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TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY TODAY

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ORIGINAL

1 MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART
2 91ST ANNUAL CONVENTION - ~~FINANCE MEETING~~

4 DATE: JULY 15, 2024

5 REPORTER: LYN SI HERGERT

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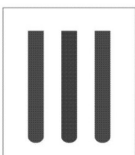
1 APPEARANCES

2 LEADERSHIP:

3 Carder Ferguson - National Commander, Arkansas
 4 Robert Olivarez - National Senior Vice Commander,
 Washington
 5 Tracey Brown-Greene - National Junior Vice Commander,
 Texas
 6 Walter Kroptavich - National Judge Advocate, Virginia
 Ernie Rivera - National Finance Officer, Florida
 7 David Jackson - National Inspector, California
 Gary Witt - National Sergeant At Arms, Virginia
 8 Dennis Wallot - NFC Chair. Michigan
 Paul Pickart - NFC Member, Iowa
 9 Craig Wertheim - NFC Member, Florida
 Jim Anderson - NFC Member, California
 10 Larry Leighton - NPC Chair, Arizona
 Alan Gibson - NPC Member, Georgia

11 REGION ONE

12 Frank Bokan - National Region 1 Commander, Pennsylvania
 Bryan Bossong - Region 1 Adjutant, Pennsylvania
 13 Charles Eggelston - Region 1 Chief of Staff, Maryland
 Michael Perron - Dept. Commander, Connecticut
 14 James Yacone - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Connecticut
 John Alberghini - Dept. Junior Vice Commander,
 Connecticut
 Jason Coppola - Dept. Adjutant, Connecticut
 15 Gary Morris - Dept. Commander, Delaware
 John Hohman - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Delaware
 16 Calvin Burgess - Dept. Commander, Maryland
 Chad Baker - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Maryland
 17 Timothy Abele - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Maryland
 James Hontz - Dept. Adjutant, Maryland
 18 Joseph Belardo - Dept. Commander, New Jersey
 Norman Glover - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, New Jersey
 19 John McCabe - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, New Jersey
 Richard Clark - Dept. Adjutant, New Jersey
 20 Ruben Pratts - Dept. Commander, New York
 Richard Gerbreth - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, New York
 21 Erie Mutz - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, New York
 Howard Goldin - Dept. Adjutant, New York
 22 Philip Arnold - Dept. Commander, Pennsylvania
 Bryan Bossong - Dept. Senior Vice Commander,
 23 Pennsylvania
 Robert Lauver - Dept. Junior Vice Commander,
 24 Pennsylvania
 Peter Verbos - Dept. Adjutant, Pennsylvania
 25 Benjamin King - Dept. Commander, Virginia
 Dominique Dionne - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Virginia



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1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED

2 REGION ONE (Cont.)

3 Richard Wise - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Virginia

4 Clifton Johnson - Dept. Adjutant, Virginia

5 REGION TWO

6 Terry Anderson - National Region 2 Commander, Minnesota

7 Paul Pickart - Region 2 Adjutant, Iowa

8 David Bellis - Region 2 Chief of Staff, Minnesota

9 Dan Welman - Dept. Commander, Illinois

10 Gordon Brenner - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Illinois

11 Keith Crossin - Dept. Adjutant, Illinois

12 Tom Moorman - Dept. Commander, Indiana

13 Micheal Shadowen - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Indiana

14 David Bandelier - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Indiana

15 Michael Shadowen - Dept. Adjutant, Indiana

16 Jack Hanson - Dept. Commander, Iowa

17 Anthony Polich - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Iowa

18 Francis McAllister - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Iowa

19 Paul Pickart - Dept. Adjutant, Iowa

20 Steven Schaltenbrand - Dept. Commander, Kentucky

21 Christopher Williams - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Kentucky

22 Christopher Smrt - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Kentucky

23 Christopher Smrt - Dept. Adjutant, Kentucky

24 Ronald Allen - Dept. Commander, Michigan

25 Fred Honerkamp - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Michigan

Scott Wilson - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Michigan

Sam Alverado - Dept. Adjutant, Michigan

Dave Bellis - Dept. Commander, Minnesota

Willie Pargo - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Minnesota

Wallace Lind - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Minnesota

Bull Shirley - Dept. Adjutant, Minnesota

Garfield Pellhum - Dept. Commander, Missouri

Alios Befort - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Missouri

John Dismer - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Missouri

Alios Befort - Dept. Adjutant, Missouri

Michael Sheets - Dept. Commander, Nebraska

Terry Minarik - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Nebraska

Robert Montag - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Nebraska

Thomas McBride - Dept. Adjutant, Nebraska

Dennis Hannerman - Dept. Commander, Ohio

John Looker - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Ohio

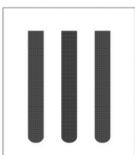
Shane Whitten - Dept. Junior Vice Commander (Ohio?)

Terry Blair - Dept. Adjutant, Ohio

David Duffer - Dept. Commander, West Virginia

David Depersig - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, West Virginia

Marcel Depersig - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, West



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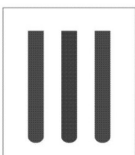
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- 1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED
- 2 REGION TWO (Cont.)
- 3 Larry Thompson - Dept. Adjutant, West Virginia
- 4 George Banda - Dept. Commander, Wisconsin
- 5 Richard Daseke - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Wisconsin
- 6 Joseph Heil - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Wisconsin
- 7 William Hustad - Dept. Adjutant, Wisconsin
- 8 REGION THREE
- 9 Lawrence Rupo - National Region 3 Commander, Oregon
- 10 Blanca Taylor - Region 3 Adjutant, Idaho
- 11 Keith Whittenbel - Region 3 Chief of Staff, Oregon
- 12 Stephen Blair - Dept. Commander, Alaska
- 13 Timothy Robbins - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Alaska
- 14 Armando Martinez - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Alaska
- 15 William McClain - Dept. Adjutant, Alaska
- 16 Ned Barker - Dept. Commander, Idaho
- 17 George Nickel - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Idaho
- 18 George Nickel - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Idaho
- 19 George Nickel - Dept. Adjutant, Idaho
- 20 Keith Wittenbel - - Dept. Commander, Oregon
- 21 Joseph Howell - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Oregon
- 22 Patrick Wilburn - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Oregon
- 23 Larry Rupp - Dept. Adjutant, Oregon
- 24 Connie Johnson - Dept. Commander, The Dakotas
- 25 David Flute - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, The Dakotas
- Bill Flippo - Dept. Adjutant, The Dakotas
- Jennifer Horn - Dept. Commander, Washington
- Nick McCallon - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Washington
- Nino Gray - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Washington
- Allen Acosta - Dept. Adjutant, Washington
- Barry Gasdek - Dept. Commander, Wyoming
- Albert Walsh - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Wyoming
- Daniel Carmona - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Wyoming
- Charles Livermont - Dept. Adjutant, Wyoming
- REGION FOUR
- Francis Figueroa-Lowe - Region 4 Commander, North Carolina
- Ed Abbey - Region 4 Adjutant, North Carolina
- Lou Zayas - Region 4 Chief of Staff, Georgia
- William Bergman - Dept. Commander, Alabama
- Robert Jones - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Alabama
- Delbert Leonard Robinson - Dept. Adjutant, Alabama
- Craig Wertheim - Dept. Commander, Florida
- Louis Barnes - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Florida
- Stewart Hilbmann - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Florida
- Bill Smith - Dept. Adjutant, Florida
- Harold Jones - Dept. Commander, Georgia
- Lou Zaya - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Georgia



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- 2 REGION FOUR (Cont.)
- 3 Alan Gibson - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Georgia
- 4 John Wilder - Dept. Adjutant, Georgia
- 5 Charlie Tolliver - Dept. Commander, Mississippi
- 6 Holis McArthur - Dept. Senior Vice Commander,
- 7 Mississippi
- 8 Alexander Campbell - Dept. Junior Vice Commander,
- 9 Mississippi
- 10 Edward Buckman - Dept. Adjutant, Mississippi
- 11 Lenny Lazzara - Dept. Commander, North Carolina
- 12 James Hicks - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, North
- 13 Carolina
- 14 Christopher Davis - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, North
- 15 Carolina
- 16 Eddie Abbey - Dept. Adjutant, North Carolina
- 17 Carl Lopez - Dept. Commander, South Carolina
- 18 Cottie Aleen - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, South
- 19 Carolina
- 20 Harold Palmer - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, South
- 21 Carolina
- 22 Charles Cook - Dept. Adjutant, South Carolina
- 23 Manuel Davila-Galarza - Dept. Commander, The Caribbean
- 24 Victor Manuel Betancourt-Castro - Dept. Senior Vice
- 25 Commander, The Caribbean
- Angel Matos Perez - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, The
- Caribbean
- Emilio DeLeon - Dept. Adjutant, The Caribbean
- REGION FIVE
- Gustav Wittschack - National Dept. 5 Commander, Texas
- Chuck Adkins - Region 5 Adjutant, Arkansas
- John Footman - Region 5 Chief of Staff, Texas
- Jimmy Lewis - Dept. Commander, Arkansas
- Quinton Ezeagwula - Dept. Senior Vice Commander,
- Arkansas
- Lonnie Young - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Arkansas
- Ted Clymer - Dept. Adjutant, Arkansas
- Peter Dowding - Dept. Commander, Colorado
- Larry Hathaway - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Colorado
- William Dunn - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Colorado
- Jon Eckhoff - Dept. Adjutant, Colorado
- Joe Sutton - Dept. Commander, Kansas
- Douglas Randolph - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Kansas
- Zachary Schuman - Dept. Adjutant, Kansas
- Deron Santiny - Dept. Commander, Louisiana
- William McGinnis - Dept. Senior Vice Commander,
- Louisiana
- Jason Sedatol - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Louisiana
- Harold Molbert - Dept. Adjutant, Louisiana



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1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED

REGION FIVE (Cont.)

- 2 Geoffrey Stone - Dept. Commander, New Mexico
Gregory Long - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, New Mexico
3 Peter Cornstock - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, New Mexico
4 Roger Newall - Dept. Adjutant, New Mexico
Larry Van Schuyver - Dept. Commander, Oklahoma
5 Mitchell Reed - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Oklahoma
Frank Whitlock - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Oklahoma
6 Gary Lewis - Dept. Adjutant, Oklahoma
Michael Matthew - Dept. Commander, Texas
7 Lorenzo Rodriguez - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Texas
Felix Garcia - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Texas
8 Edward Rodela - Dept. Adjutant, Texas

9 REGION SIX

- Charles Anderson - National Region 6 Commander,
10 California
Timothy Haney - Region 6 Adjutant, California
11 George Waller - Region 6 Chief of Staff, California
Keith Gray - Dept. Commander, Arizona
12 James Sallman - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Arizona
John Moore - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Arizona
13 Larry Leighton - Dept. Adjutant, Arizona
Nicholas Francisco - Dept. Commander, Asia Pacific
14 Ricardo Cruz - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Asia Pacific
Charles Bush - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Asia Pacific
15 Pedro Aguon - Dept. Adjutant, Asia Pacific
Jo Keller - Dept. Commander, California
16 Raymond Wetzel - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, California
Ronald Manjarrez - Dept. Junior Vice Commander,
17 California
Gary Rutledge - Dept. Adjutant, California
18 Joel Brilliant - Dept. Commander, Hawaii
Barrett Taylor - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Hawaii
19 Thomas Tanaka - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Hawaii
Chris Lee - Dept. Adjutant, Hawaii
20 Andrew LePeilbet - Dept. Commander, Nevada
Daniel Peterson - Dept. Senior Vice Commander, Nevada
21 Vincent Palmieri - Dept. Junior Vice Commander, Nevada
Andrew LePeilbet - Dept. Adjutant, Nevada

22 NATIONAL CHIEFS OF STAFF

- 23 Brian Willette, Massachusetts
Charles "Char" Gatlin, Montana
24 Richard Farrer, Tennessee
Sam Talkington, Utah
25



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1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED
2 PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS
3 Frank Athanason, Florida
4 Boyd Barclay, Oklahoma
5 Jim Blaylock, Georgia
6 James Durkin, New York
7 Felix Garcia III, Texas
8 Hershel Gober, Florida
9 William Hutton, California
10 James McCormick, West Virginia
11 Bruce McKenty, Washinton
12 Ernie Rivera, Florida
13 Jeffrey Roy, Colorado
14 Ron Siebels, Alaska
15 Alfred Silvano, South Carolina
16 Fred Taylor, Florida
17 Cornelius Van-Ess, New Jersey
18
19 APPOINTED OFFICERS
20 Chuck Adkins - National Adjutant
21 Francis Figueroa - Advocacy Officer
22 Ed Abbey - Americanism Officer
23 Louis Barnes - Asst. National Sergeant at Arms, Florida
24 Carlton Cannon - Chaplin, Delaware
25 Kevin Bucek - Chief Information Officer, Tennessee
Brandon Wegner - Deputy Chief Information Officer, Texas
Nick McIntosh - Historian, Kentucky
Lee Brown - Homeless Veterans Officer, Florida
James McCormick - Legislative Director, West Virginia
Zachariah Fike - Director of Medical Recovery Program/
Purple Hearts Reunited, Vermont
Joe Tormala - POW/MIA Officer, Michigan
Joe Sutton - Purple Heart Legacy ad Trail Coordinator,
Kansas
Charles Eggelston - National Service Office, Maryland
Beth Bucke - Social Media Director, Tennessee
Brandon Wegner - Software Development Program Director,
Texas
Jo Keller - Suicide Awareness Program Officer,
California
Robert Bibeau - Surgeon, New Mexico
Bill Bull - Viola Program Officer, Minnesota
Felicia Flake - Director of Women's Issues, Louisiana
Roger Newell - Youth Services Officer, New Mexico
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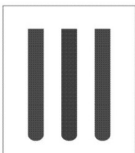
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2 NATIONAL BYLAWS COMMITTEE
3 Robert Olivarez - Senior Vice Commander, Texas
Francis Figueroa-Lowe - Member, North Carolina
4 Joe Schaler - Member, Illinois
Tom Moorman - Member, Indiana
5 Keith Wittenbel - Member, Oregon
Gustav Wittschack - Member, Texas
6 Mitchel Reed - Member, Oklahoma
Raymond Wetzel - Member, California
7 Joshua Dale - Member, California
Craig Wertheim - Member, Florida
8
9 NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE
10 Dennis Wallot - Chair, Michigan
Paul Pickart - Member, Iowa
11 Craig Wertheim - Member, Florida
Jim Anderson - Member, California
12 Carder Ferguson - National Commander, Arkansas
Robert Olivarez - National SVC, Washington
13 Tracey Brown-Greene - National JVC, Texas
Ernie Rivera - National FO, Florida
14 Walter Kroptavich - National JA, Virginia
15
16 NATIONAL INVESTMENT COMMITTEE
17 Dennis Wallot - Chair, Michigan
18 Paul Pickart - Member, Iowa
Ernie Rivera - National Finance Officer, Florida
19 Jim Anderson - Member, California
20 Craig Wertheim - Member, Florida
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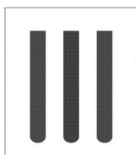
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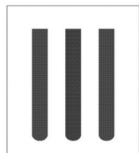
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STIPULATION

The PUBLIC MEETING was held at ROSEN PLAZA, 9700
INTERNATIONAL DRIVE, ORLANDO, FLORIDA 32819 on MONDAY
the 15th day of JULY 2024 at 7:45 a.m. (ET); said PUBLIC
MEETING was taken pursuant to the AGREED UPON RULED OF
THE PRESENT PARTIES



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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MR. WALLOT: -- meeting for the pre-convention
3 to go over last year's budget and a few
4 announcements. Do we have an agenda here? Okay.
5 Let's kind of go by -- we'll call it to order.
6 We'll do the pledge, if you would, Junior Vice.
7 Stay seated.

8 MS. BROWN-GREENE: Ready. Salute.

9 ALL: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the
10 United States of America and to the Republic for
11 which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible,
12 with liberty and justice for all.

13 MS. BROWN-GREENE: Ready. Two.

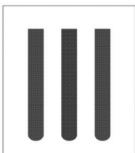
14 MR. WALLOT: Thank you, ma'am.

15 MR. ADKINS: Well done.

16 MR. WALLOT: Senior Vice, you want to do a
17 prayer?

18 MR. OLIVAREZ: Uncovered (phonetic). Thank you
19 for bringing us here together today in going over
20 our finances and help hold our events to run safely
21 and smoothly, and to watch over all the patriots
22 that are here and the patriots that weren't able to
23 attend. Please -- please watch over us and make sure
24 that we have a -- event from today until Wednesday.

25 ALL: -- the Lord.



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1 MR. WALLOT: Please be seated. National
2 Adjuvant, give us a roll call, please.

3 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Bear with me. I just had
4 it here and switched pages. Okay. Chair Dennis
5 Wallot?

6 MR. WALLOT: Here, sir.

7 MR. ADKINS: Member Paul Pickart.

8 MR. PICKART: Here, sir.

9 MR. ADKINS: Member Craig Wertheim.

10 MR. WERTHEIM: Here.

11 MR. ADKINS: Member Jim Anderson.

12 MR. J. ANDERSON: Here, sir.

13 MR. ADKINS: National Commander Carder
14 Ferguson.

15 MR. FERGUSON: Here.

16 MR. ADKINS: National Senior Vice Robert
17 Olivarez.

18 MR. OLIVAREZ: Here.

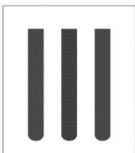
19 MR. ADKINS: National Junior Vice Tracey Brown-
20 Greene.

21 MS. BROWN-GREENE: Here.

22 MR. ADKINS: Finance Officer Ernie Rivera.

23 MR. RIVERA: Here.

24 MS. BROWN-GREENE: And Walter Kroptavich, Judge
25 Advocate.



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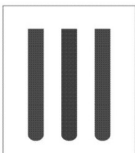
1 MR. KROPTAVICH: Here.

2 MR. WALLOT: Thank you. Commander, would you
3 like to say a few opening words at all?

4 MR. FERGUSON: I'm glad that everybody's here.
5 Thank you for taking your time to make sure that
6 we're going to be successfully moving forward --
7 year. We had a great year in certain areas. In
8 some areas we had work with, but this is going to be
9 a good report when the finance officer comes up and
10 explains how we got through this year. But I
11 greatly appreciate everybody's efforts. It wasn't
12 by me. It was by teamwork we get this thing done,
13 so thank you, and I appreciate it and thank you.

14 MR. WALLOT: Thank you, sir. Okay. We'll go
15 -- the main reason for this meeting is to go through
16 and approve the items that are over budget by 10
17 percent, and some explaining if they're over that
18 that has to be approved by the NEC. So with that,
19 I'm going to hand the microphone over to our finance
20 officer so he can explain his overages.

21 MR. RIVERA: Thank you, sir. Okay. I -- I've
22 passed the report out to everybody. You can see in
23 the income we have a few areas that there was zero.
24 Obviously, we didn't get -- we weren't on mark in
25 those areas. You can see in the other income on the



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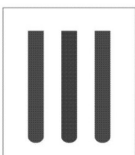
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1 inheritance grants and the bequests, we were 284
2 percent over, so we actually brought in 133,857 in
3 bequests that we did not calculate, so that was a
4 great thing for us.

5 The MOPH Fund, Inc., we did not receive
6 anything this year from them as far as donation-
7 wise, so hopefully, that -- we can get something
8 moving along with that in the future. The Legacy
9 Program -- the Flipcause PayPal Legacy Program, we
10 are up to \$17,187.10, so that program is actually
11 starting to pay off for us. Total other donations
12 which we received through PayPal, and checks, and
13 all that, we came in with 37,396.05.

14 Membership cards. You can see we had projected
15 3,300, and it only came in at 1,668, so I think over
16 a period of time, since we started offering that, I
17 think less patriots are -- are needing a card. This
18 year, the MOPH store, we really didn't do anything
19 with that. Google AdSense, we actually went -- we
20 did really good on Google AdSense. We -- when you
21 go on the website and you see that little popups and
22 stuff, we actually made \$5,109, and that's what we
23 get paid for that so it's a revenue source.

24 The PCI book, the contract that I signed when I
25 was national commander back in 2021, we finally



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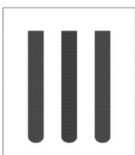
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1 received the \$50,000 for that. Membership dues this
2 year. We had projected 62,200. We came in with
3 54,933. We were a little under on that but what we
4 did do is we have a temporary membership now, and so
5 they can start out with \$50, and we figured that out
6 this year we brought in 44,045.44. So we've figured
7 that out. We -- we're tracking that now as far as
8 -- so that we can send e-mails out to them to say,
9 hey, you know, you're within this level of -- you
10 know, you need to make a couple more payments in
11 order for us to do that, for you to become a member.
12 The Youth Services, 37. The VAVS fund scholarship,
13 now the NEC approved -- it was budgeted for 5,000,
14 but we actually sent out a vote for that and we got
15 -- in the actual we received from that was 30,000.
16 It was -- was transferred from that account directly
17 into ours, and that money was then transferred to
18 the restricted account, so that money is in the
19 proper restricted accounts. It repaid the money
20 that we did for scholarships this year, and it's
21 going to push forward for next year. We -- there
22 was 315,000. It was paid to the operating account
23 for -- 60 percent of that went to the headquarters,
24 40 percent of that went out to the chapters and
25 departments. So we had a projected income of

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1 641,987. We actually -- actual was 731,269.92 so we
2 actually did pretty well this year, but we ended up
3 with 89,282.92 more than was projected for the year
4 in income.

5 So moving down, the very first one that is the
6 122 percent is the membership cards, certificate
7 printing the new cards. We had budgeted 1,200. It
8 ended up costing us 1,458.94. That's at 122
9 percent. What had happened with that was this was a
10 cleanup. We had to pay for cards that -- there was
11 an invoice that came in for the prior year for the
12 cards, so that was the overage of that 122 so we're
13 actually 12 percent over the 10 percent on that one.
14 So that's one right there.

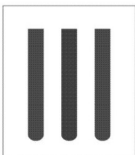
15 Do you want -- do you want to go -- when we go
16 over 10 percent, you want an explanation?

17 MR. WALLOT: All they want to know -- all they
18 want if it's over 10 percent.

19 MR. RIVERA: It's 122 percent --

20 MR. WALLOT: Over.

21 MR. RIVERA: -- so it's -- that one right there
22 is the membership cards, certificates printing. So
23 what happened is when we got into the headquarters,
24 we had quite a few bills that were pushed over from
25 the year prior, and so we -- and I can tell you,



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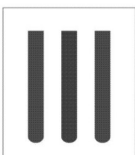
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1 almost every single overage was caused with that, is
2 that we had to pay the bills, and we took care of
3 the bills that were due.

4 MR. WALLOT: Moving on.

5 MR. RIVERA: Okay. Moving on. So the next
6 over 10 percent would be the estimated payroll tax.
7 It was -- we had it projected at 21,279, and it was
8 13,000 so that's at 162 percent. And if you see
9 that we paid last year's fiscal year tax. When we
10 got there, they hadn't paid the payroll trust for
11 the -- we had to pay for two quarters to catch up
12 and that's where the 13,286.70 came in. So that's
13 where the 162 percent is. So the next one, the
14 outside bookkeeper. We had it -- the -- we had the
15 outside bookkeeper at 18,000. That was what was
16 approved. It ended up costing 23,881.70. That was
17 133 percent.

18 Now, this organization cannot operate without a
19 bookkeeper. Anybody thinks it can is it -- we're
20 going to be heading down a real bad path. So we
21 ended up going 5,881 over, and so, to date right
22 now, everything's migrated, QuickBooks Online, and
23 we are reconciled. I think the first time in many
24 years that our accounts are reconciled. We're
25 working on the audits, and it's making life a lot



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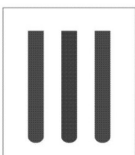
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1 easier. So that's where the overage came on that.
2 We saw it coming, but we're in the middle of the
3 audits, and so we did not even come close on our
4 total payroll. So the overall amount, we only ended
5 up at about 40 percent of that. So the total for
6 employees. So we went over on that so it helped
7 with the audits. I put that on there.

8 Now, the Commander's Awards, that's at 244
9 percent. We got there. We had to pay for the
10 outgoing administration, all the -- the Commander's
11 Awards. We got an invoice for those and that's why
12 that's at 244 percent. It was only budgeted for 500
13 and we ended up spending \$1,222.43, and that's why
14 that's over at 244.

15 So moving down to the next one would be copier
16 printer lease, Delange (phonetic). Now, we actually
17 resigned a -- for -- and we no longer -- it no
18 longer costs us the -- we don't -- we're out of that
19 contract. The contract is -- is over, and that was
20 -- the reason that happened is there was a bill at
21 the end of last year that was not paid, so we had to
22 do all of our year, which our bills are all caught
23 up and paid, and we had to pay a portion of the year
24 prior.

25 Now, one of the things in that area is, we got



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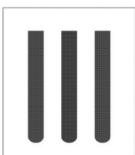
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1 a refund of \$2,000 from Canon. So the refund from
2 Canon is -- so that would actually be 2,019.80. So
3 that's been deposited, but I think we got that after
4 the end of the -- the fiscal year so that'll go into
5 next year. Now it's -- what is it? 438 now? Or 4
6 -- yeah, it's about \$400 instead of the 1,100 so we
7 actually saved. We got a way better printer --
8 commercial printer. It's a -- it's way better,
9 nicer, more efficient, and it's not -- you know, we
10 have a -- we're going to be paying for one anyway,
11 so it's much better.

12 Now moving on to supplies for the copy printer
13 maintenance, this was one right here that we're 201,
14 and that was a prior year bill. For some reason, a
15 lot of the bills at the end of last year were not
16 paid.

17 MR. FERGUSON: If you also remember, that they
18 were charging us for the two. If you remember we
19 were charged for copiers that were sitting there.
20 They estimated prints and we never did get that so
21 that's where we had to argue back on that.

22 MR. RIVERA: Okay. Moving on down, the next
23 one is the D&O Liability Policy, which that is paid
24 until almost through the entire next year. So it's
25 at, what, 192 percent, prepaid insurance into next



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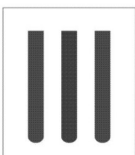
1 year. We have two of them. We have the Hartford
2 Bond, which the dates are wrong in there. I didn't
3 change the dates. It should be into -- it -- it's
4 into next year. And also the D&O policy, that's
5 paid, and it's paid all the way through to what?
6 April of '25, so yeah, it's -- that -- that's all
7 prepaid insurance.

8 MR. WALLOT: In case someone doesn't know, D&O
9 insurance as directors and officers for their
10 liability.

11 MR. ADKINS: That's correct.

12 MR. WALLOT: Moving on.

13 MR. RIVERA: Moving on. Okay. Next three of
14 five. So QuickBooks Online, we transferred to
15 QuickBooks Online. We're having issues. The reason
16 it's 138 is we projected the 2,940. That's for the
17 desktop version, and we're having an issue closing
18 out the desktop version, so we don't use it anymore.
19 We have everything backed up. All the QuickBooks
20 are backed up. So we're going to have to work on
21 getting that closed out because we've been with them
22 for so long, you sure you want to close it out?
23 We're like, yeah, we want to close it. I mean, you
24 know, we can just shut off the payment to it, but
25 we're trying to work on that. That's where we're



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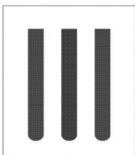
1 138. So we are 100 percent online. Everything is
2 done electronic. We have real time accounting now.
3 We can go online, know exactly how much money is in
4 the bank and all that. So that will be reduced, but
5 that's 138 because we needed both for the migration.

