



Department Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 2, 2025



The Department Executive Committee meeting was held on November 2, 2025 at the Columbia Marriott, 1200 Hampton St, Columbia, SC 29201, in the Palmetto Room

Dept Cmdr Jim Rabon

Department Adj Bob Renner

NEC Jim Hawk

Alt NEC Cecil Phillips

Imm PDC Bruce Donegan

Department Historian Vacant

Dept 1st Vice Cmdr Jack Lonergan

Dept 2nd Vice Cmdr Patricia Dandy

Dept 3rd Vice Jerome Childs

Dept 4th Vice Cmdr Lou Morse

D-1 Cmdr Darlene Walton

D-2 Cmdr Richardson

D-4 Cmdr Tom Myers

D-5 Cmdr Bonita Wells

D-6 Cmdr Vacant

D-7 Cmdr John Galloway

D-8 Cmdr Harry Malpass

D-9 Cmdr John Comins

D-11 Cmdr Mike Cook

D-12 Cmdr AL Hough Everage

D-13 Cmdr Rick Gibson

D-14 Cmdr Vacant

D-16 Cmdr Mark Dorsey

D-17 Cmdr Winston Boddie

D-18 Cmdr Larry Pouncy

D-19 Cmdr Charlie Strickland

Dept Sgt-at-Arms Kevin Joy

PDC John Palmer

PDC Bob Scherer

PDC Jim Kvam

Absent

D-1 Cmdr Darlene Walton

D-6 Cmdr Orval Mills

D-11 Cmdr Mike Cook

D-12 Cmdr A. Hough

D-14 Cmdr Terry Greenfield

D-18 Cmdr Larry Pouncy

D-19 Cmdr Charlie Strickland

Also Present:

Dept Exec Director, M. May

Dept Admin Assistant, Sabrina Kennedy

Dept Finance Chairman Tom Yarborough

Sherri Scherer

Department Commander, James Rabon, opened the meeting and called on Chaplain Shuford for the invocation. Commander Rabon read Resolution 288, led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Preamble to The American Legion, and called on Adjutant Bob Renner to call the Roll. Adjutant Renner called the roll and announced there was a quorum to conduct business.

Commander Rabon asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous DEC meeting. Motion made by Vice Cmdr Jack Lonergan to approve the minutes from September 10, 2025, second was made by D-13 Cmdr Rick Gibson,

At this time I need a motion to go into Executive Session and anybody that is not a member.....

Vice Cmdr Lonergan: Speak up.

Commander Rabon: At this time, I'd like anybody that is not a member of the DEC, to please leave the room.

D-4 Cmdr Myers: Sir, we need to approve the first motion.

Imm PDC Donegan made a motion to go into Executive Session, a second was made by Vice Cmdr Jack Lonergan.

D-4 Cmdr Myers stated he'd like to make a point of order, saying unless he missed it, did we approve the minutes?

Commander Rabon: Yeh, we did. Ok...I'll...all in favor of approving the minutes as written, say aye. Thank you, appreciate it Tom.

Commander Rabon: Ok, all in favor of going into Executive Session, say aye? All present approved the motion to go into Executive Session, none opposed, motion carried. At this time, PDC Palmer will bring his report.

Dept Adjutant Renner: Before we go, Commander, I want to make sure everybody understands what is said here in the Executive Session, stays in Executive Session. You're subject to disciplinary action, should anybody violate that, and that's in accordance with Roberts Rules, **EXECUTIVE SESSION**, Section 9.25. Anybody that violates that can be disciplined. Commander, can we take a few minutes break so everybody can sign in?

Commander Rabon: Everybody didn't sign in?

Adjutant Renner: No, you went right from the Religious Service straight into the meeting.

Commander Rabon asked everyone to move up closer to the front and to sign in so the meeting could begin.

EXECUTIVE SESSION BEGINS

EXECUTIVE SESSION ENDS

Commander Rabon thanked CIC Chairman Palmer and CIC member Joy and NEC Hawk for the work they had done on the Post 15 issue. Commander Rabon asked Adjutant Renner if the Department had received any letters of communication, Adjutant replied the Department had not.

Commander Rabon stated that the DEC would hear reports from the Department Officers, he called on Department Americanism Commission Chairperson, Vice Commander Dandy, for her report on the findings, and plans of all Department Americanism Sub-committees

Vice Cmdr Dandy stated there were eight resolutions at the National Fall American Commission meeting in October and that NEC Hawk would be going into detail on them.

Commander Rabon called on NEC Hawk for his report.

