



American Legion Post 543  
Saint James, NC 28461

SUBJECT: General Membership Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday March 27, 2019, 7:00pm

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

1) Call to Order and Advance The Colors (Opening Ceremony): (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
- 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) Recognition of American Legion's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

3) Recognition of Vietnam War Veterans

4) Roll Call of Officers: (Fegan)

- Officers Present:
  - Tom Bednarczyk, Chaplain
  - Dan Bennett, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander
  - Mike Fegan, Commander
  - George Freeman, Adjutant
  - John Muuss, Historian
  - Doc Liberty, Judge Advocate
  - Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
  - Rick Sessa, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander
  - Paul Witmer, Service Officer
- Officers Not Present:
  - Chuck Blackburn, Sergeant at Arms
- Executive Committee Members At Large:
  - Tom Balbert, Member at Large (Absent)
  - Bill Morgan, Member at Large & Chair, SJMAD (Present)
  - Steve Muir, Member at Large (Present)

5) Welcoming Guests & Sick Call: (Fegan)

- Veterans attending for the first time were invited to stand and introduce themselves and share their Branch of Service.

- Prayers were requested for a member and his wife who are both in ill health.

6) Approval of Minutes: (Fegan)

- Minutes of the February 27, 2019 General Membership Meeting were approved without alteration.

7) Guest Speakers:

- Nestor Rodriguez-Garcia, Constitutional Speech Contest Division II Winner
- Mark Erskine, Candidate for Department Commander
- James Moore, Candidate for Department Commander

8) Membership Report: (Freeman)

- To date 192 (101%) members have renewed their membership for 2018-2019. The 100% goal was met on January 31, 2019.
- Including 8 in-year transfers the Post has 200 members.
- Membership goal for 2018-2019 is 190, one more member than 2017-2018.



9) Finance Report: (Pratt)

- The monthly finance report was shared showing 92% of budgeted donations/income received and 62% budgeted expenses incurred. The Post is financially sound with budgeted expenditures on track for the year. The budget report was approved without alteration.

10) Service Officer Report: (Witmer)

- Paul shared that he is working with several veterans, who are not members of Post 543 to assist them across a myriad of issues they are facing. Paul also shared that 5 separate local Veterans organizations are coordinating resources to help another Veteran with a significant financial need and to date have raised over \$4K. Additionally, Paul mentioned the following:
  - CB's completed building a wheel chair ramp at a Veterans home
  - Poppy distribution will occur at the Southport Spring Festival 19-20 Apr 2019. Volunteers requested to sign up with Paul.
  - Charters of Freedom Gala is being supported by Post 543 through a cash donation. Members were also invited to attend the Gala.
  - The VA chose to not take the case relating to Agent Orange and its adverse effect on Blue Water Navy Veterans to the Supreme Court. Therefore, the lower ruling stands and Blue Water Veterans are now eligible to receive VA benefits/support for illnesses linked to Agent Orange.

- Steve Muir again shared that the next VEAC is scheduled for 25-27 April 2019 at the Elks Lodge on Oleander Drive, Wilmington. With the American Legion as Lead, the intent is to be inclusive of other Service organizations. Steve also shared that it appears enough funds/donations to fully fund this event will be in place and therefore, donations from individual American Legion Posts will not be sought. Volunteers are requested and can sign up with Steve.

11) Old Business:

- Bill Morgan provided a brief status update of work that is ongoing in preparation for the Post's annual SJMAD events. Below are the applicable Points of Contact and Summary Schedule:

<b>SJMAD Key Points of Contact</b>			
<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>eMAIL</b>	<b>PHONE</b>
Chairman	Bill Morgan	bill.am68@gmail.com	(571) 423-8530
Concert in the Park	Rick Sessa	popsest@gmail.com	(973) 714-5253
Business Solicitations	Tom Bednarzyk	tombed@aol.com	(203) 415-3750
Neighborhood Solicitations	Steve Muir	smuir1950267@gmail.com	(910) 253-5331
Volunteers	Bob Rice	bobbyrice48@gmail.com	(475) 204-1840

<b>SJMAD Key Milestones</b>
<b>MARCH</b>
Last year's Neighborhood Captains to confirm participation
Business Captain Solicitation Kickoff
Start personal visit to businesses
Recruit Neighborhood Captains
<b>APRIL</b>
Neighborhood Captains Kickoff Meeting
Save The Date Email to Neighborhoods
Wristband sales to membership
Golf Tournament: local newsletter blast to save the date
<b>MAY</b>
Neighborhood Captains send out 1 <sup>st</sup> solicitation letter/ email
SJMAD Shirt & Wristband sales to Post membership
<b>JUNE</b>
2 <sup>ND</sup> : Patriotic Concert in the Park
Follow up emails and letter box stuffers in neighborhoods
28 <sup>TH</sup> : Donation submissions to Steve Muir
<b>JULY</b>
12 <sup>TH</sup> : Place tee signs and large banners @ Members Club
13 <sup>th</sup> : Final preparations: attach service flags, ice in carts, registration

- Final Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee (Freeman)
  - George presented the results of the AD Hoc Committee charged with exploring improvements to the current Post governance structure.
  - The results were previously presented to the Executive Committee on March 18, 2019 where the recommendations were unanimously

approved and likewise approved for presentation to the General Membership.

