THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA, INC.

******

SUMMER CONVENTION

REGULAR SESSION

1ST DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (DEC) MEETING

GRAND CASINO & RESORT, 777 GRAND CASINO BOULEVARD

SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA 74804

July 13, 2025

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(Meeting called to order at 14:03 hours.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: We will call this meeting to order. You can all rise, please.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LAGER: Hand salute. Two.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Please uncover.

Chaplain Stewart, will you please offer us an invocation, please?

DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN STEWART: Let's pray.

God, we're humbled and honored today to be part of the 2025-2026 year for the American Legion.

We're also thankful for the positive report of Past Department Commander Jim Quinn being revived and brought back to us in this meeting today.

Now we ask that you would give us direction for this new year that we face. Bless every part of leadership, we pray, from the Department to the posts.

We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen.

COLLECTIVE GROUP: Amen.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: As part of honoring our brothers and sisters who are POWs and MIAs, Sergeant-at-Arms.

(WHEREUPON, the POW/MIA chair cover was placed and a moment of silence was observed.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Please join me in

reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

(WHEREUPON, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Re-cover. And, again, I will apologize. This, obviously, is a transition day. A lot of us didn't know where we were going to be an hour and a half ago, so we're trying to get caught up.

But please join me in reciting the preamble of the Constitution of the American Legion.

(WHEREUPON, the preamble of the American Legion Constitution was recited by all.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I now declare the Department of Oklahoma administrative year '25-'26 DEC 1 convened for whatever business comes before us.

All right. So I was speaking with our fearless Adjutant sitting here. We are aware that there are several positions within our department of leadership that have transitioned with the transition of convention concluding.

So, please, if you are a newly elected officer, please rise and identify yourself to the Adjutant.

DEC REP GORDON: Debra Gordon, District 1A DEC, Post 195.

DISTRICT COMMANDER FISHER: Andrew Fisher,

District 1B Commander.

DEC REP TYLER: David Tyler, District 3A DEC.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Excuse me. 3B?

DEC REP TYLER: 3A.

DEC REP AKIN: James Akin, 3B DEC.

DEC REP THOMAS: Danny Thomas, District 5B, District Representative.

DEC REP SCHACHER: Dave Schacher, District 5B Vice Commander.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Those newly elected officers and position holders, please come forward to be sworn in.

(Complied)

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: While he's looking, would you like me to sing?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Actually, with that said, I actually would. We need to sing "Happy Birthday" to Ms. Patricia Mathes-Kerr.

(Complied)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Newly elected officers, if you would, please raise your right hand, repeat after me, your name where I state my name.

(WHEREUPON, the all Newly Elected Officers were administered the following oath of office:)

NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS: "I," (stated names),

"do solemnly pledge myself to perform faithfully and impartially the duties of the office of the American Legion I am about to assume, and I further pledge I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government."

Please, lower your hands, turn around and face your fellow members.

(Applause)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The Adjutant will now call roll.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Senior Vice Commander Shirley May.

DEPARTMENT SENIOR VC MAY: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Vice Commander East Karen Cruice.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Vice Commander West Lance Larson.

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Chaplain Bobby Stewart.

DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN STEWART: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Finance Officer Sam McPherson.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON:

Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Judge Advocate Curtis Dale Haynes.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Historian Wayne Flowers.

DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN FLOWERS: Present.

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

DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LAGER: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Surgeon John Loose.

DEPARTMENT SURGEON LOOSE: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Adjutant Rick Redden, present.

National Executive Committeeman Charlie O'Leary.

NECMAN O'LEARY: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Alternate NEC Michael Taylor.

PDC MARTIN: He's here. He just went to the restroom.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He stepped out, yeah.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: We'll count him.

Representative to the Oklahoma Veterans Commission Brett Martin.

OVC REP MARTIN: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 1A Commander Karen Ritter.

DISTRICT COMMANDER RITTER: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 1B Commander Andrew Fisher.

DISTRICT COMMANDER FISHER: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 1A [sic] Commander Kayla Rector.

DISTRICT COMMANDER RECTOR: 2A Commander. Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Thank you.

2B Commander, Ken Rose.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 3A Gary Pierson.

DEC REP DEER: We have no commander.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER WOODS: Would you please come to the microphone?

DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, 2B DEC. We have no commander at the time. He had resigned due to health issues, so we have no 2B Commander.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 3A Commander Gary Pierson.

DISTRICT COMMANDER PIERSON: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 3B Commander Jack Sikes.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 4 Commander Thomas Snodgrass.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SNODGRASS: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 5A Commander Mike Harris.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 5B Commander Eric Grubbs.

DISTRICT COMMANDER GRUBBS: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 6A Commander Grant Brower.

DISTRICT FIRST VC DEVENITCH: Mike Devenithch filling in, Vice Commander.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 6B Commander James Rees.

DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 7 Commander Elmo.

DISTRICT COMMANDER MAY: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 8A Commander Joe Kingery.

DISTRICT COMMANDER KINGERY: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 8B Commander Wayne Flowers.

DISTRICT COMMANDER FLOWERS: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 1A DEC Rep Debbie Gordon.

DEC REP GORDON: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 1B DEC Rep Ron Bunch.

DEC REP BUNCH: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 2A DEC Rep Jim Quinn is excused.

2B DEC Rep Curtis Deer.

DEC REP BUNCH: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 3A DEC Rep David Tyler (pronouncing).

DEC REP SEYLER: Seyler.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Tyler (pronouncing).

DEC REP SEYLER: S-e-y-l-e-r.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 3A DEC Rep David Seyler.

DEC REP SEYLER: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 3B DEC Rep James Akin.

DEC REP AKIN: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 4 DEC Rep John Bloxom.

DEC REP BLOXOM: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 5A DEC Rep Danny Thomas. I'm sorry. That should be 5A DEC Rep Melvin Hopkins.

DEC REP HOPKINS: Here.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Thank you.

5B, Danny Thomas.

DEC REP THOMAS: Here.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 6A, Don Kuntze.

DEC REP KUNTZE: Here.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 6B, Larry Watson.

DEC REP WATSON: Here.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 7, Doug Hale.

DEC REP HALE: Here.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 8A DEC Rep Tina Kilmer.

DEC REP KILMER: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: 8B DEC Rep Jack Day.

DEC REP DAY: Present.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Would any Past Department Commanders please rise and identify themselves?

PDC MARTIN: Brett Martin, Post 12.

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

PDC TAYLOR: Michael Taylor, Post 12, Bethany-Warr Acres.

PDC BLOXOM: John Bloxom, Post 126, Bristow.

PDC KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, Post 353, Mustang.

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

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Thank you.

We have a quorum.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, Mr. Adjutant.

Because trying to work through this on the fly is going to slow things down, slower than if we take a five-minute break to try and coordinate with Past Department Commander Martin so I can get this slide show straight, we're going to take a five-minute recess.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LAGER: Hand salute. Two.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Please be back in five minutes.

(WHEREUPON, a brief recess was held from approximately 14:19 to 14:26. Thereafter, the following transpired:)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: With the Colors of our nation still in place, Sergeant-at-Arms.

DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LAGER: Hand salute.

Two.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I will now receive reports from our new department officers.

Senior Vice Commander Shirley May.

DEPARTMENT SENIOR VC COMMANDER MAY: Hi. Good afternoon. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you, and I look forward to working with each of you throughout the coming year.

(Applause)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Vice Commander East Karen Cruice.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Thank you for supporting me, those of you on the East. I really appreciate it.

I really don't have a lot to say, but I will be reaching out to you within the next week. So, if your communication online isn't correct, if you could get with me at the end of this, I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Vice Commander West Lance Larson.

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: Yes. Today, after I was elected, we got some programs already moving, and we'll be getting the information about these programs out to you. And I want to remind everybody, let's have fun. If we don't have fun, how are we going to get members?

So that's why I have to say thanks for electing me. I thank y'all a lot for the support, and let's have a good year. Thank you.

(Applause)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: NEC Charlie O'Leary.

NEC O'LEARY: Well, since we last met, the most momentous event that we've had has been our National Commander's visit, and I bring you greetings from National Commander James LaCoursiere from Connecticut, who was here along with his aide, Butch Hansen.

The National Commander's visit was originally scheduled for a six-day visit, which was kind of -- logistically, trying to figure out what we're going to do with no money and things like that.