6 TrueShred. We paid a huge portion of last
7 year's bill. That's why it's at 226. We paid last
8 year's bill again. Uline. So the Uline, it's ROT
9 -- ROTC shipping supplies. Why that is \$3,498 over,
10 and it's 333 percent, is they ordered furniture last
11 year and -- through Uline, and it was \$3,498.31, and
12 we got stuck with the bill. So we had to pay the
13 bill. So there was \$3,500 worth of furniture
14 purchased from headquarters. Two conference room
15 tables, a big screen TV, and some chairs which --

16 MR. ADKINS: And a laptop.

17 MR. RIVERA: -- and a laptop, right. So yeah,
18 so that's where that is through Uline. That's the
19 333 percent.

20 Okay. Moving on down, one or two. So Verizon.
21 I -- right here it's 112 so we're 2 percent over the
22 10. Paid deposit and into the next year. So we're
23 paid with Verizon through now into the next fiscal
24 year. We have to pay a deposit to get it set up.
25 So that's why we're at 2 percent over on that. So



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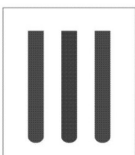
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1 Election Buddy is fine. It's 5 percent.

2 Moving on down to the website. Maintenance is
3 at 140. We -- there was -- we had to pay \$9,800 for
4 a website that was designed the year prior. We got
5 the bill for \$9,800, and we had to pay it. It was
6 the last prior bill, so we actually went over 2,800
7 on that. And that was last year's bill, so it
8 wasn't -- it was \$9,800 that they paid a company to
9 redesign the website, and we never got anything out
10 of it, so we had to pay the bill.

11 Okay. Going down to the Zoom. The Zoom is at
12 153. One of the things that was paid from the prior
13 year. The problem with that is that there was a
14 bunch of recordings on there and they charge us
15 every month for the -- to keep a hold of the
16 recordings, so -- and I think that we've got that
17 taken care of now, so now that -- it -- it's not
18 going to be that amount. But that was more than was
19 paid from the year prior. Constant Contact is at 1
20 -- it's right at the 110. There was an increase in
21 the cost that they hit us in right when we came in,
22 so that's where that's at, the 110.

23 So the next one going through here is the
24 National Adjuvant Travel. So we had a national
25 adjuvant. It was only approved for the 3,000 on the



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1 national adjuvant so the issue with that was that
2 national adjuvant, the one that came in resigned,
3 and he lived there so when Chuck Adkins came in and
4 became the adjuvant, he had to travel from Arkansas
5 up there. But we didn't even come close to spending
6 -- we were only, I think, at like 40-something
7 percent total for all the travel, so we still came
8 in under travel, but it was critical for the
9 national adjuvant to be in headquarters.

10 So moving on down, we had -- the budget was
11 approved for \$708,649.73. We spent 592,904.17, so
12 we came in under budget 115,745.56, so we only spent
13 84 percent of the budget overall.

14 MR. WALLOT: Very good. Thank you, sir.

15 MR. ADKINS: Good report.

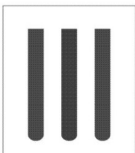
16 MR. WALLOT: Is there any questions pertaining
17 to the overages and the budget?

18 MR. WERTHEIM: The bills that were not paid
19 prior -- sorry. Craig Wertheim.

20 MR. ADKINS: State your name and who you are.

21 MR. WERTHEIM: Sorry. Craig Wertheim, finance
22 committee. The bills that were not paid prior to
23 you coming in, how was the year last year closed out
24 with those bills being left open?

25 MR. RIVERA: So what are you --



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1 MR. WERTHEIM: In other words -- so in other
2 words, the last year's finance officer turned over
3 everything and just walked away without clearing out
4 his --

5 MR. RIVERA: Well, yeah, because he -- so what
6 happened last year was the national commander and
7 the national adjutant resigned prior to the end, and
8 so, what -- what happened is, is that the bookkeeper
9 stole some money and -- which she's actually being
10 charged right now. We -- I -- I went through,
11 calculated it all. We turned it in. We pressed
12 charges through the sheriff's office, the detective,
13 and everything. And so she was terminated. And
14 what happened is they didn't bring in another
15 bookkeeper for a little bit, and so what was
16 happening was they were doing the warrants, but
17 nobody was actually paying the bills. So we came
18 in, right into it. We got all the bills and
19 everything because that -- what -- the problem you
20 have is with the fiscal year the way it's set now,
21 it's like right now, whoever the national commander
22 is next year, we're paying bills under their budget
23 because of the fiscal year closing on June 30th.
24 And so, what happened is, the last couple of months
25 going in June, July, and then into August, we come



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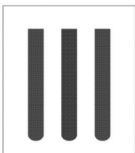
1 in there in August, the bills weren't paid. Nobody
2 paid the bills. So when we got in there, that was
3 -- that -- those were legitimate bills that had to
4 be paid, and so -- but it kicked over onto ours
5 because July 1st our year came in, so we had to pay
6 those bills. They were not paid by the prior
7 finance officer, whoever that they had.

8 MR. WERTHEIM: My question is such that the
9 last year's finance officer is looking to join the
10 finance committee, so it's really a prelude to do we
11 want him to be joining the finance committee? Did
12 he leave the position adequately to go --

13 MR. WALLOT: When the election gets here,
14 that's a question that what if we get hit by
15 lightning tomorrow. At the election time if he gets
16 up and stands up, that's when you question.

17 MR. WERTHEIM: Withdraw my remarks.

18 MR. WALLOT: Thank you, sir. Okay, everyone
19 understands that when -- the finance committee is
20 allowed to go up to 10 percent over the line item
21 budget. When it goes beyond that, they usually,
22 according to the bylaws, need a request to the NEC
23 to extend that. Most of these that Ernie just read
24 are past 110 percent, all of them, so even though
25 the bylaws have been bent or broken on this case,



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1 there seems to be a legitimate reason for all of it
2 in my mind. So I guess I'm going to ask for a
3 motion that we accept --

4 MR. PICKART: Motion by Pickart to accept.

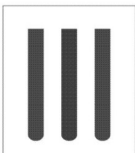
5 MR. WALLOT: Need a second.

6 MR. J. ANDERSON: Jim Anderson, second.

7 MR. WALLOT: All those in favor of accepting
8 last year's budget say aye.

9 ALL: Aye.

10 MR. WALLOT: Opposed. Motion carried. Okay.
11 That'll go to the NEC on the floor for the same
12 vote, and that's what that's going to look like.
13 Other stuff under unfinished business, first of all,
14 I wasn't here last year. First convention, I missed
15 in 27 years and almost didn't make it, so there's
16 some of this stuff -- when you miss a convention,
17 you kind of miss a whole year that went by, and then
18 you miss the new one that started, so essentially,
19 it's like you missed two years. So a lot of people
20 said, well, Dennis, it's good to see you again, and
21 I -- my response has always been, better to be seen
22 than viewed, and that's how close I was. So with
23 that, I got a few things that also pertain to your
24 question, Craig. I got a letter here just recently,
25 July 2nd second from JP Morgan. Tim Felix has asked



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1 to -- updating his paperless preferences on the
2 Internet for our accounts.

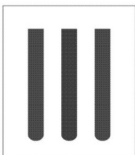
3 MR. ADKINS: He's not on the accounts. He's
4 not on them but he's asked --

5 MR. WALLOT: Asked --

6 MR. ADKINS: Because he thinks he's going to be
7 voted on --

8 MR. WALLOT: The other thing is I've got all
9 the paperwork. The people that aren't elected to
10 the committee, the new commanders, the adjuvants,
11 and the new finance committee person or persons,
12 I'll need all their signatures, phone numbers, and
13 I've talked to both banks already. Part of the
14 reason that -- with some of the bylaw changes it's
15 every -- our monies right now in the life membership
16 fund are managed, okay? So on a managed account, we
17 really don't do much. There's one small account
18 that I bounce around a little bit and that's all in
19 ETFs and -- and TVA bonds, so the report, 78 pages
20 with Chase, you get a paper report. My personal
21 opinion is to vote no on these bylaw changes. That
22 will fall under new business.

23 The other thing I've got, I've been told that
24 all our chapters and departments now have changed
25 their fiscal year; is that correct?



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1 MR. RIVERA: Well, they didn't, no.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

3 MR. WALLOT: No? Okay. Because I haven't been
4 notified by the IRS. Yeah, go ahead.

5 MR. RIVERA: Ernie Rivera as finance officer.
6 So what happened is that it had been a couple years
7 since we had updated as the parent unit all of the
8 EINs underneath us. So what -- when we got
9 everything done and we submitted it in there, the --
10 the -- the internal revenue service lined it down
11 and just had the fiscal year on from all the
12 supporting units under ours. So it was -- we
13 submitted it. That's something that they did. I
14 don't think that -- I think if you look at it, and
15 you actually go online, you're a chapter, you're a
16 department, I don't know if they actually changed it
17 because it's kind of -- I've dealt with this in the
18 past when I was a national adjutant. They kind of
19 did something like that similar, but when the
20 chapters and the departments actually went and did
21 their postcard 990, it was not actually changed on
22 there. So I'm not sure if -- and I know Jim called
23 and talked to them. I'm not sure, you know, if it's
24 actually a lock in or not, because they are a
25 separate entity so, yeah --



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1 MR. WALLOT: The only other thing with that is
2 that we have to file a short 990 for all the
3 chapters or the departments that actually file a
4 990. I do about 15 990s a year. And if you change
5 your fiscal year to a calendar year, vice-versa, you
6 have to file short return.

7 MR. ADKINS: Mr. Chairman?

8 MR. WALLOT: Yes.

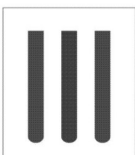
9 MR. ADKINS: Chuck Adkins, national adjutant.
10 Adding on to PNC Rivera's remarks about the -- what
11 the IRS did with the 990s, yeah, I sent out the e-
12 mail but so far, every chapter or department that's
13 been submitting their 990s has not had an issue
14 so --

15 MR. WALLOT: Okay.

16 MR. ADKINS: It's not -- it's -- apparently it
17 really didn't change.

18 MR. WALLOT: Okay. The other thing I've got
19 under new business here that I had a question about.
20 I got a statement from Morgan Stanley. We do not
21 have a Morgan Stanley account now. Haven't had one
22 for numerous amount of years, and they're saying
23 that they owe us \$0.13 from 1987 or something. I
24 just thought I'd bring that up because --

25 MR. RIVERA: We don't have an account with



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1 them. Yeah.

2 MR. WALLOT: So just -- yeah, we're going to
3 add that to the budget. The \$0.13 we'll probably
4 donate to -- I mean, so far I've gotten three
5 statements from them for a \$0.13

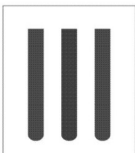
6 MR. RIVERA: Well at least they're trying to
7 track us down to give us all that money.

8 MR. WALLOT: Actually, it's from -- yeah. Looks
9 like it's -- I don't even -- I saw it in here
10 someplace, but it's seven or eight years old, this
11 stuff, so I will give them a call and just tell them
12 to keep their money.

13 The other thing I've done is -- I'll explain
14 this now, even though -- only because we've got a
15 little time. Last year with our investments, we
16 started with a little over 3 million, \$3,110,06 --
17 \$3,110,065. We ended up with 3.3, 3.4 million.
18 Bottom line total gain, 524,090.47, which equates to
19 an 18.29 percent rate of return that we've got on
20 the life membership. With that said from what I
21 understand, we're now giving 60 percent to National,
22 40 percent --

23 MR. RIVERA: Yeah, 60/40. Yep.

24 MR. WALLOT: Okay. With that being said,
25 60/40. Last year, in my sickened state, we split it



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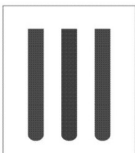
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1 60/40, and I sent Ernie two separate checks, one for
2 chapters and departments, and we let the rest sit
3 there because we didn't need it and we gained some
4 money. Because of that, when Ernie called me up and
5 said, okay, let's swing the money into the general
6 fund, I also sent the same amount of money, which
7 related to 157,000. That means 40 percent went out
8 and then another 40 percent went out. Therefore,
9 the difference was we shorted the general fund
10 \$78,884.40.

11 Now, if we look at the loan that we had out
12 there, \$36,000 was paid last year on the loan. The
13 loan started as a \$500,000 loan. I paid the 360,000
14 of it. We had 140,000 left and we're paying that at
15 2 percent interest. According to the GAAP, General
16 Accounting -- General Accepted Accounting Practices
17 and the IRS, you're not allowed to pay interest to
18 yourself. We have one federal ID number. We can't
19 say we paid interest to this federal ID number and
20 received this interest from federal ID. They can't
21 do that. So if we skip the interest payment that
22 they were paying, and we take off the payments that
23 have been made, and we take off the 78,000, and not
24 give that to the general fund, we would still own --
25 owe on the whole half a million dollar loan,



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1 \$7,115.60.

2 MR. ADKINS: Wow.

3 MR. WALLOT: And it would be paid off. So what

4 I'm proposing --

5 MR. RIVERA: It was my year, '21.

6 MR. WALLOT: It was when we were at the Chateau
7 in Missouri.

8 MR. RIVERA: Yep.

9 MR. WALLOT: That -- that's when all that came
10 about. So my proposal would be that instead of
11 sending National 60 percent this year, \$314,000, we
12 send them \$307,000 and pay loan off. Just something
13 to think about. And skip the interest because of
14 that previous statement, and according to Will
15 Rogers, if anybody remembers Will Rogers, you know,
16 like yesterday, Will Rogers says, "I'm more
17 concerned about the return of my money than the
18 return on my money." So if we get all our money
19 back for the life membership fund that the order had
20 borrowed, we'd be all set with that. Wouldn't have
21 to worry about it. Here's the amortization
22 schedule, if anybody would like to look at that.

23 MR. RIVERA: All right so Finance Officer
24 Rivera. So the question that I have is, so
25 currently the way -- the last few years I've been



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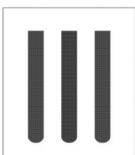
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1 involved with the finances and stuff, and I think
2 it's awesome that we paid it back. That was my year
3 that we borrowed the money because I came into my
4 year as national commander with nothing. PNC Garcia
5 presented it out so that I could try to have some
6 money, and we voted on it, and I got the money. We
7 had a really good year. We paid it back. One of
8 the concerns I have, currently right now, in our
9 general fund, we have 300,000 restricted. We have
10 about 124,000. One of the things that, as the years
11 have gone -- and I checked all the prior years,
12 we're -- we are, this year, 159,000 was sent to the
13 national. When the \$200 is collected up front, \$100
14 is given to national for operating. Then the other
15 \$100 is put into the investment account, and then --
16 life membership account. Then 60 percent of that
17 is, in turn, given to national when the investment
18 income comes out. So we're sitting with about --
19 cash on hand about \$400,000.

20 I think it's time that we started helping the
21 departments and chapters because we've seen where
22 it's -- where it's going with this, and national
23 probably could have operated without that 60 percent
24 for the last couple of years. Look, I've been on
25 the national for a number of years now, since about

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1 2019. There's no guarantee what's going to happen
2 next year, but I can tell you that there is chapters
3 and departments that I think that if we're giving
4 that amount of money to national, I think that this
5 year we need to consider reversing that and giving
6 the 60 percent to the departments and to the
7 chapters.

8 MR. WALLOT: Let's stay on one topic at a time
9 here. That's a follow-up. First of all, I want a
10 motion to pay back this loan completely this year.

11 MR. J. ANDERSON: Jim Anderson, finance
12 committee. I'll make a motion to pay back the loan
13 and present the balance to the body for repayment of
14 the loan completely.

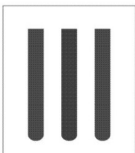
15 MR. WALLOT: Need a second.

16 MR. PICKART: Pickart, second. Finance
17 committee.

18 MR. WALLOT: Been moved and seconded. All
19 those in favor?

20 ALL: Aye.

21 MR. WALLOT: Very good. Now, if we pay back
22 that \$7,115, that's going to come out of the
23 national portion, so it's either going to be 50
24 percent, or 40 percent, or 60 percent, and that
25 would be your motion.



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1 MR. J. ANDERSON: Currently in the bylaws with
2 a sunset of 2025, it's 60 percent to the order and
3 40 percent to be divided between chapter and
4 departments of the life membership --

5 MR. WALLOT: That's in bylaws now?

6 MR. J. ANDERSON: It's in the bylaws. It would
7 require -- it would require a motion from the floor
8 to change that, but since there is a sunset, it
9 would be hard to change.

10 MR. WALLOT: Okay. And --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It would require two --
12 three-fourths majority.

13 MR. ADKINS: Yes. It takes a three-fourths
14 majority, and the sunset is actually 2026 because it
15 was passed in 2021 in West Virginia.

16 MR. WALLOT: Well, we have to do the budget.
17 Well, yeah, when we do that on Thursday or Wednesday
18 when we do the budget we're going to need the
19 number, so we'll find out then if someone wants to
20 bring it up on the floor that we change that
21 percentage chapter to departments. And if that's
22 the case, then we --

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It would be out of
24 order.

25 MR. WALLOT: Yeah. It would be out of --



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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: How would it be out of
2 order?

3 MR. RIVERA: Yeah, because you have a bylaw
4 that says that, and you can't just on a floor motion
5 change the by law.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

7 MR. RIVERA: So you -- so it could be 60
8 percent? Nothing in the by-law states that the
9 national cannot send out an additional rebate.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's how we could get
11 around it.

12 MR. WALLOT: The old getting around thing.
13 Okay. Something's -- that's going to have to go out
14 on the floor. Okay. With that, I wrote this
15 investment policy 2004. This is not legalized.
16 It's not on anything. It's not signed by anybody,
17 but it's just some intellectual stuff I thought was
18 intellectual at the time. And I reread it the other
19 day and, yeah, it's debatable. So possibly a new
20 investment policy as I was reading these changes in
21 the bylaws, but again, it's -- we're in an 80/20
22 right now, 80 percent equities, 20 percent fixed.
23 The way the market's been, actually the fixed assets
24 last year, we're in the TVA bonds for part of it.
25 Every year the rebate's sent out. We -- I



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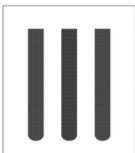
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1 reallocate the funds to fit into the 80/20 model.
2 Take so much out of the fixed side, take so much out
3 of the investment side, sell the appropriate stocks,
4 stuff like that, only when we need the funds to come
5 out of cash. So again, this goes to bylaws for the
6 investment policy. It's about four pages long. A
7 lot of spaces and big print, so like I said, it's
8 not legalized, but that's what we've been living
9 with.

10 And with that, I don't think there's any action
11 required except for the bylaw changes, and we'd have
12 to do that. Is there any questions from the finance
13 committee pertaining to the amount of monies that we
14 took in, how they're in invested now? All of these
15 funds are managed except for the one small account
16 that has got four ETFs in it, and the TVA bonds,
17 Tennessee Valley Authority that pays about 5-and-a-
18 quarter. Now you can go in with the interest rates
19 that are probably going to drop according to the
20 Fed, 100 percent guarantee, possibly, maybe, unless
21 something drastic happens, probably in February. So
22 when they drop the rate, that's supposedly going to
23 increase the housing. The economy's going to pick
24 back up, bond prices are going to fall more. People
25 are going to get back into equities more. Right



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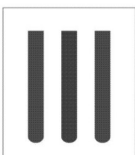
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1 now, we've done fairly well in the -- in the ETFs
2 that we're in. We're in the big three plus -- see
3 we're in IT, health, finance, energy. There's 11
4 sectors in the -- in the S&P. We're in those four,
5 and they're the - usually the highest performing
6 ones. And then everything else is professionally
7 managed and we paid about 80 basis points for the
8 managed equities fund and the rest of the
9 international bonds and things like that. They're a
10 smaller percentages because we have smaller numbers
11 in those. And everybody knows what basis points is,
12 right? Is there a shill in the crowd that knows
13 that?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's almost 1 percent.

15 MR. WALLOT: Four-fifths. And with that, is
16 there any other comments from the finance committee?

17 MR. RIVERA: Yes, sir. Finance Officer Rivera.
18 So one thing in the -- and I don't know if we could
19 make a motion now so we can bring it onto the floor,
20 but we currently have \$76,960 in a restricted
21 scholarship account. And we have the -- for this
22 incoming year, we have -- there was approved
23 scholarships for 20,000, and it's already done.
24 They've already gone through this stuff. Of course,
25 the budget has to be approved, but the junior vice



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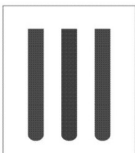
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1 was ahead of the game and got all the applications
2 and all that stuff in. Having \$76,000 sitting in a
3 savings account in the bank, I don't think is a very
4 prudent thing to do with our money. I don't know if
5 we could make a motion to -- we cannot spend that
6 money on anything except for scholarships, so if
7 there is a possibility that we could, say, take
8 50,000 of it and put it into, like, an Edward Jones
9 account or something to where we could actually
10 start building up an investment account for the
11 scholarships, it would eventually pay for itself
12 like the VAVS account.

13 If we don't do something with that, the money
14 just has to sit in the account. So there's a
15 possibility that we could discuss that and bring it
16 up on the floor. Maybe we don't need to do the full
17 50. Maybe we could do 30 or 40, but we need to come
18 up with some kind of a number so that we could have
19 our money work for itself because I can tell you,
20 every single restricted account we have now, the
21 money is in a restricted account in the proper
22 place, and it's accounted for. So I mean I think
23 this is kind of towards the Edward Jones thing that
24 they did with the VAVS, but I don't know how we'd go
25 about that.



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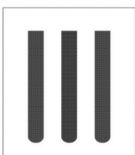
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1 MR. WALLOT: Was there any special reason the
2 money was not gifted or spent out?

3 MR. RIVERA: Well, so what it was was that in
4 the audit for 20 -- so in the audit for PNC Felix's
5 year, we had quite a bit of donations for
6 scholarship, but during that year, we didn't -- we
7 -- it was a -- we had a -- an issue with paying the
8 scholarship so the money sat in the account. And
9 then each year we had budgeted for the scholarships,
10 so the money has just been there. Then this year,
11 we actually replaced it with the -- we had some
12 extra money that came in on the VAVS. The NEC
13 approved that to replace the money that was paid
14 into it, 15,000 towards this last year's
15 scholarships. So it put the amount back up to
16 76,000. So if we could maybe do a scholarship for a
17 huge amount, but this would be an excellent
18 opportunity for us to actually start setting up a
19 real scholarship account that could actually start
20 paying for itself and eventually -- we brought in
21 over \$5,000 in application fees so the way this is
22 sitting right here, if we keep replenishing it, but
23 it could be a way for us to actually set up a real
24 scholarship fund.

25 MR. WALLOT: The other account that we do have



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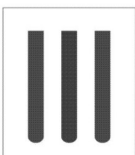
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1 was a bequest 15 years ago possibly where we got
2 \$150,000. It was for the Jones account. That
3 account now is valued a little over -- about 210
4 after I sent the 30,000 over, and that is in high
5 yield, fairly safe dividend payment stocks. I think
6 they got four down there, 4 to about 6 percent. No
7 matter what the price of the stock is, they got some
8 funds out there \$10 stock that pays a \$1 dividend,
9 but you're looking at 10 percent return on that
10 money. And as interest rates drop, it's in a real
11 estate investment choice, New York office buildings,
12 but it's still paying \$1 a year in dividends on a
13 \$10 stock.

14 I, personally, have got the -- a chunk of that,
15 and it's -- no matter what happens, your dollar
16 value, it's paid that for the last 12 years. So
17 there's options out there where we're to make a
18 better return on our money, if you want to consider
19 not guaranteed, but the things that are guaranteed
20 today, government bonds, you know, how shaky is the
21 government now. You know, gold funds, things like
22 that, so it all depends what we want to do with it.
23 And like Ernie said, if we move some of this money,
24 the education fund now with the VAVS fund, we have
25 evolved since then. We've lost our VAVS programs

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1 basically. We still have people that are working in
2 hospitals, at least in the State of Michigan.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. Arkansas.

4 MR. WALLOT: So we've got the funds there and
5 it was supposed to be set up for the candy strippers
6 that work in the hospital. That was the main
7 purpose of those dollars, and I don't think we've
8 given anything in the last --

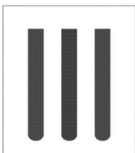
9 MR. RIVERA: No. No. We haven't.

10 MR. WALLOT: -- four or five years. That's why
11 the fund has grown. Right now --

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The VA shut the program
13 down during COVID, so that was a --

14 MR. WALLOT: Yeah. And right now, it takes in
15 about \$8,000 a year in dividends, so that was going
16 to be the scholarship money that was going to go out
17 of it where we kept our balance, but since we
18 haven't spent it, now it's up to about 210,
19 something like that. Okay. Any other questions from
20 the committee?

21 MR. J. ANDERSON: Yeah. Jim Anderson.
22 Referring back to what Ernie was talking about
23 pulling monies out of the scholarship fund and
24 putting it into an investment fund, I'm debating
25 whether we should make the motion within our



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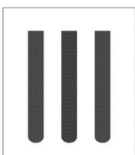
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1 committee to carry it forward to the body looking
2 into it, saying moving 30,000 or 40,000 across into
3 an investment like Edward Jones, and leaving, you
4 know, maybe 30,000 in the account, just as a backup.

5 MR. WALLOT: Edward Jones is going to charge
6 us, probably 2.5 percent, 2-and-a-quarter percent
7 with the right stock through Jones. We can go into
8 a self-directed investment portfolio with Chase, and
9 they won't charge us anything, but that means we or
10 I or someone is going to say, these are the stocks
11 we pick. Jones charges us 2.5 percent to say, you're
12 taking this stock. Cut. So do we want to put in a
13 professional manager in this, or do we want to do it
14 ourselves? With 40 grand if you're making 10
15 percent on your money, you're making \$4,000 a year.
16 If we -- if we move 70, or 50, or 60, that all
17 depends what we're going to give out in
18 scholarships.

19 MR. ANDERSON: Well, the upcoming budget,
20 you're scheduling 20,000 to go out so that's going
21 to put it down to 50. So that's why I was thinking
22 30 or 40,000. We've got 5,000 to go back into that
23 account, so that just leaves a little bit of
24 available cash in there, but on the investment side,
25 we can invest that 30 or 40,000.



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1 MR. WALLOT: So if we want to pay 2-and-a-half
2 percent on the 40 grand, which would be what,
3 \$6,000?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

5 MR. ANDERSON: No.

6 MR. WALLOT: Is it time for the bylaws
7 committee?

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

9 MR. WALLOT: Oh, okay. I don't know about
10 that.

11 MR. RIVERA: So I guess the question myself is,
12 I mean is this an investment committee also both,
13 right? So this is a finance committee --

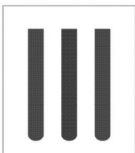
14 MR. WALLOT: Yeah. Probably. Yeah. Everybody
15 on the investment committee is on --

16 MR. RIVERA: -- stuff, so I mean this would be
17 an investment committee motion that would be made,
18 right?

19 MR. WALLOT: Okay.

20 MR. RIVERA: But I mean, the committee has to
21 make it to take it forward. I mean, we can't get
22 just move restricted money into an investment
23 account without -- and it doesn't make sense to have
24 the money sitting in the bank doing nothing.

25 MR. WALLOT: Oh. I agree with that. Now, we



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1 could take -- we'll say there's 100 grand in there
2 now or 200. We'll take the 40,000 and add it to the
3 Jones account that we have now, and just always
4 figure that percentage of that, one-sixth of this
5 money is that education now, as long as we --
6 percentage wise is there, you know. If we had 210
7 grand and 50/50. So we could do that, no problem.

8 MR. WERTHEIM: Yeah, make a motion to move the
9 money into the --

10 MR. WALLOT: Which is now Edward Jones, we're
11 going to pay for anyway, but in the Edward Jones
12 account now we've got the RIT account that pays 1
13 percent. We've got Ford, Bristol Myers,
14 pharmaceutical companies that always pay decent
15 dividends, utilities, things like that.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: How much you want to
17 lose?

18 MR. WERTHEIM: I say 40.

19 MR. WALLOT: 40?

20 MR. WERTHEIM: Yeah.

21 MR. WALLOT: Okay.

22 MR. J. ANDERSON: All right. Jim Anderson,
23 finance committee. I'll make a motion to move
24 40,000 of the scholarship fund into the Edward Jones
25 and keep track of it on -- independently.



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1 MR. WALLOT: I need a second.

2 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, second the
3 motion.

