

**The American Legion
Department of Nebraska
Department Executive Committee
Minutes
January 16, 2026
Norfolk Lodge – Norfolk, Nebraska**

The Department Executive Committee meeting of the Nebraska American Legion was called to order by Department Commander Judy Walters at 10:00 a.m. Following a salute to Colors, prayer was offered by Department Chaplain Steve Witmer. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the POW-MIA “Empty Chair” ceremony was observed. The Preamble was recited by all in attendance.

DEC roll call was taken by Department Adjutant Eric Martin. Present were Commander Judy Walters, Senior Vice Commander Doug Frahm, Area A Vice Commander Gary Davis, Area B Vice Commander Kelly Hanvey, Area C Vice Commander Marti Neal, Area D Vice Commander Cliff Rininger, Past Department Commander Don Suchy, Past Department Commander John-Henry Percy, Past Department Commander Boyd Yochum, District 2 Commander Gerald Bouska, District 5 Commander Geoff Florum, District 6 Commander Brian Rapp, District 7 Commander Virgil Blum, District 9 Commander Amie Moores, District 10 Commander Charles Tuttle, District 11 Commander Robert Eyer, District 12 Commander David Stander, District 13 Kevin McKinney, and District 15 Commander Ronnie Hindmand. National representatives in attendance were NEC Jim Costello and Alternate NEC John-Henry Percy.

Motion to seat District 1 Vice Commander Jerry Lemmon by Charles Tuttle. Second by Robert Eyer and carried. Motion to seat District 3 Vice Commander Ken Hanel by Amie Moores. Second by Chuck Tuttle and carried. Motion to seat District 4 member Clint Thompson with voice only. Second by Robert Eyer and carried.

Adjutant Martin declared a quorum and the meeting was declared regularly convened.

Commander Walters extended a welcome to members and guests at this meeting. She reminded all DEC members to submit vouchers to Department Headquarters in a timely fashion. He also stated that only DEC members had a voice and vote and that PDCs had voice only.

Commander Walters asked for a motion to approve minutes from the June 26 - 27, 2025 DEC Meeting. Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Tuttle. Second by Eyer and carried.

Commander Walters distributed the District Dues checks and expressed that they are to be deposited into the District bank accounts – not personal accounts. The next District Dues checks will be distributed in July.

Commander Walters noted Consolidated Post Reports are due June 1, 2026. She thanked Past Department Commander Yochum for his work on them last year. District Commanders and Department officers were asked to lead the way to another 100% performance. She asked the District Commanders to encourage Posts to track their activities and to fill them out with the correct information. He also encouraged the District Commanders to make sure that the Squadrons in their District are turning in their CSRs.

Commander Yochum presented the proposed 2025 District Time and Place. Three changes were made. Motion to accept the revised schedule by Chappell. Second by Bell and carried.

District	Date	Time	Location
District 1	Saturday, March 28, 2026	9:00 a.m.	Valentine Post 90
District 2	Sunday, March 15, 2026	1:00 p.m.	Elkhorn Valley Bank
District 3	Saturday, March 14, 2026	8:30 a.m.	Bancroft Village Hall
District 4	Saturday, March 21, 2026	10:00 a.m. MT	Sidney Post 17
District 5	Saturday, March 21, 2026	10:00 a.m.	Lincoln County Fairgrounds
District 6	Saturday, March 7, 2026	9:00 a.m.	Kearney Post 52
District 7	Saturday, March 14, 2026	10:00 a.m.	Valparaiso Post 371
District 8	Saturday, February 7, 2026	1:00 p.m.	Springfield Post 143
District 9	Saturday, March 21, 2026	9:00 a.m.	Palisade Post 318
District 10	Saturday, February 21, 2026	9:00 a.m.	Clay Center Post 87
District 11	Saturday, March 21, 2026	10:00 a.m.	Beatrice Post 27
District 12	Saturday, March 14, 2026	8:00 a.m.	Seward Civic Center
District 13	Saturday, March 7, 2026	9:30 a.m.	Falls City Post 102
District 15	Tuesday, February 10, 2026	6:30 p.m.	Lincoln Elks Club

Commander Walters stated the 2026 Department Convention will be held June 25 – 28, 2026, in Columbus. All sessions for the Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons will be conducted at the Quality Inn.

Adjutant Salak shared the Washington Conference would be held February 28 – March 4, 2026, at the Washington Hilton.

National Executive Committeeman James Costello was introduced for remarks on activities at the National level. He introduced National Vice Commander Jerry Landkamer of Nebraska. He spoke about the “Be The One” mission, resolutions that had been passed during Fall Meetings, and recognized all Nebraska members on National Committees and Commissions.

Adjutant Martin briefed the 2026 National Convention being held in Louisville, KY, August 28 – September 3, 2026.

Adjutant Martin stated all Department officers have been certified to National Headquarters with official documents verifying eligibility in the American Legion.

Adjutant Martin noted that there was one application for the 2025 National American Legion College and Jason Baker of Kearney Post 52 attended in November 2025. Applications for the 2026 session are due to Department Headquarters by June 1, 2026.