And then we got a phone call from National that said the National Commander and his aide wanted to spend July 4th at their homes in Connecticut with their family. We were the third to the last Department to be visited. After us, it was Texas and North Dakota. So they're pretty tired from traveling, you know, 360 days out of the past year. So we said sure.

He arrived a week ago, Sunday, and we went to the Oklahoma City Comets game, where he threw out the first pitch. So he's in his early 70s, and the pitch went

right to the catcher at home plate, which is always impressive for old people.

(Laugher)

NEC O'LEARY: And then, we stayed at the Embassy Suites on Meridian because part of the rules when the National Commander comes to visit, you have to be at a facility that has dry cleaning and dry and laundry service available, and so, we did that.

The next morning, we stopped by Edmond. They had coffee and donuts, Post 111; drove to Post 50 in Tahlequah, which was the first time the National Commander had ever been to that historic post. And they had a taco salad dinner there.

The National Commander is really easy-going. His aide is the current adjutant of the Department of Connecticut and has been the adjutant for five or six years, so he has a critical eye on what's going on. He took a leave of absence. So, probably, with the National Commander, we could have sat on our heads and wiggled our ears, and he would have thought "Oh, okay," but the aide would have probably written us up or something.

So then we went to Northeaster State University to see their veterans memorial monument that they have have there. It's really a unique thing. It has all of the services in bronze cast with stone monuments for the

veterans in Cherokee County who have passed away.

We did have something set up with the Tribe, with the Cherokees, with Chief Hoskin, but they canceled at the last moment, and we ended up at a Cherokee Nation job fair on the campus there, and it was informational. We got to meet a lot of veterans. Most of them weren't Legion members, and we passed out membership cards -- or, applications for that.

Then we went to Post 17 in Sand Springs. They had the city council there that gave a proclamation. That was pretty good. We had torrential downpours, with rain, driving on 412. If any of you have done that, that's bodacious. And both the guys from Connecticut didn't know that it rained in Oklahoma. We said, "Well, usually it doesn't, but here it is."

So the next morning we went to Grove. So just by word of explanation, when the National Commander comes to visit, we try to visit the home post of the current commander, who is Hayden Woods from 164 and Post 39. In the southeast section, we had originally set up to go to Tishomingo, visit the Chickasaw Nation capital; Ardmore, with the veterans and the cemetery down there.

The current Auxiliary National President is Trish Ward, who is from -- she lives in Grove. She's a part of Auxiliary Department of Kansas, but lives in Grove.

So these two have been traveling for the past year with their paths intersecting, along with the Sons Commander, and she's been bragging what a great place Oklahoma is and Grove is the bright and shinning star of Northeast Oklahoma, and he wanted to go see that. So when the National Commander wants to do something, of course, we do our best to go ahead and do that.

So we went up there. That turned out, really, pretty good. She was there, with her schedule. It's unusual to have the National Legion and the National Auxiliary work together with scheduling. Sometimes that doesn't always happen.

We did get to do all the things we had planned. We went to the F-4 park in Grove. That was pretty good, but it started raining. So we had to do the dinner with the gift portion. And we went to Claremore and stopped at Rogers State University and gave them a tour of OMBA and the memorials there, where we have Oklahoma Boys State, which is the best in the nation. He and the aide were impressed with that. And Ray Watts from Post 2020 was there to see us on that.

They went back to the hotel. The next morning, they were supposed leave, and at 11 o'clock at night, they got a phone call. The airlines had canceled their flights. They were going to fly from Tulsa International to

Austin, but because of the floods down there and the additional rain, the airlines had canceled the flight Wednesday night, and they left Thursday, then, to go down there and do that. So that turned out pretty good.

We did take up collections for the Veterans and Children fund and collections for the folks in Kerrville, Texas, because the Sons and the Legion are helping with rescue support activities down there. So we've been busy with that.

So we're just to drop a hint with the Adjutant and with the New Commander: Try and not have the National Commander visit adjacent to the Department Convention coming right after it. It's always better to try and have a break in there so we can do that.

So the final thing I would do [sic], I was really glad to see the Be the One training that we had today. As you know, I've been passing out the Be the One cards, and I'm going to keep on doing that. I think every post, every unit, ever squadron, every detachment or a chapter needs to have that Be the One card. When a veteran calls you, you will know what to do to get them help.

And finally, please go to Legion.org/action for the Grassroots training every morning, and there's about 15 to 20 bills that the Legion is supporting, and let our national senators and representative from your district

know to support that.

Thank you.

(Applause)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Just to follow up on what NEC O'Leary said, a bunch of members from our posts were chaotically busy Monday and Tuesday morning, getting ready for the National visit, and then, obviously, spent all day with them, and turned around and headed up here Wednesday. So I like the idea of doing it sometime other than right there.

Alternate NEC/PDC Mike Taylor.

ALTERNATE NEC TAYLOR: Good afternoon.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Good afternoon.

ALTERNATE NEC TAYLOR: Yesterday I was saying good morning into the night, but, hopefully, we don't have to do that today.

(Laughter)

ALTERNATE NEC TAYLOR: It's a great opportunity to start a new year, and I'm excited about the future. My main thing would be that, by resolution, we still have, at National level, a chaplain. Before National, we have a National Vice Commander Resolution with Brett Martin, and we still have our National Commander Resolution with Tim Smith. So it's always good to keep that on the forefront and to know that the donations can

still come in. And we're going to move forward with that and work to -- when National is ready for us, we'll be ready for them. Because there's a two- or three-year window where we have to step it up as a state and do receptions, be all hands on deck at all the meetings, and we'll be ready for that.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get with John Bloxom, John McNeal, or myself, and we'll walk through that with you.

Thank you.

(Applause)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, sir.

Adjutant Redden.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: I have just a couple of things that I need you guys to, when we get to the right point, to make some motions about. The first one is I have two options for next year's Summer Convention. Option one is right back here on July 9th through the 12th. The other option is instruct me to go seek some other location, and, of course, we won't be able to approve that until later in the year, if we go that way. So, please, someone make a motion to either do it here again one year from this weekend or instruct me to seek somewhere else.

The second thing is that all of you should have

gotten some information about what we need to do to finish our application for the 501(c)(3). Please bring that up. Jared's here to answer our questions and move that along.

The third thing is really not a motion. It's setting dates for fall district meetings. We can do that now or later.

What's your sense, Commander? Should we take care of the fall district meetings now or give them a few minutes to think about it?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I would assume that when you get done with your report, give the district commanders ten minutes to self-discuss and try to fill in the dates that you picked out so that we can try and accommodate what post events are going on around those different dates.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Okay.

So you all got an e-mail, District Commanders, about the order in which I'm going to ask you for your dates, and I will quickly give you the dates that are available: September 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th are available; October 18th and 25th are available; and any Saturday in November, but let's not do Thanksgiving weekend.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Or Veterans Day weekend, preferably.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: And that's my report, Commander.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you. Commissioner Brett Martin.

OVC REP MARTIN: Nothing for the report at this time, Commander.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, sir. Judge Advocate.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: No report, Commander, but I do want to express my appreciation to not only you, but all of your posts for -- (indiscernible).

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Mr. McPherson.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: All right. I think most of it, we covered. We covered it the other day. However, there are a couple of things I did want to bring up.

Thank you very much to our Adjutant Rick Redden. For whatever reason, because of different things, people being drunk and belligerent and getting dropped as our accounting firm or doing accounting for one year and then ghosting us the next, for a variety of reasons, Rick was able to go back, and he was able to engage an accounting firm to catch us up on our 990s. Because, if we would have gone past this year, we would have, in effect, lost our non-profit status because our 990s were not up to

date.

So he actively took the bull by the horns, and he got an accounting firm, and they got our 990s turned in. So this year just finished, so, of course, those aren't due for probably another four months. But he did get that accomplished when, for whatever reason, we couldn't get it accomplished before.

He also engaged a company to do our audits, and we actually had a meeting with them in our office recently and exchanged a lot of information. They believe that --

For years, we've operated on an accrual format, and we kind of had to do that for a couple of different reasons. One of the reasons was we had a government requirement to do an annual audit. Well, right now, that law has changed. We no longer have a requirement from the State of Oklahoma to do an annual audit. We still have a requirement in our Constitution and By-Laws to do an audit.