4 MR. WALLOT: Moved and seconded, all those in
5 favor?

6 ALL: Aye.

7 MR. WALLOT: Any questions on the motion? Too
8 late, I guess. Reverse.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Reverse that.

10 MR. WALLOT: Okay. Any other questions from
11 the finance committee? Any questions from the floor
12 at all? All set. Thank you, gentlemen. Meeting is
13 adjourned.

14 (Finance Meeting concluded at 8:37 a.m. ET)

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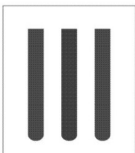
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PROCEEDINGS

MR. ADKINS: Yep. Take your seats and make sure your cell phones are off. Most of the -- it goes. Sergeant at arms, you can come up and introduce the ballot. All right. We're going to do roll call. And when I get to the departments, it is department commanders only for the NEC. So National Commander Carder Ferguson?

MR. FERGUSON: Present.

MR. ADKINS: National Senior Vice Robert Olivarez?

MR. OLIVAREZ: Present.

MR. ADKINS: National Junior Vice Tracey Browne-Greene?

MS. BROWN-GREENE: Present.

MR. ADKINS: National Judge Advocate Walter Kroptavich is excused. National Finance Officer Ernie Rivera?

MR. RIVERA: Present.

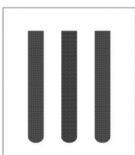
MR. ADKINS: National Inspector David Jackson?

MR. JACKSON: Present.

MR. ADKINS: Okay. National Sergeant at Arms Gary Witt?

MR. WITT: Present.

MR. ADKINS: NFC Chair Dennis Wallot?



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1 MR. WALLOT: Here, sir.

2 MR. ADKINS: NFC Member Paul Pickart.

3 MR. PICKART: Here, sir.

4 MR. ADKINS: NFC Member Craig Wertheim.

5 MR. WERTHEIM: Here.

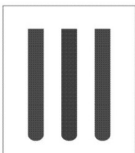
6 MR. ADKINS: Good. Patriot Jim Anderson, NFC
7 member?

8 MR. J. ANDERSON: Here.

9 MR. ADKINS: National Publications Committee
10 Chair, Larry Leighton? He should be online. I
11 don't know if we got it set up, but I know he'll be
12 participating. All right. National Publics
13 Committee, Alan Gibson. Absent. All right. Region
14 1. Region 1 Commander Frank Bokan? Region
15 Commander Frank Bokan? Absent. All right. The
16 Department of Connecticut, Michael Perron?
17 Department of Connecticut, Michael Perron?
18 Department -- well, we don't have a department of
19 Delaware. Department of Maryland, Calvin Burgess?
20 Department of Maryland, Calvin Burgess? New Jersey
21 Commander Joseph Belardo? Joseph Belardo? New
22 York?

23 MR. PRATTS: Present.

24 MR. ADKINS: That's Ruben Pratts. It's good to
25 see you, Ruben.



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1 MR. PRATTS: Thank you.

2 MR. ADKINS: And Department of Pennsylvania,
3 Philip Arnold? Department of Pennsylvania, Philip
4 Arnold? Department of Virginia, Benjamin King?

5 MR. KING: Here.

6 MR. ADKINS: Excellent, sir. Region 2, Region
7 Commander Terry Anderson?

8 MR. T. ANDERSON: Here, sir.

9 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Illinois, Dan
10 Welman? Department of Illinois, Dan Welman?
11 Department of Indiana, Tom Moorman? He's excused,
12 but I know he'll be participating by Zoom. He's --
13 I know he's here somewhere. Department of Iowa,
14 Commander Jack Hanson.

15 MR. HANSON: Here, sir.

16 MR. ADKINS: Department of Kentucky, Steven
17 Schaltenbrand. I know you're here somewhere.

18 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: Here.

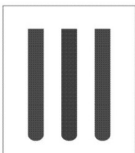
19 MR. ADKINS: And Department of Michigan, Ron
20 Allen?

21 MR. ALLEN: Here.

22 MR. ADKINS: And Department of Minnesota, Dave
23 Bellis?

24 MR. BELLIS: Here.

25 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Let's see. Department of



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1 Missouri, Garfield Pellhum?

2 MR. PELLHUM: Here.

3 MR. ADKINS: Welcome. And Department of
4 Nebraska, Michael Sheets? Department of Nebraska,
5 Michael Sheets? Department of Ohio, Dennis
6 Hannerman? Department of Ohio, Dennis Hannerman?
7 West Virginia Department Commander David Duffer?
8 Department of West Virginia, David Duffer?
9 Department Commander of Wisconsin George Banda?

10 MR. BANDA: Here.

11 MR. ADKINS: Region 3. Region Commander
12 Lawrence Rupp?

13 MR. RUPP: Here.

14 MR. ADKINS: And Department Commander of
15 Alaska, Stephen Blair?

16 MR. BLAIR: Here.

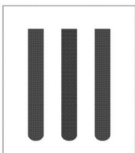
17 MR. ADKINS: Department Commander of Idaho, Ned
18 Barker? Department of Idaho, Ned Barker?
19 Department of Oregon, Keith Wittenbel?

20 MR. WITTENBEL: Here.

21 MR. ADKINS: Department of the Dakotas, Connie
22 Johnson.

23 MR. OLIVAREZ: Absent.

24 MR. ADKINS: Department of Washington, Jennifer
25 Horn?



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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Online.

2 MR. ADKINS: Online? She is online?

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: Well, I'm trying to get him.

4 MR. ADKINS: Okay. I saw him running around,
5 Department of Wyoming, Barry Gasdek?

6 MR. GASDEK: Present.

7 MR. ADKINS: And his dog. Okay. Region 4.
8 Depart -- Commander Francis Figueroa-Lowe? She's --
9 well, I think she's out registering people. I know
10 she's there. Can somebody go out and ask her to
11 come in please? Department of Alabama, William
12 Bergman? Department of Alabama, William Bergman?
13 Department of Florida, Craig Wertheim?

14 MR. WERTHEIM: Here.

15 MR. ADKINS: Department of Georgia, Harold
16 Jones?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

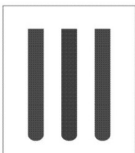
18 MR. ADKINS: Department of Mississippi, Charlie
19 Tolliver? I know he's absent. Department Commander
20 of North Carolina, Lenny Lazzara?

21 MR. LAZZARA: Here.

22 MR. ADKINS: Department of South Carolina, Carl
23 Lopez?

24 MR. LOPEZ: Here.

25 MR. ADKINS: Department of the Caribbean,



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1 Commander David Davila-Galarza? Department of
2 Caribbean, Commander Manuel Davila-Galarza? Region
3 5. Commander Gustav Wittschack?

4 MR. WITTSCACK: Here.

5 MR. ADKINS: Department of Arkansas --

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's absent.

7 MR. ADKINS: And Department of Colorado, Peter
8 Dowding? I know he's absent. Department of Kansas,
9 Joe Sutton. I know he's absent. Department of
10 Louisiana, Deron Santiny?

11 MR. SANTINY: Here.

12 MR. ADKINS: Department of New Mexico, Geoff
13 Stone? Department of New Mexico, Geoffrey Stone?
14 Department of Oklahoma, Commander Larry Van
15 Schuyver?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

17 MR. ADKINS: Department of Texas, Michael
18 Matthew?

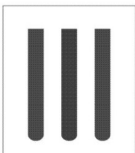
19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's on his way.

20 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Region 6, Commander Charles
21 Anderson? Region 6, Commander Charles Anderson?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: En route.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: En route.

24 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Arizona,
25 Keith Gray?



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1 MR. GRAY: Present.

2 MR. ADKINS: Department of Asia Pacific,
3 Nicholas Francisco? Department of Asia Pacific,
4 Nicholas Francisco? Department of California, Jo
5 Keller?

6 MS. KELLER: Present.

7 MR. ADKINS: Department of Hawaii, Joel
8 Brilliant? Department of Hawaii, Joel Brilliant?
9 Department of Nevada, Andrew LePeilbet?

10 MR. LEPEILBET: Present.

11 MR. ADKINS: Did I pronounce your name right,
12 sir?

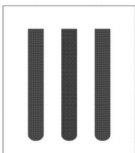
13 MR. LEPEILBET: Close enough.

14 MR. ADKINS: Okay. My apologies. All right.
15 Past National Commander, Frank Athanason? Past
16 National Commander, Boyd Barklay? Past National
17 Commander, Jim Blaylock? Past National Commander,
18 James Durkin? Past National Commander, Felix Garcia?

19 MR. GARCIA: Present, sir.

20 MR. ADKINS: Past National Commander, Hershel
21 Gober? Past National Commander, William Hutton?
22 Past National Commander, James McCormick? He may be
23 on later. Past National Commander, Bruce McKenty?
24 Past National Commander, Ernie Rivera?

25 MR. RIVERA: Present.



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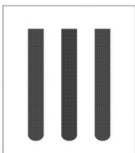
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1 MR. ADKINS: Past National Commander, Jeffrey
2 Roy? Past National Commander, Ron Siebels?
3 MR. SIEBELS: Here, sir.
4 MR. ADKINS: Past National Commander, Alfred
5 Silvano? Past National Commander, Fred Taylor?
6 MR. TAYLOR: Present.
7 MR. ADKINS: Past National Commander, Neil Van-
8 Ess? Okay, sir. Roll call has been taken. The
9 floor is yours.
10 MR. FERGUSON: Good morning.
11 ALL: Good morning, sir.
12 MR. FERGUSON: Everybody all bright and shiny
13 and ready to go?
14 ALL: Yep. Oh, yeah.
15 MR. FERGUSON: Before I get going, I'm going to
16 let the sergeant at arms give some rules talking
17 about the convention, phones, and things like that.
18 Do you mind, Sergeant at Arms?
19 MR. WITT: Good morning.
20 GROUP: Good morning. Good morning.
21 MR. WITT: Just a -- just a few little rules.
22 Just make sure that when you come in the door, you
23 salute the flag. Everybody knows if you need to go
24 out and come back in, salute going out and salute
25 coming back in.

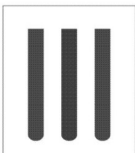


1 And secondly, if you've got your cell phone
2 silenced, and like I didn't have when I came in,
3 make sure you do that before you -- and make sure
4 before any meetings going on that you've done that.
5 And no weapons in the room at all. And if -- you
6 have to be credentialed to be checked at the door
7 and you got to have the credentials with you when
8 you come in. So make sure that you're here in time
9 and we'll be checking.

10 Thank you for honoring what we ask you for and
11 we're trying to keep an eye on things. And if you
12 have any questions, and we got a couple people that
13 are in wheelchairs back there that we have to keep
14 an eye on, and so just be courteous to each other,
15 love one another, and let's have a good convention.

16 MR. FERGUSON: Just wanted to get a few things
17 covered on that. I know the sergeant at arms did a
18 practice example about the cell phone, so then that
19 way we know that make sure we get that off. Thank
20 you. Thank you for sacrificing one for the team
21 here, so keeping things up and going.

22 So first thing is, thank you for everybody
23 that's coming here. I mean, it's an honor to be up
24 here. And I think the greatest thing is to see
25 everybody here, some with smiling faces. I don't



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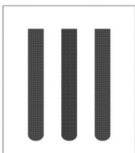
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1 know if that was before the coffee or after they
2 coffee, but I mean, everybody is here, we're up.
3 We're here to conduct this step, number one, but
4 also remember that we're here for friendship,
5 fellowship, and comradeship.

6 There's going to be a lot of things discussed
7 today, tomorrow, and Wednesday. So as we're going
8 along, just remember this, the peace in mind of what
9 we're doing this year. We're here to accomplish the
10 goals of the order and to move the things forward in
11 a positive manner. You know, we all may have, we'll
12 say, topics that we're passionate about. Maybe not
13 everybody's going to be passionate about that same
14 topic. Be open-minded, be cheerful, and listen to
15 everything so we can move things forward in the
16 right direction.

17 And again, you know, I want to thank everybody
18 that helped me through this year to get where I'm
19 at.

20 It wasn't me. It was the team. And if you
21 notice, that's one of the things I said: It's teamwork.
22 And that's what it takes each year. And each and
23 everyone here showed that you're a part of the team.
24 Whether you believe it or not, you're here. You got
25 what it takes to be here. I know none of us really want



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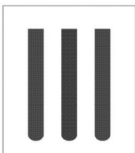
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1 to be in the room because, you know, none of us wanted
2 to be a Purple Heart recipient. But we're here, and
3 it's -- now it's our duty and our honor to move this
4 forward, not only just for ourself, but for the families
5 and the veterans. And that's one thing we got to make
6 sure that we remember that. When we make those
7 decisions and move things forward, it's not just only
8 for us, but the families and the things that they come
9 for.

10 So everybody's got a chance to look at the
11 convention schedule. Remember it's tentative because
12 things will change. We've already had change this
13 morning from one time that's on it. So bear in mind,
14 the natural adjective will make and let you know that
15 these things have changed because obviously things have
16 changed. I know you had changes getting here. I know
17 some people had some flight delays, maybe some getting
18 shuttles to here. I apologize because, you know, things
19 happen. I mean, traffic jams. I got locked in one here
20 for 30 minutes before I came to get here, and I wasn't
21 even 15 miles away. So, you know, that's -- those
22 things happen, you know, where we're coming from. But
23 expect change. That's one thing that's always going to
24 be constant that's in here.

25 All right. One of the other things I want to



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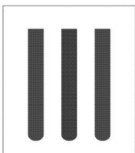
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1 talk about is respect for each other. It's one of the
2 most important things that we have here, is have that
3 respect. Trust with the knowledge, there is a lot of
4 experience in here. This is the most that I've seen the
5 past national commanders in any convention I've been to
6 for quite a while. So I'm proud to see that they're
7 here. We've got people that's been in this order for
8 quite a while. The experience that they can hand to us
9 and cherish and know the knowledge of how we'll move
10 forward. Make sure that you expand on that. I was in
11 this morning with the first timers. We have I guess
12 around about 12 first timers in here, and I asked a lot
13 of things about them. And, you know, I want them to
14 enjoy this experience because believe it or not, that's
15 part of our future in the order, and that's where
16 they're going to move this thing forward. Get them
17 involved. Make sure you come and talk to them if you
18 haven't seen them. Shake your hand. Find out
19 information on them. Of course, they found out I was
20 some hillbilly from Arkansas, I guess they might say.
21 But again, they found out Lisa had shoes on, so they
22 were proud of that. But they did know that I liked
23 talking and a few other things here.

24 One of the things that we want to make sure
25 that we go over, like I said, having that experience



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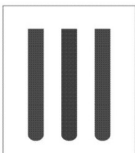
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1 with the mentors of what we got, make sure that when we
2 talk about things that you're -- that we keep it here in
3 the room. When we turn around, when we conduct
4 business, business is in here in the room. When you go
5 back out, we don't need it out in open forum, out with
6 things that's on here. Please be respective of where
7 you're going to conduct your business. It's great to go
8 and ask these questions, and you want to have that.
9 Maybe set off in a room, set off in another area, but
10 remember because what's happening sometimes, people
11 overhear, oh, and the next thing is rumor control, and
12 that's what's going to kill us. Make sure that's what
13 we do to keep up with business and keeps it in here.

14 As we talk about things that's on here, I
15 think one of the things is it's important to remember
16 the vision of why we're here. Everybody knows what our
17 mission statement is. And that's what we got to
18 remember what -- how we're going to project this order
19 forward because we got to keep these things forward. So
20 through this year, I tried to get a lot of things
21 accomplished, and I'll tell you this, as I say things
22 through here, we were successful in a lot of things, and
23 a lot of things did not get accomplished. And how those
24 things didn't get accomplished because so many changes
25 got thrown in front of us, so many variables that's on



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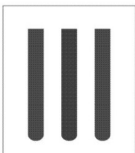
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1 it. And I expect change. I have no problem with that.
2 But the key thing is to establish the procedures
3 correctly, how to get these done. And we've got to get
4 these done in a correct way.

5 So we've accomplished a few things. But one
6 of the things before we even started out last year, we
7 talked about the letter of intent from the VFW. So that
8 was really great. We got the intent of working on that.
9 But one of the things we came back in, so we talked
10 about one of the things is having trained service
11 officers in with the VFW through the Military Order of
12 the Purple Heart. Since now we don't have a service
13 officer program, we got to figure out how do we get some
14 service officers and how we can do that. So one of the
15 things we're going to have to look at is how to figure
16 to find the funds to pay for them. Right now, our
17 biggest part that we have, all of our budget is
18 basically being almost in administrative costs. We
19 don't have a lot going out towards our programs, and
20 that's a problem. So we got to get out and fundraise
21 for those programs and get things up there. We got to
22 talk to the departments. We got to talk to some of the
23 chapters to see some of the funding. People want to
24 come out and be a service officer and they're going to
25 be credited by the VFW, but they'll be working for us as



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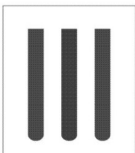
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1 the Military Order of the Purple Heart. But we cannot
2 state that they're Purple Heart service officers because
3 that's an agreement that we have. So that's why we're
4 partnering in with the VFW.

5 In addition to that, we also had another
6 meeting with the DVA. DVA is saying that they would
7 like to turn around -- and that's the Vietnam Veterans
8 of American. And same thing, they're offering a hand to
9 help us. And again, same thing, there's not any cost to
10 us for them having their service officers on there. So
11 that's another positive way of some of the things that
12 got accomplished.

13 One of the things we did, we also passed
14 several things through here. PCI was another sore
15 subject for some people and some people didn't mind
16 that, but that's the book that goes out with all the
17 Purple Heart recipients that were going to do a digital
18 version that was on it. And one of the things that the
19 said as we voted through, we did not vote to approve
20 that to move forward because it took us -- I forgot the
21 finding officers led, but it took us almost four years
22 to collect the last payment that they were to do for us.
23 And that was only \$50,000. And even then, they couldn't
24 pay it all up front. So that was \$10,000 out of whack.
25 So that took almost, you know, two months to get that



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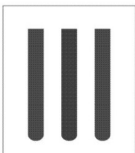
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1 in. So I can understand that.

2 Another thing we got accomplished was AUSA.
3 We'll probably be playing some videos on that. So as
4 that we're associate partner program with the AUSA
5 program. Hopefully, most of you-all have seen that
6 through your Constant Contact and some of your e-mails.
7 That's a good program. They offer benefits to us, and
8 it's at no charge. Now, whether you're Navy, Marine,
9 Air Force, I know it's an Army program that's on there.
10 They have that, and they have several different groups
11 that are there. So I think that's another great program
12 that will help move us forward. Since he just walked up
13 here, I want to thank the finance officer because he
14 reached in his pocket this year because one of the
15 things we needed to do is we need some new computers up
16 there at the headquarters. So the finance officer
17 personally bought two computers and put those up there
18 at the headquarters for us. So now we've got one for
19 the management and for the membership department, and it
20 was greatly needed. Now I'm trying to get them updated
21 and figure things out. And we do have computers up
22 there, but the problem was, you know, we had so many
23 people at the headquarters, those old computers is just
24 sometimes outdated. Some people -- somebody said
25 something about -- I understand that, too.



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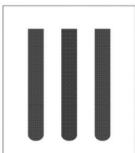
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1 One of the other things we did was we adjusted
2 the budget. We did it twice this year. Once we did
3 that was in reference to we had to get money in for our
4 scholarships that we ended up having to pay for last
5 year. Plus, we also had to put money into programs to
6 support our software educational training and our
7 suicide awareness. So we moved \$30,000 from our VAVS
8 account to help cover with these programs. The other
9 time we had to do on the budget is we had to come up
10 with Constant Contact had raised the price that we had
11 on that and Google Workspace. So we're talking almost a
12 40 percent increase on the payments of what we were
13 supposed to have. So that was a couple times where we
14 had to change to move the budget so that gets things
15 done.

16 Next thing we did is magazine. Everybody's
17 had a passion about that. Hopefully, some of you all
18 got the surveys and things on that. In reference, we've
19 been doing a digital magazine that's on that. But then
20 we turned around and did a survey to find out if we can
21 do the hard copy magazine, and would you guys be willing
22 to pay for that? And we'll have that up in more in the
23 meeting that's hearing out the details of that. Some of
24 that you should have seen in your delegates book.

25 So one of the things, I know we're covering a



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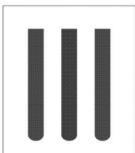
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1 lot of things, but hopefully, you read in your delegate
2 book that's on there, so I think on Page 104, that would
3 have a lot of the accomplishments we had out there. And
4 then same thing, you can follow that up on with the
5 commanders and national actions. We did several trips
6 going up to D.C., and one of the things we did was we
7 did Veterans Day. So when we did Veterans Day, that was
8 up there over at Arlington Cemetery. I represented the
9 order. One of the things I found out when we went to
10 Arlington Cemetery, it was this year the -- or last
11 year, the VFW was the host, you know, sponsor. So I
12 asked the question, well, who's the next host, and
13 where's the list that's on this? Come to find out, the
14 Military Order of the Purple Heart in 2029 will be the
15 host for Veterans Day at Arlington Center.

16 So one of the things about it, we were there
17 because we're on the list. Now, I know we clapped about
18 that, so here's the next thing: We are going to have to
19 have \$50,000 to host that convention that's on there.
20 We're going to bring this back up that's coming in. I
21 know we got some money, and I'm going to ask some money
22 to be set aside for that, and then we can pay so much
23 each year towards that. So that way, when it comes to
24 2029, we don't have to turn around and come up with a
25 lot of money there to host this. But it's going to be



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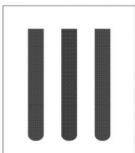
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1 an honor, and I want everybody we can, so now you know
2 in 2029, if we can get everybody up there, and so we can
3 host this convention for Memorial Day.

4 Next, after that, I actually went to Pearl
5 Harbor, and that was an honor to be there. And then I
6 went to Guam. Awesome honor to go there for Guam. Then
7 I turned around, we all went back up there for March on
8 the Hill. I found out one thing about it, we are well
9 known for our legislative issues, but we have not done
10 that in several years. We've been stagnated on that. We
11 got to get this up. That's one part of our mission
12 statement where we turn around and support necessary
13 legislative issues for the order. We got to get on top
14 of that.

15 I also just want to say this, I had a well-
16 rounded education. I didn't know how far apart and how
17 many buildings and how far we had to walk. So needless
18 to say, wore out a few pairs of shoes, and I think I did
19 lose some weight. But I will tell you this: Thanks for
20 the staff that's up here. We had Chuck, Tracey, and
21 Robert. I will tell you what, and the inspector, we
22 were all running around hitting on every senator,
23 congressman for passions and things that's on that. Now
24 they kind of know who we are.

25 Our legislative officer, which was Brian Ohler



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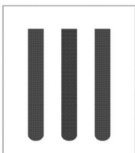
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1 (phonetic), had stepped down. So James McCormick, past
2 national commander, came in and stepped up and he's been
3 helping supporting some of the things on that. He is
4 now taking a full-time job with the DVA, so he will not
5 be as the legislative officer moving on, but we're
6 making that contact between the DVA and that.

7 Again, let's partner in with these people. If
8 they're pushing legislative, let them know what ours
9 are, and we know what theirs are, so we can pull
10 together as a team, more in numbers and people who will
11 listen. But I will tell you that was a great time that
12 was there to learn that, and we need more on that. I
13 want to ask more departments to be involved in that and
14 have a department representative come up there. Some of
15 these other groups, I was, like, amazed of how many
16 people they have on their legislative. So it does make
17 a difference that's on that.

18 One of the things we did on the legislative,
19 we set up there with the Vietnam -- I mean, not Vietnam,
20 the VFW SA, and what happened was you got all the VFW
21 members in there, and then we had a whole row of nothing
22 but the Military Order of the Purple Heart showing what
23 we're supporting and doing the things there. So I think
24 that speaks loudly for us where we're trying to move
25 forward.



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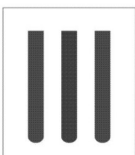
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1 After that, we went to -- for Memorial Day
2 awesome time that was there. But one of the things that
3 we realized was some of the things of other areas where
4 we had to have on Memorial Day, not just Arlington
5 Cemetery, the Vietnam Memorial Wall. Think about that.
6 It was really realized to think, you know, and it's not
7 that I didn't think about them this way, those are all
8 Purple Heart recipients. We need to be there, got to be
9 there to support that, even if it's just a small wreath
10 that's showing our -- token of appreciation of their
11 support and what they're doing to remember those. That's
12 what we have to be there for. Same thing for the Korea
13 Memorial. We need to be a part of this. So get more
14 active. And now that's one of the things we've got to
15 do. So I noticed that as where moving forward that we
16 have to keep things up. So the key thing is that us, as
17 a group, we got to get our brand, and we got to know who
18 we are. We got to be more on top of this. So that's
19 one thing we have to learn through and through this
20 year. It has been, I don't know how to say a trying
21 tribulation of moving things through here, understanding
22 things on here, finding out there's many things that we
23 assume to be done, but it's also the follow-up to make
24 sure it is done, and being part of that team that's
25 here.

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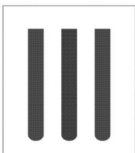
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1 And again, I couldn't have done this without
2 everybody else's support. You know, you elected me in
3 here to be as a commander. I did the best job I could.
4 There may be some things that some people may disagree
5 on. That's fine. We're going to move forward. The
6 thing is there's not a -- one thing I haven't done out
7 of my heart that's not been good for the order. And
8 that's where I want us to move forward, to be honest. If
9 I can turn around and make sure we have that passion for
10 everybody else that's injured, would be great success.
11 And, you know, the other thing that I've talked about,
12 and I've said this to several people, everybody, we got
13 to have our trust. Chuck's getting excited for the
14 gavel because --

15 MR. ADKINS: Yeah, I need the --

16 MR. FERGUSON: Yeah. Because he likes our
17 regular gavel, so -- but we do have one just in case
18 anybody has any complications or problems. I did
19 bring my own gavel, so if we have anything that's --
20 Sergeant at Arms said he wanted to out this thing
21 right here, so -- all right. I'm going to open it
22 up just for a minute to any questions because we
23 talked about -- this is basically -- I covered what
24 we did as in business that's here. Is there any new
25 business, any questions or things that we need to



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1 do? So I'm going to open the floor up real quick.

2 MR. EGGELESTON: Strike heart (phonetic). I'm

3 Charles Eggleston, National Service Director. I

4 like a lot of things you said, Commander. Of

5 course, I was in the -- was mixed in that whole big

6 fight. And we worked together as a team. That's

7 the main issue -- the main equivalent issue that I

8 haven't seen in a minute is a team method. But

9 things that I've seen by being inside of the circle

10 inside of Washington, D.C. And I wish I could have

11 had a chance to not only the service director. I

12 could have handled the legislative because a lot of

13 stuff that was legislative, I was already hammering,

14 you know. And me and the secretary of the VA, as

15 well as the sitting president we're working

16 together, as well as the officer -- the executive

17 officer and the president working together on

18 certain issues. So in the future, the next

19 commander coming up, let's look forward to doing

20 that. A lot of things we -- a lot of things we

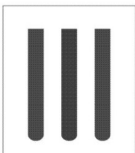
21 missed, as in, you know, the Capitol Hill testimony,

22 all right? If I'm notified about the time and the

23 date of that, all right, because me and Chuck talked

24 offline on certain things, he would get information

25 that's supposed to be coming to me --

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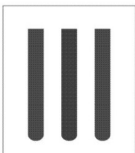
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1 MR. FERGUSON: Sure.

2 MR. EGCELSTON: If I'm notified by me being on
3 the Senate side, I make sure you as commander,
4 because you're the big four, it's automatic. But if
5 you don't put in that request saying, I want to sit
6 at the table, they will take you off the -- just --
7 you know, off the actual testimony panel.

8 On top of that, as you know, Commander, I'm a
9 part of a digital team that does service as well.
10 We tested out on the national commander. We did his
11 POA. Within three to five minutes, we did more than
12 the VA would do in six to nine months, right off the
13 bat. So under the service program this year, I was
14 able to do 300 cases. And half of them became 100
15 percent total earned. And that's what I'm talking
16 about. That's the difference we make. And that's
17 the vision we have. And that's how we go get it.