NEC Hawk: Hawk stated 48 resolutions were presented for consideration by the various Commissions and Committees at the National Fall meetings. All were approved, some had verbiage changes and information added to better explain their content. There were two that sticks out that applies to all of us.

- 1) Approval for the budget for the new Legion owned membership program to move forward for development. Hopefully, we will have our own membership program that cuts out Personify, that everyone loves dearly (laughter).
- 2) The second is the requirement of background checks for National Officers of The American Legion. This was passed and directed by the National Adjutant with consultation with the legal counsel and appropriate staff, to develop and implement procedures to conduct such background checks concerning confidentiality of information and determine disqualifying criteria consistent with applicable laws and organizational policies.
- 3) There was an opinion from the National Judge Advocate reference the SAL and other programs concerning IRS and other issues revolving around non-profit status. This has resulted in a lot of phone calls to the Department concerning the status of our programs within The American Legion, questions still need to be answered. We have a hand-out pertaining to that. You've got to remember, this primarily in South Carolina only to those squadrons that have canteens or local bars at their Posts, we've got to work out the details on some of the criteria. This is not a new policy, a lot questions we've got and talking with Jay, the issue is the 75/25 rule. You've got to have 75% American Legion, not guests, not SAL, that's the 75, that's been the rule. You've got to go back to the policies of the American Legion; they have to be signed in by a Legionnaire. That's been on the book, it's not been adhered to certain posts in the Legion. It's geared to the IRS rules and The American Legion policy of signing in guests.

D-4 Cmdr Myers: There's another IRS rule that says the Sons are members. If we're going to enforce this 25% rule, it's going to cut into a lot of the programs of the Sons

Dept Adj Renner: That's not true, as long as you maintain 75% at the post, then you can have over your 25%.

(excerpt from Ntl JA's opinion updated 11/6/25) -which is attached for clarification)

SAL squadrons, detachments, and the national organization are not stand-alone Veteran Service Organizations; rather, they must co-exist through the adoption and sponsorship from a post and cannot have their own EIN or tax-exempt status.

This means that the SAL is under the full autonomy of its sponsoring post. If the post chooses to allow the squadron to use the post's EIN and tax-exempt status, that would be predicated on whether the squadron (program) is in full compliance with the Four Rules of a Program.

Moreover, the rights and privileges of a program are not the same as those of a Legionnaire, or member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

For example, the post bar, restaurant, canteen, or other social activity is intended for Legion members (veterans) of the post, their bona fide guests, and members of the Auxiliary unit, with the revenue remaining in the tax-exempt category.

The IRS defines a bona fide guest as an individual a member invites to participate in an activity and pays for his expenses. If the guest pays for his own recreation or food, he isn't a

bona fide guest. **The members of the SAL squadron would be considered social non-members, and therefore, any sales or revenue generated from social non-members may also be subject to Unrelated Business Income (UBI) Tax by the IRS.**

The Subcommittee on Committees recommended to the National Executive Committee that the National Commanders national appointments presented by all Departments be approved and so ordered by the National Executive Committee.
so ordered.

NEC Hawk read the South Carolina national appointments for the following Legionnaires;

James Petterson for Americanism Council
Larry Pouncy for Americanism Council
Dana Richardson for Americanism Council
Richard Sullivan for Health Administration Committee
Joseph Lysaght for Media & Communications Commission
Richard Dorman for Membership and Post Activities
Bruce Donegan for Military Benefits & Quality of Life Committee
Louis Morse for National Cemetery Committee
Jerome Childs for National Security Council
Kevin Joy for National Security Council
Charles Strickland for National Security Council
Mark Dorsey for Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Council
John Comins for Veterans Employment and Education Council
Mack Holland for Veterans Employment and Education Council
A.L Hough-Everage for Veterans Employment and Education Council

NEC Hawk thanked Commander Rabon and concluded his report. Commander Rabon called on Adjutant Renner. Adjutant Renner called on Department Finance Chairman Yarborough for his report.

Chairman Yarborough: Chairman Yarborough began with two items.