Well, they've looked at that. They've looked at how we do business, and they said, "Even though you do a few things that are accrual type," we actually operate on what they call a modified cash basis. And they are giving us some guidance and instruction that, going forward, we should be able to operate more simply, and simpler accounting methods, and it should actually help

us in accounting and knowing the real financial picture of our money, because we don't really deal with accounts receivable and accounts payable.

(Cough)

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Bless you.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: We do have a few things where they cover two different fiscal years, typically with Boys State and with Baseball. But they said we can operate on a modified cash basis, and it should simplify our accounting practices and make it simpler for us and actually give us a more accurate picture of what our money really is.

And I really thank Rick. I know he'll say, "All I did was make a couple of phone calls." But when others couldn't get it done, he got it done.

So, thank you very much, Mr. Adjutant.

(Applause)

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: And I know there was some other things, but I can't think of them off the top my head, but if anybody has any questions, I'll be glad to entertain any questions.

Yes, ma'am?

DEC REP GORDON: Do we have a budget to approve today, or did y'all do it Friday?

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON:

No, we didn't.

DEC REP GORDON: I'm sorry. I forgot I was in a DEC meeting. This is my first one back.

Debbie Gordon, DEC 1A. Do we have a budget to approve today, or do y'all do that Friday?

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: No. They had a budget. Because it wasn't balanced, they did not want to present it. They want us to go back to the drawing board and redo it.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: We'll be working this week at Headquarters, trying to work some of this out.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Continuing resolution?

PDC MARTIN: Yes.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Okay.

Yes, we need to have -- if you want to --

PDC MARTIN: Brett Martin, Past Department Commander. At this point, Sam, we need a continuing resolution in order to go ahead, legally.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Okay. I move that we adopt a continuing resolution in order to pay the bills until we have a budget in place.

PDC MARTIN: You should give yourself a time

limit of 30 or 45 days, sir.

Once again, Brett Martin, Past Department Commander.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Forty-five day. So, within 45 days, have a budget out to be approved.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER HARRIS: When? Don't say "within 45 day."

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Okay. Okay.

(Crosstalk)

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: September 15th.

PDC MARTIN: Could you restate your motion again? Brett Martin, Past Department Commander. Can you restate your motion, please?

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: All right. Continuing resolution in order to pay the bills, that we continue to do that until a budget is approved, no later than September 15th.

DISTRICT COMMANDER PIERSON: District 3A, Gary Pierson, District Commander. I second the motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion on the floor and a second. Any discussion?

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A Commander.

Rick, was September 15th one of the dates for conferences?

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: No. It would be the 13th, if with we do one that weekend. September 13th would be a Saturday.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Okay. Thank you.

PDC MARTIN: Past Department Commander Brett Martin. Are you going to do a line item budget review? If so, when?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: That is to be scheduled, but it will be ASAP.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: Dale Haynes, Judge Advocate. I just want to make sure that the intent of the resolution is to only pay essential bills between now and September 15th.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Karen Cruice, Vice East. I'm assuming that we all have to approve that, so shouldn't the date that we pick be aligned with a meeting? Or do we have to have an emergency meeting? And that's almost two months, also, the 15th.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A Commander.

Ms. Cruice, the date on the 15th is for the Finance Committee to go through the budget and figure out a proposed budget to bring to the DEC, and it still has to

be approved, but this has to go -- the Finance Committee has to get into the middle of it and dig it out, get rid of all the extra expenses that we feel, as a Finance Committee, and then it will have to be put together and then presented to the DEC.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Someone has to yield to me; right? Because I've already spoken.

PDC SMITH: Tim Smith, Post 20. I think the Finance Officer's asking to September 15th to get it done, not to set a meeting that day.

Am I correct?

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Correct.

PDC SMITH: Okay. So we're arguing about the wrong things. He's got until September 15th to get it done. That's not setting a meeting date or nothing yet; correct?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: That's correct, sir.

PDC SMITH: Thank you very much, sir.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, sir.

PDC MARTIN: Past Department Commander Brett Martin. So, if I understand what's on the floor right now, September 15th is the date --

(Crosstalk)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Please, off to the side.

LEGIONNAIRE MCNEAL: Sidebar, we can't hear.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry.

PDC MARTIN: If I understand correctly, right now, the Finance has until September 15th to get it done. Based on what Judge Advocate General Haynes said, he only wants to have essential bills paid between now and then, and very shortly, we will have a date to do a complete line item budget review.

Is that where we stand?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Roger.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Karen Cruice, Vice Commander East. The motion on the floor is to approve a temporary budget until --

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Continuing resolution.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: -- a continuing resolution until -- how do I say it?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: To clarify --

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Doesn't it have to go until we approve a budget? I mean, don't you need spending power, or are we going to have another motion to, after the Finance Committee --

Brett, can you explain to me? Do you see what I'm

asking?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: To clarify it, there is a continuing resolution motion to allow us to pay the essential bills that must be paid between now and September 15th, by that time, in which, we will have the budget ready to present at the next, following, date following September 15th, whether it be DEC 2 or a Special DEC.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: But that window -- so, you get it all done. Everything's done by the 15th, but if we don't meet until, say, the 30th, we can't spend any bills in those 15 days? I'm just asking.

PDC MARTIN: Past Department Commander Martin. Karen, we have the ability to do an e-mail vote on this, if need be.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further discussion? Hearing none, somebody call for a vote, please.

DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B Commander. I call for a vote.

PDC MARTIN: Past Department Commander Martin, I second that motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. So, for clarification --

(Crosstalk)

PDC MARTIN: I'm not voting. I have a voice, but I don't vote.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Are you clear? Are you clear, Vice East?

(Crosstalk)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. All in favor of passing the current resolution that is on the floor for a continuing resolution, say "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All opposed, same sign.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Aye.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nay.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

I will now receive any other reports from commissions or committees.

I'll recognize Boys State, Barton Looper and Brian DeGraeve.

BOYS STATE ASST. DIRECTOR LOOPER: Thank you, Mr. Commander.

Bart Looper, (indiscernible) as Assistant Director, Oklahoma American Legion Boys State.

DEC REP KUNTZE: Bart, could you step up to the mic, please sir?

BOYS STATE ASST. DIRECTOR LOOPER: Bart Looper,

Assistant Director, Oklahoma American Legion Boys State.

Mr. Commander, we have a couple of things today. Starting off with the Boys State, just as we're on the heels of talking about budget, I would like to ask for a quick review and approval of the Boys State budget for the year. This is largely exactly the same as it has been the previous several years -- revenue, based on delegate fees, mainly, and all the normal expenditures that are all, like I said, largely similar to past years.

So I would ask this body if they could approve our budget for the year.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Sam McPherson, Department Treasurer. I move we accept the Boys State budget as presented.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you.

DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, 6B Commander.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion on the floor and a second to approve the Oklahoma American Legion Boys State budget for 2025-2026.

Any discussion?

DEC REP DEER: You said there was a few things different. What are those, specifically?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Identify yourself.

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

BOYS STATE ASST. DIRECTOR LOOPER: When I say, "largely similar --"

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Pardon. Did you get his comments with his name?

THE STENOGRAPHER: Yes.

BOYS STATE ASST. DIRECTOR LOOPER: Mr. Commander, to answer the question, when I say "largely similar," I mean almost exactly the same. It's more the budget is the same. The ending expenditures will be off by dollars because things don't cost exactly $3,000. So this is big bulk numbers and everything just based on the cost.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further discussion? Any further discussion? Hearing none, all in favor of approving the budget, say "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

BOYS STATE FINANCE OFFICER LOOPER: Okay. Mr. Commander, moving on to stepping into my Finance Officer for the Sons of the American Legion, this is the proposed Sons of the American Legion budget that was approved at the Detachment Convention yesterday by the

Detachment that we come and ask for the DEC's approval on it. The SAL dues, being the largest part of the proposed income, which is the exact same number of members as we had in the previous year, and expenses are, like I said, largely similar. This would be more expense than we would normally spend, but we don't ever spend as much as we plan for. So we planned for minimum income, compared to last year, and maximum output, still showing a ten percent net operating income to put for savings for the Sons.

So we would request an approval of this budget as well.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Mr. Commander? Sam McPherson, Department Finance Officer. I've been working with the Sons' budget at least for the last eight years, and they have never exceeded their budget. They have always had an excess to put in a rainy day fund.

I would make a motion to accept this budget.

DEC REP DAY: Jack Day, DEC, 8 Bravo. I second.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion and a second on the floor to approve the Detachment budget for administrative year '25-'26.