18 Yeah, it's a -- it's a -- I know I got Ernie
19 sitting up there. He's laughing going, man, I never
20 heard of this. That's what I like about it because
21 me and the secretary of VA, we talked about it.
22 They may even start trying to buy this program from
23 us. And we're totally digital. We're inside the
24 actual system of the VA. But looking at the big
25 picture of that, the Purple Heart is set on top of



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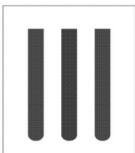
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1 that altogether. So it was a representation of the
2 Purple Heart as well. So it brought -- we didn't
3 have a full steam service program, but we are tied
4 to Congress through our service program. Folks keep
5 on forgetting that. Without our family of the
6 service program, we'd lose our seat at the table in
7 Congress. That's how we came online from the start.

8 We need to get back into the National Parade as
9 well. Because we're Purple Heart, they will -- I
10 guarantee you they will give us a seat at the table
11 for free because we part of the committee as well in
12 Washington, D.C. So showing our colors is showing
13 that we're here and we're not gone. We're not dead.
14 We're the most honorable folks out there, whether
15 you like it or not. And I feel honored when I have
16 a national man, a national senior vice, and a
17 national junior vice is doing the job of the whole
18 team, and all of us. It's a team effort. So
19 remember that -- those few words. That's inside me.
20 And that's the communication I had coming back. You
21 know, we could always back line with guys like the
22 VFW and all this stuff, but it's all about our
23 vision. It's all about our presence to the people.
24 They don't look at VFW. They look at VFW by a
25 segment on the side, but they always look up to the



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1 Purple Heart and the Medal of Honor in a whole
2 different light. So remember that. That's all I
3 have to say, Commander.

4 MR. FERGUSON: Appreciate it. Actually, I have
5 to do one other thing. I jumped ahead of doing the
6 things. One of the things we need to do is we need
7 to approve the post-NEC minutes from last year. So
8 I want to see if anybody will bring a motion to
9 approve the minutes. Those minutes have been posted
10 online, so everybody's had a chance to see that.

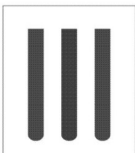
11 MR. PICKART: Paul Pickart. Make the motion,
12 sir.

13 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
14 Florida Commander. Second the motion.

15 MR. FERGUSON: All right. We have a first and
16 second. Is there any discussion of the minutes? Do
17 I hear any discussion of the minutes? I don't hear
18 any discussion. All in favor?

19 ALL: Aye.

20 MR. FERGUSON: Any opposed? Okay. Motion
21 passed. Before we get things started, minutes on
22 there, so sorry. I guess once you only do this once
23 a year, you kind of figure things out and you, and
24 lose track of all things. Even though I wrote
25 things down and got scribbled all over, it still --



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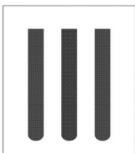
1 sometimes you kind of miss things that's on here.
2 So thank you all. I appreciate that. Anybody else
3 have anything else they want to talk about? Go to
4 the order. It's moving things through, things that
5 got accomplished? Yes, Keith?

6 MR. GRAY: Keith Gray for Credentials. I just
7 wanted to go over this real quick. I'm working on
8 transposing the delegate counts that were in the
9 delegate book that went out. So if there's any
10 discrepancies, please bring that up to us prior to
11 voting. We don't want to try adjusting anything
12 while we're voting. And again, before we start the
13 vote, I will publish the numbers I have, which
14 should be the same one reflected in your delegate
15 books.

16 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you.

17 MR. GRAY: Sure.

18 MR. FERGUSON: Appreciate that. While I know
19 you are gathering your thoughts and thinking and
20 letting the coffee sink in, one of a couple other
21 things that we done for some people when we were up
22 there at headquarters, remember we had our building,
23 which is Building B, so we also have Building C.
24 Building C is -- right now they're actually in the
25 process of trying to remodel some of it that was



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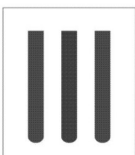
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1 there. So one thing about it, that contract is
2 still good. So that's still going to be for another
3 three years or four years. I think that was the
4 first year. Yeah, I'm sorry. Yeah, for four years.
5 So with that, that's going to turn around and bring
6 some revenue coming in.

7 And then, as we also did that, one of the
8 things, as we talked in the finance meeting, I got
9 rid of our boat anchors of copiers up there. And
10 that was a -- account. So now we got a new copier,
11 and a lot less appliance, and one of the fastest and
12 easier print ones that was here for -- so now the
13 office ladies don't have to sit around and wait for
14 copies, and then it's a great tool for us. And then
15 actually, I hate say this. They even gave us \$2,000
16 to get off the contract, so that's so good. So I
17 always wanted to pay you and get something faster,
18 and you got it cheaper. You did something good, so
19 thank you. Yes, sir?

20 MR. ARNOLD: Commander, Phil Arnold. I came in
21 after -- ADC, Pennsylvania Region. One, I came in
22 right after the roll call. I'd like the record to
23 show that I'm present.

24 MR. FERGUSON: Duly noted. Thank you,
25 Commander.



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1 MR. ARNOLD: Thank you.

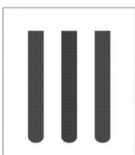
2 MR. FERGUSON: You got something, Dennis --

3 MR. WALLOT: No.

4 MR. FERGUSON: Okay. Roger?

5 MR. NEWALL: Roger Newall, ROTC and Youth
6 Coordinator. Oh, first of all, it's nice to be back
7 in charge of the ROTC. I had it for ten years, and
8 now I have it back again. A number of things really
9 need to happen as we -- as we move forward. One, I
10 think we need to get back to the point where the
11 recipient schools or the departments or the
12 chapters, are not paying for the awards. One of our
13 things that was really critical over the years,
14 would set us apart from everybody else, was the fact
15 that the award did not cost a recipient's school.
16 When I left it two years ago, we had 3,700 member
17 schools plus. I'm not sure where we are right now.
18 Just because of the accounting process, it's not the
19 same.

20 The other thing that we really need to look at
21 is we need to stop using the ROTC award for the
22 Badge of Merit. It's not the same, and it doesn't
23 signify the same. And in my report, I did list,
24 with the help of a good gentleman in Florida, a
25 rebate for the Badge of Merit, which would be able



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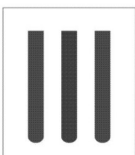
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1 to be able to use with Sea Scouts, like the
2 gentleman who had friends that were meeting us at
3 the airport. Our young Marines, Boy Scouts, Girl
4 Scouts. It is a very, very important award. So we
5 need to get back online and move forward. And we can
6 talk about these things later, but I just really
7 want to express my thank you for bringing me back.
8 And I really appreciate it.

9 MR. FERGUSON: Roger, thank you. Give a couple
10 comments on what he made. And one of the things it
11 was never ever forced that the chapter or the
12 department ever paid for reports. It was actually
13 making the ROTC units go through them, so that way
14 we have a chapter or a department to be there. So a
15 lot of these awards were shipped to the school, and
16 nobody was there. So now we're trying to get our
17 contact out. So that was the purpose of that, not
18 to have a chapter of that. So even if a school
19 wanted to do the -- if they didn't have the funds
20 that -- on that, if the schools could turn around
21 and pay it for their self, you know. And that's
22 hardship.

23 And like Roger said, I would love that we could
24 turn around and get enough money into the program,
25 and that we can have that. So long story short, you



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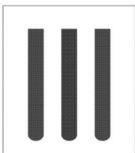
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1 know, just to get that up and going, that's going to
2 cost at least 50,000 a year to turn around and make
3 sure that we have money in the program to keep this
4 up and going on the current way we're doing it. But
5 we do have some proposals coming up later, is to
6 talk about how we can save some money because, as we
7 know, this is not anything that's not been going up
8 in the last few years. One thing I continue to do is
9 that ROTC program, that \$20 has not changed in the
10 last three or four years. So think about that. So
11 we've tried to keep it at that to do the best we
12 can, but the costs of everything goes in there.

13 Badge of Merit. Yes, I think that's a good
14 thing we need to do. One of the things we need to
15 also do, and we have to remember, how many people
16 know that, you know -- reiterate this, ROTC is a
17 national program. That's one of the things on that.
18 We can't have a chapter or a department go and print
19 their own certificates and things on this because
20 this is a national program. We have medals that's
21 out there. If we have some people that decide that
22 they're going to do this because they don't want to
23 pay the \$20, and they're going to give them a coin.
24 One of the problems you have is now these kids will
25 go to a summer camp or go to the school, and they're



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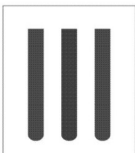
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1 wearing their uniforms, and say, well, where'd you
2 get that from? Well, I got that because I got an
3 award -- the leadership award from the Military
4 Order of the Purple Heart. Well, that's a nice
5 metal, and you got a ribbon that's on there. Well,
6 I got the same thing, but I only got a certificate
7 and the coin. There's no uniformity on that.
8 That's why we have to have the standard, and we
9 can't change from that. These awards are actually
10 approved by the ROTC national level at each one,
11 whether it's Army, Air Force, Marines, that's their
12 -- where they came in here. So that's why we want to
13 keep -- make sure to keep the uniformity of those.

14 So again, Roger's bringing up some great ideas.
15 I want to make sure that we move these things
16 forward, but we've got to have that. Yes, sir?

17 MR. NEWALL: Let me just add a couple of
18 things. You all know what the ROTC award is, but
19 most -- many people don't know what the Badge of
20 Merit program is or when it started. Basically, the
21 Badge of Merit was started to remember the original
22 Badge of Merit from 1782. It is not the same. And
23 that's one of the things that, really, we need to
24 think about. When I came on board a number of years
25 ago, one of the problems we had was people getting



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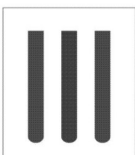
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1 more than one award, or they're not getting an award
2 at all. And the ROTC award, you can only receive
3 one in your high school years, or one in your
4 college years. You can't receive two. You can't
5 give a -- an ROTC award to a Sea Scout organization
6 because it's not part of the ROTC recognized
7 program. So that's why I created the Badge of Merit
8 about five years ago. Granted, the award material
9 that I used was quick and dirty. It definitely
10 needs to get upgraded to our -- what our current
11 system is.

12 But I want people to understand that they're
13 really -- they're very, very much two different
14 awards, and they go to two different type of groups.
15 And it's these small, minor organizations, like Land
16 Cadets, Sea Cadets, things like that, that are very
17 important for people that are involved with it. And
18 we need to be able to give them something from my
19 order to recognize their accomplishments, and who
20 they are, and let them wear the -- these awards just
21 like we would the ROTC award. So that's -- thank
22 you very much.

23 MR. FERGUSON: Thanks, Roger. Raymond?

24 MR. WETZEL: Good morning, Commander. Raymond
25 Wetzels, Senior Vice, Department of California.



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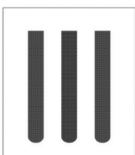
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1 You're talking about the -- cutting costs, and we're
2 moving forward into the new future of digital
3 services. I personally call upon membership a lot
4 to assist in finding records. It would be really
5 advantageous. If we could have access, as
6 department officers, to the archives to locate
7 missing charters, missing election reports, missing
8 990s, to get information for either closed or
9 restarted chapters. And it would really be helpful
10 to us in that aspect. So that is the request that
11 possible to opening up the archives of the digital
12 service to your department officers.

13 MR. FERGUSON: So two things about that,
14 Raymond, real quick, is all those archives are
15 actually into the Google Drive. So we have to have
16 that. You have to have a purpleheart.org e-mail to
17 get in that. So that -- and each one of those per
18 person that's on that, a month costs us \$25 or 35.
19 It did bump back up. So to add each one of that,
20 that would run our budget way up. So that's why the
21 charters and the information on that. But you do
22 have, through the website, to get your current
23 information that's on there, and then that's some of
24 the things that's there.

25 So I know you're dealing with California,



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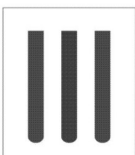
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1 obviously with the several chapters that not turned
2 in the election reports, and it's been for a few
3 years. And I know it's hard to get those. What we
4 can do is once you do that, to get that to us so we
5 can get that to the webmaster, and the webmaster
6 could turn around and send the things through here.
7 So -- okay. So -- and I greatly agree with you.
8 Thank you for bringing that up.

9 MR. WETZEL: Thank you.

10 MR. FERGUSON: Right. So when we go with that,
11 he would just want to remind you, we do have what we
12 call as a webmaster e-mail that's on that. But all
13 this needs to be funneled towards the senior vice or
14 who's actually in charge of the web that -- each
15 year because the commander can do that. Before we
16 go, I want to bring up that we have two people
17 that's online, and it's Larry Leighton, and then we
18 got the department commander, Jennifer Horn, from
19 Washington, that's on there. Yes. Go ahead.

20 MR. HONERKAMP: Fred Honerkamp, Michigan Senior
21 Vice. There's some strategic issues that we need to
22 face. One is lack of new members. One is declining
23 participation in by existing members, and the third
24 major one is financing. The fact that we have to
25 talk at the national meeting about getting two



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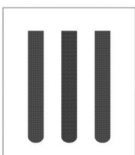
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1 computers and a printer tells us the state of affair
2 that we're in. It -- it denies the management of
3 this organization, the ability to go forward when
4 we're putting down little fires. What is the status
5 of our relationship with the foundation, and how can
6 we address those three critical issues?

7 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, sir. Okay. Status
8 of the foundation. Everybody has turned around and
9 every time I've been towards the order, we've had
10 some, we'll say positive and negative things about
11 the foundation. We know what happened with all the
12 grievance. We've known. We've gone through the
13 lawsuits. I don't think any of the last few past
14 commanders have ever had a meeting with the
15 foundation. I can tell you this, one thing about it,
16 I did have a meeting with the foundation, with the
17 team at the headquarters. The reason why I had a
18 meeting I was right there to find exactly what you
19 just said. The first thing they asked us is what do
20 we want? We didn't ask for anything, did we? We
21 didn't ask for anything going on with that. All
22 through the two-hour meeting with them, that's all
23 they asked. I'll tell you who was there. That was
24 past national commander Neil Van-Ess.

25 MR. NEWALL: Georgia, Jim Blaylock.



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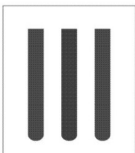
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1 MR. FERGUSON: Yeah, Jim Blaylock. And then
2 Steve Ruckman (phonetic). I'm sorry. Had so many
3 things. And again, I will tell you this, they were
4 not forced. They actually wanted us to sign an
5 agreement that we were in wrong and doing things
6 that was to them. And we know if we signed that
7 agreement, what that's going to do. Come back and
8 cause more harm towards us. That's honest. I mean,
9 like I said, I'm from Arkansas, barefoot. I may
10 look slow, but I know that that's something that we
11 don't want to turn around and do. So again, you
12 know, we asked a few things. So one of the things I
13 was going to bring back up later, and this has got
14 to go in from where the body, is we, mutually,
15 understood one of the things about it. The only
16 thing that's keeping us together with them is the
17 2009 agreement. Everybody understand what we had on
18 the 2000 -- because they -- we did it, what was it,
19 2016? And that was, you know, brought out from a
20 lawsuit and things on that. So they were taking it
21 under consideration that to say, hey, let's go ahead
22 and cancel that 2009 agreement. I think all of us
23 way out there were talking about that.

24 One of the reasons why -- and I'll just spit it
25 out, why I did not let everybody know that we had



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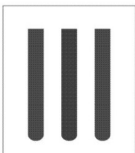
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1 that meeting, because every time I do a meeting or
2 anybody else has done something, word gets out,
3 everything gets spread. So as a commander, you got
4 to control these things. So that's the way I did it
5 as controlling it. So we had the meeting. We know
6 where we're at. We know where the status is here.
7 Now, how we move forward, that's going to have to be
8 done with on the body. Because one of the things we
9 got to do is we got to turn around. Obviously, we
10 need more funding for ourself, and work, and that,
11 and moving things forward. I -- you know, I'll just
12 tell you this, they were supposed to reschedule for
13 this. This tells me how important it was for them.
14 So we met with them back -- that was in March, when
15 we went up there and marched on the hill, sat down
16 and had the time. So we said, hey, why don't we
17 meet back in another month and see where
18 everything's at? He said, oh, sorry. I can't do it
19 in a month. Okay. So when can we do it? Oh, we'll
20 figure maybe in May. I've never received another
21 phone call back from him. I did receive something
22 that they had a bathroom program. They wanted us to
23 move forward and help out. That was it. So that
24 told me where their priorities is at. So Finance
25 Officer Rivera. Sorry.

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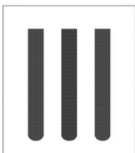
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1 MR. RIVERA: I want to address you. You came
2 up with the issue on finances about the computer,
3 and the computers and the printers and stuff. If
4 you look at the finance report that we submitted in
5 there, you know, currently the headquarters and the
6 finance stuff that we currently have, the
7 organization is not bleeding and hurting for money.
8 So if anybody thinks that it is, it's not, okay?
9 Because we set up where 60 percent of the life
10 member rebate goes to the headquarters. So
11 currently right now, in -- in the general account
12 for the MOPH, we have almost \$300,000 in the
13 account, and we have \$131,000 in restricted money,
14 okay? So the issue is, how do we continue to move
15 forward and set up programs that bring us income.
16 This year, if you look at the report, we had
17 \$133,000 that was donated in requests this year. So
18 the critical thing is looking at the budget, looking
19 at the stuff that we're going to be doing, moving
20 forward. The building is -- the building currently
21 is rented out, so we're getting an income of about
22 34,000 a year. The -- the legacy program brings in
23 \$17,000 a year. The little website things that pops
24 up on there brings us almost \$6,000 a year. There
25 is small programs that are doing that.

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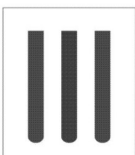
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1 You know, as a -- as the body, what we need to
2 be asking as the incoming leaders, what is your plan
3 to get us to the point where we can raise money so
4 that the rebate can go back to what we and the
5 chapters and the departments are doing, the heavy
6 lifting. So currently there's \$200 is paid in life
7 membership. \$100 is given to the headquarters.
8 \$100 is given to the life member investment account,
9 which they invest. And then when the rebate comes
10 out, the national headquarters gets 60 percent of
11 the rebate. So they're essentially getting a huge
12 portion of that money. So through -- over the last
13 few years -- and I can tell you all the books,
14 everything is reconciled. It's all online now. So
15 these are real numbers. If anybody wants to look,
16 I'll pull up the QuickBooks online or the bank
17 accounts and show you because we did that this year.

18 What needs to happen is, is that we need to
19 start electing leaders that have the ability to
20 understand what a business is. We are a business.
21 We're a nonprofit, but we're a business. We cannot
22 -- we cannot -- people are not going to donate money
23 to us unless we're actually doing something to help.
24 I think this year we did not provide any money out
25 to Patriots for any kind of assistance. We did do

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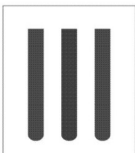
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1 one thing, we sponsored somebody who's going to be
2 doing the National Triathlon that made it to the
3 nationals. So as far as money wise, I think it's a
4 question for the body to ask the incoming leaders,
5 what is your plan to move us forward? I think that
6 we're in a whole different place. It looks like
7 we're going to be paying off -- the loan back this
8 year, so that's the question we should be asking.

9 I think it's up to the body to make a decision
10 and the leaders that you've picked, what is the
11 future going to be? Because we're not doing bad,
12 I'm telling you, we're not. We're not doing bad.
13 We're not doing great, but we're a lot better than
14 2019 when me and PNC Garcia got there, and we were
15 1.54 million negative. So we've really turned the
16 corner, so -- and you -- if you've got any questions
17 about that, we'll be going over the finance report.

18 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, Finance Officer
19 Rivera. One of the things I'll reiterate about
20 that, so if you look at where we did a budget, 90
21 percent of our budget is actually going from
22 administrative cost. So if you look at that around
23 almost 10 percent of the budget, and I'm just
24 ballparking this off the top of my head, it's
25 actually going towards programs. So when somebody



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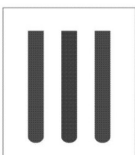
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1 wants to make a donation, where are they going to
2 look at? Are they going to pay for your
3 administrative stuff or are they paying for the
4 programs? So that's one of the things we got to
5 look for, how we promote this and move forward.

6 You know, and again, I know we talked about the
7 fund, we need to get some people that's in the fund
8 that will help us manage and get the things for --
9 that has the ideas in the charisma to get it through
10 there. We have the region commanders in there, I'm
11 not knocking any of them down, but we need some help
12 that was in there. They are the boards that decide
13 what the programs are to move forward and that's how
14 this has got to happen. So I know later on, we'll
15 get a little fund report. You-all seen to -- what
16 the fund generated this year. It's same thing
17 that's having this -- structure that's on here.

18 So again, we've got to promote ourself so
19 people know who the Military Order of the Purple
20 Heart -- you know, we've increased a little bit on
21 our social media, and that's been doing well for us,
22 but social media is only just part of the programs,
23 you know? I have one individual Patriot that's -- I
24 think he's in this room talking about maybe doing a
25 commercial for us, and I think that is something



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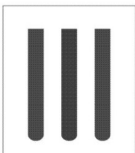
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1 that we definitely got to have that's on here. So
2 I've had the junior vice talk and link up with this
3 individual so we can get this information out and
4 figure out how we can move forward. That's the way
5 we can look at this.

6 I mean, we got more donations this year, and I
7 think that was one of the things, not just in the
8 request, but we did have some online donations
9 because we would get the word out and that's how
10 we're going to do a few things. Yes, sir?

11 MR. WERTHEIM: Hi. Craig Wertheim, Department
12 of Florida. So -- this convention, so it was --
13 money was raised by small individuals, but I had the
14 opportunity to meet with a very high net worth
15 individual that donates well over \$1 million a year
16 in different organizations, Top of Towers, Wounded
17 Warrior Project, and such, where he gives an upwards
18 of hundreds of thousands of dollars to. And I sat
19 with him over lunch and he, like the commander said,
20 pulled up our financials. And he said to me,
21 "Craig, I'd love to write you a check right now for
22 \$50,000 at the convention, and I was prepared to do
23 that until my accountant showed me your rating in --
24 in the Charity Navigator," and my accountant said,
25 "You can't do this because it'll screw up your" --



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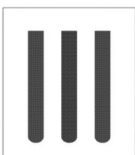
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1 however it looks to the IRS and how you give your
2 money. And he said, "Once you get your things in
3 order, I'll be happy to come back to you and work
4 with you guys," he goes. But, he said, "It'll just
5 mess up how you donate your money and how it looks
6 in your financials." And I left that meeting very
7 depressed because I thought I was -- it was a sure
8 thing.

9 And this guy, you know, he works for one of the
10 biggest builders in the United States and has a
11 yacht, has a private plane. He's a -- but he's a
12 down to earth guy and he's no BS. We've got to get
13 ourselves in order in terms of, you know, getting
14 that ratio down to under 5 percent in terms
15 administrative, of course, costs to the expenses,
16 and getting that money back out to where it needs to
17 go. We do it at the chapters. We do it at the
18 departments. We've got to do it at the
19 administration.

20 And that doesn't mean that we don't pay our
21 employees, and we -- we need the employees. We need
22 more employees, but somehow we've got the tail
23 wagging the dog as opposed to the dog wagging the
24 tail and it -- it's got to get fixed. And we've got
25 to get smarter, how we're doing things. And I know



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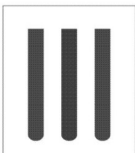
1 that command team is working hard at it, but we --
2 we've got to work harder getting money in at the
3 national level. They -- we can't be relying on the
4 money that's invested and not have large donors. It
5 -- it's crazy that the Military Order of the Purple
6 Heart, we're the -- we're the ultimate wounded
7 warriors in the nation, and people would rather give
8 to other organizations of wounded warriors and not
9 give to us. That's all, sir.

10 MR. FERGUSON: Major Jackson. Oh, are you
11 yielding?

12 MR. JACKSON: Yes.

13 MR. FERGUSON: Okay.

14 MR. JACKSON: To kind of piggyback and I'm
15 asking this for Financial Officer Ernie and also the
16 commander for the rating that we have Charity
17 Navigator, so everybody understands, it's not MOPH.
18 It's coming from the foundation. So my question is
19 this, how do we change that as an order? You know,
20 because we really didn't have any financials that
21 anybody was dealing with. So how do we go forward
22 in trying to change that rating when it really
23 wasn't the order because the order didn't have any
24 monies at that point. Everything was based on the
25 foundation. And of course, everybody thinks the



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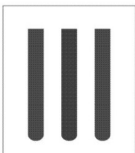
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1 foundation is MOPH and it wasn't.

2 MR. RIVERA: Let's let -- Finance Officer
3 Rivera. Let me -- let me answer that question. So
4 currently, if you look at the budget that we have
5 right now, what we currently have, what we spent
6 this year, if you look at the total dollars that we
7 brought in, the total dollars that we actually
8 provided for the programs, us, if you look at the
9 report and I can sit down and show you the report,
10 we're still, even as an organization, a huge portion
11 of what the money we spend is on administrative
12 fees. Even us, it's not just the foundation. And
13 so, one of the things that is difficult when we have
14 programs, we have suicide awareness programs, we
15 have all these different programs, we're not
16 spending on those programs. It shows in a budget,
17 but then when it goes to the -- to the line item and
18 there's nothing there, when we fill out the 990s,
19 when we submit all of our documentation and people
20 look at that, that's why it's critical that we can
21 bring the money in. We have enough money here now
22 to pay for the lights, pay for a couple of staff
23 members to go to Washington and do these few little
24 things we're doing. The programs are the things that
25 have to be pushed because we're not providing -- if



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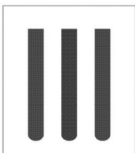
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1 you look at the percentage of money that we bring
2 in, the percentage of money that we put out in our
3 program -- so you think about this year, we did
4 17,500 in scholarships is what we paid out, and we
5 did -- the ROTC program cost us \$27,000. So if you
6 add those two together, about 35,000, we spent
7 around 600-and-something-thousand. What percent of
8 that is in programs? Real easy, about five, maybe 8
9 percent of this right here, the order. Until we turn
10 that and we start putting money into programs, if we
11 had somebody that donated money and they donated
12 \$50,000, and we spent that full \$50,000 on a
13 program, guess what? Now that's going for the
14 program.

15 MR. JACKSON: Okay. So we got to do a better
16 idea -- a better job on what we're --

17 MR. RIVERA: We do. So if you step up and
18 become the suicide awareness or whatever it is that
19 you're -- you want to be a part of, any of the
20 service programs and stuff like that, when the order
21 -- so the thing with the foundation is, the
22 foundation would bring in right now, currently,
23 about 22 million. It costs them 21 million to bring
24 in \$22 million, that's why they're F rated. So
25 currently, right now, what does it cost us to bring



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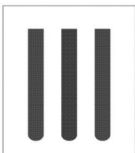
1 in 600-and-something-thousand dollars -- 620,000 to
2 bring in 650,000? We're no different because we
3 have to revamp the way that our programs are. So we
4 need to have where the money that comes in has to be
5 spent out on programs. That's the critical thing.
6 That's where donors are going to give you money.
7 Anybody that -- I know there's some people in here
8 that run non-profits, you got to go in there and say
9 you're going to give me \$50,000. I'm going to spend
10 49,000 of that on the program, and we're going to
11 use 1,000 of that for, you know, printing out things
12 and administrative stuff.

