

Minutes from the American Legion 21st District Executive Committee Meeting Uvalde, Texas 23 Oct 2021

Posting of Colors by Sgt-At-Arms (0900)

Invocation was given by District Chaplain Carol Hammes, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, Acknowledgement of the POW/MIA, and THE American Legion Preamble to the Constitution.

The District Commander Welcome all members present and asked for a Roll Call. 11 Members were present and one represented via Zoom. Quorum Present

A motion was introduced to suspend the reading of the last minutes which had previously been distributed through email. Joey Bess made a motion that the reading be suspended which was seconded by Post Adjutant John Quigley from Brackettville. Motion carried

Commander discussed the order of business for the day with a review of the agenda. A visitor, Al Alford, the American Legion Texas Department Historian was introduced. Al Alford is running for Department Vice Commander.

Finance Report – James Cox was elected as the Finance Officer but has resigned due to Health. Commander McHorse reported that as of 1 August and current for today 23 Oct 2021 there is a total of \$9,718.53 available funds. Commander noted that there needed to be a signature change on the documents with the resignation of James Cox. A motion was made by the Post Adjutant of Brackettville to accept the Finance report as given and seconded by the Post Commander William Evans of Lake Hills. Motion Passed.

Reports given by Joey Bess, District Judge Advocate and SAL District Commander

Bess stated there is a challenge from the Department for all members to recruit at least one member this year.

District Resolution Endorsements

1. Post 319 Endorsed Lynn E. Sparkles for the Alternate National Executive Committee for 2022-2024
2. Fred Brock Post 828 endorsed Al Alford for Department of Texas Vice Commander for upcoming elections.
3. Earl Graham Post 159 Bryan, Texas endorsed – Tom Marty for Department of Texas Vice Commander.
4. Hopkins County Post 66 of Sulphur Springs, Texas endorsed Andy E. Lowen for Department of Texas Commander
5. Post 208 Kerrville, Texas Endorsed Joey Bess for 4th Division Commander, Department of Texas.

Sons of the American Legion report

Encourage Dual Members to join. Activities for the SAL 208, helped FFA by purchasing 10 hogs and provided to Veterans. Also set up playground equipment. Please provide any information or input on SAL or other district issues to WJBest@yahoo.com

Legion Baseball – 21st District will hold tryouts for team. Dates and Time TBD. This past year there were only 5 teams in the state of Texas. State Tournament will be in McAllen, Texas this year.

Post 572 is working on getting a baseball team and have a tentative commitment for a team out of Christoval.

Al Alford requested that any activities of the SAL be submitted to the Dept Historian by 31 Oct 2021 as they are preparing an article on the SALS

Dept Texas Executive Committee – Notes from the Commander

Incentive Program. \$31 will get 2020 members caught up if they have lapse membership

Buddy Checks still extremely important to reach out to Vets in need

Texas Membership is currently at 55%

A second reading was made requesting the closure of Texas Posts, 45, 124, 622, 203, and 417. Motion carried.

There as been a name change for the VAVSit is now the Center for Development and Civic Engagement

Aug Unemployment for Vets in Texas is at 5.9%. Job fairs are looking for Engineers and IT fields

Possible District Boundaries changing. More to come on this issue

Americanism Committee - 1100 attendees are planned for at Boys State in 2022 and to be held at UT Austin. The cost for individuals has increased to \$330.00 each. Still discussion on whether to do Virtual vs Real-time. Members from the Posts expressed that their sponsors for 2021 said that the virtual still was a rewarding experience. Virtual attendance has become a way of life for most students now.

Oratorical Contest - Need to look at timelines....looking for a chairman to lead this activity. Boerne Post Commander Don Gray expressed disappointment that the Oratorical Contest was cancelled at the last moment, the day before, the event. They had an excellent candidate who had prepared extensively but notified only the day before. Needs to be better planning and coordination.

Membership – District Vice Commander Evans, Lake Hills Post 410 – District Membership at 41.93%. Encouraged all to reach out to younger vets from Iraqi and Afghanistan Wars. Wear your hats and “colors” at events for recognition and to stimulate interest in others.

Historian Report – Kristy – No new updates at this time

Judge Advocate – Resolutions previously presented at meeting.

Commander Announcements - Noted that the Spring Convention will be in March 2022 in Uvalde, Texas. The 4th Division is in May in Kerrville and the 2023 Convention will also be in Kerrville. Posts who would like to Sponsor beyond these dates need to contact District Commander.

There were questions on rules for bonding of commander and whether those having felonies in the past are eligible. Will be brought to the convention for discussion

Questions from Members

K2

Burn Pit Registry – Go to VA website. There is a list of 100 questions to complete. VA is now looking at individuals in the STANS who were exposed to burn sites with possible Cancer causing agents.