Any discussion? Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, say "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

BOYS STATE FINANCE OFFICER LOOPER: Thank you, Mr. Commander. I'll turn it over to Detachment Commander Chris Sherbourne.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: Mr. Commander, while we have our computer system hooked up, we have a couple of resolutions. Would you mind if we bring that forward now, sir?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Please do.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: Chris Sherbourne, Detachment Commander.

The first resolution we have is:

"The Sons of the American Legion

"Detachment of Oklahoma

"Detachment Convention

"Held in Shawnee, Oklahoma

"July 12, 2025

"No.: SAL Resolution #1 - Detachment Convention 2025

"Title: Sons Emergency Fund

"Originator: Chris Cook, NEC

"WHEREAS, the American Legion National Emergency

Fund was established by the American Legion National Executive Committee, Resolution 30, October 1989; and

"WHEREAS, there should be no fundamental difference between the American Legion and the Sons of the American Legion; and

"WHEREAS, the need for an emergency fund to support the members of the Sons of the American Legion is not currently being met by the American Legion National Emergency Fund; and now, therefore, be it:

"RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of the American Legion in regular assembly at Indianapolis, Indiana, October 4th through 5th, 2025, that the Sons of the American Legion create a trust fund, 'Sons Emergency Fund,' and be it further:

"RESOLVED that the purpose of the Sons Emergency Fund is to:

"1. Solicit and receive funds voluntarily given by Members, Squadron and Detachment of the Sons of the American Legion and members of the general public; and to

"2. Distribute said funds to our comrades in areas stricken by natural and other disasters in order to meet their most urgent needs; and to

"3. Maintain at the ready all sums not distributed immediately for distribution in the event of future disasters; and be it further:

"RESOLVED the Sons Emergency Fund will follow the rules and regulations set forth by the American Legion, and be it further:

"RESOLVED that all funds received in contribution to the Sons Emergency Fund, and all monies earned by the management of funds remaining on hand between times of urgent need, shall be used for the sole purpose of providing aid to our comrades in stricken areas in the event of local, state or national disaster; and, be it further:

"RESOLVED that local, state or national disasters for the purposes of the Sons Emergency Fund are defined as unanticipated acts of God or man which result in physical and/or financial hardships to individual members or Squadrons of the Sons of the American Legion as determined by competent government authority and confirmed by officials of the affected Detachment(s) of the Sons of the American Legion; and, be it further

"RESOLVED that a special committee appointed by the National Commander to oversee the monies for the Sons Emergency Fund is to disseminate with the sincere and heartfelt appreciation of the National Executive Committee, and, be it finally:

"RESOLVED that National Internal Affairs Commission shall assume and bear from this point forward the

responsibility to recommend and oversee the actions and accomplishments of the Sons Emergency Fund, to interpret and recommend action on needs which may from time to time arise as special cases not specifically addressed by the Sons Emergency Fund, and to report same as may from time to time by required by the National Executive Committee."

Mr. Commander, this was brought forward, and there's other detachments that have done it. We're just endorsing this. It's not an approval, it's an endorsement. And we would ask the same, sir.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The floor recognize Past Department Commander Tim Smith.

PDC SMITH: Commander, what's the difference between the National Emergency Fund and this fund?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I will ask for an explanation from our NECman Chris Cook to explain what the need for this is and why it is being brought forward.

DETACHMENT NEC COOK: Chris Cook, NEC, Detachment of Oklahoma. The purpose of this resolution is that, at our May meetings up there in Indianapolis, I was informed by our National Liaison Kevin Mook that the Sons are no longer eligible for the NEF funds. I didn't get a full story of why, but it happened about two weeks prior to us being up there in Indianapolis. There have been multiple SAL members that have been denied access to

NEF funds, in case of disasters.

This resolution mimics the American Legion's NEF resolution, and it mimics what the Auxiliary has, The AEF, Auxiliary Emergency Fund.

So the purpose of this is just to serve the SAL members that are no longer eligible for the NEF funds.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Before we go any further with discussion, I will entertain a motion.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: As usual, I'm a little bit confused. Is this resolution being sent to National to encourage National to set up this fund at National?

DETACHMENT NEC COOK: Yes.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: Yes.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: And so, basically, that's all you're doing is just sending it up and making a recommendation or a request to National?

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: That is correct, sir.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: Thank you, sir.

DEC REP DAY: Jack Day, DEC 8 Bravo. Point of order. Before we move into discussion, we should have had a motion. So I make a motion to accept the Sons Emergency Fund endorsement as written.

DISTRICT COMMANDER RECTOR: Kayla Rector, 2A District Commander. I second that motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. I now have a motion on the floor and a second.

Any discussion? Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, say, "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Endorsement carries. Motion carries.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: Mr. Commander?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Yes.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: May I present the second resolution, sir?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Yes, sir.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: Chris Sherbourne, Detachment Commander now, Detachment of Oklahoma.

"The Sons of the American Legion

"Detachment of Oklahoma

"Detachment Convention

"Held in Shawnee, Oklahoma

"July 12, 2025 --"

DEC REP KUNTZE: Chris, you've got to speak intelligibly so the stenographer can understand what

you're saying.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHERBOURNE: I apologize.

"The Sons of the American Legion

"Detachment of Oklahoma

"Detachment Convention

"Held in Shawnee, Oklahoma

"July 12, 2025.

"SAL Resolution 2 - Detachment Convention 2025

"Endorsement of Barton Looper for Higher Office.

"Originator: Squadron 5

"WHEREAS, the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 5 recognizes the need for future leaders to support this great organization and the four pillars for which the American Legion was founded on; and

"WHEREAS, Barton Looper is a dedicated member of Squadron 5, and who served in several Squadron and Detachment offices and positions; and

"WHEREAS, Barton received his eligibility for the Sons of the American Legion through his grandfathers' honorable service in World War II, Wilburn Singer, deceased, Army, and Bennie Looper, deceased, Army Air Corp; now, therefore, be it:

"RESOLVED, by the Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of Oklahoma, at Detachment Convention, assembled in Shawnee, Oklahoma, on July 12, 2025, hereby

endorse Barton Looper for higher office, at such time as the position becomes available; and be it finally:

"RESOLVED that the above resolution was endorsed by the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 5 and the American Legion Post 5."

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Sam McPherson, Department Treasurer. I'm also a member of Squadron 5 and Post 5, and I would move that we accept this and endorse this resolution going forward.

DISTRICT COMMANDER RECTOR: Kayla Rector, District 2A Commander. I second that motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion and a second on the floor to pass the SAL resolution for higher office for Mr. Barton Looper.

Any discussion? Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

I will receive any further resolutions to come before this body.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: So that the

district commanders have the opportunity to try and work out a schedule that will be suitable for all parties, we will take a ten-minute recess.

Ten minutes enough?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Five.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. We'll take a five-minute recess. All rise.

DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LAGER: Hand salute. Two.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Be bake in five minutes, 3:17.

(WHEREUPON, a brief recess was held from approximately 3:09 to 3:16.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: With the Colors of our nation still in place, Sergeant-at-Arms.

DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Hand salute. Two.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. So the floor recognizes Adjutant Redden.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Just a few quick reminders. It's perfectly okay for East and West, one district each to share a date. I said October 11th was for DEC. You guys make that decision. That's tentative until you decide.

I am going to call districts in the order of attainment of the goal for membership in 2025 as of

June 30th.

District 6B, which date would you care for, for --

DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: Jim Rees, District 6B Commander. District 6 has chosen 25 October, and we'll be holding it at El Reno Post 34.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 8B.

DISTRICT COMMANDER FLOWERS: Wayne Flowers, District 8B Commander. We have selected September 27th at Perry.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Post 53.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 1B.

DISTRICT COMMANDER FISHER: District 1B, Andrew Fisher. We've selected September 13th. It will be at Post 110, Broken Arrow.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Excuse me. Broken Arrow?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Yes.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: All right. District 2B.

DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, 2B DEC, September 6th, and to be announced where it's located, probably in Tahlequah.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 5A.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A Commander. We have chosen November the 15th.

Location to be determined.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Is the 15th a Saturday? I wrote down the 18th. What's the 15th?

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: The 15th is a Saturday.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Thank you.

(Crosstalk)

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 3A.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Jack Sikes, 3B. And A and B will be doing it together, depending on what dates are still left.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: September 20th, November 1st, 8th, and 15th.