13 MR. FERGUSON: Okay.

14 MR. EGCELSTON: Commander, I'm, like -- I'm
15 getting to fall in love with Ernie just a little bit
16 because he --

17 MR. FERGUSON: What happens after the
18 convention or after we close, that's in between him
19 and --

20 MR. EGCELSTON: Charles, I just -- yeah. Yeah.
21 On the golf -- on the golf course, yeah. I'm
22 beginning to like Ernie a little bit more because he
23 took the word out of my mouth. And I'm going to
24 make a simple case. Commander from Florida, here's
25 the deal. Felix Garcia, when he was running and



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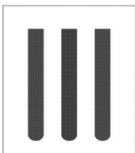
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1 became a national commander. What did you do, Felix?
2 You came to me because you know I'm sponsored by
3 AT&T and Dell. Computers -- I'll kill you. I throw
4 computers at you all day long. And what did they
5 do? They turned around and cut us two checks. One
6 for 10,000, do what you want to do, another -- it's
7 a donation, another ten more thousand to do what
8 they had to do for the convention. It should -- it
9 had nothing to do with the rating at that point
10 because they wanted to give because I have a
11 personal connection. All right. If you in love with
12 me, and you believe in me, and you know I'm a Purple
13 Heart recipient, you're going to do this because
14 it's the Convention of Purple Heart Recipients.
15 You're not doing it because your accountant said it
16 ain't the right thing to do, or you want to wag the
17 dog's tail the other way, or whatever the case is.
18 You doing it because it's the right thing to do at
19 the point, and it's a write off.

20 Same thing with FedEx. You know, I have FedEx
21 ready to donate in a different operation coming up,
22 but at the same token, this FedEx -- the founder is
23 a two- time Purple Heart recipient. Me and Fred
24 talk all the time. So remember that. It's -- it is
25 all about what they want to do. It's -- it's a

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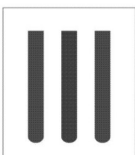
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1 simple write off. And that 20K wasn't anything for
2 them. Matter of fact, they stroke the check and ask
3 Felix to come and pick it up from the headquarters
4 in Dallas at that time. It was a Dallas convention,
5 matter of fact. And I think he ran down and did it,
6 and we threw a big party. It's all about
7 relationships. Don't ever let anything discourage
8 you from -- with your sponsorships. And that's what
9 we need to get to. Personal connection to
10 sponsorships. If I'm doing commercials with these
11 guys, and I'm doing entities, I'm speaking on a tour
12 with these guys, then they will give back because
13 it's a personal relationship. They see what we do.
14 It's not about me. It's about the team of all of us.
15 So you know, Ernie, when I get on the golf course,
16 I'm going to hit you with the club. I'm not going
17 to even give you the stroke. Thank you.

18 MR. FERGUSON: I surely appreciate that. Okay.
19 That one of the things, we had a comment from online
20 is to remind everybody that the MOPH is not a
21 501(c)(3), we're a 501(c)(19). So that's why when
22 we're getting donations and things here, it needs to
23 go through the MOPH fund because they are the
24 501(c)(3) because that's one of the big things about
25 the -- who have some money to donate to you, that's



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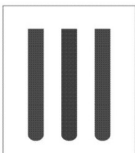
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1 where they want to look at. Until -- one of the
2 things we ought to do, and we're talking about
3 legislative things, why don't we push that through
4 that all the BSOs will be -- are -- as 501(c)(19)s
5 can get the same recognition as a 501(c)(3). Why
6 can't we do that? So that's something that we need
7 to look forward and get on with that.

8 I will talk real quick before I get to you,
9 Patriot, in reference to programs. And one of the
10 things -- my failure was to communicate with the
11 part of the program chairs, and the reason why, I've
12 asked for how to run the program. What we need to
13 do, what your future is going to be and that's on
14 this. How are we going to afford this? So we use a
15 program, say we're going to do some training in
16 through the order. What does it cost of train an
17 individual? So say it's \$50 or \$100, where do we
18 start that at? Whether it's at a chapter level or a
19 department level, take that number and say, hey, we
20 want to do ten per department. We know we got 43
21 departments. You start multiplying that out, now
22 you've got something where they're going to come
23 back in and put this out. So we turn around and
24 say, hey, here's where we're going at. So we want
25 to say maybe in the program we want to run 100,000



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1 or 200,000 in the program. So now we know. We've
2 got an idea. We can't just come up to somebody and
3 say, hey, yeah, we got a program, what do you need,
4 if you don't have an idea of where you're going. So
5 that's one of the things we've got to do -- work
6 better on that.

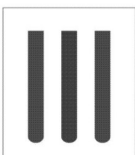
7 So like I said, part of that, I've tried to
8 work with that, and hopefully, we can get some of
9 this communication going forward with each and every
10 one so we can move forward on these programs because
11 that's a strong thing that we got to do. And then
12 we got to promote when we do something. Again, a
13 lot of people don't know all the things that the
14 Military Order of the Purple Heart does. And it's
15 not just what we do with other groups, it's what the
16 Military Order of the Purple Heart does. We partner
17 in with a lot of people that's out here, we have to
18 make these things the Military Order of the Purple
19 Heart.

20 MR. TAYLOR: Sorry. I'm a bit taller.

21 MR. FERGUSON: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

22 SEAN: Do you mind if I move this up here a
23 little bit?

24 MR. FERGUSON: I think -- I think there's a
25 crank on it somewhere.



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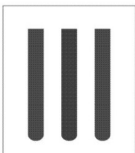
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1 SEAN: I just tilted it. I think that will
2 work. I'm Sean (phonetic) out of Pittsburgh, long
3 time member, first time conference. So hey
4 everybody, I think I have a pretty good sense of
5 humor. My wife doesn't laugh. So you -- don't feel
6 obligated to laugh. I just -- I'm sitting back
7 there, and I always think if you have a seat at the
8 table, you should have a voice at the table. So I
9 just had a couple thoughts.

10 MR. FERGUSON: Great.

11 MR. TAYLOR: One, I love the Merit Award that
12 got talked about earlier. I was a naval sea cadet
13 as a young marine. It helped me get my promotion
14 when I first went through bootcamp, and it helped
15 instill a lot of discipline in me. So the fact that
16 we have that is awesome. But when it comes to the
17 fundraising side of the house and getting our
18 information out, I just want to reiterate what that
19 man said right there, was the big one, sponsorship,
20 right? So great examples is we have the Americanism
21 Program. I used to be an Americanism officer in
22 Colorado, so kind of near and dear to my heart, but
23 being able to say, you know, having -- hey, we would
24 like you to sponsor this program. You are going to
25 cover every dollar that goes to that. Every success



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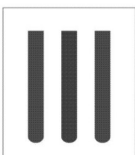
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1 we have with that is you directly and you sponsoring
2 this program. So if somebody comes in and say
3 Americanism costs us, make believe number, \$10,000,
4 like, hey, you're \$10,000 is going direct to this
5 program, and at the end of the year, we're going to
6 show you how many students we got in front of -- how
7 many cadets we got in front of so they could see
8 that dedicated response. So there's a lot of great
9 things out there.

10 So when he was talking about sponsorship, it is
11 not just a name on a sheet of paper, but us doing
12 the due diligence on the back end, letting him know,
13 hey, you did sponsor this program and we made it to
14 1,500 schools and talked to 18,000 students or
15 whatever those numbers are, right, because that gets
16 them to come back the next year. That gets them to
17 be, like, well, what else can I do? So it's -- it
18 is not just the sponsorship and that one time check.
19 It's how do we get them to continue? So I think a
20 big step is when we're talking about these
21 fundraising efforts, is how are we maintaining those
22 individuals for the next round and a big part of it
23 is doing what you just said, letting people know
24 what we're doing. So if we're better at that with
25 our donors, letting them know like, hey, this is



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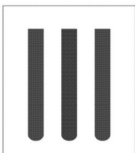
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1 exactly where that money went and how it was used,
2 we're going to look a heck of a lot better.

3 And the very last thing I was going to mention,
4 just because I think it's a big one, when we're
5 talking about advertising outside of the real world,
6 a lot of people don't know we exist unless you are a
7 member. A very simple one that I think national can
8 really help with and build out because it's free,
9 and we love free, public service announcements. If
10 you make a set of public service announcements, you
11 can launch out to the departments and the chapters,
12 we can reach out to the local radio and use the pre-
13 approved spots that they throw in for free when they
14 have a break in radio time and they'll just go,
15 yeah, there's your 30 seconds, and now the public
16 around the nation, for free, is hearing about the
17 Military Order of the Purple Heart, what we do, and
18 who we serve. And there might be an up upfront cost
19 of getting those recordings made or whatever that
20 may be, but heck, I have I Love Radio right down the
21 road from me, right? I have the local Christian
22 radio right on the other side of where I work.
23 There's a lot of options out there where we can just
24 drop off the PSA. And now, you have your memberships
25 building, you know, awareness for us without us



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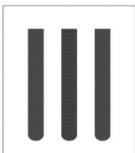
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1 costing a dime out of pocket. And, you know, the
2 public in that local area is suddenly going like,
3 oh, wow, there is an Military Order of the Purple
4 Heart. It is out here doing great things in our
5 neck of the woods, not just when we see them on TV
6 on Capitol Hill, I'm hearing about it when I'm
7 driving, you know, through the tunnels in
8 Pittsburgh. So just want to throw it out there. If
9 we added a line, I really recommend getting some
10 PSAs you can launch out with us to drop off in our
11 local neighborhoods.

12 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you. Appreciate it. You
13 can speak, Taylor.

14 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Commander for
15 recognition. Commander Fred Taylor. I think we
16 failed to recognize the assets that we have as an
17 organization, and here's what I mean by that. Nine
18 or ten years ago, when things disintegrated with the
19 foundation, many people were like, we're done.
20 We're cooked. And I said to everyone that would
21 listen we have advantages that the foundation can
22 never have. They don't have membership. They do
23 not have a chapter level organization. They do not
24 have a department level organization. They do not
25 have a regional organization. They can never have



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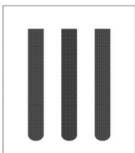
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1 those things. We have that in place. We have not
2 utilized the assets we have right at our disposal
3 all this time to overcome the deficits. They had the
4 car program and other things. We also didn't have a
5 501(c)(3) or a (c)(19), which, as a veterans'
6 organization is a different thing. We should have
7 immediately gone for 501(c)(3) I think, because we
8 had lost our 501(c)(3) and made it available to us.
9 But we are not assessing correctly what our
10 advantages are and taking advantage of them. In the
11 Art of War, Sun Tzu says clearly, you assess your
12 enemy. They're not our enemy, but you assess your
13 enemy in the book, then you make adjustments to
14 focus on your strengths and focus on their
15 weaknesses. Our strengths is right here, this group
16 right here, and we -- I got a lot more. I could say
17 a lot more, but you get the gist of what I think.
18 Commander, we have things they can never have, and
19 it is right here. Thank you so much.

20 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you. All right. Nick
21 McIntosh?

22 MR. MCINTOSH: Nick McIntosh, National
23 Historian. Commander, you were talking about
24 501(c)(19). (c)(19) is a subparagraph -- is a
25 subparagraph that for nonprofits. (c)(19) was



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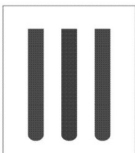
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1 dedicated exclusively for veterans' organizations.
2 The trouble with raising money and 501(c)(3) and
3 (c)(19), everybody knows (c)(3) is tax-deductible.
4 Nobody knows (c)(19) is, and the problem therein
5 lies, the fact that since they both give to somebody
6 they don't know about. That's the reason the (c)(19)
7 isn't working. So the 501(c)(3) is the way to go.

8 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you.

9 MR. CANNON: I want to do a privilege
10 statement. The last patriot that got up. As I look
11 out over the groupings here, a lot of us are beige.
12 And last year after the convention, when I went back
13 home, I was trying to see how I could be a part of
14 the Military Order of the Purple Heart and the
15 legacy that I'm leaving. Now, we are talking about
16 finances. Let me just tell you what happened a
17 couple of months ago. I realized that in the aging
18 process, I need to work quick. So I went to and was
19 invited to the Dover Air Force Base Mortuary. I am
20 an ordained bishop, and I was invited.

21 During that process, I wore my Purple Heart
22 colors. Meeting with the base chaplain and the
23 dignitaries that were there and other ministerial
24 folk at the mortuary, they gave me a tour around the
25 entire mortuary, and they explained the process. As



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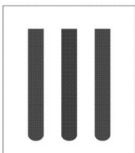
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1 -- in the three hours -- more than three hours that
2 we were there, I got invited to take part when one
3 of our military personnel were deceased. I am now
4 getting ready to go to their school -- or their
5 introductory school of how I can be a part of that
6 process, so that door has opened. And now I'm
7 looking at when we do have a combat wounded veteran,
8 I can take part in that from a voluntary position.
9 Meeting, greeting, and taking care of the families,
10 the loss.

11 There are two more mortuaries that I know of,
12 one in Hawaii and there's one in Japan. We who are
13 there in those areas, we can take part in that also
14 to make a point. There's things that we can do to
15 get the popularity of the Military Order of the
16 Purple Heart to where people will want to donate to
17 us. We also have a situation where there -- where
18 we're having a problem recruiting them. I have a
19 plan that we can recruit, but it's a slow process
20 because we are in competition. There's competition
21 there, so to speak. And I use that term for lack of
22 another.

23 You know, I look at the Wounded Warriors and
24 the other programs that are gaining a lot of
25 attention. I remember years ago, in the '80s, when I



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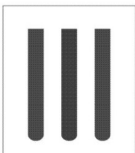
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1 joined the Purple Heart, we had a lot of attention.
2 And I'm trying to figure out where that went. And
3 then if we go back to nine years or so, we see that
4 we come -- our reputation was kind of damaged. But
5 here we are now, 21st -- we can do something about
6 that. So I challenge you, why not get involved and
7 not be afraid to let folk know in our social
8 groupings, we are combat-wounded veterans. Let --
9 chest out. I go into Lowe's, and Home Depot, and
10 stores, and things of that nature, I -- I'm taken
11 aback with people who salute you and et cetera, et
12 cetera. And I have an opportunity to explain to
13 them and let them know here we are. I'm finding
14 that this is one of the ways that we all can take
15 part, all of us. All of us.

16 The church organization that I'm involved with,
17 over 8 million members, trust me when I'm up in
18 front of them, they know that I'm a combat-wounded
19 veteran. They know that, without a shadow of a
20 doubt. And I have a couple of regions that are
21 going -- after this convention that we just had in
22 Indianapolis last week, there's a couple of regions
23 that are going to take part in supporting the
24 Military Order of the Purple Heart. Yes, God is
25 working. We are praying. We are doing things. And

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1 whatever we do, let's keep our foot to the pedal,
2 let's do what we can do, and I guarantee you we're
3 going to come ahead of this thing. Thank you.

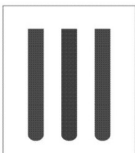
4 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, Chaplain. We know
5 we're doing good when he's got God on our side,
6 right? And that's going to turn around and keep
7 things up. Department Commander, Keller.

8 MS. KELLER: Jo Keller, Suicide Awareness
9 Program. I just have a question regarding -- back
10 to the finances. I am the chair of the program, and
11 I've had trouble requesting finances because I
12 haven't gotten any, but I hear that some finances
13 have been moved or borrowed or used. How is it that
14 the chair of a program cannot access funds for their
15 program? However, someone else is able to access
16 them or move them around. I thought if you're the
17 chair of program, you should know what's going on
18 within your programing finances. So I just want to
19 know how that works --

20 MR. FERGUSON: Sure.

21 MS. KELLER: -- so that the next person that
22 comes along, they know how to access their monies.

23 MR. FERGUSON: So that's actually been approved
24 by the budget when we did the budget last year. So
25 let me ask you a question. When did you submit



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1 anything in to say how you're going to spend the
2 money in the budget?

3 MS. KELLER: I have been all along --

4 MR. FERGUSON: So I'm going to ask that again.
5 When?

6 MR. KELLER: -- and I submitted, and I even
7 asked who should I include in this e-mail, who
8 should I be CCing? I even included an invoice and
9 an example of what I wanted to bring to convention.
10 And it was thrown around. It was never answered in
11 an e-mail. I got several -- I got several comments
12 on it. However, the e-mail was never answered. I
13 was --

14 MR. FERGUSON: So can I ask who you sent the e-
15 mail to?

16 MS. KELLER: Who did I send the e-mail to?

17 MR. FERGUSON: Yes.

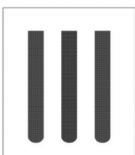
18 MS. KELLER: Who? I sent it to Robert.

19 MR. FERGUSON: Okay. So as the national senior
20 vice, the only time I got an e-mail was the 28th of
21 June.

22 MS. KELLER: Okay.

23 MR. FERGUSON: That's two days before we close
24 the budget out.

25 MS. KELLER: However, the senior vice was being



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1 contacted as -- when I talked to the senior vice
2 over the phone, he did answer calls and texts.

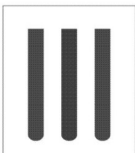
3 MR. FERGUSON: So --

4 MS. KELLER: And he did say that he was taking
5 that information up. The information you might have
6 heard about it on too, but it was sent before. And
7 the invoice was also sent before to be approved so
8 that we -- I could bring materials here for the
9 convention so that other people can take it to their
10 areas because we're coming up on the suicide
11 prevention month --

12 MR. FERGUSON: Sure.

13 MS. KELLER: -- where we should be -- you know,
14 whoever is going to take this program next should
15 have a good start with that, and --

16 MR. FERGUSON: So the -- so the answer I owe to
17 you, that's here, obviously, I don't think we had
18 any problem with the money being spent out of the
19 account. But number one, it was all at the last
20 minute. And it wasn't the decision made by me that
21 I can contact it with the senior vice, Junior Vice,
22 the finance officer and the -- about this. The key
23 thing, what we're looking at, yes, I think this
24 would be a great thing to have if we had this, like
25 at the first year, so then that way, we can turn



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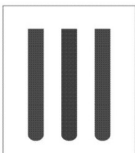
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1 around and put this out, and put it out even if it
2 went to, say, January, six months later, as we're
3 coming in. The hardship is -- can I ask this other
4 question? How many other people do we have across
5 the order that's actually -- could be a counselor,
6 could be trained. Is there anybody on that?

7 MS. KELLER: I don't know right now because I
8 have requested assistance. I have -- every
9 convention somebody says I'll contact you. I do
10 this. I do that. I know people are doing in their
11 -- little groups out there. Other people are
12 connected to other organizations. And they do it.
13 A lot of people reach out to me, but it's usually on
14 a case-to-case basis --

15 MR. FERGUSON: Sure.

16 MS. KELLER: -- where I've spoken to a lot of
17 individuals and get them -- given them resources.
18 I've always been looking for people all over the
19 nation to be a part of the program. The chaplains
20 should be a part of the program because they are a
21 great resource for this. And we do have social
22 workers, peer support specialists. We have them all
23 over. People call me as individuals, but people do
24 not want -- have not been a part of a committee.
25 That would be optimal.



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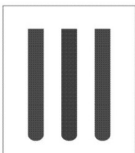
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1 MR. FERGUSON: So --

2 MS. KELLER: However, right now we're talking
3 about the money. It's about three years. I've
4 always asked. And you -- you've explained to me
5 because I did ask you as soon as you moved over, how
6 do we do this? And everybody says, well, you don't
7 understand, or this is the way, or that's not how it
8 should be done. But nobody tells me how it can.
9 All I'm saying is, right now I can't do anything for
10 the past. I hope that you can do better for the
11 future.

12 MR. FERGUSON: So again, appreciate your
13 comments s on that. One of the things, that's why I
14 was asking how we could do better for the future, is
15 having this out. As soon as you get finished from
16 this, if -- we'll say, if you were stepping up as
17 the suicide awareness director next year, have that
18 program, have that in front of us, and tell how you
19 want to do this.

20 You know, you asked me about one thing we had
21 in South Dakota, and you were asking about the funds
22 that was raised off the airplane auction. So those
23 funds are still there. They're actually in -- in
24 the MOPH funds. So they're sitting there. So
25 that's restricted. So out of the 5,000 that we had



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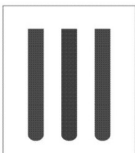
1 this year for that, there was nothing ever spent.
2 And you asked one thing about if that rolls over.
3 No. That's why we approve the budget every year at
4 that amount, whatever it happens to be. And that
5 comes from the program chairs so they can do that.

6 So again, you -- your help for us to help you
7 succeed, because this is a passion program for all
8 of us that's on here, is the turnaround and have
9 that out for us.

10 MS. KELLER: So if it's out there -- I provided
11 the same thing I provided in -- when I was in West
12 Virginia, the sheet that I provided to Robert was
13 the same sheet. I just provided it again because
14 Robert wasn't in that group at the time, in West
15 Virginia. And actually, my mistake, the auction
16 happened in North Dakota.

17 MR. FERGUSON: Correct.

18 MS. KELLER: But the money was there. I asked
19 for that too, and nobody knew where it was until
20 just a couple of days ago when I got explained where
21 the money for the auction went. However, I'm still
22 asking when a money's spent in a program, why
23 doesn't -- isn't the chair aware. I wasn't able to
24 access any money to buy any materials. When I teach
25 classes, whatever group I teach, they're paying for



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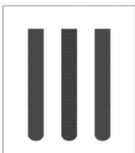
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1 their own materials, which is okay. I just want
2 branded merchandise so that we could advertise just,
3 let's say, like the legion advertises their program.

4 And also, I would like to know if there's a
5 program and there's a chair to that program, when
6 there's money moved around from the program, why is
7 it that the chair knows nothing? We're not supposed
8 to know? Because I'm requesting money now that
9 isn't there.

10 MR. FERGUSON: So again, I asked this one
11 question, and I guess I don't know if we're
12 communicating. I never knew anything about anybody
13 else being trained into the program. And I asked
14 that. So we're going to go buy silicone bracelets,
15 ink pens, and things on this, and how many people do
16 we have that's trained to going to move this program
17 out? We're buying information that's on this to get
18 things out to the individuals. I understand that,
19 and I think it's important, but I think we need to
20 have trained people. It doesn't need to be one
21 person in the military or the Purple Heart. You say
22 you're training people. I have no list of anybody
23 that's trained, or we know anything on this. So how
24 do we promote the program?

25 MS. KELLER: I didn't say I train people.



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1 They're give -- they're given briefing and suicide
2 awareness classes. These are people that are out
3 there to be peers, just to know how to talk to
4 people. Remember, we cannot train --

5 MR. FERGUSON: Correct.

6 MS. KELLER: -- experts or, you know --

7 MR. FERGUSON: Or counselors.

8 MS. KELLER: -- social workers or anything
9 else. So it's -- this -- the training or the
10 briefings are for the general public, just to be
11 comfortable in speaking to other people.

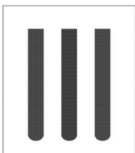
12 MR. FERGUSON: Correct.

13 MS. KELLER: And that's all. And maybe that's
14 why people haven't come out because they think, oh,
15 now I'm going to have to go and do these classes.
16 No. It's just for you to be comfortable to speak to
17 another patriot, to your peer, to your child, to
18 anybody. And that's all.

19 MR. FERGUSON: Well, I sure appreciate you
20 bringing that up, and we will get this corrected and
21 moving forward --

22 MS. KELLER: So I still never got the answer
23 regarding the money and how to know or how it gets
24 moved without the chair knowing.

25 MR. FERGUSON: So again, that's -- again, there



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1 was money that was in there. This was to sponsor a
2 suicide awareness. And he is a -- make sure I get
3 this right. He's a Purple Heart recipient, now in
4 Florida, who's actually going to be wearing the logo
5 on with a triathlon -- national triathlon that was
6 on here in the --

7 MS. KELLER: That's not -- that's not under
8 this program, so however --

9 MR. FERGUSON: It's under high advertisement,
10 so -- it is. So let's talk this off the line that's
11 here because another one, we turned around, the
12 money wasn't being spent that was in there. We've
13 asked before this. Never came to us. So again,
14 obviously, there was communications. But one thing
15 I can ask you, as a leader, when something comes out
16 and you're wanting something, and if you don't get
17 the answer, when are you going to follow up with it?

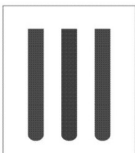
18 MS. KELLER: I've asked every year.

19 MR. FERGUSON: So that's got to be key.

20 MS. KELLER: I've asked every year. That's --
21 all right. Thank you.

22 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you. Yes, sir?

23 MR. MCCALL: Bill McCall (phonetic), Chapter
24 717, from East County. An interesting point came
25 across my brain when I moved to Florida. I was off



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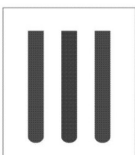
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1 active duty for over 40 years. Cleveland didn't
2 have a chapter, North -- Ohio didn't have a chapter
3 other than Warren. Warren's a spot on the map,
4 that's all. But they had a chapter. I knew nothing
5 about this organization for over 40 years until I
6 got down to Palm Beach County. So I joined. I was
7 one of those screwballs that went back to college
8 when I got off active to duty, and I wore my field
9 jacket. And I didn't wear it because the hippies
10 wanted it. I wore it because I earned it. I wore
11 regalia in my division and all that. I punched
12 college kids in the head that told me I couldn't go
13 into a classroom because I was proud of all that.
14 But I couldn't -- I did -- I had no way to
15 demonstrate my Purple Heart because I didn't know
16 that it existed. And there's still no chapter in
17 the Cleveland area. So I would like to see all the
18 department commanders that get on board to make sure
19 that everybody in their state knows about the
20 military or the Purple Heart, because I would've
21 been a member in 1970, not 2017 or whenever I
22 joined. I appreciate that being thought about.

23 MR. FERGUSON: Yes, sir. I appreciate that.

24 Thank you. Commander?

25 MR. WITTENBEL: Keith Wittenbel, Department



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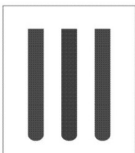
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1 Commander of Oregon. For the past several months,
2 I've been hosting a Zoom meeting for our National
3 Chaplain. He's trying to get all the chaplains in
4 the order to participate. So far participation has
5 been dismal.

6 MR. FERGUSON: Only a couple of people,
7 correct?

8 MR. WITTENBEL: Yeah. There's been -- I know
9 that there are more than three chaplains in this
10 organization. And the invitation's open to anybody,
11 but I would request that region commanders,
12 department commanders to get the word out to your
13 chaplains to join. The first Thursday of every
14 month, we hold that meeting for the national
15 chaplain. So thank you.

16 MR. CANNON: Thank you, Veteran Keith. I
17 appreciate that. What he alluded to was we have --
18 every first Thursday of every month, we have the --
19 a meeting set up -- a Zoom meeting set up to where
20 we spend approximately an hour with the chaplains --
21 regional chaplains. It was designed to get the
22 regional chaplains, department chaplains, to get --
23 the chaplains to get involved. And I guess the most
24 we've had about five or six onboard during a Zoom
25 meeting. But I want to personally thank Keith for



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1 allowing us and setting up that Zoom call.

2 Now, I don't know what you think about prayer.

3 I don't know. But if we ever going to get anywhere,

4 we're going to have to know what prayer is all

5 about. That's why we have chapters. And we need to

6 come together because we're going to make it, it'll

7 be by the grace of God. We're going to make it. So

8 please, Commanders, those of you that are

9 responsible, yes, let's get our chaplains on board

10 because I have a training program that I wanted to

11 -- to get put out so that we can get interment

12 (phonetic) on the ground, on the ground, on the

13 ground, strategically on the ground in the

14 communities, doing things. So it's a non-

15 denominational thing. If you're chaplain, we invite

16 you. Just, let's get involved in whatever we're

17 doing and whatever we're in, whatever your title is.

18 Get involved. Our time is short. We're getting

19 older. I'll be 76 here real soon. So let's get it

20 done. Thank you.

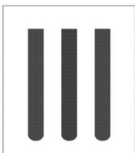
21 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, Chaplain. Major?