Brackettville Commander had a question regarding a complaint received by family of Veteran in a Nursing Home. District Commander will get more information and follow up.

Morning Session was Adjourned for Lunch

Afternoon Session reconvened at 1300.

Training Session –Kristy

Explained access to My Legion.org to begin the basic training modules. Please keep a record of completion. Recommend American Legion EI training of looking at running for any positions in the organization.

The 21st Website has “Training Tuesday” Link through the department

There are currently 52,040 Members in the Dept of Texas – Notes on how to get members to join and get involved. Not a price problem as to cost of dues but more of a Value issues. Return for their Money...what are we offering to our Vets? What matters most to members and prospects? Recommend Questionnaires asking why be involved, and do follow-up in their interests. Prepare giving Elevator Speech..3-5 minutes when ever the opportunity arrives.

Post Commander’s Remarks.

Lakehills Commander Evans – Issue of Boys State. Though they don’t have a high school, they will still be able to pick up from Bandera if 208 wont be able to support all. It was addressed that the school must notify if they have interest in sending a candidate.

Brackettville Commander Post 26 - Discussed youth activities to support. Stated the importance of a Shooting Club as many of the Olympians start here. Sold Property in Uvalde and moved to Brackettville. 50% of membership renewed. Currently holding meetings at a restaurant, posting flyers, and advertising in the paper

Boerne Post 0313 – Commander Gray asked for input from other posts on how do you get members to volunteer for events. Response from other posts that they too had the same problem and couldn’t even get quorum at times for a meeting. Hoped that things might get better now that the issue of COVID has subsided with the availability of vaccines.

Post Activities held – Market Days has been a great recruiting event

- Participated in parade events, Memorial Day, Flag Day, and presented colors at other ceremonies
- Hosts a Social Hour before meetings for Legion, Auxiliary, and SAL
- Restarting Nursing Home Visits and Continuing Buddy Calls

Sponsored Boys State and Oratorical Contest

Sponsors Coffee Events

Golf Tournament Fundraiser very successful

Held meetings for Vets and Family regarding burial information

Sponsors Blood Drives

Food Drives

Post 208 Kerrville, Commander McHorse- Flag Day Events, Easter Parking, Bingo at the the VA, Starting to get back into the community. Note there will be a Car Show by VA Kerrville 13 Nov and need Veteran Support

Held a 4 Post Meeting. With Boerne, Kerrville, Lakehills, and Bandera Posts.

Hosted Event with VFW to honor a 98 year old Vet from Louisiana . their last Surviving Pearl Harbor Veteran

Memorial – Placed Flags on Vet Plots at Cemeteries, and Memorial Service at Court House Square

Presented \$1000 to VA Center and provided \$20 Coupons for VA Vets to use at their facility

Will continue to push for training of members and work through VAVS

Lakehills Post 410 –

Hosting Community Dinners now that Covid has allowed greater participation

Sweep Stakes Machines providing \$500 to \$600 a week for Post

Reopened Canteen

Established an Honor Guard of 5 Members

Planning a BBQ cook off

Teamed up with Vet center in SA for their mobile unit to provide counseling and access to computers for vets.

Uvalde Post 479

Held a VA Benefit Fair – Vet Van Center Group put at Court House

Developed good relationship with Newspaper providing information on flag etiquette

National Security – Met with Congress Mans at Office to discuss border support

Feed First Responders on 11 Sep

Memorial Day Ceremony – replaced flags

ROTC program banquets and awards

Sponsoring Boys Scouts and Cub Scout

Sponsoring Boys State Candidates

Held a BBQ cook off

Cinco De Mayo Festival

Remodeled Building

San Angelo Post 572

Held 2 Day Golf Tournament

911 Ceremony in conjunction with a Car Show

Joined the Better Business Bureau

Memorial Service – Post Everlasting. – Chaplain

Prayers were given for members who have died in the district since last Meeting in March

Members were transferred to the “Everlasting Post” for Eternal Rest

Members from Post 208, Kerrville

C.R. Prinz , Edison L. Schaefer, Richard Trevino, Thomas Murray, Jr.

Charles Sherrill, Travis Cameron, Connor Richter, James Crofoot, Alan Maxfield

Arthur Warren Colvin, Jr, Ron Fuller, Melvin Heck, James Culp

Members from Post 313 Boerne

Carl Weed

Clarence Pottorff

Members from Post 479

Olivia Allen, Jose Aviles, Richard Cuellar, Gilbert Riojas, Noe Saldana, Juan Martinez

Harold Henkel, Luis Gonzales.

A Closing prayer was given by Chaplain Hammes and, there being not further business, the meeting was adjourned by Commander McHorse

Signed;

George McHorse Jr

21st District Commander