(Crosstalk)

LEGIONNAIRE MCNEAL: Remember, there's too much conversation for the recorder to pick that up.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: I show still available for an east district, the 20th of September, the 27th of September, the 18th of October, the 25th of October, and any November date, Saturday.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: 3A and B will on the 20th of September. I'm still Jack Sikes, by the way. And the location is TBD, to be determined.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: District 7.

DISTRICT COMMANDER MAY: District 7 will take

November 8th.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Who are you?

DISTRICT COMMANDER MAY: Elmo May, Post 146. District 7 is going to take November 8th, at Sayre Post 146.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: And then, finally, District 4.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SNODGRASS: Tom Snodgrass, Commander, District 4. We want October 18th, at Tecumseh, 260.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Thank you.

I'm going to read them back to you to make sure I got them right:

September 6th, District 2, in Tahlequah;

September 13th, District 1, in Broken Arrow;

September 20th, District 3, to be determined;

September 27th, District 8, in Perry;

October 15th --

Is that the correct date?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: 18th.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: -- 18th, District 5 [sic] and District 4;

October 25th --

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Correction.

(Crosstalk)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Mr. Harris?

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A Commander. District 5, November the 15th, place to be determined.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Thank you.

District 5 on November 15th;

District 6 on October 25th; and,

District 7 on November 8th.

Do I got it right? Just go "yeah."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Yeah.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: We are currently looking at October 11th to be your DEC 2, based on you guys's schedules there, where we can put in. October 11, DEC 2.

PDC MARTIN: Commander? Brett Martin, Past Department Commander. I make a motion that we accept November [sic] 11th as the date for our DEC 2.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: October.

PDC MARTIN: I'm sorry. October 11th.

DEC REP BLOXOM: John Bloxom, 126. I second the motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion on the floor and a second to accept the October 11th date for DEC 2.

Any discussion?

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Jack Sikes, 3B. Are we going to push our budget approval off? Our continuing resolution ends before that, so we're going to have to have an emergency meeting prior to that date.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: More than likely, that will come via an electronic meeting versus an in-person meeting, with everybody already traveling for all of the fall conferences.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Thank you.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further discussion?

DISTRICT COMMANDER SNODGRASS: Tom Snodgrass, District 4. Where's the location going to be?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: TBD.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SNODGRASS: TBD. That's under my bed.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Can we all fit?

DISTRICT COMMANDER SNODGRASS: It's a big bed.

(Laughter)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further discussion? Hearing none, all in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries. Mr. Martin, can you please --

Oh. Sorry.

DEC REP BLOXOM: John Bloxom, District 4 DEC. I make a motion that we schedule the next Summer Convention 9-12 July in this facility.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Can you repeat those dates, sir?

DEC REP BLOXOM: 9-12 July.

DEC REP HOPKINS: Melvin Hopkins, Post 157, DEC 5A. I second.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. I've got a motion on the floor for Summer Convention 2026 for July 9-12, location, same as we are currently.

Any discussion?

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Karen Cruice, Vice East. At what point will we have a budget on this one to find out if we lost money or not? I know that we missed our beverage time which we were supposed to buy alcohol for. So I would like to know how much this cost us, or none at all.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Do you want to take that, sir?

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: I'll remind you, Karen, that the convention is not intended to be a

money-making endeavor. It is always an expense of the Department. But to answer your question, what exactly that expense is, in about ten days, two weeks, all the bills should be in, and we'll know exactly how much revenue we took in from banquet and registration and what the total expense was to do this thing. So, like I said, about two weeks.

DISTRICT DEC REP HALE: Doug Hale, DEC District 7. Just as a point of discussion, we thought about cutting the length of the conventions, instead of four days, three days.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further discussion?

The floor recognizes Adjutant Redden.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: Rick Redden, Department Adjutant. I think that's a real valid thing you should ask yourselves.

I have a contract in hand for the dates just mentioned, but it's not signed. So, if we want to shorten or lengthen, I guess -- and we don't have to do it here. I wanted to prepare us for not having to wait until mid-year to know where we're going to do something, so I wanted to give you some options right away.

So I think it's a valid thing to discuss. Each day you pare from the convention, obviously, it takes away

from the cost.

DEC REP BLOXOM: There was a to motion -- or a resolution that was submitted that we go Thursday, Friday, Saturday. That's one way of cutting it, but the more weekdays we take, we're interfering with work days. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, that's another part of the discussion. Which three days?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I would like to interject on this one. So we had it for four days this year, and we had five or six of our programs and committees double and triple and quadruple booked.

Where on earth are we going to fit everything, all the business that this body and or programs bodies into a shortened -- into three days? It's not going to happen, not if you want to remotely have a chance to participate in all of your functions that you are passionate about and want to be involved in.

DEC REP GORDON: Debbie Gordon, DEC 1A. If you're talking about the resolution that Barnsdall did, okay, that wasn't a resolution to shorten the convention to three days. It was to make the voting on Saturday, at the end of the day, as opposed to Sunday morning. That doesn't mean we couldn't do something else on Sunday morning, like give awards or whatever.

And the second thing is the shorter you make the

convention, the more that you cut off from it, the less people have reasons to come. Because everybody doesn't come just to vote. They come for the training. They come for the meetings.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further -- Mr. Smith?

PDC SMITH: Yeah, short and sweet, Commander. Tim Smith here, Post 20. Through experience, I've leaned on past state commanders that have been to many, many conventions. And, overall, if you look at the expenses at Grand Casino, it's our most affordable and overall convenient facility. I've been doing this since 2011 -- or 2010 was my first convention, and by far, this is the most accommodating on a budget level. There's some other hotels we went to that I liked better, but it cost us a lot more money.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Mr. Haynes?

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: I think we need to cut it down to no more than three days. And one of the things I think we need to do is look at having the meeting on Thursday.

We do a lot of this stuff because it's the way we've always done it. If we look at our budget, we'll see sometimes the way we've always done it is not the best. When we look at our attendance, we'll also see that the

way we've always done it is not always the best.

So, quite simply stated, I would propose that we may want to look at not having our committee meetings in conjunction with our conventions or our conference, even though we might need to go back and look at our Constitution.

Because I contend that we cannot get anything accomplished, just like we have proved with our Resolutions Committee, or Constitution and By-Laws Committee, and our Finance Committee that did not get anything accomplished the day before the convention. These committees need to be working during the year, perhaps giving reports at the convention, but not trying to do it in conjunction with conventions.

Same thing with our training. I know we're very proud of our training. We have all the people coming to it.

But what I would contend is what do the posts want? What do the members want? It's not what we want. It's what they want and what they need.

So go back and start looking at what we're doing at our convention, what we're doing at our conference. I think we can cut down the days and hopefully get more attendance. Because a lot of people, when they look at the schedule, to be quite candid -- why we do not have

blue hatters here -- when they look at that schedule, they say, "There's nothing here for me. There's nothing here for me to do, and I'm not going to come for four days." I had delegates come and end up leaving because they didn't see anything here for them.

So I think we might want to go back and look at the way we're doing business instead of just continuing to do what we've always done. In doing so, I think you can cut your conference and your conventions down to a couple of three days, and the conference may be even be one day so you don't have any of the hotel expenses.

That's my humble opinion.

DISTRICT COMMANDER GRUBBS: Eric Grubbs, 5B Commander. I apologize if I don't know for sure. Is there a method for providing input from the people that attended the convention of what they liked or disliked or want to change or would change? Because I didn't see a critique or an after action report.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The Adjutant's e-mail's address.

(Laughter)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further comments?

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: I would like to speak one more time.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Granted.

(Crosstalk)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEARKER: Here you go, Danny.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: They asked the question the other day --

DEC REP KUNTZE: Dale, go to the mic, please.

DEC REP THOMAS: Daniel Thomas, 5B District Representative. Do we have a committee that actually puts this together? Is there a committee that does this, organizes the convention?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Convention.

(Crosstalk)

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: Permission to speak one more time?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Granted.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: I struggled when they asked a question here a while back about setting your schedule, when they talked about this resolution on Saturday -- on Sunday. I've looked diligently, and so far, I've not found anything in the Constitution that says who sets the schedule. Okay?

And so, I think, like he said, you can have a committee get it done. But I do think we need to do it. I do not see that it's a DEC function. I do not see it's a commander's function. We do not have that. If they

have a Convention Committee, maybe they need to be the one to do it and take what I've said and what everybody else thinks under consideration.

