



American Legion Post 543
Saint James, NC 28461

SUBJECT: General Membership Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday October 23, 2019, 7:00pm

LOCATION: St. James Community Center, Saint James, NC, 28461

1) Call to Order and Advance the Colors (Opening Ceremony): (Freeman)

- Per Agenda previously provided, the meeting was called to order at 7pm in the Town of St. James Community Center. (See Attachment #1)
- Colors were posted
- Our Post Chaplain offered the opening prayer
- The POW/MIA Empty Chair was formally recognized
- Pledge of Allegiance
- The Preamble to American Legion Constitution was recited by all

2) Roll Call of Officers: (Freeman)

- Officers Present:
 - Tom Bednarczyk, Chaplain
 - Dan Bennett, Deputy Vice Commander Active Duty Support
 - Chris Romig, Deputy Adjutant
 - George Freeman, Commander
 - Bill Morgan, 1st Vice Commander Resource Development
 - Steve Muir, Service Officer
 - Pom Pomeroy, Sergeant-at-Arms
 - Rick Sessa, Membership
 - Tom Balbert, Historian
 - Chuck Blackburn, Deputy Vice Commander Americanism (Excused)
 - John Muuss, Public Relations Officer
 - Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
- Officers Not Present:
 - Doc Liberty, Judge Advocate

3) Welcoming Guests & Sick Call: (Freeman)

- Veterans attending for the first time were invited to stand and introduce themselves and share their Branch of Service.
- Ray Clemens and Dick Belch have recovered and are no longer on sick call.
- Nominations for the position of Adjutant were opened and the nominating committee, led by Doug Pratt, reported only one nomination for the position of

Adjutant had been received. A motion to accept the nomination of Chris Romig and keep the nominations open until the end of the meeting was approved.

- Special guests were recognized and included:
 - Sara Long, a member of the local scouting troop and nominee for the National Youth Leadership Training Program scholarship, who was sponsored by Post 543.
 - 17 Blue Star families. A history of the Blue Star organization was provided by the Commander and Blue Star flags were presented to families by the Chaplain.

4) Approval of Minutes: (Freeman)

- Minutes of the September 25, 2019 General Membership Meeting were approved without alteration.

5) Membership Report: (Sessa)

- To date 75% of the membership has renewed their membership goal for 2019-2020 and six new members were present for the meeting.

6) Finance Report: (Pratt)

- The monthly finance report showed the Post has received 76% of the budget projections up to this point. Budgeted expenditures totaled 10% and are on track for the year.
- Doug provided a budget update for the 1st Quarter. Due to the tremendous success of the MAD golf tournament, which raised \$5,000 more than projected, the additional funds resulted in budget increases for Veteran Support for Folds of Honor and Wounded Warrior Foundation; Defense for additional ONS Christmas Boxes; Americanism to cover additional Uniforms and Signage; and, Post Operations to cover additional expenses for the new Quarterly News Letter.
- The Finance Report was approved without alteration.

7) Service Officer Report: (Muir)

- Steve reported the state adopted the VEAC as a formal program at the recent Fall Conference. He also reported that, due to the success the American Legion has had in North Carolina in assisting veterans with their claims, the Deputy Undersecretary of the VA would be visiting the Durham office to find out more about their process.
- Steve spoke briefly on benefits provided to Veteran's survivors and made flyers with all applicable information available to everyone.
- Steve provided an update on a wounded Marine at Camp Lejeune and announced the EXCOMM had approved a \$500 donation to the EOD Warrior foundation in his name.
- Steve is working with Rep. Rouzer's local office to assist a veteran in bringing his family from Columbia.

8) Guest Speaker: Sara Busch, Folds of Honor Director of Golf Relations, Southeast United States.

- Since 2007, the Folds of Honor has provided over 24,500 educational scholarships to spouses and children of America's fallen and disabled service-members.

- In 2019 alone, the efforts of our Post, through the MAD Golf Tournament, contributed to the award of 430 scholarships in North Carolina.
- George presented Sara with a check for \$5,000. Sara spoke on the importance of our efforts and expressed deep appreciation and thanks for our support.

9) Recent and Coming Events and Commander's Report

- Operation North State Christmas Boxes is ongoing. Post is looking for names of individuals eligible to receive boxes.
- "Charlie Brown" Holiday Tree – your military memorabilia is needed!
- Veterans Parade in Wilmington-Nov 9th.
- Poppy Distribution-Nov 9th at Lowes Home Improvement 9am-3pm
- Chili Cook-off Nov 9th at 1:00PM at the Oak Island Moose Lodge
- Legionnaires Appreciation Celebration at the Woodlands Pavilion, Nov 10th from 1-3 PM.
- Veterans Day Observance at the Community Center at 1100 on Nov 11th.
- Visit to Carillon Assisted Living Nov 11th.
- UNCW Basketball game at the Trask Center on the Wilmington Campus, Nov 12th 5:00PM
- Post General Membership Meeting, Nov 20th, 7:00PM. Guest Speaker will be the Director of the USS North Carolina Battleship.

10) Commanders Report (Freeman)

- Reported on the vetting report completed by Mike Carton.

11) Committee Reports

- John Muuss reported that Cat Tales would feature the Post's memorial bricks as its cover story next month.
- Dan Bennett and Rick Quashne reported on plans for the upcoming Marine fellowship tournament at Members Club on Nov 2d. Additionally, Dan reported that 11 Active Duty service members would be attending Thanksgiving dinner with St. James families.
- Several members reported on the richly rewarding experience provided to both participants and volunteers at the Wounded Warrior peer fishing event earlier this month.
- Mike Fegan, District Vice Commander, reported on a program to recognize businesses that fly the American Flag.

12) Closing Remarks, Ceremony & Adjournment (Freeman)

- George thanked everyone for their continued support and efforts.
- No additional nominations for the position of Adjutant were offered and nominations were closed.
- Meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

CHRIS ROMIG
Deputy Adjutant

GEORGE R. FREEMAN
Commander



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1. Call to Order and Advance The Colors (Opening Ceremony): (Freeman)
 - Posting of Colors
 - Post Chaplain opening prayer
 - POW/MIA Empty Chair recognition
 - Pledge of Allegiance
 - Preamble to American Legion Constitution reading
2. Roll Call of Officers
3. Welcome to Guests & Sick Call
4. Approval of Minutes of August 28, 2019
5. Membership Report: Rick Sessa, 2nd Vice Commander Membership
6. Finance Report: George Freeman, Commander
7. Service Officer Report: Steve Muir, Service Officer
8. Guest Speaker: Sara Busch, Folds of Honor
9. Committee Reports
9. Coming Events and Commander's Report
10. Closing Ceremony: George Freeman, Post Commander
11. Adjournment and Fellowship

Next General Membership Meeting: November 20, 2019

ATCH #1