- The slide presented are below:



**Richard H. Stewart, Jr. American Legion Post 543**  
**Final Ad-Hoc Committee Briefing**  
**March 2019**

**Structuring To Meet Our Full Potential**



### Why Address Our Post Governance Structure?

NC  
Post  
543

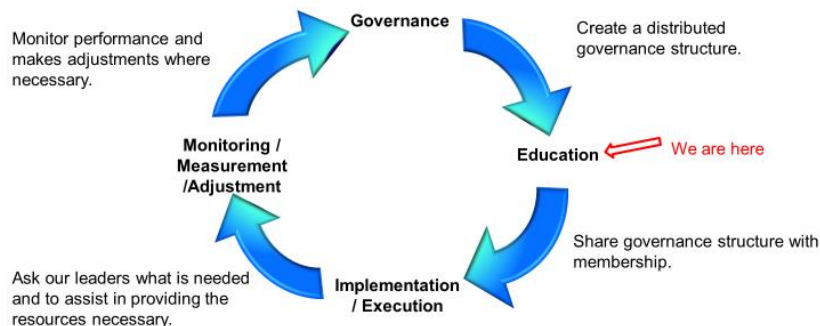
- What worked well for < 100 members needs to be adjusted to best serve over 200 members
- Increased attention to serve the needs of current members is needed to better include & serve all
- Individual Officer roles evolved to out of balance workloads
- A more robust governance platform is needed to support recent exponential growth
- Better defined Officer roles & responsibilities will help inform potential candidates running for office



### Our Strategic Approach

NC  
Post  
543

**GOAL:** Create an environment that best enables active individual member participation through a distributed governance structure





## Our Approach & Timeline

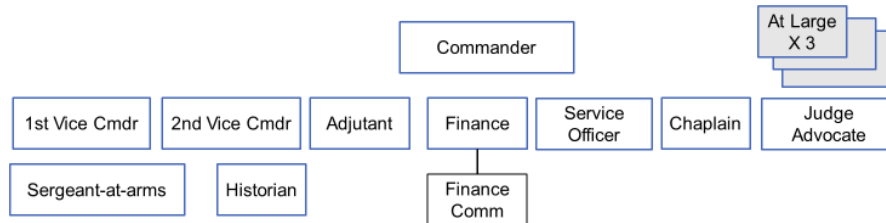
NC  
Post  
543

- **Late 2018: Need for improvement recognized by the EXCOMM**
- **Dec 2018: Commander formed an Ad-Hoc Committee to address the challenges (Fegan, Bednarczyk, Bennett, Freeman, Pratt & Sessa)**
- **Jan 2019: Post Officers requested to provide a list of current duties and responsibilities that they are currently performing**
  - Note: In some cases this revealed the morphing of roles & responsibilities over the years that needed to be formally incorporated going forward
- **Jan - Mar 2019: Ad Hoc Committee met several times to review data gathered and develop alternative solutions**
- **18 Mar 2019: Ad Hoc Committee results shared with the entire EXCOMM**
- **27 Mar 2019: Path ahead presented to membership at the Monthly Meeting**