DISTRICT DEC REP KUNTZE: Commander, we're running over time on this topic, please.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Yeah.

Final comment.

DISTRICT COMMANDER FISHER: Andrew Fisher, District 1B Commander. I move that we table this motion until we can get our finances back from what this cost us, also give us time to discuss this within our districts and report back to Adjutant Redden on what our membership, what our blue hats, actually want.

Table this motion until DEC 2.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The floor acknowledges Adjutant Redden.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: I would prefer that you did not table this motion, you either pass it, and we do a convention of four days. From a contract standpoint, we can always do three, in reality. I can work that out with this hotel. But if we're not going to do it here next year, I need to do start looking for what's next.

So make a decision today. It's not irrevocable, but let's move forward.

PDC SMITH: Point of order, Commander. Tim Smith. There's already a motion on the floor. You have to get the originator to amend his motion.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It hasn't been seconded.

DEC REP BLOXOM: My motion was that we schedule this facility for next year's Summer Convention, 9-12 July.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: And it's been seconded.

All right. Discussion closed.

All right. We'll call for a vote to schedule next Summer's Convention, July 9-12, 2026, at this location in Shawnee, Oklahoma.

All in favor, say "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All opposed, same sign.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Nay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 3: Nay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 4: Nay.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The ayes got it.

All right. If I can please have Past Department Commander Martin to address the body, please.

PDC MARTIN: Thank you, Commander.

Brett Martin, Past Department Commander. During DEC 5 we talked about the need to procure a commander's vehicle. This is the draft letter I'm going to read to you and ask for you to approve. This will be put on Department letterhead, and the business address will be the Department's address, and "To Whom It May Concern" will actually be a point of contact. With that being said, I will read you the letter:

"To Whom It May Concern,

"On behalf of the American Legion, Department of Oklahoma, I respectfully write to you today seeking your support in a cause that impacts more than 350,000 veterans across our great state.

"The American Legion is the world's largest and oldest wartime veterans service organization, founded on four enduring pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. These pillars guide our mission and our service to those who wore the uniform of this great nation.

"Today, we face a challenge that limits our ability to fully serve. The Department of Oklahoma currently does not have a vehicle, making it difficult to attend critical outreach events, visit veterans in need, and represent our programs across the state. This is where your generosity and community spirit can make a direct

and lasting impact.

"We are reaching out to kindly request your consideration in donating a vehicle to the Department. In return, we would proudly wrap that vehicle in a patriotic design featuring your dealership's name and logo, making your support visible at every stop we make throughout Oklahoma.

"This partnership would not only enable us to continue our mission, but it would also highlight your commitment to our veteran community and display your business as a proud champion of service, patriotism, and community leadership.

"Should you find it in your heart to assist us in this endeavor, please feel free to contact Past Department Commander Brett Martin at --" my phone number and my e-mail.

"Thank you for your time, your compassion, and your consideration.

"For God, Country, and Service."

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, Mr. Martin.

So I will be looking for a motion to approve this letter as written.

DEC REP KUNTZE: I'll make that motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Please identify

yourself.

DEC REP KUNTZE: Sorry.

(Laughter)

DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, Post 353. I make a motion that we accept this letter.

DISTRICT COMMANDER KINGERY: Joe Kingery, District 8A Commander. I second.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion on the floor and a second. Any discussion?

DEC REP GORDON: Debbie Gordon, DEC 1A. Who did you say the letter would be going to?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All 188 dealerships in the state of Oklahoma.

DEC REP HALE: Doug Hale, DEC 7. Just as a point of discussion, when we bought our last car, I went to our local dealer in Weatherford, Oklahoma, and he has all the cars that are sold in the world. And just because he's a friend of mine, I asked him would he consider donating a car to the American Legion. He said, "It's a great idea, but as a dealer," he said -- his point was, "I'd love to do it, but I can't see putting my dealership on my car that's going to be broke down on the road all over Oklahoma. It's going to wreck. I'm the one they're going to sue, along with the American Legion." That was his comment.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: That would be a contract that would be drafted by our JA with their legal team. And if it came down to them not wanting it, they just wanted to give the car without their logo, we could work that out.

Any further discussion? The floor recognizes Dale Haynes.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: JA, Dale Haynes. I'll make it real short and sweet. To get on what Doug says, I was thinking basically the same thing. We normally give a letter to somebody that says, "Thank you for your donation. I hereby certify that you have not received anything in compensation for your donation."

If we did that and put the advertisement on it, then they would be advertising, and they would be receiving something. So there may be a lot of dealerships that would rather not have it on there.

I think it should be an option. Because, that way, they can either use that as an advertising expense, or they can use it as a donation. And I think if you advertise, then they are receiving something in return for their donation.

Just a thought, make it optional.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further discussion? Any further discussion? Hearing none, all

in favor to approve the letter as written, say "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

TWO SPEAKERS: Nay.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

DEPARTMENT VC EAST CRUICE: Why would you not want to make that change?

(Crosstalk)

LEGIONNAIRE MCNEAL: If we want to speak, let's get the Chair's permission.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any other Unfinished Business?

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Commander? Jack Sikes, 3B. As we all have been in leadership positions, we can't be in leadership without the "lead." Now, the fact of the matter is if we don't have committees set up, then you are trying to be the sole executor of all these commands.

I ask, what is your committee representation or planned committee representation so that this work is not overburdening to the Adjutant nor yourself, but let's get the committees set up.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Roger that, Jack.

So, if any of you attended any of the southern

district meetings that I made during the spring, I asked every single person in the district meetings that I wanted to see passion get within in the committees, to please reach out to me with things of your interest. I did that at all of the seven of the districts. The only district that I did not attend was District 4 for the purpose that it was on the same weekend as District 1 that I was a hosting post commander at.

So, over the past four months, finger crossed that I would be in this position, I've been working on my list, and there are still a few positions that I want to get filled within the next few days. So I will be having that list completed and sent out to you guys for approval by the end of the week.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Should be a task organizer.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Roger, sir.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURE MCPHERSON: Sam McPherson, Treasurer. I believe the adjutant asked for something on the 501(c)(3). Did we complete that task?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: That is what I was hoping somebody would bring up in Unfinished Business.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Thank you.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The floor recognizes Jared Harrison.

DEPARTMENT GENERAL COUNSEL HARRISON: Jared Harrison, Department General Counsel. I think -- somebody can correct me if I'm wrong -- that copies went out so everybody could review things. I talked with the Judge Advocate a little bit. We had a couple of small typos in the documents that were sent out and a couple of things that weren't clear, some of it was tied back to the original time when we ran through the draft.

So my request, I think, would be that we go ahead and push forward, because I know that everybody has the goal of getting this up and running because there's a lot of good things that the Department would be able to do with that.

But it would have just a few amendments. There would be an amendment to section 3.03 in the last full paragraph. In the third line, there is a reference to "directed." That would be to "director." That was just a typo there. Then, in section 4.02, this was one of the holdover lines that just had a small error that needed to come. We would change that. That's the paragraph for the annual meeting for the 501(c)(3). It would be amended to strike that the business to be conducted would be for electing directors for the ensuing year, because

the DEC is in charge of selecting the directors, not the board of the 501(c)(3). And then, in the title for section 5.01, that would just be changed to "Election" and "Tenure." There's a reference to "compensation" that's not talked anywhere in that paragraph, so there's no need to have it there.

Otherwise, I think, after talking to the Judge Advocate, he was comfortable with that. I think those are smart changes to make. So I think with those changes, it would be ready to go so we can get that 501(c)(3) filed.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Sir, with you here and the JA here, when this was originally brought forward at DEC -- two years ago, whenever it was -- I apologize I don't have the date of the meeting off the top of my head. The DEC did approve me personally as one of the board of directors, and I think it would need to be changed prior to this submission so it doesn't hold up again because of the conflict of interest of my new position.

DEPARTMENT GENERAL COUNSEL HARRISON: Yes, that is still one of the names that would be listed on the directors right now. There was a change to it, from originally, because one of the original members is no longer with the Department. But those names were: Steven

Thomas II, Tina Kilmer, Richard Redden, Danny Thomas, and Tim Smith. So now would obviously be a time to change any of those if we need to.

DEC REP THOMAS: Danny Thomas, 5th District. I read the statements, and everything in there, I concur with, and I'm still good to go as director, if this be your desire. Ready to serve.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: They're not actually looking for approval currently for any of the other four that are on there. It's just for conflict of interest, I have to recuse myself.