- 1) The Constitution & Bylaws provides that when a post ceased to exist that any assets of that post becomes the property of the Department. And there was in Georgetown County, Post 243, ceased to exist some time ago, and the Department assumed the assets of that post. We found out late this week that the property taxes had not been paid on that property, and it was going to a sale. He stated he received a message from the Department Adjutant and the Dept Executive Director and we needed to get money there to preclude that property from going to sale. So we did that, I did that on behalf of the Committee, we didn't have enough time to pull the committee together to approve that. So that amount was \$4059.01. What generally happens on that, that sanitized the tax line, we should have had to pay taxes on that so the Adjutant and full time staff are researching that to get that property off the rolls as it should be and time staff could possibly get some of that money back, we just don't know that right now.
- 2) The other thing is, and I'm going to recommend a motion from the Chair on that, Commander, after this. When the 2025 budget was presented to the DEC last December, I ended up being sick and so that budget was presented by the former Department Adjutant. The budget that was presented and approved by this committee was not the budget that should have have been presented. Since then, you've

received the profit & loss statements each time, you saw the budget vs actual, that is the correct 2025 budget, and that includes everything. Chairman Yarborough requested that on behalf of the committee that the DEC would acknowledge that the 2025 budget approved as part of the monthly process in the profit & Loss statements, and also that the DEC would approve the amount of \$4059.01 for the property taxes on Georgetown Post 243.

Commander Rabon asked for a motion to approve the 2025 budget and the Georgetown Post 243 expense as described by Tom.

D-9 Cmdr Comins: I make the motion. A second was made by Vice Cmdr Morse. Commander Rabon asked for discussion, there being none, he called for the vote. All present approved the motion to approve the 2025 budget and the expenditure of \$4059.01. None opposed, motion carried.

Chairman Yarborough proceeded to go through the budgets for the General Fund, Law Cadet, Americanism, ALR and SAL. He stated all the budgets would be reviewed for approval at the DEC meeting on 12/3/25. He added there was one change and that all funds for the tickets per state law, must be sent to the Department and then Department would turn around and send \$10.00 per ticket back to the post. Chairman Yarborough reminded the DEC that when the external auditors come in they capitalize certain expenditures when they do the 990's.

We have it in the budget two items that if used, IT Expense and the Expense for the Commander's car, that will come out of the continuing fund balance, most of that money resides in CD's and savings and that sorts of thing. The Finance Committee will meet again before December 3rd to finalize the budget.

A question was asked about employee expenditures. Chairman Yarborough said it was not raised this year, the budget will allow for a 2.8 COLA, but the employees decided that to help balance the 2026 budget, there would be no cushion put in for merit raises for 2026.

Commander Rabon asked for a motion to accept the finance report. Vice Cmdr Lonergan stated he thought the motion had already been made.

Commander Rabon: We made the motion.

Vice Cmdr Lonergan: We had discussion.

Exec Dir May: Oh, we did?

Adjutant Renner: Somehow I missed that.

Vice Cmdr Lonergan: John Comins made the motion to accept it, and it was seconded by Vice Cmdr Morse.

Executive Director May stated that was way at the beginning of the finance report.

Adjutant Renner and the Exec Director May both stated that if there was a motion made to approve the finance report, they both missed it

Adjutant Renner: Ok, the next report would be Membership & Post Activities, Richard Dorman, Chairman:

Vice Cmdr Lonergan: We need to vote on that. The motion was made and seconded, but we need to vote on it.

Commander Rabon asked for vote on the motion to approve the finance report as presented, all approved, none opposed. However, no motion (after review of the recording several times) was made to approve the finance report, there was only the motion to approve the two items at the beginning of Chairman Yarborough's report).

Chairman Yarborough concluded his report and thanked Commander Rabon.

Chairman Dorman: He explained that he, Commander Rabon and Acting Adjutant Hawk went to the National Membership Workshop in August, and each attended several sessions, he added those sessions are available on mylegion.org

He said South Carolina met with the leading candidate at that time, Dan Wiley, and discussed the goal, What they came away with from leading candidate Wiley, was that South Carolina's membership goal for 2026 is 19518. We are currently at 61.88%, the next goal is 65% by November 13. South Carolina is 35th nationally and 9th in the Southeast. Last year, we finished 8th in the Nation. We did good last year, we got \$2,000 for our membership award, but each year we lose membership to DMS. As of October 30, we were at 12,326 members, right now we're at 12,320 members, only six below from where we were last year.

He asked all the District Commander's to motivate their members. D-5 Cmdr Wells said she gave her posts a report from mylegion and one particular post got upset that their membership was low and they went back to the post and did a transmittal that day of all members that had paid the post.

Commander Rabon said he'd asked the Districts to go out and have a quarterly event at Wal-Mart, Fall festivals, recruit, recruit, recruit. We're not giving posts that are under 15 a pass this year. If you're under 15, I'm going to pull the charters. If you've got that problem, take care of it, don't wait until the March DEC meeting. He stated he appreciates what the membership team does, he said the Team meets quarterly and he meets quarterly with them. This is the best Team that we've ever had.