22 MR. JENKINS: Theodore Jenkins (phonetic). I'm

23 the state and local chapter in South Carolina

24 chaplain. I guess some of you may notice something a

25 little different about me. I got a hat on. And



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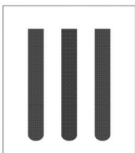
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1 this hat got the Order of the Purple Heart. And any
2 funeral that I do, if there's a military person, I
3 always wear my Purple Heart. If I attend a service
4 that's military, I wear my Purple Heart. This hat
5 is a -- it's a sign. Wherever I go, people say I
6 would like to take that hat from you. And they read
7 what's on it. We do a whole lot as far as
8 advertisement. Now, one of the things you all are
9 talking about is a problem: communication. The
10 young people are socially inclined. The old members
11 that we have are not. When we shut down everything,
12 they are not on social media. They don't even know
13 how to text. Some don't. My mother is 90-
14 something-years old, and when the pandemic came in,
15 she learned how to do all kinds of things. I'm
16 saying this because what the chaplain said, I didn't
17 know nothing about, and I'm a chaplain. I'm also
18 certified by NAMI, the National Alliance of Mental
19 Illness, to do classes. I just finished a ten-year
20 tour in the VA hospital at the volunteer -- a --
21 mental health. And I chaired it. And I'm saying
22 this to us, people don't know who we are. And if
23 you want to get people back involved, they got to
24 have a purpose. We are old. We're not getting old.
25 We are old. We can't do what we used to do. We got

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1 a younger generation here who are socially inclined
2 but also hurt with establishment. We got a golden
3 opportunity to use many means. It's good that we
4 have it on digital. But what about our older
5 people? What about our patriots who have put in the
6 time? I understand expenses. I'm also presiding
7 mission of our whole organization. And I work with
8 budgets, and I work with the old and the young and
9 the ones in between. We need members, but members
10 don't see a need for us. We are not out there. We
11 talk about many things in our programs. Sir, I
12 appreciate the opportunity to say something to you.

13 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you.

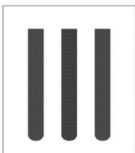
14 MR. JENKINS: But my love is for the Purple
15 Heart. I wear my uniform. I just did a funeral. I
16 had my bishop robe on. Took it off and greeted the
17 people in my Purple Heart uniform.

18 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you.

19 MR. J. ANDERSON: Jim Anderson. Recommend
20 taking a break until 11:00 a.m.

21 MR. FERGUSON: Yes. We're getting close on the
22 scheduling. Yes. We will get a break. Go ahead,
23 Raymond.

24 MR. WETZEL: Sir. There's one point that I
25 would like to bring up prior to us coming back in



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1 our dress uniforms. This note that's on our
2 schedule is inaccurate. It cannot be there. It
3 goes against the ADA requiring a person with
4 disability with -- having to wear special uniform,
5 has to get permission. That's incorrect.

6 MR. FERGUSON: No, no, no, no. That's been
7 drawn way out of proportion. All it is is if --
8 asks if anybody has any disabilities, just let the
9 sergeant at arms know. That's all we're asking.

10 MR. WETZEL: No, sir. You can't do that. You
11 cannot -- a person with special things cannot and
12 does not need to let anybody know. If you -- if
13 this organization cannot trust any member in this
14 organization --

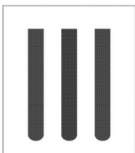
15 MR. FERGUSON: I understand you. It --

16 MR. WETZEL: -- then it doesn't need to --

17 MR. FERGUSON: That's fine. Then what we'll --
18 what we'll do is we'll adjust --

19 MR. WETZEL: You don't need to pay -- put it in
20 writing. I'm sorry.

21 MR. FERGUSON: So we -- what we need to know,
22 that that's actually been in there for all the other
23 conventions. What we'll do is we'll adjust the
24 uniform policies that's in there. It does have it
25 in there in Section 14. So since you brought that



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1 up, that something needs to be changed. So thank
2 you.

3 MR. WETZEL: Thank you.

4 THE REPORTER: I do apologize for interjecting.
5 What was your name, sir?

6 MR. FERGUSON: Raymond Wetzel. Raymond Wetzel.

7 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

8 MR. FERGUSON: So thank you. Does anybody else
9 got anything? We've already had the request for a
10 break. I know we're going to do a break in about 12
11 minutes, but we can go early. Sergeant at Arms?

12 MR. WITT: All right. Please stand, please.
13 Raise the flag. Attention. Salute. Two.

14 MR. FERGUSON: We officially close the pre-NEC.

15 MR. WITT: Attention. Salute. Two.

16 (NEC concluded at 10:47 a.m. ET)

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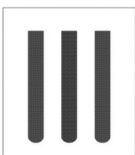
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PROCEEDINGS

MR. ADKINS: I've turned this over to the national commander.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Halt. Two.

MR. ADKINS: Thank you, Sergeant at Arms. All right. Region 2 to mic 1. Region 3 to mic 2.

MR. SMRT: Point of order if I may. Smrt, delegate, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Motion to return to regular order.

MR. ADKINS: Good point.

MR. SMRT: We went -- we went to suspension of order, obviously, for the memorial, but we have to formally reinstate to go to regular order.

MR. ADKINS: Good catch. We have a first. Do we have a second?

MR. T. ANDERSON: Yeah. I could --

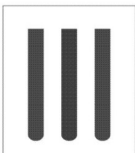
MR. ADKINS: Please come to the mic, state your name so the recorder can get it, please. Name?

MR. T. ANDERSON: I'm either the motion or the second. I don't know which one.

MR. ADKINS: Well, who are you?

MR. T. ANDERSON: Excuse me. Terry Anderson, Region 2 commander.

MR. ADKINS: Okay. We have a first and a second. Any discussion? Any discussion? Hearing



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1 none, call to question. All in favor, say aye.

2 ALL: Aye.

3 MR. ADKINS: All opposed? None. Motion
4 carries. Thank you, Patriot Smrt. All right. We
5 will go to the roll call. Region 2, line up behind
6 mic number 1. Region 3, line up behind mic number
7 2. When Region 1 finishes, Region 4, go to mic 1,
8 and so forth and so forth.

9 MR. T. ANDERSON: What happened to Region 1?

10 MR. ADKINS: Region 1 is the last in this order
11 this year. They were first last year. Remember
12 when. All right. Line up. Come on. Yep. By
13 department. All right. Yep. Region 2. Region
14 commander?

15 MR. T. ANDERSON: Region Commander Anderson,
16 present.

17 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Illinois?
18 Okay. Region Commander, if you have a department
19 that's absent, please -- you -- you please state it.
20 So Department of Illinois?

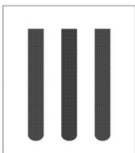
21 MR. T. ANDERSON: Illinois, absent.

22 MR. ADKINS: Department of Indiana?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent, but online.

24 MR. T. ANDERSON: Absent, sir.

25 MR. ADKINS: Department of Kentucky?



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1 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: Steven Schaltenbrand,
2 commander, Department of Kentucky.

3 MR. ADKINS: Department of Michigan?

4 MR. ALLEN: Department of Michigan, one of
5 three.

6 MR. ADKINS: And your position, sir?

7 MR. ALLEN: Oh, commander.

8 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Minnesota?

9 MR. BELLIS: Commander, Dave Bellis.

10 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Missouri?

11 MR. PELLHUM: Department of Missouri, Garfield
12 Pellhum.

13 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Nebraska?

14 MR. T. ANDERSON: Nebraska, absent.

15 MR. ADKINS: Department of Ohio?

16 MR. T. ANDERSON: Ohio, absent.

17 MR. ADKINS: Department of West Virginia?

18 MR. GREEN: Senior Vice Commander Daniel Green.

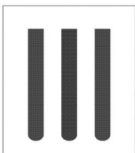
19 MR. ADKINS: All right. And Department of
20 Wisconsin?

21 MR. BANDA: Wisconsin Department Commander
22 George Banda.

23 MR. ADKINS: Okay. All right.

24 MR. HANSON: You missed Iowa.

25 MR. ADKINS: No, I called Ohio.



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1 MR. HANSON: Oh, you called it?

2 MR. ADKINS: Iowa. Oh, Iowa. My apologies,
3 Jack. Department of Iowa?

4 MR. HANSON: Jack Hanson, Department of Iowa,
5 commander.

6 MR. ADKINS: My apologies, Jack, but welcome.

7 MR. HANSON: That's all right. I forgot
8 what ---

9 MR. ADKINS: All right. Region 4, go ahead and
10 start up at mic 1. Region 3.

11 MR. RUPP: Larry Rupp --

12 MR. ADKINS: Region Commander?

13 MR. RUPP: Larry Rupp, Region 3.

14 MR. ADKINS: Department of Alaska?

15 MR. S. BLAIR: Steve Blair, commander --

16 MR. ADKINS: Yep. Department of Idaho?

17 MR. NICKEL: George Nickel, department senior
18 vice commander.

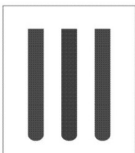
19 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Okay. All right Department
20 of Oregon?

21 MR. WITTENBEL: Keith Wittenbel, commander,
22 Department of Oregon.

23 MR. ADKINS: Department of the Dakotas?

24 MR. FLIPPO: Bill Flipppo, senior vice.

25 MR. ADKINS: Department of Washington?



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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She's online.

2 MR. ADKINS: She's online? No, I'm -- online?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She's responding --

4 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Just let me know when she's

5 on. Okay. Department of Wyoming?

6 MR. GASDEK: Barry Gasdek, commander,

7 Department of Wyoming and Tango.

8 MR. ADKINS: Okay. All right. Region 3 is

9 complete, so Region 5, go to the mic. Region 4

10 Department Commander is running a little late, but

11 we know she's here. We will have her check in what

12 [sic] she returns. Department of Alabama?

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Absent.

14 MR. WERTHEIM: Absent.

15 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Florida?

16 MR. WERTHEIM: Department of Florida, Commander

17 Wertheim, present.

18 MR. ADKINS: Department of Georgia?

19 MR. WERTHEIM: Absent.

20 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Mississippi?

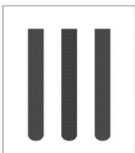
21 MR. WERTHEIM: Absent.

22 MR. ADKINS: Department of North Carolina.

23 MR. LAZZARA: Absent -- no. Department of

24 North Carolina, Lenny Lazzara.

25 MR. ADKINS: Uh-huh.

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1 MR. LAZZARA: Department commander.

2 MR. ADKINS: Got you. Department of South
3 Carolina?

4 MR. LOPEZ: Department Commander Carl Lopez,
5 South Carolina.

6 MR. ADKINS: Who else? Department of the
7 Caribbean?

8 MR. WERTHEIM: Absent.

9 MR. ADKINS: Okay. All right. Region 5, and
10 then Region 6 needs to move to mic 1. Region 5
11 commander?

12 MR. WITTSCHACK: Gus Wittschack, Region 5
13 commander.

14 MR. ADKINS: Department of Arkansas?

15 MR. JUSDIES: Tommy JUSDIES (phonetic). Tommy
16 JUSDIES, sergeant-at-arms, Arkansas.

17 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Colorado?

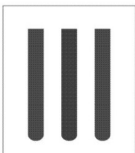
18 MR. WERTHEIM: Absent.

19 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Patriot Elisagli
20 (phonetic), I understand he may be trying to log in
21 later; is that correct?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's correct.

23 MR. ADKINS: Okay. So we'll -- we'll -- all
24 right. Department of Kansas?

25 MR. WITTSCHACK: Absent.



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1 MR. ADKINS: Department of Louisiana?

2 MR. SANTINY: Deron Santiny, commander,
3 present.

4 MR. ADKINS: All right. Was just notified the
5 Department of Washington is online, so let's note
6 that. All right. So we got Louisiana. Department
7 of New Mexico?

8 MR. NEWELL: Roger Newell, finance officer,
9 representing Geoff Stone.

10 MR. ADKINS: All right. Department of
11 Oklahoma?

12 MR. REED: Mitchel Reed, district vice
13 commander, Department of Oklahoma, present.

14 MR. ADKINS: All right. Department of Texas?

15 MR. MATTHEW: Michael Matthew, department
16 commander, Texas for --

17 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Region 6 is at mic 1.
18 Region 1, please move to mic 2. Region 6 commander?

19 MS. KELLER: On his way.

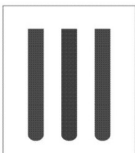
20 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Arizona?

21 MR. GRAY: Department of Arizona, Keith Gray,
22 present.

23 MR. ADKINS: Department of Asia Pacific?

24 MS. KELLER: Not present.

25 MR. ADKINS: Department of California?



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1 MS. KELLER: Present.

2 MR. ADKINS: Department of Hawaii?

3 MS. KELLER: Present.

4 MR. ADKINS: Tommy, raise your hand.

5 MS. KELLER: He's behind you.

6 MR. ADKINS: Okay. For the record, please note

7 that's Tommy Tanaka, who is the junior vice for the

8 Department of Hawaii. Department of Nevada?

9 MR. LEPEILBET: Andy LePeilbet, commander,

10 Department of Nevada.

11 MR. ADKINS: Okay. National Commander

12 Ferguson?

13 MR. FERGUSON: Present.

14 MR. ADKINS: National Junor -- Senior Vice

15 Robert Olivarez?

16 MR. OLIVAREZ: Present.

17 MR. ADKINS: National Junior Vice Tracey Brown-

18 Greene?

19 MS. BROWN-GREENE: Present.

20 MR. ADKINS: National Judge Advocate Walter

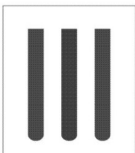
21 Kroptavich, absent. National Finance Officer Ernie

22 Rivera?

23 MR. RIVERA: Present.

24 MR. ADKINS: National Inspector David Jackson?

25 MR. JACKSON: Present.

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1 MR. ADKINS: Okay. I have -- let's see.

2 National Sergeant at Arms?

3 MR. WITT: Present.

4 MR. ADKINS: All right. National Finance
5 Committee Chair?

6 MR. WALLOT: Present.

7 MR. ADKINS: National --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Point of order. You
9 missed --

10 MR. ADKINS: I got it.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- you missed one.

12 MR. ADKINS: I know I missed it.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You missed one.

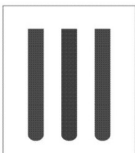
14 MR. ADKINS: I understand that. I'll get to
15 him. It's been duly pointed out by many.

16 THE REPORTER: I do apologize for interjecting.
17 If you do speak into the microphone, if you could
18 please state your name before speaking, it would
19 help me immensely.

20 MR. ADKINS: Yes. Again --

21 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

22 MR. ADKINS: -- if you are going to speak in
23 the mic -- into the mic, please state your name,
24 position, and department or chapter, or you know,
25 other. All right. So we had National Finance



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1 Committee Paul Pickart?

2 MR. PICKART: Here, sir.

3 MR. ADKINS: Craig Wertheim?

4 MR. WERTHEIM: Here.

5 MR. ADKINS: Jim Anderson?

6 MR. J. ANDERSON: Here.

7 MR. ADKINS: And Larry Leighton, National

8 Publish Committee, is he still online?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Online.

10 MR. ADKINS: He's online? All right. And

11 Publish Committee. Let's see. Alan Gibson?

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

13 MR. ADKINS: All right. My apologies to Region

14 1, because I had the senior leadership on that same

15 page. All right. National Commander -- Region

16 Commander Frank Bokan? Region 1 Commander Frank

17 Bokan.

18 MR. EGCELSTON: Not here, but I'm --

19 MR. ADKINS: Okay.

20 MR. EGCELSTON: -- I'm replacing him as Charles

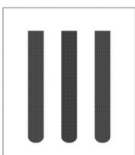
21 Egcelston.

22 MR. ADKINS: Okay. But you can't do that

23 because you're -- you're -- you're not an elected

24 officer. You can -- you can be here as a member of

25 Maryland -- I mean, Region 1, but you are -- you are



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1 the adjutant -- or the chief of staff, which is a
2 non-voting position.

3 MR. EGCELSTON: Roger that.

4 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Connecticut?

5 MR. BOSSONG: Bryan Bossong, adjutant,
6 Department of Pennsylvania, Region 1, present.

7 MR. ADKINS: Okay. But you are also an
8 adjutant, sir?

9 MR. BOSSONG: Yes, sir.

10 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Again, non-elected officers
11 do not carry a vote.

12 MR. BOSSONG: All right.

13 MR. ADKINS: All right. Again, Department of
14 Connecticut?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

16 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of Delaware?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

18 MR. ADKINS: Department of Maryland?

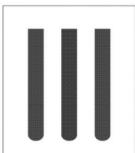
19 MR. EGCELSTON: Absent. But Charles Eggelston
20 from Department of Maryland.

21 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of New Jersey?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

23 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Department of New York?

24 MR. PRATTS: Commander Ruben Pratts, Department
25 of New York.



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1 MR. ADKINS: Department of Pennsylvania?

2 MR. ARNOLD: Phil Arnold, commander,
3 Pennsylvania.

4 MR. ADKINS: And Department of Virginia?

5 MR. KING: Ben King, Virginia department
6 commander.

7 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Now we'll move to past
8 national commanders. That's PNC Frank Anthan --
9 Athanason? PNC Boyd Barclay?

10 MR. BARCLAY: Right here.

11 MR. ADKINS: PNC Jim Blaylock?

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

13 MR. ADKINS: PNC James Durkin? PNC James
14 Durkin? PNC Felix Garcia, III?

15 MR. GARCIA: Present, sir.

16 MR. ADKINS: PNC Hershel Gober? PNC William
17 Hutton? PNC James McCormick? Is he online?
18 Because he was trying to get online. Okay. He's
19 not here. PNC Bruce McKenty? PNC Ernie Rivera?

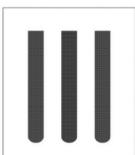
20 MR. RIVERA: Present.

21 MR. ADKINS: PNC Jeffrey Roy? PNC Ron Siebels?

22 MR. SIEBELS: Here, sir.

23 MR. ADKINS: PNC Alfred Silvano? PNC Fred
24 Taylor?

25 MR. TAYLOR: Present.



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1 MR. ADKINS: Yep. And PNC Cornelius Van-Ess.

2 Patriot Commander, that completes the roll call.

3 MR. FERGUSON: All right. Yes. Jim Anderson.

4 MR. J. ANDERSON: Jim Anderson. Make a motion
5 to suspend the --

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Roll call.

7 MR. J. ANDERSON: Roll call, unless a roll call
8 vote is needed during the convention.

9 MR. FERGUSON: So I have a first that says
10 suspending the roll call for the convention. Do I
11 have a second?

12 MR. WERTHEIM: I second the motion.

13 MR. FERGUSON: Come to the mic.

14 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
15 Florida. Second the motion to suspend roll call
16 unless a vote is needed.

17 MR. FERGUSON: So I have a first and second.
18 Any discussion? Any discussion? All in favor?

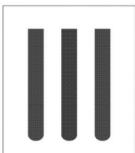
19 ALL: Aye.

20 MR. MIDDLETON: How would --

21 MR. FERGUSON: Any opposed?

22 MR. MIDDLETON: How would we know that there's
23 a quorum present without a roll call?

24 MR. FERGUSON: A quorum when we need to vote --
25 or do we need -- every time we're in and out of the



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1 room?

2 MR. MIDDLETON: -- meeting.

3 MR. FERGUSON: I'm sorry?

4 MR. MIDDLETON: You need -- sir, you need a
5 quorum for the meeting. You need -- we need to have
6 a quorum present to have a meeting, so we need a
7 roll call to determine that we have a sufficient
8 number of -- of patriots present to have a meeting.

9 MR. J. ANDERSON: Point of order. Jim
10 Anderson. There is no quorum in a general
11 convection. Only in an NEC does a quorum
12 requirement. The roll call vote is done for making
13 sure that everybody's here in case a roll call vote
14 is required, and the only time that is required is
15 during the election of officers, unless it's called
16 for by the floor.

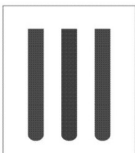
17 MR. FERGUSON: We did this last year, I figured
18 Middleton would know that.

19 MR. MIDDLETON: 27th.

20 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you. PNC Seamans
21 (phonetic).

22 MR. SEAMANS: Yeah. But one thing we need to
23 consider is Robert's Rules is what we follow.
24 Robert's Rule does talk about quorum.

25 MR. FERGUSON: Patriot McIntosh.



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1 MR. MCINTOSH: Nick McIntosh, national
2 historian. I did notice that there was not a roll
3 call of appointed officers. We're not there. We
4 don't have a vote, but we're still here, and they
5 always have called all of the elected and appointed
6 officers in roll call.

7 MR. FERGUSON: Okay.

8 MR. MIDDLETON: Go for it.

9 MR. ADKINS: We need to -- since we already
10 have a motion on the floor to suspend the roll call,
11 I need the individuals at first and second to come
12 back up and ask that that be, you know, tabled for
13 the moment.

14 MR. J. ANDERSON: Jim Anderson. I re-call the
15 motion to suspend the roll call.

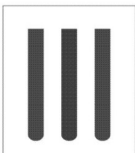
16 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
17 Florida. I suspend my second.

18 MR. ADKINS: Okay. All right. Appointed
19 Adkins, officers, Chuck Adkins, adjutant. Well, I'm
20 hearing in the concrete. Has Patriot Figueroa come
21 back in yet?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Negative.

23 MR. ADKINS: Okay. All right. She's our
24 advocacy officer. Patriot Ed Abbey, Americanism?

25 MR. ABBEY: Ed Abbey, Americanism, present.



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1 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Let's see. Chaplain
2 Carlton Cannon?

3 MR. CANNON: Present.

4 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Speak into the mic.

5 MR. CANNON: Present.

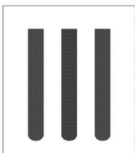
6 MR. ADKINS: Please come to the mic when your
7 name is called and speak into it. Our chief
8 information officer and webmaster, Kevin Bucek, he's
9 not here. Our deputy chief information officer,
10 Brandon Wegner, is absent. Nick McIntosh,
11 historian?

12 MR. MCINTOSH: Present.

13 MR. ADKINS: Homeless Veterans Officer Lee
14 Brown? Homeless Veterans Officer Lee Brown?
15 Legislative Director James McCormick? Did he come
16 online yet? Okay. He's not here yet. Director of
17 Metal Recovery Program Zachariah Fike? Purple
18 Hearts United Zachariah Fike, absent. Joe Tormala,
19 our POW/MIA officer?

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

21 MR. ADKINS: Please note that Patriot Figueroa,
22 commander, Region 4 and our advocacy officer, has
23 reentered the room. Purple Heart Legacy and Trail
24 Coordinator Joe Sutton? National Service Officer
25 Charles Eggelston?



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1 MR. EGCELSTON: Present, sir.

2 MR. ADKINS: Social Media Director Beth Bucke?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

4 MR. ADKINS: Brandon Wegner, software

5 development program.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

7 MR. ADKINS: Jo Keller, suicide awareness?

8 MS. KELLER: Present.

9 MR. ADKINS: Department -- National Surgeon

10 Robert Bibeau?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

12 MR. ADKINS: And VAVS, I've been working that.

13 Present. Viola Program, Bill Bull? Okay. I know

14 he is trying to -- I -- he is trying to work to see

15 if he can get in electronically. Please let me know

16 when he does.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: All right.

18 MR. ADKINS: Director of Women's Veteran's

19 Issues Felicia Flake.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Absent.

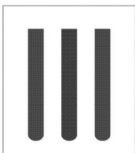
21 MR. ADKINS: And Roger Newell, youth services

22 officer.

23 MR. NEWELL: Present and last. Appreciate

24 that.

25 MR. ADKINS: All right. Let's untangle the



1 motion. Please restate it.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 3: Isn't it true that --

3 MR. ADKINS: We're going to restate it.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 4: Hey. We don't --

5 MR. J. ANDERSON: Jim Anderson.

6 MR. ADKINS: Come to the mic.

7 MR. J. ANDERSON: Make a motion to suspend the
8 roll call during the convention unless a roll call
9 vote is required or requested from the floor.

10 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
11 Florida, commander. Second the motion to suspend
12 the roll call vote.

13 MR. ADKINS: Okay. We got a first. We have a
14 second. Do we -- do we have any further discussion?
15 Any further discussion? Any further discussion?
16 Hearing none, call the question. All in favor say
17 aye.

18 ALL: Aye.

19 MR. ADKINS: Any opposed?

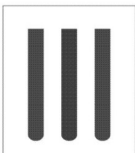
20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nay.

21 MR. ADKINS: How many?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nay.

23 MR. ADKINS: Nay? Okay. Troublemaker. All
24 right. I yield back to the national commander.

25 MR. FERGUSON: This seems like deja vu. I



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1 mean, it is going back through this again, you-all.
2 Wow. I wanted to -- let's everybody give a round
3 applause because we made it through roll call.
4 Well, you know, that -- you know, all I can say is,
5 that -- how long that took. That was a lot longer
6 than what I thought, but that's okay. That's why we
7 got a flexible schedule, right? We'll keep the
8 things that's on there. I hope everybody's doing
9 good. How'd everybody like the joint grand opening?

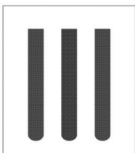
10 MR. ANDERSON: It was great.

11 MR. FERGUSON: It was great? Good. Thanks to
12 the Department of Florida for getting everything
13 taken care of on that.

14 MR. ANDERSON: We should have a roll call.

15 MR. FERGUSON: Yeah. We need a roll call on
16 that one, yeah, yeah, to see how everybody's
17 catching on the votes. So -- yeah, keep everything
18 necessary. So one of the first things we need to do
19 in order of business is, everybody has had a chance
20 to look at the last year's convention minutes, so
21 I'd like to entertain the motions for somebody to
22 approve the minutes of last year's convention.

23 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
24 Florida, make a motion to approve the 2023
25 convention minutes.



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1 MR. FERGUSON: I have a first. Is there a
2 second?

3 MR. GRAY: Keith Gray, department commander,
4 Arizona. Second.

5 MR. FERGUSON: All right. We got a first and
6 second. Any discussions on?

7 MR. MIDDLETON: Doug Middleton, delegate from
8 Georgia. There is an issue if you're not an officer
9 of the convention that you'll not be able to
10 download -- or I have not been able to download the
11 minutes of last year's convention. It doesn't give
12 me access to it. Even though I think you tried to do
13 it, it's still not working.

14 MR. FERGUSON: Yeah, I'm kind of concerned
15 about that one because the only thing you had last
16 year -- you were on the finance committee. I don't
17 know. Did you ever use the certificate to log in?

18 MR. MIDDLETON: Yes. I was logged -- yes, I
19 was --

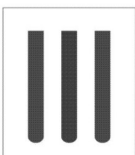
20 MR. FERGUSON: So --

21 MR. MIDDLETON: -- logged in as a officer --

22 MR. FERGUSON: So when --

23 MR. MIDDLETON: -- until I was no longer an
24 officer.

25 MR. FERGUSON: Well, and I'm kind of concerned



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1 why, you know, when that took back off -- what I'm
2 saying is, when you log in, I don't know if they've
3 ever updated you -- that you didn't need to have
4 your certificate. Because any patriot should be
5 able to log in right now.

6 MR. MIDDLETON: Yeah. and that's my point. Any
7 patriot should be able to --

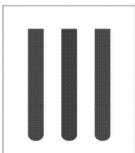
8 MR. FERGUSON: Well --

9 MR. MIDDLETON: -- log in to read the minutes
10 of the convention. Matter of fact, they may wish to
11 do that because they weren't present here, or
12 whatever it is, just to see what --

13 MR. FERGUSON: So Patriot Middleton, what I'm
14 explaining is, is that they probably did not take
15 you off from you having your certificate, so what
16 it's saying is, every time you try to log in it's
17 going to say you have to have your certificate. If
18 it's not updated --

19 MR. MIDDLETON: It's not asking me for that.

20 MR. FERGUSON: Well, what I'm saying is -- but
21 if it's not updated on the website, then what will
22 happen is you won't be able to log in to anything
23 properly, so we need to get that with Webmaster. We
24 need that fixed up, okay? It's getting fixed right
25 now.



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1 Okay. So we got first, second. Any more
2 discussion on that on that? For the minutes, any
3 more discussion? Somebody call for a vote?

4 ALL: Call for a --

5 MR. FERGUSON: Call for a question. All in
6 favor?

7 ALL: Aye.

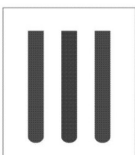
8 MR. FERGUSON: Any opposed? Hearing none, it
9 passes. Now, we're going to turn around and talk
10 about -- are we waiting for the finance?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh yeah.

12 MR. FERGUSON: Yeah? Okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
13 You -- you know -- you look pretty good at that.