Any further discussion on this?

You're looking for a name to --

DEPARTMENT GENERAL COUNSEL HARRISON: Yeah, we'll need a name because we need to have that that way we can get this submitted and get it in. If we don't have that name, we're still waiting.

DEC REP DAY: Jack Day, DEC 8 Bravo. I make a motion that we strike Steven Thomas II from the 501(c)(3) as board of directors, and we find a new person to fill that slot.

PDC SMITH: I don't know if I can. I was going to nominate someone.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: With me recusing myself, I don't think we need a motion to strike myself.

DEC REP DAY: Jack Day, DEC. I rescind my motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, sir.

PDC SMITH: Commander, I would nominate, if he accepts it, Michael Taylor.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Mr. Taylor, would that be a nomination that you would accept, sir?

PDC TAYLOR: Michael Taylor, Past Department Commander. I would be honored to serve.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: We have a nomination with an acceptance on the floor. I would entertain a second.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A Commander. I second that motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion, a nomination, an acceptance of the nomination, and a second. Any discussion?

This motion is specifically for that approval, and then we will come back to --

All right. Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor of Michael Taylor being added as a director? All in favor, say "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

DEC REP DAY: Jack Day, DEC 8 Bravo. I make a motion that we accept the 501(c)(3) as amended.

DISTRICT COMMANDER KINGERY: Joe Kingery, District 8A Commander. I second.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion and a second on the floor to accept those changes.

Any discussion? Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

DEPARTMENT GENERAL COUNSEL HARRISON: Commander, if I may?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Yes, sir.

DEPARTMENT GENERAL COUNSEL HARRISON: I will just let you know, from there, my plan will be to get with the Adjutant to get everything signed and finalized there, and then we will get it to the attorney that is doing that, and --

LEGIONNAIRE MCNEAL: She's having a hard time hearing you.

DEPARTMENT GENERAL COUNSEL HARRISON: Commander, just so you understand my plan to go forward and get that finalized, we'll get with the adjutant to get everything signed, get that to the attorney taking care of all the documentation, and then we will get that pushed forward, get the 1023 filed with the IRS, so we will be a pending 501(c)(3) at that point, and we can get to work.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: And as a pending, we have the ability to accept up to 100,000 per --

DEPARTMENT GENERAL COUNSEL HARRISON: I think, because we are doing the long form, we have even a little bit bigger latitude than that. That was part of the complication with switching to being a supporting organization is you do a bigger 103, which allows you to end up doing more even in that pending phase. But I can get you the exact answer on that soon.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, sir.

Any further Unfinished Business?

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: I know everybody wants to go home. I've already had two text messages from my wife and my son.

(Laughter)

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: There's something very near and dear to my heart. Due to our financial status, and due to some conversations that have come up in the

past concerning our building fund, I would like to make a motion that we get into the minutes, that the Building Fund has been earmarked as a Building Fund and not to be used for other purposes at this point.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: So, to make sure that I am clear, the funds that are currently earmarked actually as building fund, that that actually locked those funds to that purpose?

(Crosstalk)

DISTRICT COMMANDER REES: (Indiscernible.)

LEGIONNAIRE MCNEAL: John McNeal, Post 306. I know it seems like I've been a pain in the butt, but I've got a recording device on the corner of my desk, and I've been asked to help us, because those minutes won't reflect correctly if we keep having conversation and we're not identifying who's making that conversation and stepping on someone else. I don't have a voice in the DEC. I'm no longer a DEC or a commander, but I hope you take that into consideration.

That you, Commander.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Thank you, Mr. McNeal.

Dale, can you repeat your response please?

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: Yes. Our budget item had a Building Fund in it. There has been discussion whether

or not that was actually approved by consensus. I think it's important that we actually get it in the minutes that that Building Fund is for the Building Fund, it has been earmarked for that. This way, we will have it in the minutes, and if we decide to do something else, we will have to go to the DEC to change it.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A.

Dale, you might need to get the mic back.

Can we -- I know there's a motion. That's why I said he might need to get the mic back.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: We need a second before we go to discussion.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A. I second the motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. I have a motion and a second on the floor. Any discussion?

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Yes. Mike Harris, District 5A. That dollar amount has been a subject of contention, because we have literally wasted two years that those dollars could have been put into an interest-bearing account, and it is sitting in a bank, basically, drawing nothing.

So it would be my recommendation or suggestion to reword that motion to take that money, put it into the

Building Fund, but put it into an interest-bearing account to help us get some more funds.

PDC TAYLOR: Michael Taylor, Past Department Commander. A couple of DECs ago, the commander took action -- this body said to put it in a CD.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Point of order. The past commander.

PDC TAYLOR: So my ask is, after that action was taken, did it get put into a CD, any amount of money get put into a CD?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: No.

PDC TAYLOR: I'm going to yield my time.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: I'll amend the motion to say not only that it be earmarked for the Building Fund, but that also be put into a Certificate of Deposit until such time as it's needed.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A. I second that motion.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have an amendment to the original motion and a seconded second to the amendment. Any discussion?

DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, 2B DEC. We have already voted on this a couple of years ago. Why do we need to revote on the same thing we already did? Because we've already established this to be put into an

interest-bearing fund two years ago or more. I remember this. That's why I'm asking, didn't we already do this? So why are we having to redo this again? Is there a reason why that previous action we did is null and void?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The floor recognizes PDC Martin.

PDC MARTIN: Past Department Commander Martin. Great question. The answer is the records for DEC 5 minutes, we do not have them. We were told we have the tape, but I have not seen the tape yet, and it's been a year.

Therefore, just so it gets in the record, we need, if we cannot produce the tape and produce the transcript, we need to put it back in the minutes that are current and viable.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: For the first time, the floor recognizes Past Department Commander Woods.

PDC WOODS: Thank you. Hayden Woods, Past Department Commander, Commander of Post 39. The reason that was not done is because we were also looking at Post 13. We were looking at Lexington. And we were concerned that the funds may not be available if we locked them up into a CD or some other account. So that's why that did not happen.

Now that we are not, kind of -- I should say -- we are not actively engaged in doing that, it would be more than appropriate to actually put those funds -- but, remember, when you do that, you lock them up. So, if you find something, you may not necessarily be able to get those funds out as needed.

PDC MARTIN: Commander? Past Department Commander Martin. But the problem with that is this body never said to the building committee to go look for a new building. This body never said, "Take as much time as you need every week and go look for a new building." That never came from this body, period. Because the money had already been stated be put into a CD.

So by doing that, you told this body "I know better," in a roundabout way.

PDC SMITH: Commander? Tim Smith, Past Department Commander. Just something to think about, a CD is good. It's hard to get to. You get a penalty to pull it out, but ROGER Bank, 4.2 percent interest, a money market. You can draw it out in two days. Edward Jones, financial advisor, a money market, you can draw it out in one or two days. There's a lot of options that don't tie it up to where you don't get to it.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Mr. Haynes, your motion was for a CD. That is a very valid point. Money

market is a much more suitable option.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: I modify it again to make it an interest bearing account. I like CD because I do them for six months and I can get them out, because I usually don't need it within six months. But "interest-bearing account" is the way I'll modify it.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A Commander. For the second time, I'll -- third time, I approve that modification.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a second amendment and a second second to the amendment.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Third.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries. The floor recognizes Mr. Deer.

DEC REP DEER: Curtis Deer, Post 153. He makes a good point. If we haven't appointed a committee to go look for buildings, why haven't we? We need to do that. And I'll make a motion if needed.

(Crosstalk)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: One at a time, please. One at a time. Stop the sidebars.

There is no motion on the floor.

PDC WOODS: Yeah, there's no motion. Hayden Woods, Past Department Commander, Post 39 Commander. You actually do have a Building Committee. It was elected three years ago when we moved out of the state building at -- Jim Thorpe. We do have one. It's just that it has been inactive in some areas. They did initially bring us a floor plan. They gave us an estimate of about $230,000, wasn't it? Yeah, something in that area. But at that point, nothing else happened.

So you do have it. You just got to bring them back.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: So this week, as I told Mr. Sikes earlier, I will have my committees selected by this week, so I will be contacting, based on the master list from the past, reconnecting with those individuals to make sure that it's still of interest or trying to fill those positions if I get any calls from other people who are interested or passionate about that, and we'll go from there. So that will be included in that list.