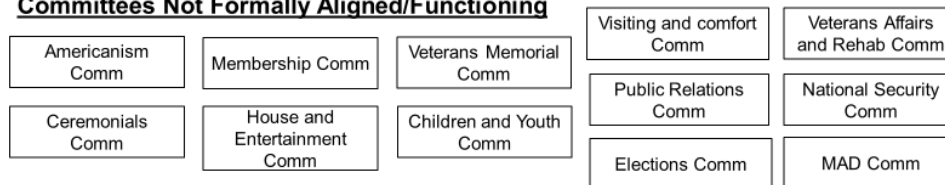


## Current Structure

NC  
Post  
543

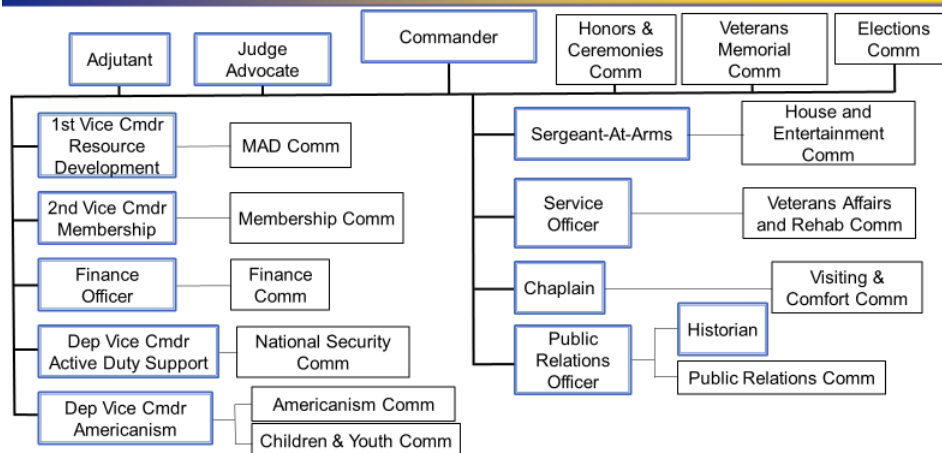


### Committees Not Formally Aligned/Functioning



## New Structure

Officer  
Comm  
NC  
Post  
543





- Defines Committee roles & responsibilities enabling all members to:
    - better “see” what the Post is doing
    - improve knowing where to participate
  - Better defines individual Officer roles & responsibilities
  - Equalizes workload across officers
  - Creates a robust governance platform; providing the foundation for future growth
- Following the above presentation and the answering of the few questions asked, the Commander called for a motion to approve the Post moving forward to amend applicable areas of both the Post By-Laws and Constitution to bring them into alignment with the newly proposed governance structure. The motion was made by John Muuss and seconded by Doug Pratt. A verbal vote was taken with all present indicating “Aye”, there were no “Nay” votes.

12) New Business:

- Nominations for 2019-2020 Officer Positions:
  - The Commander opened nominations for members desiring to be considered for 2019-2020 Officer Positions.
  - The Chair of the Post Nominating Committee (Tom Bednarczyk) presented the results of the Committee’s efforts and read a slate of proposed nominees by position as indicated below.

POSITION	NOMINEE
Commander	George Freeman
Adjutant	Woody Dashiell
Judge Advocate	Doc Liberty
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr Resource Development	Bill Morgan
2nd Vice Cmdr Membership	Rick Sessa
Finance Officer	Doug Pratt
Dep Vice Cmdr Active Duty Support	Dan Bennett
Dep Vice Cmdr Americanism	Chuck Blackburn
Sergeant-At-Arms	Pom Pomeroy
Service Officer	Steve Muir
Chaplain	Tom Bednarczyk
Public Relations Officer	John Muuss
Historian	Tom Balbert

- Following the entrance of the candidates recommended by the Nominating Committee the Commander again opened the floor for additional nominations. The Commander made the call for any additional nominees three (3) times with a lengthy pause between each call. No additional individuals were nominated.

- The Commander shared that nominations are open and will close at the April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 General Membership meeting. During the interim period members were advised that nominations may be made by contacting the Commander directly.

- Coming Events

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>POC</u>
19-20 Apr	Southport Spring Festival	Franklin Square Park	Rick Sessa
18 May Time: TBD	Post Spring Picnic In Recognition of 100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Woodland Pavilion	Rick Sessa
27 May 11 am	Memorial Day Observance	St. James Community Center	Bill Morgan
1 Jun 5-9pm	Concert In The Park	Woodland Pavilion	Rick Sessa
1 Jul 10am-Noon	St James 20th Anniversary Day Parade	Trailwood to Marina via St James Drive	Mike Fegan
13 Jul 8 am	St. James Military Appreciation Day Golf	Members Club	Bill Morgan

13) Commanders & Executive Committee Reports: (Fegan)

- Commanders Report (Fegan)
  - Mike provided a brief update on matters being worked by the Post Executive Committee.

14) Closing Remarks, Ceremony & Adjournment (Fegan)

- Closing ceremony was conducted, including prayer and retirement of the Colors
- Meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.

  
 GEORGE R. FREEMAN  
 Adjutant

  
 MICHAEL FEGAN  
 Commander



American Legion Post 543  
Saint James, NC 28461

SUBJECT: General Membership Meeting Agenda

DATE: Wednesday March 27, 2019, 7:00pm

LOCATION: St. James Town Council Chambers, Saint James, NC, 28461

1. Call to Order and Advance The Colors (Opening Ceremony): (Fegan)
  - Posting of Colors
  - Post Chaplain opening prayer
  - POW/MIA Empty Chair recognition
  - Pledge of Allegiance
  - Preamble to American Legion Constitution reading
2. Recognition of American Legion's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
3. Recognition of Vietnam War Veterans
4. Roll Call of Officers
5. Welcome to Guests & Sick Call
6. Approval of Minutes of February 27, 2019
7. Guest Speakers:
  - Nestor Rodriguez-Garcia, Constitutional Speech Contest Division II Winner
  - Mark Erskine, Candidate for Department Commander
  - James Moore, Candidate for Department Commander
8. Membership Report: George Freeman, Adjutant
9. Finance Report & Membership Approval Request: Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
10. Service Officer Reports: Paul Witmer, Service Officer
11. Old Business:
  - SJMAD: Bill Morgan, SJMAD Chairman
  - Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee: George Freeman
12. New Business:
  - Nominations for 2019-20 Officer Positions
  - Coming Events
13. Commander's and Executive Committee Reports
14. Closing Ceremony and Adjournment & Fellowship

NEXT MEETING: April 24, 2019

ATCH #1