D-13 Commander Gibson reminded everyone of the resources on mylegion, if you don't play around with it, you won't ever learn it. If the computer is turned off, you're not learning anything. Stay on the computer because that's the way it's going to go. Like it or not, Mylegion is where it's happening. So if you're not going to help your posts, get out of the way and let somebody else do it.

Commander Rabon stated that's what mylegion is all about, it's a report card on your district. Get a District Adjutant and a District Chaplain, train your team and get the job done.

D-13 Commander said they've had nine straight years of being 100%. When we were smaller, we struggled, I went in and got some M & M's. What does that mean? **More Members**, adding that a lot of these small towns don't even know there's a post in their town. He said get the veterans in this building and sign them up.

PDC Palmer said when he was membership Chairman, the goal for SC was 25555 and we made it. He said he put 64,000 miles on his car that year and his face was seen everywhere. He said he had a membership meeting every two weeks. He said he assigned a task for every member on the team, and he said when he asked for a report, they said they had this and they had that. PDC Palmer said he told them that until you get finished tonight, you're not going home. You're going to be right here. If you come together and work together, you can come up with more ideas and more ways to do things. You can get out there and work it.

Commander Rabon asked for a motion to accept the membership report, Vice Commander Lonergan made a motion to accept, a second was made by D-9 Cmdr Comins. All present, non opposed, the membership report was accepted as presented.

Adjutant Renner called on the Law and Order Chairman, Kevin Joy. He said last year they had 52 cadets sign up but only 48 participated. We're fortunate here in South Carolina, we have Kelly Griffith as the Director, myself and my brother, Russ Cantrell. We have a good working relationship. We have a good working relationship with Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott, who is a Two Star General in the South Carolina State Guard. With his relationship with Fort Jackson, they're on a first name basis working together so we've been quite fortunate to go out to Fort Jackson on the backside.

The Highway Patrol teaches them how to drive patrol cars, DNR (Department of Natural Resources) teaches them how to shoot a bow and arrow and rifle, and the Richland County Sheriff's Department takes them to pistol range as well as engage with the tasers. We're quite active and it's an honor to be Chairman of that program. Mr. Commander, that's my report.

Vice Commander Lonergan made a motion to accept the report, second was made by Imm PDC Donegan. All present voted in favor of the motion, no one opposed, motion carried.

Commander Rabon asked Adjutant Renner if the Department had received any Resolutions, Motions or Petitions, Adjutant Renner replied that we had not.

Vice Cmdr Lonergan stood to be recognized. He stated that yesterday that only 60% of the posts in SC had completed their CPR's, Rick Gibson had 100% of his post complete their CPR's. Vice Cmdr Lonergan stated that two Departments that he spoke with, that posts do not receive their membership cards until the Post completes their CPR. CPRs are online and then the answer from Posts is that they don't have this or that. Rick Gibson said he calls each of his posts and they go over the report line by line so he's sure their CPR is completed correctly, and that's why D-13 was 100% in CPR submission last year. It was explained yesterday by Maggie & Sabrina that it is changing this year, so that means every post has to fill it out. I sent out an email to all post Commander and Adjutants in the Department of SC about the Rifle Raffle, and I got a message that six of those emails no longer exist. If the Department and National had that information, we would not be sending emails to addresses that do not exist. That's why these forms are important. If your membership cards are that important, you need to do the work to get them. We talked about it yesterday, and a lot of people said it was a good idea. But we think the DEC ought to approve that.

So I would like to make a motion....

Adjutant Renner: Before you do, I'd like to say why the CPRs are important.. As you all know, we go to Washington, DC every year to talk with our Senators and Representatives. But that is also the time that our National Commander testifies before Congress. So what is on these CPR's is what the National Commander reports to Congress. If we not turning in the CPR's, the National Commander cannot give an accurate report to Congress. Thank you, Jack.

Vice Cmdr Lonergan: I would like to make a motion that Posts do not receive their membership cards, actually, Districts do not receive their membership cards for their posts unless that District is 100% turning in their CPR and their Post Data report.

Department Commander Rabon said Commander Lonergan might want to change that to the posts are 100% participating and working on their CPR, because they're not going to turn it in until later, so they need to be 100% working on them.

Adjutant Renner: Commander, excuse me, point of order, you've got a motion, get a second, then go into discussion.

D-13 Commander Gibson made a second to the motion, Commander Rabon asked for discussion.