Any other business? Any other Unfinished Business? Any other Unfinished Business? Hearing none, we'll move on to New Business if my laptop's not sleeping.

All right. New business. Any new business to come before this body?

Mr. Kuntze?

DEC REP KUNTZE: Don Kuntze, 6A DEC. I have here a lease agreement to extend and renew our lease at Post 12 spaces for the Department office. Looking back, you know, that building, as far as I'm concerned, is adequate, is reasonable, less than around $1,300 a month and centrally located, plus we don't have any money to spend on a building.

So I would like to make a motion that we look at this lease presented by Post 12 and extend our lease at Post 12 for two more years. Thank you.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Has this body seen the copy of this lease?

(WHEREUPON, the copy of the lease was handed to the Department Commander.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I do have a motion on the floor. Y'all saw it, obviously, before I did.

DEC REP GORDON: Debbie Gordon, DEC 1A. I'll second the motion so we can discuss.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: I have a motion on the floor and a second. Any discussion?

DEC REP GORDON: Since the motion was only saying that it was a lease for two years, I should note

that the lease does say that we can get out of the lease with 60-day notice.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: Dale Haynes, Judge Advocate. We have some rental property. We don't do it on a month-to-month lease. I'm not a lawyer. I don't see why we need to lock it in for two years. We may stay there for two. We may stay there for four. We may stay there for ten.

I would prefer that instead of having a definite date up there that it would say it would be a month-to-month lease. As Debbie pointed out, they're saying that we can get out of it in six months anyway.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Sixty day.

DEPARTMENT JA HAYNES: I mean, sixty days, anyway. So I would prefer to have it say this is a month-to-month lease instead of saying a two-year lease with definite time periods that we've got to keep going back and renewing it.

PDC MARTIN: Past Department Commander Martin, representing the lease. I'm no longer the commander of Post 12, but I am the representative on this lease.

If you notice, there's no cost increase on this lease from the first lease two years ago. I have post members pushing us to kick you guys out because we can get so much more money for that annex.

The 1,350 -- and this last month was bad because of the heat, $1,400 a month. We've been offered $2,200 a month, but for the good of the Legion, we took a vote on it and we said, "No. We will do a contract again for two more years at the same rate that we had in the past."

So think hard about you what you want to do. If you want to go a month-to-month, I'll take it back to the DEC from Post 12, and we'll see how much we have to raise the rent.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further discussion?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Call the vote.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: All right. I'll call for a vote. All in favor of going into an extended lease agreement as presented, say "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any opposed, same sign.

(No response)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Motion carries.

Any other New Business to come before the body?

The floor recognizes Vice Commander West.

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: Lance Larson, Vice Commander West. Yes. We need to make a vote on continental breakfast at National Convention and stuff

like that. We used to do it all the time, and we need to start doing it again. (Indiscernible.) Sorry about that guys. We used to buy six tickets for $80, and that's all we bought.

John, you should remember.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Can you clarify what you're referring to? Continental breakfast where, from whom, from what?

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: From the National Convention, the continental breakfast that cost $80.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Sam McPherson, Department Treasurer, he's talking about the Southern Block Breakfast.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: For clarification, the Adjutant -- I just got clarification on that. We did not buy the tickets for anybody. As a Department, we bought those tickets for resale purposes so there was no cost incurred to the Department.

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: Are we talking about this year or last year?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Every year.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: This year.

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: Okay.

DEC REP BLOXOM: Comment, sir.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The floor

recognizes --

DEC REP BLOXOM: John Bloxom, District 4 DEC. In the past, those kind of tickets were purchased on a through basis. If I wanted to attend the Southern Block Breakfast, and it costs $40, I provided $40 to the adjutant to purchase that ticket. The same thing for Commanders Banquet; same thing for -- we have a --

Charlie, help me out.

NEC O'LEARY: ANAVICUS.

DEC REP BLOXOM: -- ANAVICUS Breakfast. If I wanted to attend that, I paid for it through the adjutant, but I paid for it myself, not the Department.

If I needed a room reservation at our assigned hotel, I informed the adjutant from day A to day B, and I gave him the deposit.

We've got to get out of the Department paying for things. That's up to us.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The Department is not paying for anything except for the five rooms that this body approved in DEC 5.

I was just passed the announcement that Past Department Commander Quinn has been released from the hospital and is en route back here to this facility.

(Applause)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER SIKES: Commander? Jack

Sikes, 3B. What you brought up there, Commander, is a valid thing, but I think all of this was addressed at the Finance Committee that we're working on trying to resolve.

And I would request your input during that, Sam.

All of these people with these comments need to be in a Finance Committee so it can be brought to this body.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further business to come before this body?

DISTRICT COMMANDER GRUBBS: Kind of in regards to --

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Name.

DISTRICT COMMANDER GRUBBS: Eric Grubbs, 5B Commander.

-- duties and responsibilities of officers, I've asked the Adjutant and the Past Commander if there is a job description for the DSO. I have not received an answer or the job description. Because we've been having certain problems, which I will be filing shortly, but I don't have a job description for the position.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Adjutant Redden said he will be more than happy to try and create something to be satisfactory.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: As the Department Adjutant, I inherited the DSOs as employees of the

Department. I don't know how they were chosen, I don't know under what criteria. I don't have a job description for them. We've already had one turnover. We advertised the job to be the same thing as the other guy was doing. So it was less than specific.

I agree such a thing should exist. Probably the best thing to do is reach out to other departments, see what they have in a written format.

But, I'm sorry, I just don't have that information, but I'll get it. Is that going to work? Take my word for it, maybe?

DISTRICT COMMANDER GRUBBS: Yes, take your word.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Mike Harris, District 5A Commander. Correct me if I'm wrong, but wasn't there a motion on the floor --

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: There is no motion.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: -- discussing the Southern Block?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No second.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: That was never made by a motion.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Did you not make a motion, Vice Commander West?

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: Yes. If we get the

tickets, we only get six, but they've already been purchased, so it went off the floor.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: They were ordered. They were not purchased.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Okay. But did you make that a --

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: No. I took that off.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Did you rescind it?

DEPARTMENT VC WEST LARSON: Yes.

DISTRICT COMMANDER HARRIS: Okay. Because it never was seconded, and we've got all this other discussion going on.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further New Business to come before this body?

The floor recognizes Adjutant Redden.

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT REDDEN: I want to just clarify and make sure you understand. We were given the opportunity to hold 20 tickets to the Commanders Banquet. I, indeed, have held them, and if we do not sell them through, we will make them available for people who are on a waiting list for Commanders Banquet tickets.

We held 14 tickets to the Southern Block Breakfast. Again, if we don't, among the people going, buy that

many, we'll release them back to the Southern Block for sale.

We have paid for any -- well, that's not true. We have paid for the Commanders Banquet, but we have not paid anything for the Southern Block Breakfast. But we're protected. If our attendees don't buy them we, the Department, has no liability. And that includes me. I'm on my own.

DISTRICT COMMANDER SIKES: Commander? 3B Jack Sikes. Can you give the non-knowledgeable of your podium there with the flag on it, please, for the initial understanding of it?

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Blue Star Banner will be at all official American Legion meetings, and I apologize that we did not cover that when we were getting started at the beginning of our meeting.

DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER MCPHERSON: Sam McPherson, Department Treasurer. If I remember right, it's not required at American Legion meetings. It's required at Sons of the American Legion meetings, but it is a good addition. Thank you, Commander.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Any further New Business to come before this body?

Please uncover.

Chaplain, please offer a benediction.

DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN STEWART: Let us pray.

Thank you, God, today for a good report of Past Department Commander Jim Quinn.

We're also thankful that today we can leave this DEC meeting all in the same mind and in one accordance, and that is to promote the American Legion. Help us to see this Department grow. Help each district to see their districts grow, and give leadership, knowledge, and skills to those that have been elected and appointed to leadership positions.

Give us now traveling mercies as we travel to our homes.

We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen.

COLLECTIVE GROUP: Amen.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: Sergeant-at-Arms, please recover the POW/MIA chair cover.

(WHEREUPON, the POW/MIA chair cover was retrieved.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER THOMAS: The Colors are retired to the shelf.

All right. I now declare DEC 1 '25-'26 now adjourned. Re-cover.

(WHEREUPON, the 1st DEC meeting, held July 13, 2025, was concluded at approximately 16:21 hours.)

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