Adjutant Martin provided an update on Nebraska’s revenue enhancement program participation as of January 12. The label campaign has brought in just over \$7,584 from the Fall Label program that started on September 13. The lottery mailing donations totaled \$29,336. The final lottery total will be reported at Convention. The 2026 calendar mailing donations totaled \$7,572 and after expenses we netted \$4,604. USAA revenue incentive of \$2,010 was received in December 2025 and it will be the final one. The Legionnaire Insurance Trust held their annual board meeting, and the department received two checks for a total of \$30,964.

Adjutant Martin stated the 2026 Nebraska Legislative Day would be held January 30 at the State Capitol.

Adjutant Martin briefed the DEC about the Lincoln Post 1919 discussion. He stated that following the June DEC meeting it took longer than anticipated to gather the statement of facts needed for the case and no letters had been sent to the Post. Because of the current lawsuit pending with the Post, the lawyers suggested that no action be taken against the Post until that was all resolved. Any discussion about Lincoln Post 1919's charter would be tabled until the following DEC meeting.

Commander Walters asked if there were any Post or Squadron cancellations. Adjutant Martin noted there were three Posts this year. Franklin Post 209, Hildreth Post 378, and Wilsonville Post 152 had submitted the correct paperwork to have their charter cancelled. Motion to accept the cancellation of those Posts by Tuttle. Second by Eyer and carried. Adjutant Martin noted there were three Squadrons that the Sons had voted to cancel them in June and the DEC would have to confirm the cancellations. Motion to accept the cancellation of those Squadrons by Moores. Second by Tuttle and carried.

Commander Walters asked for the following appointment to be approved. Department Service Officer James Foster – indefinitely. Motion to approve the appointment by Neal. Second by Florum and carried. Commander Walters stated that there many committees that had vacancies.

Recess for lunch.

District 3 Commander Jeff Finken took his seat at the DEC table.

Commander Walters asked National Vice Commander Jerry Landkamer to bring greetings.

Committee reports were given as follows:

Convention Committee Report given by Chairman Rod Rose. All members of the committee were present. The committee reviewed upcoming dates for Mid-Year and Convention. The 2027 Mid-Year Conference was awarded to the Grand Island Ramada at \$94.00 a night and will be held January 15 – 17, 2027. The 2028 Department Convention was awarded to the Grand Island Ramada at \$121.00 a night and will be held June 22 – 25, 2028. Registration fee for all conferences and conventions will be \$10.00. Motion to accept the report by Rapp. Second by Florum and carried.

Americanism Committee Report given by Chairman Michael Hatfield. Hatfield reported Dean Chase, Teresa Johnston, and Gabe Skalka were absent. Programs reported on included Oratorical Scholarship Program and the judging changes this year, Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Noah Zach of Lincoln, Firefighter/EMS of the Year Jeremy Genier of Omaha, Junior Shooting Sports, and County Government Day had only thirteen counties report. Motion to accept the report by Blum. Second by Tuttle and carried.

Junior Shooting Sports Liaison Report given by Liaison Doug Frahm. He stated the 35th Annual American Legion JSSP competition will be held July 14 – 18 in Michigan at Hillsdale College. Nebraska had many new clubs register for the 2025-26 postal match to compete at the National Competition. The 2025 State champions will be determined in the first round of the postal and the second round determined the top scores nationally. The top Nebraska shooter in the Sporter class and the top team will receive trophies provided by the Detachment of Nebraska. Frahm stated that Ashley Carr from

Nebraska placed 2nd overall at the National competition. Motion to accept the report by Tuttle. Second by Moores and carried.

Children & Youth Committee Report given by Charman Donald Nelsen. Nelsen reported that Greg Smolik and Julie Schnitzler were present. He shared that the members talked about the yearly citations that are given out at District Conventions. He asked the District Commanders to ensure their Posts are filing out the Children & Youth part of the CPRs, as only 39% of the Posts filed it out last year. Motion to accept the report by Eyer. Second by Blum and carried.

Boys' State Committee Report given by Committee member Richard Colson. Colson shared the minutes from the November Boys' State Committee and Boys' State Corporation meetings. He stated that the dates for the 2026 session are May 31 – June 6, 2026, and the sponsorship cost will be \$450.00 and then the delegate will need to bring a \$25 registration fee to Boys' State. He asked all Posts to reach out to their local schools to speak with those boys who are eligible for the program. Motion to accept the Boys' State Committee report by Bell. Second by Chappell and carried. Motion to accept the report by Florom. Second by Moores and carried.

Membership Committee Report was given by Chairman Steve Bartos. Chairman Bartos shared that Dave Bruckner was present and Richard Baxter was excused. They discussed the 2026-27 membership awards. The committee discussed the January 15th membership report and discussion on how to continue to reach out to members to renew. He stated this year's membership year is going much better than last year's went. He stated that some Departments were using texting apps to reach out to members and they would be looking into it more. Motion to accept the report by Tuttle. Second by Blum and carried.