D-4 Cmdr Myers said he like the idea but instead of the entire district suffering because of one post, because I can see there's posts out there, he said he has one post that he has a problem with, he'd like to have the post get their CPR done and the forms submitted before the Post gets their membership cards, not the whole district.

Vice Commander Lonergan: I will amend the motion to say not the Districts, but the posts don't get the membership cards until the CPRs, and the Post Data report has been turned into the Department by the deadline of June 30 for the CPR and April 15 for the Post Data Report

D-13 Cmdr Gibson seconded the amended motion. Commander Rabon asked all in favor to say aye and any opposed to say nay, all present voted in favor of the motion, none opposed, motion carried.

Commander Rabon said it's very obvious when he reviews the CPR's that some of them are pencil whipped, he said he'd rather have a few things submitted that are correct, than a bunch of lies being submitted because I don't want the National Commander to lie about what's going on in The American Legion. I'd like the posts do it on a weekly or monthly basis but don't submit it until it's done.

Commander Rabon asked if there are any appointments or removals on Committees. Adjutant Renner replied that with the passing of Bill Simpson, that Commander Rabon had appointed John Britt as Chairman of the Constitution & Bylaws Sub-committee and Tom Myers as a member. Adjutant Renner added that with the Social Media Policy that three members need to be appointed to that committee to assure there is compliance by the Posts, Squadrons, Chapters, and all Programs.

Commander Rabon said he types a Commander's report and he gives them to the District Commanders so we're on the same wavelength so we're all on the same page what I want you to do and what I want the posts to do. He said his program is Operation Comfort Warriors,

please support the program, it assists active duty veterans as well as retired veterans. What I'd really like to get is \$1.00 per member.

We had a Celebrate America USA 250 Challenge in your Fall Conference packet, please read that and get your posts involved. Please do your Buddy Checks, I've requested that the District Chaplains and the Post Chaplains do the Buddy Check.

Department Adjutant Renner asked for a motion for the Commander to appoint that committee, it doesn't need to be done immediately, but a motion is still needed.

Vice Commander Lonergan made a motion to authorize Commander Rabon to appoint the Media and Communication committee members without coming back to the DEC, a second was made by D-4 Commander Myers, Commander Rabon asked for discussion, there being none, all present were in favor of the motion, none opposed. Motion carried.

Commander Rabon asked for comments or suggestions, adding he appreciates everything that was done this weekend. He thanked Commander Palmer and Kevin Joy again for all the work they did on the CIC.

Dept Executive Director May made the comment that she thought this was one of the best Fall Conferences that the Department has had she's been with the American Legion family.(applause). And the most well attended, adding she thinks if we keep carrying this forward, it will remain well attended.

Adjutant Renner said he'd like to say it was a success because we have Maggie and Sabrina putting all this information together, so let's give them a round of applause.

Commander Rabon said South Carolina does lead the way, and we want to get our numbers up, so we show them "South Carolina Leads the Way"

I'll finish with the American Legion veterans Creed.

- I am an American Veteran
- I proudly served my Country
- I live the values I learned in the Military
- I continue to serve my community, my country, and my fellow veterans
- I maintain my physical and mental discipline
- I continue to lead and improve
- I make a difference
- I honor and remember my fallen Comrades

Commander Rabon called on Chaplain Shuford for the benediction. Chaplain Shuford thanked Maggie and Sabrina for the Chaplain pins and books, that was a touchdown. He thanked all the District Commanders, he said there are 15 District Chaplains right now.

Chaplain Shuford asked all to bow their heads and gave the benediction.

Commander Rabon thanked Chaplain Shuford, stating he forgot to say one thing....let me just say one more thing.

I had a meeting with my 1st Vice.... I mean my Vice Commanders yesterday. We have decided that we need to be more actively involved with our District Commanders at their District meetings and participating with them.

So our District Commanders are going to start attending your District meetings, I mean... our 1st Vice....our Vice Commanders are going to start attending your District meetings, they're going to do the elections, they're going to be more involved in getting the information from the Department to the Districts. And we want the Districts to give the information to the Vice Commanders and getting it to Department.

So we are going to become more actively involved. So, what we're going to do is we're going to have a Zone area, and...and...and each District Commander will handle the Zones according to how we used to do it. So the District Commanders will be getting with the.....I mean the Vice Commanders will be getting with all the District Commanders, talking to them, and getting that across to them.

Ok, ok. We'll go ahead and salute the flag. Commander Rabon closed the meeting.

For God and Country

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Renner". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bob Renner
Department Adjutant

BR/mm