's no way that post can afford how much it's
2 going to take to fix that building. I know they've got a
3 lien against it right now because of some work that was
4 done on it. They're going to have to raise some funds to
5 take care of the lien.

6 But right now, we're on track to keep the Hobart
7 post open.

8 (Applause.)

9 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you, Elmo.
10 That's what needs to happen.

11 There's also the ability that we need to start
12 increasing the posts in our department. Over the years,
13 I have watched post after post after post close.

14 The Sons is working on their triple -- the Triple
15 Nickle?

16 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Triple Nickle.

17 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Trying to get five
18 new posts to reach their 80 percent goal. And what was
19 the other?

20 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: One hundred
21 and five.

22 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: One hundred and
23 five percent. That's right.

24 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Five new
25 squadrons.

1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: And they're well on
2 the way. I've got two new squadrons here on the back of
3 the podium right now.

4 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Commander?

5 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes?

6 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: May I?

7 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes, you can.
8 Please. By all means.

9 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Steve Thomas,
10 Detachment Commander for the SAL Detachment of Oklahoma.
11 So, on what Commander Woods is referring to, so, as of
12 our 10/16 goal, which was actually ran on 10/14, the
13 Detachment of Oklahoma was already 67 members over goal,
14 which obviously looks good now, but we started on five
15 last year, and then we know how membership works on that.

16 So, as Commander Woods said, he has two charter
17 applications right there which will add an additional 24
18 members, 14 coming from the newly elected squadron out of
19 Chelsea, Squadron 60. Laverne, 273, has ten numbers,
20 with the paperwork right there. Heavener, Squadron 188,
21 has their paperwork ready to go. It will be submitted to
22 Department in about three weeks. And Coweta, 266, the
23 application was submitted during the spring but somehow
24 disappeared and is being researched currently by our new
25 department adjutant now that we have somebody in place to

1 track that down and get it back on place.

2 So, for 2025 administrative year, that puts us at
3 our four squadrons out of the five that we need. That
4 will take our membership goal, once all these pending 35
5 applications, 45 applications go through, that should
6 take us up into the 45 percent range, which will actually
7 put us right up there in our region with Iowa and the
8 Dakotas. So the detachment is looking superb out of the
9 gate so far.

10 I had the pleasure of going up to the NEC earlier
11 this month with PNC Rick Cook and NECman Chris Cook. We
12 had a good time talking with the membership of our region
13 up there. Our new region commander -- so we were in a
14 membership meeting in the spring, and basically light a
15 fire under our rear ends on the call with about 30 other
16 people, reminding us that "Oklahoma, you stink." So
17 we're not going to let that happen again. So the
18 membership chair, Senior Vice Commander Chris Sherbourne
19 and myself, we're pushing hard for that Triple Nickel.
20 If Iowa can get seven of them with 3.2 million residents
21 in their state -- Oklahoma as 4.2 million -- we're going
22 to get our Triple Nickel this year.

23 That's all I've got, sir. That is my report.

24 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Thank you, sir.

25 (Applause.)

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1 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: When you are out
2 recruiting, do not just recruit for the T.A.L, recruit
3 for the family, everybody. We need to get better. We
4 need to get stronger.

5 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Commander, I
6 think out membership for the SAL had his hand up as well.
7 If you --

8 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Yes, he did.

9 SAL DETACHMENT MEMBERSHIP SHERBOURNE: I was
10 just reminding you of the other squadron you hadn't
11 mentioned, but you did.

12 SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Oh. I was
13 getting there.

14 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: All right. Is
15 there any further business to come before this meeting?
16 I know you're tired. I know you want to go home. If
17 not, keep pushing. Remember, if you want a trophy, give
18 me 200 percent. You're guaranteed to have it. All
19 right? Push, push, push. It's a goal. It's not a --
20 it's not a diehard, but it is a goal.

21 All rise. Remove your cover. Who would I like to
22 pick on today?

23 Mike Kerr, can you give us our benediction, please?

24 DISTRICT DEC REP KERR: Dear Heavenly Father, we
25 thank you for allowing us to come here and congregate.

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1 We thank you for allowing us to discuss the veterans and
2 improve the veterans' lives in Oklahoma. We ask that you
3 be with us as we go home. Improve our posts, our
4 districts, and the veterans in our communities for the
5 betterment of them and Oklahoma and the nation and the
6 country. We ask you to be with us as we vote, and
7 hopefully everyone will, and they're conscious for God
8 and country.

9 In Your name I pray, Amen.

10 COLLECTIVE GROUP: Amen.

11 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: There will be a 3rd
12 DEC meeting -- administrative year for 2024 will be held
13 at the mid-winter, starting the 16th through the 18th of
14 January.

15 Curtis Deer, will you please sergeant-at-arms and
16 please remove the POW/MIA.

17 (WHEREUPON, the POW/MIA chair cover was removed.
18 Thereafter, the following transpired:)

19 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Till we meet again,
20 let us remember our obligation to our community, state,
21 and nation can only be fulfilled by the faithful
22 performance of all duties of citizenship. Let service to
23 the community, state, and nation be ever a main objective
24 of the American Legion and its members. Let us be ever
25 watchful of the honor of our country, our organization,

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1 and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path
2 of justice, freedom, and democracy.

3 Re-cover. Face the flag. HAND SALUTE. TWO.

4 I now declare the 2024-2025 DEC 2 for the Department
5 of Oklahoma adjourned.

6 (WHEREUPON, the DEC meeting held July 19, 2024,
7 was concluded at 1621 hours.)
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2ND DEC MEETING


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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF OKLAHOMA)
) SS:
COUNTY OF MUSKOGEE)

I, JESSYCA GUERRA, Certified Shorthand Reporter within and for the State of Oklahoma, do hereby certify that the meeting held October 19, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., at 400 S. Vermont Avenue, Suite 110, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was taken by me in stenotype and thereafter transcribed by computer, is true and correct; that I am not an attorney for or a relative of either party, or otherwise interested in this action.

WITNESS MY HAND THIS 31st day of October, 2024.



Jessyca Guerra, CSR #2027

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