Finance Committee Report was given by Chairman Dan Stramel. Stramel reported that the committee met at Headquarters in December 2025, and Stramel reviewed the highlights of the minutes of their meeting. Stramel also spoke on revenue enhancement, the investment portfolio, and the condensed monthly financial statements. Other topics discussed by the Finance Committee included the building and grounds report, the baseball budget, and how frugal the Department Staff have been. Motion to accept the report by Moores. Second by Lemmon and carried.

Finance Officer Report given by Finance Officer Mark Novak. Novak reported that as of the December 31, 2025, the Department is ahead of the estimated expenses by \$120,533 because of the watchful eyes of Department Headquarters staff and only having 50% staffing at the office. The markets were good this year and the balances as of December 31, 2025, were as follows: PIF \$1,250,248, Scholarship \$115,044, Hurlbert \$94,154, Past National Commander \$160,762, Bequest \$52,760, and Stoldorf \$115,720. Investment funds are expected to generate \$30,000 worth of dividends and interest in the next 12 months. Novak briefed the DEC on the audit that was completed by BMG CPAs. A copy of the audit will be provided to all members of the DEC once it is received. Motion to accept the report and audit report by Eyer. Second by Florom and carried.

Rehabilitation & Employment Report was given by Committee member Bruce Gubser. Gubser noted that he was the only member in attendance. He stated that there were two vacancies on the committee and he had nothing to report. Motion to accept the report by Blum. Second by Tuttle and carried.

Scholarship Committee Report given by Chairman Carroll Mohlman. Mohlman stated the scholarship judging took place in March 2025. There were eight \$500.00 Maynard Jensen scholarships and five \$500.00 Boschult scholarships for the year 2025. He shared that the committee chose Braxton

Wentworth of Yutan for the Hurlbert Scholarship. Motion to accept the report by Tuttle. Second by Rapp and carried.

POW/MIA Liaison Report given by Liaison Boyd Yochum. Yocum shared his articles for the newspaper are centered around the facts about the POW/MIAs from the different war eras and mainly Nebraska. He stated that he was able to meet with members from the National League of POW/MIA Families and they were able to speak about the current recovery missions going on for all POW/MIAs. Motion to accept the report by Lemmon. Second by Rapp and carried.

Sons of The American Legion Liaison Report given by Liaison Robert Neel. Neel shared the Detachment currently had 164 Squadrons in the Detachment and there are about 4,980 paid members for 2026. He asked all District Commanders to contact those Squadrons that are at 0 paid members or below 10 paid members. The Detachment held three membership drawings this year that are similar to the Legion's membership awards. He reminded all Sons members that they needed to coordinate with their sponsoring Post when setting up events or fundraisers. Motion to accept the report by Hanvey. Second by Finken and carried.

Athletic Committee Report given by Chairman Jody Moeller. Moeller shared that 275 teams were registered in 2025, which is ranked number two nationwide, and that there were 48 tournaments held for the different classes. He stated that Legion Baseball continues to lose players to travel ball and other leagues and that it is up to the coaches and teams to show the value of Legion Baseball to all players. Moeller reported that Nebraska Legion Baseball had partnered with Hudl and they will be offering tools for teams and coaches. The program will work with all of its teams to make sure they are following the four rules of The American Legion, and they have a plan to institute it by the 2027 season. The committee is looking at the possibility of shortening the 2027 season to eliminate conflicts with the high school fall sports season. Motion to accept the report by McKinney. Second by Florom and carried.

American Legion Riders Liaison Report given by Liaison Danny Willets. Willets reported that there are 45 Chapters in Nebraska and the Riders had been busy with fundraisers, escorts, poker runs, and other events. The dates for the State Romp will be decided at the Saturday ALR meeting. Motion to accept the report by Rapp. Second by Lemmon and carried.

Service Officer Report given by Service Officer Levi Bennett. Bennett stated that he was stepping down from the position and James Foster who is a State Service Officer would be taking his position. He thanked everyone for their support and would still be active in the Legion. He shared that the motor vehicle tax credit was in full swing and that any county service officer can assist the veterans in getting registered for it.

College World Series Liaison report given by Jim Costello. Costello reported on the Legion's involvement in the 2025 season. He stated that the Legion sponsored Murray State this year and that the boys really enjoyed the opportunity. He thanked everyone for their work and would be looking for volunteers for the 2026 season. Motion to approve the report by Tuttle. Second by Moores and carried.

Homeless Veterans Liaison Bruce Husted was absent, the Department Historian position is vacant, and the Publications and Public Relations Committee remains vacant.

For the good of The American Legion:

Florum noted that LB-1072 needed to be opposed by the Nebraska American Legion and all veterans because it was taking money from the Nebraska Veterans Aid Fund and was putting it in the General Fund budget.

Pearcy stated that Emblem Sales had redone their website and there was some delay in orders being shipped.

Edith Deuel reminded everyone of her raffle going on and that the proceeds would go to Commander Walters project.

Commander Walters asked the candidates seeking Department offices to address the DEC: Doug Frahm for Commander; Richard Colson and Martin Neal for Senior Vice Commander; Julie Schnitzler for Area C Vice Commander; and Don Nelson and Bruce Gubser for Area C Vice Commander.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m. with a prayer and a salute to the flag.

Eric J. Martin
Department Adjutant

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