



Richard H. Stewart, Jr.
American Legion Post 543

SUBJECT: General Membership Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday August 28, 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
 - Chuck Blackburn, Deputy Vice Commander Americanism
 - Woody Dashiell, Adjutant
 - George Freeman, Commander
 - Doc Liberty, Judge Advocate
 - Bill Morgan, 1st Vice Commander Resource Development
 - Steve Muir, Service Officer
 - John Muuss, Public Relations
 - Pom Pomeroy, Sergeant-at-Arms
 - Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
 - Rick Sessa, 2nd Vice Commander Membership
- Officers Not Present:
 - Tom Balbert, Historian

3) Welcoming Guests & Sick Call: (Freeman)

- Veterans and new members attending for the first time were invited to stand, introduce themselves and share their Branch of Service.
- Special guests were recognized
- Honor Guard member Ray Clemen is recovering from recent surgery.
- Remembering Bill Morgan's mother passing last week.

4) Approval of Minutes: (Freeman)

- Minutes of the July 24, 2019 General Membership Meeting were approved without alteration.

5) Membership Report: (Sessa)

- To date, the Post reached 64% of our renewal goal for the 2019-2020 FY.

6) Finance Report: (Pratt)

- Doug Pratt reported the 2019-2020 annual budget was approved at the July monthly meeting. The month of July totals reflected membership dues and one donation for Boys State. The major deposit from Military Appreciation Day had not yet been provided as of this report.
- Month of July reflected minor expenditures. The primary expenditure going in the form of membership fees paid to the American Legion, Department of North Carolina.
- The Finance Report was approved without alteration.

7) Service Officer Report: (Muir)

- Steve Muir reported that he and Gary Crowden met with the Secretary of Veteran Affairs Robert Wilkie and Senator Thom Tillis concerning the availability of health care for local area veterans.
- Eastern North Carolina clinics are running at over-capacity with veterans coming to the Wilmington clinic from other areas to be treated.
- The VA has promised more medical staffing for the Supply, NC clinic.
- Mission Act: Urgent Care locations will be coming online in the near future. More info to come.
- Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC) Sept 12-14, 2019 in Cary, NC. Vets meet with VA reps to review and make compensation decisions for their case. Some vets had been waiting 3-7 years for a decision.
- Helped with burial benefits and a marker for a Korean War veteran on Oak Island.
- Reopened claim for a Viet Nam veteran who was awarded the DFC.
- Helped Viet Nam veteran who fell behind on his medical co-payments. 3 Legion posts in the area donated funds to help cover the shortfall.

8) Guest speaker-Mark Bachara, Attorney at Law

- Mark discussed the positives and pitfalls of estate planning, wills, healthcare power of attorney, planning for incapacity, and tax issues that arise when someone dies.

9) Recent and Coming Events (Freeman)

- Brick Sales ongoing through 9/20 POC Doug Elznic
- 9/11 Memorial Day Observance Ceremony Sept 11th Speaker-Kirk Davis
- Monthly Membership Meeting September 25th St James Community Center
 - Guest Speaker Rick Saunders of Peacock, Newman, & White Funeral Home
- Wounded Warrior Peer Fishing Event Oct 4th Ocean Crest Pier
- Veterans Day Parade November 9th Wilmington, NC
- Chili Cook Off November 9th Oak Island Moose Lodge
- Veterans Day Observance St James Community Center-Bill Morgan
- Operation North State Christmas Boxes Oct-Nov

10) Military Appreciation Day 2019 Summary (Morgan)

- Bill summarized the efforts of the MAD committee, the fund raising efforts of the neighborhood captains, and the business captains.
- The golf tournament was held on July 13th.
- 188 golfers at the Members Club
- Outlined the donation sources with a colorful pie chart.

11) Commander Comments & Awards: (Freeman)

- George reminded the membership of our vision to serve veterans under the four pillars of the American Legion and to take care of one another.
- The members were asked to participate in the activities coordinated by Post committee chairs. Each chair gave a brief outline of their activities and asked for volunteers.

12) Closing Remarks, Ceremony, and adjournment (Freeman)

- Post Chaplain offered the closing prayer.
- Retirement of the colors.

WOODY DASHIELL
Adjutant

GEORGE R. FREEMAN
Commander



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St. James Community Center

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Ceremony
3. POW/MIA Recognition
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Preamble to American Legion Constitution
6. Welcome to Guests & Sick Call
7. Roll Call of Officers
8. Membership Report: Rick Sessa
9. Finance Report: Doug Pratt
10. Service Officer Report: Steve Muir
11. Guest Speaker: Mark Bachara, Attorney-at-Law
12. Coming Events and Commander's Report
13. Closing Ceremony: George Freeman, Post Commander
14. Adjournment and Fellowship

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Wednesday, Sept 25, 2019

ATCH #1