



American Legion Post 543  
Saint James, NC 28461

SUBJECT: General Membership Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday June 27, 2018, 7:00pm

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

1) Call to Order: (Fegan)

- 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
- Post 543 Chaplin elect offered the opening prayer.

2) POW/MIA Empty Chair: (Fegan)

- The POW/MIA Empty Chair was formally recognized.

3) Pledge of Allegiance: (Fegan)

- Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

4) Preamble to Constitution of the American Legion (Fegan)

- The Preamble to American Legion Constitution was recited by all.

5) Roll Call of Officers: (Fegan)

- Officers Present:
  - Chuck Blackburn, Sergeant at Arms
  - Mike Fegan, Commander
  - John Muuss, Historian
  - Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
  - Rick Sessa, 1st Vice Commander
  - Paul Witmer, Service Officer
- Officers Not Present:
  - Dan Bennett, Adjutant
  - Gary Crowden, Chaplain
  - Doc Liberty, Judge Advocate
  - Rick Quashne, 2nd Vice Commander
- Executive Committee Members At Large:
  - Tom Balbert, Member at Large (Absent)

- Bill Morgan, Member at Large & Chair, SJMAD (Present)
- Steve Muir, Member at Large (Absent)
- Others Attending:
  - Tom Bednarczyk, Chaplain Elect
  - George Freeman, Adjutant Elect
  - General Members; 35 Members and 5 guests were in attendance

6) Welcoming Guests: (Fegan)

- Veterans attending for the first time were invited to stand and introduce themselves and share their Branch of Service of which there were two.
- Sick Call: Prayers were asked for Jerry Crowden, Roy Anderson, and Jerry Perriman.

7) Approval of Minutes: (Fegan)

- Minutes of the May 27, 2018 General Membership Meeting were approved without alteration.

8) Guest Speaker:

- Post 543 sponsors the Brunswick Early College High School Robotics Team
- Members of the team shared a PowerPoint presentation sharing their work and accomplishments.
- Members presenting; Thomas Chuili, Marketing Captain & Build Team Member, Cameron Stanley, Build Captain, and Destiny Pennington, Coding Captain.
- Critical learning points shared by Robotics Team:
  - Plan ahead
  - Stay on plan
    - Failed to allow time for qualification, integration, demonstration & validation testing
    - First full-scale test was at the competition which highlighted interstitial failures
  - Successful integration is essential
  - Failures most likely to occur at integration points
  - Communication among team members essential
  - Plan for the unexpected
  - Adapt to failures quickly and never give up
- The team expressed deep appreciation for both the financial and personal mentoring support provided by Post 543.

9) Membership Report: (Sessa)

- Our membership goal for 2017 – 2018 is 173 members. We have 179 members in good standing and have therefore exceeded our goal.
- NC State has not yet provided our new goal for 2018-2019

10) Finance Report: (Pratt)

- All accounts were reported as being in order and the Post continues to operate as planned within the budget.
- The membership approved the Finance Report as presented.

11) Service Officer Report: Paul Witmer, Service Officer

- Paul shared that two portable aluminum ramps have been secured and are in place supporting the needs of a female veteran in Boiling Springs Lake.
- Poppy sales at Walmart in Southport are scheduled for Saturday Nov 10, 2018.

12) Coming Events. Executive Committee & Other Reports (Fegan)

- Near-term coming events were reviewed and included:

DATE	EVENT
30 Jun – 1 Jul	911 Never Forget Traveling Memorial
1 Jul	Post 543 Membership Renewal Begins
2 Jul	Veteran's Recognition Dinner
3 Jul	Naturalization Ceremony, Flag Retirement Ceremony
4 Jul	Reading of the Declaration of Independence
4 Jul	Southport 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Parade
7 Jul	St. James Military Appreciation Day Golf Tournament

- EXCOMM Highlights Included:
  - Successful completion of the Post's filing for a NC Solicitation License
  - SJMAD:
    - Concert went well although funds raised were slightly below expectations. Final after-action report was completed and turned into the Commander.
    - Golf Tournament:
      - Sold out in record time.
      - Donations from business are on track with planned receipts.
      - Donations from Neighborhood Captains are running behind last year.
      - Volunteers will be needed to support the day of the tournament. Bob Rice is heading up the volunteers for the morning of the tournament. A sign-up sheet for volunteers is available to members.
  - Given current leadership uncertainty at the Step Up For Soldiers organization the previously planned \$1K 2018 donation will not be made.
  - The current healthy financial environment of the Post enabled movement of \$5K from the current years' Operating Budget was moved to the Post Reserve Funds account.
  - "Foursomes for Heroes": Rick Sessa is contacting Operation North State and sharing that we are working this proposal to sponsor veterans for golf.
  - Warrior Bike Ride Through St. James, Oct 2018: A volunteer (Randy Bookout) has been identified to coordinate Post support and will be sharing at future meetings.

13) HONORS:

- American Legion Meritorious Service Award is awarded to members who have displayed highly exceptional service over an extended period. Recipients at this meeting:
  - Chuck Blackburn
  - Bill Morgan
  - Doug Pratt
  - Rick Sessa
  
- Post Legionnaire of the Year is awarded to Post member(s) who have distinguished themselves over the previous year through outstanding performance across multiple American Legion Pillars (*Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth*) far and above their peers.
  - Bill Morgan
  - Doug Pratt
  - Rick Sessa

14) Installation of Officers: (Dale Smith, District 9 Vice Commander)

- The following officers were installed for 2018- 2019 terms:
  - Dan Bennett, 1st Vice Commander (In Abstention)
  - Chuck Blackburn, Sergeant at Arms
  - Tom Bednarczyk, Chaplain
  - George Freeman, Adjutant
  - Mike Fegan, Commander
  - Doc Liberty, Judge Advocate (In Abstention)
  - John Muuss, Historian
  - Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
  - Rick Sessa, 2nd Vice Commander
  - Paul Witmer, Service Officer

15) Closing Remarks & Ceremony & Adjournment (Fegan)

- “It is my distinct honor to lead this Post for another year”, Commander Fegan
- Closing ceremony was conducted, including retirement of the Colors
- Meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

  
GEORGE R. FREEMAN  
Adjutant

  
MICHAEL FEGAN  
Commander

**American Legion Post 543**  
AGENDA FOR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
June 27, 2018, 7pm, St. James Community Center

- 1) Call to Order: Mike Fegan, Commander  
    Advance and Post the Colors and Opening Prayer
- 2) POW/MIA Recognition
- 3) Pledge of Allegiance
- 4) Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion
- 5) Roll Call of Officers
- 6) Welcome to Guests & Sick Call
- 7) Approval of Minutes of May 27, 2018
- 8) Guest Speaker: Thomas Chuili, Brunswick Early College H.S. Robotics Team
- 9) Membership Report
- 10) Finance Report: Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
- 11) Service Officer Report: Paul Witmer, Service Office
- 12) Coming Events, Executive Committee and Other Reports
- 13) HONORS  
    Meritorious Service Awards  
    Post Legionnaire of the Year
- 14) Installation of Officers for 2018-19: Dale Smith, District 9 Vice Commander
- 15) Closing Ceremony & Adjournment  
Fellowship

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 25,2018

ATCH #1