14 MR. WALLOT: Okay. This morning, we had our
15 finance meeting. Dennis Wallot, chairman of Finance
16 Committee. A few things that we voted on. One of
17 them was the loan for the order. There was an error
18 last year, all the funds have been paid this year up
19 to date. Last year's portion was sent -- not sent to
20 the general fund as required, so we're going to --
21 we voted to pay off the loan completely this year
22 out of the monies that are going to come from the
23 Life Membership Fund for a total.

24 Okay. Thank you. And no surprise there. We
25 voted on the overages, there were a few, but the



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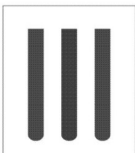
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1 total budget was under for the year. An explanation
2 was given by the finance officer on all of the
3 overages and accepted by the Finance Committee and
4 voted on. Per line item, like I said, the budget
5 was under for the year. Total for the investment,
6 last year, we made \$524,090.47. If we look at our
7 60/40 split, national is going to get \$314,000,
8 chapters and departments -- what does that say,
9 Danny?

10 MR. GREEN: 209.

11 MR. WALLOT: \$209 -- \$209,000. That money --
12 yes, that money will be available as soon as we need
13 it, as soon as it's figured out. And we'll just
14 proportionally sell the stocks and fixed instruments
15 that we have in the investment that equal out our
16 80/20 position that we have with the Life Membership
17 Fund. Right now, we've got three separate accounts.
18 We've got one equity fund, which is 80 percent of
19 our money, one fixed, which is 20 percent of our
20 money. We've got another account that has got four
21 ETFs in it and a Tennessee Valley Authority bond
22 issued, that -- those could be cashed in at any
23 time.

24 We've got a checking account with approximately
25 \$38,000 in it. That is money that is sent from the



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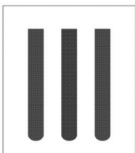
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1 headquarters, and basically, it's just a transfer
2 fund. We have to keep \$15,000 in there to receive
3 all the free services that we do from Chase
4 Manhattan Bank and JP Morgan. The loan will be paid
5 off this year then, the monies will be -- come in
6 spent, 524,000 going out. Last year, we made 18.29
7 percent on our money.

8 MR. J. ANDERSON: Wow.

9 MR. FERGUSON: That's very good.

10 MR. WALLOT: And that was the managed funds and
11 the equities. Most of the fixed instruments last
12 year did very poorly because they were in bonds that
13 were purchased five, and ten, and three years ago at
14 a 2 percent interest rate. So if you buy a \$1,000
15 bond back then, 2 percent was the going rate, and
16 you try to sell it today, well, nobody is going to
17 buy a bond to get 2 percent on it when they can get
18 a new one that pays 5 or 6 percent. So therefore,
19 they have to discount the bond price. So like a
20 \$1,000 bond, you may only be able to sell it for
21 \$850, so we took a loss on some of that stuff. The
22 actual return on the -- on the fixed side of it,
23 plus what we took out of that last year, we were
24 down about \$150,000 on the fixed side. That was
25 only 20 percent of our money that we were up



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1 tremendously on the equity side because of AI and a
2 bunch of other stuff that went right.

3 Except for that -- and that, unless there's any
4 questions is the finance report or at least the Life
5 Membership -- Life Membership Fund for you all. Are
6 there any questions?

7 MR. MILTON: Chairman, could you expand on the
8 -- on the loan, I think -- I'm sure a lot of people
9 in this room don't understand what we're talking
10 about by repaying the loan?

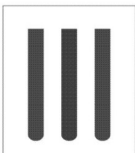
11 MR. WALLOT: At the mic, please.

12 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

13 MR. FERGUSON: The question was, is you wanted
14 to -- Dennis Wallot to explain what the loan was
15 from the Life Membership that we, as the order are
16 repaying back, and that was from Patriot Doug
17 Milton. Well, now, you know, you're making it
18 worse. He's got his glasses, out now we get the
19 real numbers.

20 MR. WALLOT: This is the CPI report and the PPI
21 report that comes with the 428 basis points followed
22 through, that's Econ 101, if you've ever taken that
23 class, and that's coffee in Brazil as well.

24 The loan -- we took out a loan for \$480,000 in
25 2019 -- 2020. We owed the bank about 300,000 that



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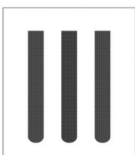
1 was borrowed that no one knew about. We had to pay
2 off the hotel in Branson. There was other bills
3 that were outstanding. I wired the money directly
4 from our account to the pay -- payees, it did not go
5 through the finance officer because at that time I
6 would have had to send it into the WCE as well as
7 our current adjutant at that time. So we owed
8 \$480,000. We took out a loan. That year in the
9 market we made a little over \$900,000. So instead of
10 sending the percentages to the chapters and
11 departments and the headquarters, made a little deal
12 where they took \$360,000 less and we put that
13 towards the loan. Then we had a balance of
14 approximately 120,000, started making payments on
15 that for the first seven months. Payments were not
16 made for the next two years, year-and-a-half. Then
17 last year --

18 MR. ADKINS: We paid -- we paid all of ours.

19 MR. WALLOT: Do what?

20 MR. ADKINS: Paid all of ours, sir.

21 MR. WALLOT: That's correct. They weren't
22 paid, in the last year 36,000 was applied towards a
23 loan. So then we got it down to approximately
24 \$86,000. At that moment, our cut for the year that
25 we sent to chapters and departments was 157,000.



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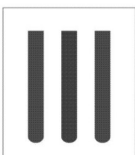
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1 That was 40 percent because the convention voted on
2 that, it would be 60 percent to national, 40 percent
3 to chapters and departments. Talked to the finance
4 officer, he said, okay, let's send out the chapters
5 and departments rebate and we can let the money sit
6 in the investment because headquarters didn't need
7 it at that time.

8 Sometime later, I got a call from Ernie and,
9 okay send the money over. And at that time, instead
10 of getting 60 percent, they got the normal 40
11 percent of what the first check was for, so
12 therefore, there was a difference of \$78,000 that
13 national should have received. So now, the Finance
14 Committee, after explaining this, and we have some
15 money left over then, if we put -- apply that
16 \$78,000 towards the loan, we're going to end up
17 owing somewhere -- I've got a conflict of interest
18 here -- not a conflict of interest, but the
19 difference in my numbers of three or \$4,000, that
20 could have been the interest that was figured on the
21 first seven payments or the last.

22 And as Will Rogers said, as we explained in the
23 Finance Committee, if you remember, Will Rogers he
24 said, "I'm more concerned about the return of my
25 money, than the rate of interest on my money." So



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1 if we take the interest off the loan, the only loan
2 balance is going to be somewhere between two and
3 \$5,000. This year, if we hold that back out of the
4 general funds portion, the loan is paid for and not
5 brought up again at any of these conventions.

6 Basically, you cannot charge interest to yourself,
7 according to the IRS, or the GAAP rules, General
8 Accepted Accounting Practices, so therefore, this
9 part would be forgiven. The Finance -- Finance
10 Committee passed this and now we're going to bring
11 it to the floor and make sure you understand it and
12 agree with it.

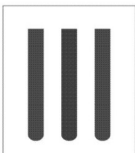
13 So I guess I'm looking for a motion on a vote
14 to accept the budget corrections that we did for the
15 10 percent overages and to pay off the loan.

16 MR. MIDDLETON: Middleton, delegate from
17 Georgia. I move that we accept the financial report
18 as presented.

19 MR. FERGUSON: So you had -- you did a motion
20 so we can do a second, and then you can -- have you
21 got a question for the discussion, Patriot Wetzel?

22 MR. WETZEL: Raymond Wetzel, Department of
23 California, Senior Vice. I second the motion.

24 MR. FERGUSON: Okay. I got a first and second.
25 Do we have any discussion? Patriot Wetzel?



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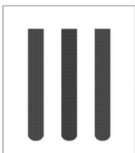
1 MR. WETZEL: Yes, this is Raymond Wetzel of
2 California, Senior Vice. I have a question and
3 would like some clarification, maybe I
4 misunderstood. When you were talking about the
5 \$900,000 on the Life Membership rebate, you stated
6 that you made a deal -- made a deal to pay some of
7 that money and pay off the loan. My question is,
8 was -- what is the deal that you made and does the
9 life member -- members get that money back that you
10 -- that you made a deal on?

11 MR. FERGUSON: I'll let the finance officer --

12 MR. RIVERA: Finance Officer Ernie Rivera. So
13 that was my year leading out as a national
14 commander. We made 900,000 during my year. So
15 instead of us getting the -- all of that money, it
16 wasn't a deal that was voted on by the Supreme Body
17 and the NSC -- the NEC, that we would take our
18 portion and repay 360,000 back into the -- to pay
19 the loan. So that money has been put back in there.
20 And then for my year as national commander of the
21 480,000, it was almost paid back.

22 MR. WETZEL: Okay.

23 MR. RIVERA: So it was a -- it wasn't a dope
24 deal. It was voted on, and it was all -- and there
25 is minutes of all of it at the convention.



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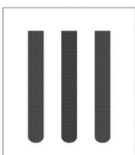
1 MR. WETZEL: Okay. Thank you.

2 MR. FERGUSON: Any more discussion on that? We
3 got a call for question. All in favor for the
4 finance -- 2023 to '24 finance report, all in favor?

5 ALL: Aye.

6 MR. FERGUSON: Any opposed? Hearing none,
7 finance report is -- subject to audit is approved.
8 All right. We're moving on. Yes. Maybe I need to
9 get my glasses so I can look through here, too. So
10 -- and looking in through here real quick, before we
11 get into -- we'll bring a couple of things up.
12 Communications, there was -- everybody has been
13 constantly -- receiving constant contact. So any
14 communications coming in from the order have been
15 pushed out. Community reports, make sure you all
16 see that, that's in your delegate books, so we have
17 issued one of that. Remember your rules, that they
18 are also in books. And then as credentials, we've
19 already talked about that so those are in your book.
20 Any corrections, make sure you see the Credential
21 Committee and make sure things are moving forward on
22 that. So with that, moving forward, I'd like to
23 turn around and to give it to the senior vice for
24 proposing the 2024 and '25 budget.

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: All right. Is that big enough



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1 for everybody to see?

2 ALL: No.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: Better? How is that for
4 everybody?

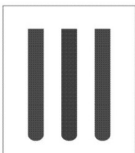
5 MR. MILTON: You need to go larger.

6 MR. MIDDLETON: A-E-O-N three.

7 MR. FERGUSON: Made in China.

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: That is 150. 200, do I hear
9 three? So that's as big as it gets, I'll have to
10 scroll over. So we have this budget here and we're
11 just going to go through what we have. So for the
12 general donations to the MOPH, we have down 20,000.
13 General donations to the Legacy Fund, which is
14 Flipcause and, I believe, PayPal, we have around
15 17,000. Other donation income, we have an
16 additional five. Life Membership -- all right. For
17 Life Membership parts review, we had a 1,200.
18 Americanism, we had 150. MOPH or other was a
19 1,000.

20 And here is the interesting thing, a lot of you
21 guys are annoyed by our Google Ads. This year we
22 actually probably would have made more but with the
23 Google Ads, we actually accumulated \$5,000 to help
24 pay for increases within our space for our Google
25 support system that we have for the drive, and I



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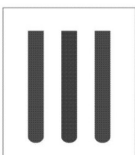
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1 think within the organization.

2 Miscellaneous grants, zero. Other revenues for
3 the art store, which I believe was what they give
4 the percentage, they gave us, correct? Okay. So
5 1,500. Okay. Building lease increased this year so
6 for this year, we'll -- there will be a 34,608, and
7 that's for Building C. The MOPH fund, we have
8 2,500. Membership dues, we're estimated 60,000.

9 These next three that are highlighted yellow
10 were all restricted accounts. The scholarships 20,
11 the truck one is 20, the disaster relief is 3,963.
12 ROTC revenue is 40,000. 2025 convention and fees,
13 we said about 130 would be 35,000 -- yeah, 35,500.
14 Scholarship application fee was 8,000. VAVS, which
15 is another restricted of 5,000. And then the
16 payment -- a total payment for this year for the
17 Life Membership was 52,490. Total income year is at
18 804,512.

19 Moving on to the program disaster relief. We
20 have 5,000. Legislative advocacy will be another
21 5,000. Purple Heart magazine and advertising at 20.
22 Scholarship at 20. Truck one at 20. Purple Heart
23 Trail, we have at 1,000. Software development we
24 have 1,500. Suicide Awareness we have 5,000. VAVS,
25 another restricted, we have 5,000. Youth services,



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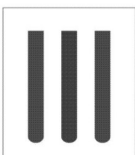
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1 5,000. And that would be the total for 875 for the
2 year.

3 Regular payroll expenses, we have our two
4 employees and tax, that come out to 82,600. We have
5 a subcontractor that we keep on for all of our
6 social media editing, everything that we have that
7 goes out, advertising, have it for the year for
8 18,000. So it's a monthly that we have in the
9 accounting services. So I have 10,000 just for the
10 audit, so I have 10,000 for Ernie's year, 20,000 for
11 James' year and 20,000 for Chris' year, another 20
12 for Carder's year with the Virginia taxes of a
13 1,000, so about 71,000 a year. Awards, for the
14 commander's awards, we have 1,250, and the patron of
15 the year award we have 2,000, which brings our total
16 of 3,250.

17 Banks and credit card fees and service charges,
18 we have 1,500, Flipcause is 150, international POS,
19 which is 120, PayPal 180 and PayPal transaction fees
20 for everything that we do when we process is 6,500.
21 So our total will be 8,450.

22 Equipment expenses, we have a brand-new copier,
23 which is a lower rate to the previous copier. It's
24 only one and we're only paying for one and not for
25 three so our expenses for the copier this year with



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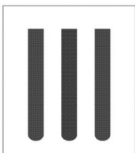
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1 maintenance, everything is 4,832. Our postage
2 machine, which is Pitney Bowes, we have 1,905.
3 Copier cost per copy after a 1,000 free black and
4 white is 120. So a total for that for the year is
5 6,859.

6 Events, so convention recording, we have set at
7 5,000, the printing recording for 2025, 6,000.
8 Expense selected for the host department, 19,500.
9 Convention, the Zoom and audiovisual 6,000.
10 Veteran's Day Memorial wreaths is 2,500. There was
11 an increase this year for that due to the fact that
12 we are going to be at more spots besides the Tomb of
13 the Unknown. We still have to make sure that we
14 cover the Vietnam wall, and the Korean wall, and
15 then the other ones that we'll cover for the next
16 year, because we're actually expanding and bringing
17 awareness about ourselves to all those other events.
18 Business insurances, our D&O, which we have covered
19 up until May, so we have to pay next April or --
20 April, May. Yeah. So we pay May. It's 8,500.
21 Hartford Insurance is 1,500. Philadelphia Insurance
22 Company, which is our general liability is 2,600.
23 Travelers Insurance, 3,000, and then another one for
24 a 1,000.
25 Legal expense. We have our legal services for



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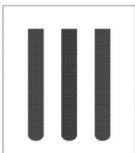
1 900 and our contingency for 5,000. Office supplies,
2 general supplies, 1,500. QuickBooks desktop, which
3 I believe we discontinued this year, correct?

4 MR. RIVERA: Yes. We are.

5 MR. OLIVAREZ: So it's 900. Our QuickBooks
6 online is 3,392. TrueShred is our shredder company,
7 comes once a month, 420. And U-Line for 4,500, and
8 that would be for the office expenses that we have.
9 Postage, FedEx, we have 200 for the year, Pitney
10 Bowes, 6,000, USPS 100. Shipping the national
11 convention items for this year and next year, I do
12 have them both at 600. Professional Services for a
13 statutory service, we have 500, HOA for building C
14 is 5,420, building -- or sorry, Building B.
15 Building C is 5,464.

16 Repair and maintenance. We have that stuff set
17 aside just in case REC wants to go out and break a
18 door. Lighting, 10,000. And for our janitorial
19 service that we have come in once a week, it was
20 2,988. Taxes on all of that is a 1,000. So the
21 total for that would be -- or sorry, total for the
22 first one is, 1,298, taxes is a
23 1,000.

24 Communication, Verizon, we actually were able
25 to lower the amount of phones we had, so we're doing



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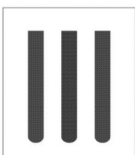
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1 better on Verizon and Internet phone bill. So we
2 have 4,567. Election Buddy, we bumped it up to 300
3 because there is going to be an increase this year.
4 Google Domain, what's -- is at 1,200. Our Google G
5 Suite is 5,519. Mailgun is \$50 a year, and cost of
6 contact will run us about 2,975. I have a budget
7 that have been given for everybody and utilities,
8 Building B will be 1,771. Building B takes care of
9 themselves. Our water for Building B is a 600.

10 Workers' comp, we have 1,000. Grievance
11 expenses, we have 2,000. And in -- company, we have
12 500 for the MOPH store inventory replenishment and
13 the general is 500. Life membership payout for a
14 chapter should be \$209,636.19. Membership dues, 50
15 percent of that funds. So as you can see -- so for
16 '22, we had 17,500. Same thing for '20 -- well, in
17 both quarters. That's all I have. Membership dues
18 that we paid for this year was 30,000. And as
19 Patriot Wallot says, we have a little bit left, and
20 we should be cleared on our dues. So total expense
21 for the year was 700,283.24 that come from
22 restricted accounts. So -- I'll put that there.
23 The total of funds remaining will be 48,963 from my
24 restricted accounts. General operating fund, we
25 have 244,900. Our current price balance is the same



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1 for the escrow, we have 16,891. Same for checking.
2 Totals out to 307,791 for that and other restricted
3 accounts. For PayPal, we have 29,728. Membership
4 -- truck run relief, we have 23,963. And as for the
5 disaster relief scholarship, we have a total of
6 76,959. And in scholarships, we have 100 in one of
7 the accounts, and then youth programs at 130,751.
8 That's it. Any questions?

9 MR. WALLOT: Question.

10 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes, sir.

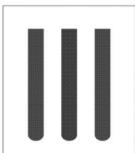
11 MR. WALLOT: Dennis Wallot, chairman of the
12 Finance Committee. The membership is not going to
13 vote on this now, correct?

14 MR. OLIVAREZ: If they want to vote on this,
15 they can now.

16 MR. WALLOT: Okay. We have to take this to the
17 finance committee, and then it has to be approved
18 and gone over there, and then we have 30 days to get
19 it to the NEC. The last portion of this was --
20 should all go on a balance sheet and not in the
21 budget as far as balances that we have now.

22 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay.

23 MR. WALLOT: So that part shouldn't count. So
24 the bottom line basically on this budget is when you
25 run the columns down, oh, just throw me up



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1 something, Robert.

2 MR. OLIVAREZ: Right there?

3 MR. WALLOT: Something with green.

4 MR. OLIVAREZ: Something with green?

5 MR. WALLOT: Okay. That's a balance sheet.

6 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay.

7 MR. WALLOT: So with the green --

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yeah.

9 MR. WALLOT: -- when you look at the first
10 number that says, "2,300 -- 2,800," that number,
11 according to accounting rules, should be underneath
12 that number because it's too hard to follow this way
13 for most people. So you have the column, like --

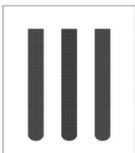
14 MR. OLIVAREZ: Should I --

15 MR. WALLOT: Go up a little bit. A little bit
16 more. Okay. You see how you got that column
17 there --

18 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes.

19 MR. WALLOT: -- coming down at the C? Now,
20 those numbers should total on the next green line,
21 where the next green line you've got is the total of
22 the numbers below that. So, like, when you add up a
23 column, where do you put the answer? You put the
24 answer on the bottom.

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: The bottom. Okay.



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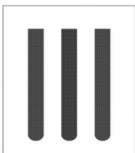
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1 MR. WALLOT: Okay. So we're going to change
2 that. And you are going to want a percentage on
3 that. You want a monthly thing. Here's the budget.
4 How much did we spend this month, what did we spend
5 year to date, and the percentage, so we know next
6 year when something goes over a percent, we don't
7 have to go through and figure all those little
8 numbers out again. Okay?

9 The other thing is when this is all done and
10 approved by the finance committee -- well, I guess
11 you don't have to do that. The one thing I would
12 like to mention though, because it looks pretty good
13 and what we're really showing here is that you've
14 got a positive -- the balance sheet is not -- or the
15 budget is not balanced. The numbers don't equal the
16 same at the bottom. We're showing an excess in
17 there, so that's good. So we've got more money than
18 that.

19 And the other thing is, I would like to add,
20 personal thing here, the ladies auxiliary did not
21 show up this year because they got no money from the
22 foundation. I would like to put the ladies
23 auxiliary in there for 20 or \$30,000 and we can at
24 least help them with a room for their thing,
25 otherwise who does all the work at home and the



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1 chapters in the department? Most of the time, it's
2 the women.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes.

4 MR. WALLOT: And they are basically being
5 penalized because they have no way to raise money,
6 except through the foundation. So I would like to
7 see a line item in there for that.

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: I added a line item for them.

9 MR. WALLOT: Okay. Very good.

10 MR. OLIVAREZ: They are our backbone and
11 without them --

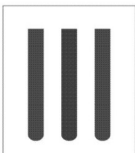
12 MR. WALLOT: Okay.

13 MR. OLIVAREZ: -- we wouldn't be here moving
14 forward.

15 MR. WALLOT: I agree with that, 100 percent.
16 And the only other thing is when we have our finance
17 meeting the last day, the last hour, this will all
18 go out to the NEC, so I'm not sure if a vote now is
19 going to make any difference to the body or not.

20 MR. OLIVAREZ: All right. Patriot Smrt?

21 MR. SMRT: Patriot Smrt, delegate, Department
22 of Kentucky. Can you scroll up and address -- you
23 had something about social media or digital presence
24 to the tune of 18,000 if I -- my memory serves. Was
25 that a cumulative per cost, per action, or a flat --



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1 MR. OLIVAREZ: That's for the year, so --

2 MR. SMRT: That anticipated expenses or are we
3 actually contracting that individual?

4 MR. OLIVAREZ: Contracting.

5 MR. SMRT: And is -- and is this a continuous
6 contract from last year, or are we -- are we
7 starting that this year?

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: This is going to be a new
9 contract starting this year.

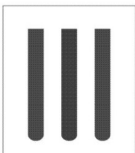
10 MR. SMRT: Okay. So it has to obviously be
11 approved?

12 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes.

13 MR. SMRT: Okay. Thank you for your details,
14 sir.

15 MR. OLIVAREZ: Major Wertheim?

16 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
17 Florida, commander. So if you go back to your
18 convention expenses. Okay. So under your -- there
19 -- under the events, there was an AV, audiovisual,
20 \$6,000. Okay. Just for the bare minimum here. The
21 list price was 14,000 for what we have in this room.
22 And I begged on my knees to get it down to 9,000.
23 You're going to -- the bottom next year, my guess
24 the discounts are going to be a little bit less, so
25 I would -- I would budget for 14 plus and -- and



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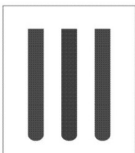
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1 hope for something close to -- close to that.

2 As far as the convention fee -- so the
3 convention fee this year was 125,000, \$125 per
4 Patriot. The real cost on that is about \$178, and we
5 had to raise the money for the rest of it. So the
6 convention fee was nowhere near what it really
7 should have been for people to come to -- come to
8 this.

9 And then you have the -- I see that the travel
10 for reimbursement for the region commanders and
11 such, everything has been reduced from last year,
12 down. Just because I travel for business all the
13 time, and I have a team that travels everything's
14 been reduced, but travel is up about 35 percent over
15 last year, and that's up 30 percent from the year
16 before. So you're taking away -- it looks like you
17 have the travel budget, everything except national
18 commander, the senior vice, junior vice, and such.
19 For everybody else, we're losing members daily, and
20 if you want people to come up to D.C. for the
21 different events, you're expanding the events of
22 Memorial Day, Veterans Day, you know, it's still
23 going to cost the region commanders to have people
24 come up out of pocket, but just cut it half -- you
25 know, their -- half their travel budgets. And, just



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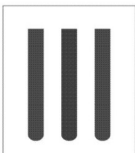
1 so you know, it's just -- and everything's going to
2 cost much more.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: Thanks. PNC Siebels?

4 MR. SIEBELS: PNC Siebels. Referring back to
5 that \$18,000 contract. Since I understand this is a
6 new contract. Could you tell us the details about
7 that and why we need it now and didn't need it last
8 year?

9 MR. OLIVAREZ: So with our social media
10 marketing director, we've actually had an increase
11 with people knowing about what we're doing and with
12 the tasks that a lot of the membership have, it's
13 easier for us to contract out to get stuff out there
14 and they're putting stuff out daily for us. So
15 getting out there and bringing awareness and
16 spreading the news about the MOPH is actually
17 helping them benefiting us. So I figured
18 contracting someone out to help us to get out there,
19 which is all the same as advertising and marketing,
20 but we set, you know, a bid to pay for the new
21 contractor. So that's actually helping us. So
22 that's why we decided to keep somebody or try to get
23 somebody for the year.

24 MR. SIEBELS: Okay. I understand. But I just
25 don't see why we -- we've had it done before, but



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1 now we need a contract written? I -- maybe it's
2 just me. That's okay.

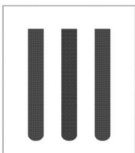
3 MR. OLIVAREZ: We -- we're doing far better
4 than with having a contractor or someone doing it
5 for us.

6 MR. SIEBELS: Okay.

7 MR. OLIVAREZ: And we also have nobody in the
8 house that can do it for us. PNC Rivera?

9 MR. RIVERA: Yeah, PNC Rivera. So one of the
10 things on this, and I know that things have been a
11 little bit different. If you notice in the past few
12 years, we've had to carry over what was not spent.
13 This year, if you notice on here, it is in the
14 general -- the general fund of the money that we
15 have. If you go down to that right there, 300-and-
16 something-thousand dollars, I mean, I don't have it
17 memorized because I worked on this, \$131,000 in
18 restricted money and part of that's going to be
19 spent.

20 Currently, right now, we pay -- for a new
21 member, it's \$200 to join. \$100 goes to national
22 for them to operate on it. It was about, I think it
23 was like \$30,000. The other \$100 goes into the life
24 investment account. And then when the life
25 investment account money is invested, 60 percent of



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1 that goes back to national and 40 percent of that
2 goes through the departments and the chapters. And
3 now we're looking up there and there's about
4 \$400,000 in a general account. So that money -- the
5 life membership money is money that we all paid
6 into, right? That money's supposed to be in there
7 for us to get a rebate. So the bylaws prohibit us
8 from changing the 60/40 split. We cannot do it
9 according to the bylaws. So I'm going to make a
10 motion that national pays the departments and the
11 chapters a second life member rebate this current
12 year out of those funds.

13 MS. KELLER: Jo Keller, department commander of
14 California. Second.

15 MR. OLIVAREZ: Any discussion? No? All in
16 favor.

17 ALL: Aye.

18 MR. OLIVAREZ: All in favor?

19 ALL: Aye.

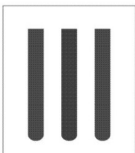
20 MR. OLIVAREZ: All opposed?

21 ALL: Nay.

22 MR. OLIVAREZ: So that's two. Two, two --
23 motion carries.

24 MR. WALLOT: Are we still at the meeting?

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes. Okay. All right, Patriot



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1 Keller, you had something?

2 MS. KELLER: Yes.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: Go ahead.

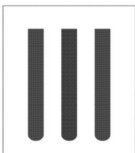
4 MS. KELLER: What's with this?

5 MR. OLIVAREZ: The top of this?

6 MS. KELLER: No. It's what we're discussing
7 right now.

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay. All right. Just so you
9 know, it's not actual \$100 going one way or the
10 other because we do have the \$6,500 in fees that we
11 did pay. So it might go 100 to somebody, but the
12 other portion -- out of the 200 we get back 192.75.
13 Oh, go ahead, Jo.

