

June 1, 2023 Post 266 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Dick Musel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

POW/MIA Cover Placement: Sergeant-at-Arms Cheek placed the POW/MIA cover on the empty chair.

Chaplin Kay: Gave a prayer.

Preamble of the Constitution of The American Legion: led by Pete Hunt.

Auxiliary Announcements: Will serve meals for June 3rd Bennington Daze, 11-am – 3 pm. Legionnaires in parade and/or part of Tomb of the Unknowns do not eat free. Wife of member Fred Ferguson passed away.

Minutes: Motion by Jim Zoulias and second by Donny Laaker to approve minutes; passed.

Financial: Finance Officer absent; tabled report's approval until next meeting.

Old Business:

Money Jar – We continue collections and need to choose a fund to support. Suggestions? Department building fund, JAVELAN service dogs, Outlook Enrichment, National Emergency Fund? Was Patriot Songs, book of poems, \$7.95; copy for the public library ordered; need finance officer to report.

Sons of the American Legion: Commander Jared absent, no report on SAL Squadron activities.

Buddy Check Program – Be the One focus on suicide prevention. Lyle Sass reported 65% response rate.

Building Committee: [Rick Reed, Merlin Kay, Donny Laaker] Back wall – old quotes: \$31,040.25 / \$23,500, plan to get updates for repairs after fireworks sales; tree trimming: neighbor agreed to our trimming as needed; Unserviceable US Flags Collection box: installed, WW II Memorial Display repaired and installed by Don Johnson; thank you Lyle. It will be painted white.

Consolidated Post Report – continue to track your activities to provide our adjutant input on community involvement hours for the Department summary to Congress.

Tomb of Unknown Soldier: Retired General / Congressman Don Bacon and Mayor Johns gave remarks. F.O. Reed acted as master of ceremonies. Legion Riders provided a flag line. Post provided an Honor Guard.

Veterans Memorial Flags: Larry Arp update Flags replaced, ropes, tucks, pulleys pending.

Memorial Day: Thank you for the strong volunteer turn-out. See May meeting minutes for name recognition.

New Business:

Membership: time for 2022-23 notices to pay dues, if you do not pay online with National, Glenn will take your money. Current status: 104 of 114, 89.47%

Bennington Daze Parade: Saturday June 3rd; meet at hall at 10:15am, leave for Middle School at 10:30, parade starts at 11am. Dress: polo shirts, black pants and cap. Tomb of the Unknowns ceremony follows at 1pm. Need flags, rifles and bugler. 22 Legionnaires and Sons participated: Larry Arp, Jim Cheek, Bill Botos, Steve Botos, Ken Dirksen, Pete Hunt, Donny Laaker, Merlin Kay, Dick Musel, Jim Musel, Deb Neisen, Jim Osterchill, Glenn Turner, Steven Youngberg, Rick Reed, Grayson Reed, Gale Sass, Jerry Valasek, Jim Zoulais, Jared Weinman, Jaydon Weinman, Les Brauer.

Post Sign: Blue American Legion part is not lit; Commander contacted Superior Lighting, 402-345-0800; Service : parts plus \$80/Hr. Labor. Repair quoted and paid, \$1,582.50.

Inventory Review Update – reviewed handout, identified items to restock. Motion by Larry Arp and second by Jim Cheek for \$2,000 limit on restock order; passed. Recruiting materials: adjutant to check with Department before ordering.

Fireworks: Merlin Kay reported delivery on June 19, baseball team to help unload, setup on days following, sales begin Sunday June 25.

Department Convention: Younes Convention Center, Kearney; June 22 Exec. Committee meets; June 23-25 general sessions for Legion, SAL, Riders, Auxiliary. Post delegates: Post and SAL commanders, 1 delegate and 3 alternates unfilled. Motion by Jim Cheek and second by Glenn Turner to approve delegates; passed.

Resolutions passed at convention: 1-23 reduce publication of NE Legionnaire newspaper and monthly newsletter from 8 to 6 times/year to reduce costs; 2-23 Department supports Men's College Baseball World Series and is 1 of 8 team hosts, costs \$4,500, ask National Legion to budget for this advertising expense.

Advertise in Convention Program: Ad with payment due at Department by June 9th. Costs: 1/8 pg \$10, 1/4 pg \$20, 1/2 pg \$30; Full pg \$60.

Convention Notes: NE Membership: 77,000; Be the One race car: worth \$50 million in advertising; next National Commander: Dan Seehafer of Wisconsin replacing Jim Troiloa; NE Finances: \$55,061 deficit, 15% decrease in portfolio, expect a dues increase; multi-year memberships: pilot program planned; Dept. Charters Suspended: Colorado and Washington for violating National Constitution, both must resolve issues and reapply; 2023 Membership early bird award: 5 winners, \$200 each; Dept Veteran Service Officer, Levi Bennet: over 14,000 claims submitted by NE's 83 VSO's, free

dental clinic at Mead October 6&7, must pre-register, county VSO required by NE statute so county board cannot eliminate position or its funding; Covid-19 discharge for rejecting job: see VSO to get upgrade from less than honorable to honorable; **Dept Election:** Commander: John Henry Percy, Senior Vice Commander: Carl Lorenzen; Vice Commanders: Area A: Robert "Bud" Neel, Area B: Don Patrice, Area C: Brennan Moore, Area D: Judy Walters; Auxiliary President: Amanda Washburn; SAL Detachment Officers: Commander: Eldon Kramer, Senior Vice Commander: Tim Heckey, Vice Commanders: East Area: James Keyes, West Area: Case Walton. 2023 National Convention: August 26-31, Charlotte NC, delegate: Les Brauer.

Post Officers Election: In 2020 there was a 2 X 2 motion, officers elected for 2 year terms and allowed to serve 2 consecutive terms in office. While a good idea, there is a misunderstanding about that motion. By the 2021 election, members were informed that the motion was improper and it violated the Department and National Constitutions which say officers are elected for 1 year terms. Therefore, it was void so we had a 2021 election. We also had a 2022 election; both resulted in 1 year terms for officers. So our 2023 election is for 1 year terms. **Election Results:** Commander: Merlin Kay; Vice Commander: Jerry Valasek; Adjutant: Glenn Turner; Finance Officer: Rick Reed; Chaplin, appointed by Merlin: Pete Hunt; Sargent-at-Arms: Jim Cheek.

Next Meeting: No July meeting; next meeting August 3rd. Sons will meet on June 8th. Legionnaires encouraged to attend.

Announcements:

Sarpy County Blue Star Museum: Armed Forces Day, May 20th to Labor Day, September 4th; free admission to active military and their families.

NE's 38th Annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion; Omaha Marriott, 10220 Regency Circle, August 10 – 13, registration: \$50; Hotel \$114/night + tax. If interested, see me for more info.

State Fair Veterans Appreciation Day: Monday September 4th; 1pm parade, color guard; registration: www.statefair.org/celebration-parade

No other new business.

POW/MIA Chair Cover: retrieved by Sergeant-at-Arms Cheek.

Adjourn: motion by Pete Hunt and second by Douglas Walters to adjourn, passed.