14 MS. KELLER: Jo Keller, Department of
15 California, National Suicide Awareness. I had a
16 request in on how use the \$5,000 in the year to come
17 just to make sure the person incoming will know how
18 to do this. I'm still wondering how the \$5,000 was
19 used last year since I was not allowed to see any of
20 the money, and the money, again, is -- I heard that
21 it was -- part of it was used to perform another
22 activity that wasn't suicide awareness, and I was
23 unaware. So I want to know if the program chairs
24 should be aware of what is used in their budget when
25 their budget is not used because money is taken out



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1 of this account for something else, so when I
2 request the money to be used for merchandise, for
3 training, anything else, it's not available to me.
4 I just want to know what happened.

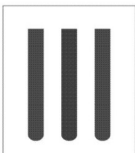
5 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay. What do you have to say?

6 MR. WERTHEIM: Yeah, Craig Wertheim on the
7 finance committee, and for the different committees
8 that -- so -- we -- I looked at the budgets from
9 those committees, and I don't believe I saw a budget
10 from the suicide awareness committee at all this
11 year. So I don't -- I think that's one of the
12 reasons why no money was dispersed to them.

13 MS. KELLER: Sir, there was \$5,000 in the
14 budget plus \$600 that was there from a donation that
15 I wasn't able to use as well.

16 MR. OLIVAREZ: Commander Ferguson?

17 MR. FERGUSON: National Commander Ferguson.
18 First thing is -- is that -- from the floor. Thank
19 you. I knew -- I knew I had to come down here for
20 something. All right. First thing is, I've never
21 seen the budget from the National Suicide Awareness
22 director. If there was one, it was supposed to go
23 to either the junior vice or senior vice. I've been
24 on top of this when that was here to get a budget --
25 that was here. The money is there. It was always



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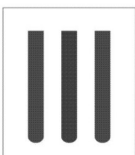
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1 willing to spend. She was never, ever denied any of
2 the budget that was on there. It was never spent.
3 Two e-mails, when I go back and look at this on 10
4 July, there was one sent to the senior vice, but he
5 said he had no attachments of an invoice. Finally,
6 when one came to him was on 28th July, two days
7 before we closed the budget, and it was for an
8 invoice of items to come to the convention. We're
9 closing out the year. And in June on the 30th, two
10 days, we get almost a \$5,000 bill for paraphernalia
11 for the convention.

12 Before I made a decision, I confirmed that with
13 not only the junior vice and senior vice and the
14 national finance officer and the national adjutant
15 and the deputy asking, is this something that we
16 need to do? They all explained to me, stating that
17 this would be something to do if this was presented
18 earlier to us. Being at the end of the year, it was
19 hard to close. We are passionate to move with the
20 Suicide Awareness Program, but we did not get any of
21 the information. So it was not denied, that was the
22 decision of what had happened. Thank you.

23 MS. KELLER: Jo Keller. There was several
24 conversations to begin with the last election and
25 everything was, yeah, yeah, we have the support,



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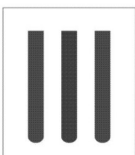
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1 this is the money and the budge, and I've been
2 discussing it. Yes, the e-mails came out late
3 because we had been discussing it on the phone. We
4 talked about it. Yes, you can get paid for
5 materials, the merchandise, whatever. Nothing ever
6 happened. I'm always saying, oh, this can't be
7 done, or this is here, or this is there. So yeah, I
8 did finally put it in writing late because nobody
9 was answering. But I had had conversations
10 regarding the money, regardless, I just want to make
11 sure the next person that takes this over knows how
12 to access it and can access it, which is the \$5,000
13 plus the \$600. I don't know how you would intend to
14 bring back the money that was used for something
15 else rather than suicide, to put that back in the
16 budget. So where does that money go?

17 MR. WALLOT: It goes to the general fund.

18 MS. KELLER: Because I believe once it's put in
19 for suicide awareness, that's what it should be used
20 for, and if not, then the chair should be aware of
21 where that money is going to go if it is needed
22 somewhere else.

23 MR. RIVERA: PNC Rivera. So if you're -- if
24 you're referring to the \$2,200 that was sponsored to
25 the suicide awareness program for a patriot that is



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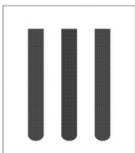
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1 going to have a table on -- and at the ESPN National
2 Olympic Trials, that is a full suicide awareness
3 program that we're doing. So there was 2,200. So
4 the reason that was approved is because there had
5 not been a budget, and during the year we were
6 looking at different line items.

7 I'm the finance officer. I don't approve
8 anything. We go by based on the budget. The
9 national commander is the only person that can
10 approve the spending, the national adjutant writes
11 the warrant. The national commander approves the
12 spending. When we were going through all the line
13 items, this individual had reached out and said that
14 he had gotten into triathlon as an alternate therapy
15 for his own personal suicide stuff. So he was
16 telling the story. He won in the State of Florida,
17 the triathlon, and he made it to the Olympic trials
18 and to the nationals in New Jersey in September, so
19 he said we can do this as a suicide awareness. And
20 so whoever next year is going to be able to go and
21 attend, and he's going to have our logo in the front
22 and back of the uniform. So it's going to be a
23 major suicide awareness for our organization and the
24 program. So that was what \$2,200 was spent on.

25 MS. KELLER: Jo Keller again.



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1 MR. MIDDLETON: Point of order. Point of
2 order.

3 MS. KELLER: Regardless --

4 MR. MIDDLETON: Point of order. Point of
5 order. A patriot may only speak on the subject once
6 unless they receive permission from the body to
7 speak a second time.

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yeah. So does the body approve
9 giving the patriot a chance to speak for a second
10 time?

11 ALL: Yeah. Yeah. Aye.

12 MR. OLIVAREZ: All in favor?

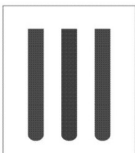
13 ALL: Aye.

14 MR. OLIVAREZ: All opposed?

15 ALL: No. No.

16 MR. OLIVAREZ: You got it. Go ahead, Jo.

17 MS. KELLER: Thank you, sir. Okay. This is
18 the first time right now that I hear that that money
19 went for suicide awareness. I am the chair. I
20 should have known. That's a great program right
21 there for the person going to the ESPN, which could
22 get some sponsorships. However, when -- if you are
23 asking me to chair a committee and that's the
24 budget, and I think that's fair, wouldn't it be
25 appropriate to let the chair know what's going on?



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1 I just find out right now. I've been asking about
2 this all through the year, asking what happened
3 since -- for a couple of days I've been here, and
4 this is the first time, now, that I hear, oh, now,
5 this is because this patriot needs it for -- to
6 represent suicide awareness. So, you know, it
7 would've been nice to know. Definitely --

8 MR. FERGUSON: So --

9 MS. KELLER: I was -- I --

10 MR. FERGUSON: So can I -- can --

11 MR. OLIVAREZ: Let her finish.

12 MR. FERGUSON: No, no, no. The reason why I'm
13 going to stop this, because she did make mention
14 earlier in the meeting that's on here, that she knew
15 that money was taken out from the account that was
16 here, and why she wasn't doing it. Now, she's
17 saying it is the first time on the floor that she
18 realized that money wasn't taken out. So that's
19 where I'm having a conflict.

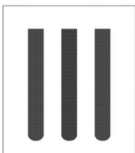
20 MS. KELLER: No, sir.

21 MR. FERGUSON: Yes, you did.

22 MS. KELLER: No, sir. I said -- yes.

23 MR. FERGUSON: When we go back in the minutes.

24 MS. KELLER: Yesterday, they told me this is
25 taken for an athlete. Nobody said this is taken for



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1 an athlete that's going to represent suicide
2 awareness. This is the first time I hear that that's
3 what it was for. They said --

4 MR. FERGUSON: Okay.

5 MS. KELLER: -- somebody explained --

6 MR. FERGUSON: Patriot Keller, I understand
7 it's --

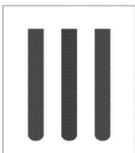
8 MS. KELLER: -- two different --

9 MR. FERGUSON: -- semantics that we have,
10 that's here. But the key thing is, we asked one
11 thing. I asked you the first of this year for a
12 budget. So to answer your question, which you
13 originally started this with, was to turn around and
14 ask, how would the next program be ready to go? My
15 answer to that will be, submit the budget in. You
16 know we have \$5,000. Submit it in after the first
17 of the year. That's on this. So in other words,
18 when we start our fiscal year, this should be
19 submitted. We never received anything from you
20 until June. That's 11 months later.

21 MS. KELLER: Great. My recommendation to the
22 next person who's taking over, submit that tomorrow.
23 Thank you.

24 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you. Continue on.

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: Patriot Wetzel?



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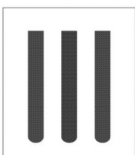
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1 MR. WETZEL: Yes, this is Raymond Wetzel,
2 senior vice, California. The problem that I have
3 is, like anybody else, is that the -- you say that I
4 say -- the order has had problems with non-
5 transparency for years. The problem I have is, is
6 that any one of us that has a business that is in
7 charge of money, regardless of what the situation
8 has been, would have been, or will be, is that the
9 fact that you're going to take the money and sponsor
10 something for a program, you always let the
11 chairperson know. Period. You don't just go ahead
12 and take it upon yourself because you're the finance
13 officer or you're the -- you're whatever, and you do
14 it and not tell anybody.

15 The bottom line is, is that the chairperson
16 that's running that program should be aware of it.
17 Bottom line. And I don't care what program it is,
18 whether it be suicide awareness, a JROTC program,
19 whatever. But whenever -- if something is borrowed
20 from and taken from an account, the chairperson in
21 charge needs to know about it, and should be being
22 CCed on it, whatever, and made known about it.
23 That's the bottom line. That's my point, that the
24 body should know that.

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: Will you guys grant PNC Rivera a



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1 chance to speak for a second time?

2 ALL: Yes.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: All in favor?

4 ALL: Aye.

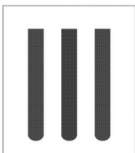
5 MR. OLIVAREZ: All opposed? Go ahead.

6 MR. RIVERA: Okay. This is a different hat.

7 National finance officer, it is a separate thing.

8 So the national finance officer, like I said, I did
9 not approve this. That's not my job. When the line
10 item is there, regardless of what the program is, a
11 warrant is written, and a bill is presented by the
12 national adjutant. The national commander approves
13 it. If -- all my job is to look at it and say,
14 there is X number of dollars in this line item, it
15 is \$2,200. Okay. Yes, we can do it. I will submit
16 the payment. So -- and I do understand about the
17 different programs and stuff. But if you read the
18 bylaws, there's one single person in this
19 organization that can approve spending, the national
20 commander.

21 As a finance officer, my job is to tell them,
22 yes, there's money there. And there was two times
23 this year, we voted on a new budget because I said
24 you don't have the money to do that. Well, we're
25 going to do it. You can't do it. Sorry. The



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1 money's not in the line item. And that's why it was
2 sent out to the ADC (phonetic). So if you say the
3 finance officer, yes, it was a variance. We had to
4 adjust the budget. The budget is a document that
5 can be changed with a vote.

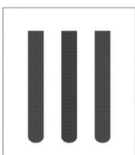
6 So -- and I kind of heard that stuff. I can
7 assure you we have warrants and invoices for every
8 single cent of money that was spent this entire
9 year. And if you would like to see them, I would
10 more than gladly sit down with you and show them to
11 you in all the bank accounts. Thank you.

12 MR. OLIVAREZ: Anybody have any other questions
13 about the budget for next year?

14 MR. T. ANDERSON: Terry Anderson. Region 2.

15 MR. OLIVAREZ: A little louder.

16 MR. T. ANDERSON: Terry Anderson. Region 2.
17 I'm a old businessman. I've been in business, self-
18 starting myself. I've been in business 40 years.
19 When you make a budget, you have to get it approved
20 by whomever you're working with. I -- I see one
21 problem here, and maybe it is the problem, but
22 finance committee needs to approve it. Why isn't
23 the finance committee actively involved in the
24 budget before the start, so that when you come to
25 us, it's already been approved by the finance and



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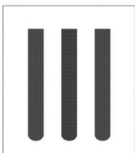
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1 approved by you guys, so that we can approve? We
2 have spent a lot of time here and we talked about we
3 want to condense our time. So, you know, I'm --
4 just a question.

5 MR. OLIVAREZ: It -- it's just a proposal for
6 the budget, and it's going to continue working,
7 updating, and to make sure that it fits all of the
8 order's needs. Yeah.

9 MR. FERGUSON: So long story short, and I'm
10 sorry for all the deliberations and what we're
11 trying to understand of the budget. This is just
12 what his proposal what could be for the budget.
13 This will save us some time tomorrow when we come
14 back through here to get the budget finally approved
15 that's on here.

16 Now you've got an idea of what we're looking
17 at, you can go back and put questions that's on
18 that, gets in front of Finance Committee, Finance
19 Committee knows the things on it. That's it. That
20 could happen. If not, you could -- like Dennis said
21 that it was going to take 30 days. There's not
22 anything being hidden, secrets that's here. He's
23 actually working in with the finance officer, trying
24 to get things under. He's asked me questions of
25 what we spent on budgets, and how things are going



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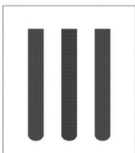
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1 to work. But he put some time in, to try to figure
2 out some of the budget that's here to get things
3 done. And that's what he's trying to show you.
4 Here's what I've done and looked into. Always,
5 we're going to have questions about this, and you're
6 not -- it is the spirit of the debate. I think this
7 is great that you asked the questions because at
8 least you're concerned about it, and we can figure
9 things out.

10 Well, obviously we had a miscommunications with
11 the suicide awareness director because we didn't
12 understand where our budget comes in. That's one of
13 the things I did talk about each program. It's not
14 just that area. We also have the park trails. We
15 also have scholarship. What are we going to do
16 there? So we put money in there, so that money
17 needs to turn around and have somebody who's in
18 charge of that chair give us the budget and how it's
19 going to be spent. So X amount of dollars. Let's
20 throw -- so we put \$5,000 in for suicide awareness.

21 Let's make this real quick. So one of the
22 things is, we can't have trainers, but maybe we have
23 counselors. Or we have somebody a point of contact
24 in each one of the departments, or maybe it is in
25 the region area. So say that takes, you know, \$500.



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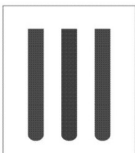
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1 So now we know we can only train ten people. So
2 that's kind of one of the things we look at. Are we
3 going to use part of that for travel? That's where
4 that budgets need to be brought down. It's not up
5 here, it's the national. It should be presented to
6 the national commander. So then, that way, we can
7 understand it. So that's our biggest point where
8 we're looking at. It's not just one person. It
9 takes a team. Once this is done, then it goes into
10 the finance committee and we can break it down, and
11 then I can understand and ask the questions. Pending
12 any questions on the -- what has been done with the
13 budget, anybody else have any questions on it?

14 Take silence as golden. So we're moving
15 forward. We need to get a couple more things done.
16 Real quick, all the reports, such as for the
17 committees has been in the delegates. So if anybody
18 has any questions about the -- any reports in the
19 delegate book, such as -- we're looking in here for
20 -- such as the adjutant, Americanism, you know,
21 chaplain had his letters, that's in there. So
22 everybody has everything in the delegate book, so
23 that will save us some time. If you guys read that
24 and have any other questions, let us know. Any
25 reports of any standing committees, any committee



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1 chairs who want to bring up any reports?

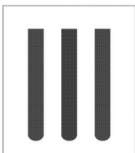
2 MR. ADKINS: Region 4?

3 MR. FERGUSON: Region 4 Commander, did you have
4 something? I was hearing from the adjutant. Did
5 you have something you want to talk about?

6 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Region 4 Commander Francis
7 Figueroa. I had just -- I didn't submit my Region 4
8 report, so I just kind of wanted to briefly go over
9 it. I did get to talk with Chuck, but he had
10 mentioned earlier that Mississippi got their
11 election together for the department -- their full
12 department again. So that's good.

13 Hold on one second. Tennessee, we still
14 haven't had much contact with Tennessee. Still not
15 a full department. There are a few chapters in
16 there that are still running and submitting their
17 election reports, but they don't have much contact
18 with the order itself. I've reached out to them, but
19 they still don't reach back. They've kind of just
20 been sticking to their chapter stuff.

21 All of our chapters have participated in the
22 JROTC program this year, so they've been giving out
23 their JROTC awards. North Carolina, they host their
24 Purple Heart dinners. And then this past year, they
25 did the POW/MIA dinner. We will be having our



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1 Purple Heart dinners in North Carolina again in
2 August. So the national staff coming in, if any of
3 them want to attend the Purple Heart dinners in
4 North Carolina, please let us know, and we'll get
5 you a ticket and reservation at the hotel for those
6 dinners.

7 The other states, the other departments, South
8 Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, have been participating
9 in the Memorial Day ceremonies and Veterans parades.
10 Georgia has been one of the busiest departments
11 we've had. They've been doing a lot of Purple Heart
12 entities, so most of their cities are becoming
13 Purple Heart entities along with some universities
14 in Georgia as well. And that's all that I had.

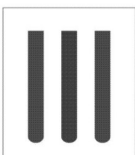
15 MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, Commander. Appreciate
16 it. All right. Like I said, been a little -- super
17 busy. Had some of -- what say stuff. What was the
18 date of the birth of your child?

19 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: April 17th.

20 MR. FERGUSON: April 17th. So it's a new --
21 new supporter for the Military Order of the Purple
22 Heart there. She's building the team up. That's
23 what she's trying to do, so --

24 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: A little busy here.

25 MR. FERGUSON: A little busy there. So yeah.



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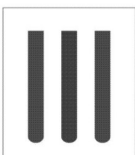
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1 Keeping things up. I guess I guess we're going to
2 let that go as an excuse here. So what I'm going to
3 do now is, I'm going to turn it over to the national
4 adjutant. We're going to talk about some
5 administrative notes, and see if we can get out of
6 here, maybe on time, like we're supposed to do, and
7 he'll get these taken care of. Thank you.

8 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Good afternoon, Patriots.
9 It's Chuck Adkins, national adjutant. We've just
10 had some reports, and we did finance -- we've done
11 quite a few. And if you -- as the Patriot Commander
12 Ferguson said, there are a bunch of awesome reports
13 in the delegate book. I mean, this is more than
14 we've had than the past several years combined, and
15 I want to thank all of those who submitted one
16 because they were really great reports. Is Patriot
17 Larry Leighton online? Okay. Patriot Leighton, do
18 you have anything to add from publications? Okay.

19 MR. LEIGHTON: We -- we've had the reports --

20 MR. ADKINS: No, we haven't done that in the
21 past, sir. Okay. Not hearing anything from Patriot
22 Leighton. Patriot National Junior Vice, Tracey
23 Brown-Greene, do you want to give a report on the
24 scholarships? Okay. And then you can follow that
25 with the MOPH fund, even though you have one in the



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1 book if you need to add anything to that.

2 MS. BROWN-GREENE: National Junior Vice Tracey
3 Brown-Greene. So the scholarship committee worked
4 really hard this year. We had a lot of great
5 applicants, and then we have a lot of applicants
6 that need to do a little more work. So that being
7 said, we are giving away really good money to the
8 people. And -- so we have one -- so we have some
9 great candidates that we would love to get some
10 funds to next year, but they went through the
11 process already. We have 11 candidates, so if the
12 budget gets approved at the end of this session,
13 then we'll be able to award them a scholarship.
14 That's the scholarship report.

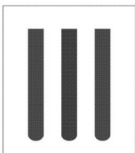
15 MR. MIDDLETON: So what club was the
16 scholarship to be?

17 MS. BROWN-GREENE: So it would be three awards
18 of \$2,500, three for \$2,000, three for \$1,500, and
19 two for \$4,000, which will equal up to \$20,000. And
20 we have one, which is the Michael P. Murphy
21 (phonetic), for \$5,000.

22 MR. ADKINS: I want to remind everyone --

23 MS. BROWN-GREENE: Please.

24 MR. ADKINS: -- if you are going to ask a
25 question or speak, please come to the mic, state



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1 your name, position, so that it goes into the
2 recorded minutes.

3 Yeah. Any other questions, comments, concerns?

4 All right. One administrative announcement on the
5 appointed committees. On the -- Page 24 of your
6 book, I had accidentally put Roy Ray in there as an
7 assistant sergeant at arms, and that should have
8 been Robert Jones. My apologies. We are fixing to
9 close today's session, but I want to remind
10 everybody it's 17:00. We have the Bylaws Committee
11 meeting, and dinner will be on your own. There will
12 be the Command Team meeting. 13, 14?

13 MR. WERTHEIM: 234.

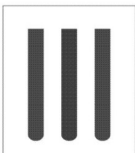
14 MR. ADKINS: No, that's command team briefing,
15 slot 13.

16 MR. WERTHEIM: Slot 15. 15.

17 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Slot 15. That's where the
18 vendor is. Slot 17. So the command team meeting
19 will meet in slot 17 at 18:00. And then 234 for the
20 hospitality room, correct? Yep. The Hawaiian
21 party. Please wear your Hawaiian shirt.

22 MR. FERGUSON: What time is that, sir?

23 MR. ADKINS: 18:00, sir. Go to the 23rd. Does
24 -- for the Bylaws Committee, are there going to be
25 any resolutions that are going to be submitted from



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1 the floor? Because if you have them, we need to
2 present them now so the Bylaws Committee can review
3 them, take them into consideration and
4 recommendation, and then give a report back first
5 thing tomorrow morning. If not, I turn the floor
6 back over to the national commander for closing.

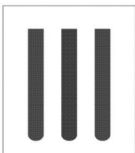
7 MR. FERGUSON: PNC Garcia?

8 MR. GARCIA: Yes. Past National Commander
9 Garcia. Scholarships, are we waiting for next
10 year's budget to pay out these scholarships?

11 MR. FERGUSON: Yes. That -- that's what will
12 happen. It will be done. In other words, get that.
13 Because what happened was, last year, when I turned
14 around and put it in, we had to pay Chris this year.
15 So the opposite, when the budget -- the budget
16 closed in -- 30th June. So that's why, when this --
17 we tried to get this up, this money's already done,
18 we have to have it for the next year. That's why he
19 has that money in there.

20 MR. GARCIA: So is it appropriate to do two
21 scholarships for this budget that add extra money to
22 the following year?

23 MR. FERGUSON: Well, one of the things we're
24 trying to do, and I'll spit this out real quick, if
25 this would help out. We're trying to change the



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1 fiscal year. We can't change the fiscal year until
2 we get our 990s done in with our audits. And that's
3 one of the things that were done. If you notice how
4 many audits that he had up there in the room, so we
5 had to change that. So because our fiscal year,
6 what we're trying to propose, which was passed at
7 the last convention, but we can't do it until these
8 are done, was pass it from 1st September to 30th
9 August. That way, it would always cover a national
10 convention. So then you're not living in the
11 previous year commander's budget. So -- and that's
12 -- we -- we've got to do that. So that would --
13 that would rectify what you're asking for.

14 MR. GARCIA: Okay. Thank you, Commander.

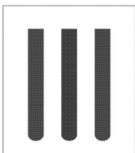
15 MR. FERGUSON: Yes. Anybody else got any
16 questions real quick? Yes, Patriot McIntosh?

17 MR. MCINTOSH: McIntosh, national historian. I
18 have a question about the Bylaws Committee. How many
19 of the Bylaws Committee members are currently in
20 attendance?

21 MR. FERGUSON: If you're a Bylaws Committee
22 member, please raise your hand so I can do the
23 count.

24 MR. MCINTOSH: Six are present.

25 MR. FERGUSON: Is that eight chairs?



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1 MR. MCINTOSH: I saw six or seven.

2 MR. FERGUSON: Okay. And pertaining to
3 McIntosh?

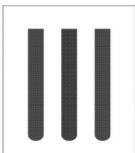
4 MR. MCINTOSH: The committee is -- has -- will
5 normally be made up of nine members. If not all of
6 the nine members are at convention, the commanders
7 are appointed additional -- dealt people from the
8 convention floor as part of the Bylaws Committee.
9 And they don't have nine. I'm volunteering to be
10 appointed to the committee.

11 MR. FERGUSON: I'll take that into
12 consideration. Thank you, Major McIntosh. Thank
13 you. Does anybody else have any questions? Any
14 other things? If not, sergeant-at-arms?

15 MR. WITT: Thank you. Please stand.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Atten. Hut.

17 (Moph Convention concluded at 5:02 p.m. ET)
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PROCEEDINGS

MR. OLIVAREZ: Board to review the current
bylaws that were submitted to here.

MR. WETZEL: You don't have to do that. Felix
-- oh Felix, give it up. Him, Marines, we're all
alike.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: We've had enough
disagreement for one day. I'm left-handed so --

MR. OLIVAREZ: All right. Starting with the
bylaws -- or roll call. So Craig Wertheim from
Florida?

MR. WERTHEIM: Here.

MR. OLIVAREZ: Francis Figueroa?

MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Here.

MR. OLIVAREZ: And then Gus?

MR. WILSON: Scott Wilson.

MR. WITTSCHACK: Here.

MR. OLIVAREZ: Keith?

MR. WITTENBEL: Here.

MR. GRAY: Which one?

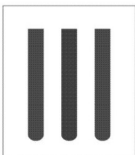
MR. OLIVAREZ: Oh, we have Keith Arizona.

MR. GRAY: Present.

MR. OLIVAREZ: Keith Oregon.

MR. WITTENBEL: Here.

MR. OLIVAREZ: Raymond?



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1 MR. WETZEL: Here.

2 MR. OLIVAREZ: And Mitch?

3 MR. REED: Here.

4 MR. OLIVAREZ: And I'll chair myself. Robert
5 Olivarez. All right. So we have bylaws resolution
6 2024-01, which is National Finance Committee
7 meetings. Let's open the floor for discussion. You
8 have any questions over those -- with the proposed
9 bylaws resolution?

10 MR. MCINTOSH: From the committee or the floor?

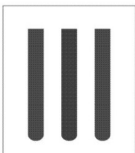
11 MR. WETZEL: Nothing has been changed. Nothing
12 has been discussed. So I -- I don't see any changes
13 necessary.

14 THE REPORTER: What was your name, sir?

15 MR. WETZEL: Oh, I'm sorry. Raymond Wetzel.

16 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

17 MR. WERTHEIM: Senior Vice Commander, we voted
18 and -- Craig Wertheim, committee member from
19 Department of Florida. So we have voted and
20 discussed each of these bylaws, and, you know, we
21 submitted them to the membership already. You know,
22 to have a third time going around to come up with
23 the same solution. I make a motion that we --
24 unless anyone has any change in their -- the way
25 that they are voting on these bylaws, that we vote



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1 to submit these as stated and adjourn the meeting.

2 MR. WETZEL: I, Raymond Wetzel, second the
3 motion.

4 MR. MCINTOSH: He didn't make a motion.

5 MR. REED: He didn't make a motion.

6 MR. WETZEL: I thought he did. Yeah, he did.

7 MR. OLIVAREZ: Nick McIntosh, go ahead.

8 MR. MCINTOSH: Can you take questions from the
9 floor?

10 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes.

11 MR. MCINTOSH: Okay. On the first four --

12 MR. SMRT: Get your microphone on.

13 MR. OLIVAREZ: Microphone.

14 MR. MCINTOSH: On the first --

15 MR. OLIVAREZ: No, no. Turn it on.

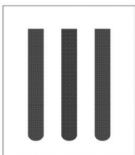
16 MR. SMRT: It's on.

17 MR. MCINTOSH: Thank you very much. Nick
18 McIntosh. On the first four, who on the committee
19 wrote those bylaw amendments?

20 MR. OLIVAREZ: Not -- nobody on the committee
21 wrote these. These were brought over from a
22 previous year.

23 MR. MCINTOSH: They were brought over from a
24 previous year?

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes, sir.



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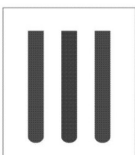
1 MR. MCINTOSH: Anything from a previous year
2 dies when our convention starts. You cannot go
3 through bylaws from a previous year and say that it
4 was created. So I mean, right now, any of them --
5 any of them that you brought over are going to be in
6 violation of the bylaws, if you go ahead and approve
7 them.

8 MR. REED: We can't approve.

9 MR. ADKINS: Patriot Adkins, national adjutant.
10 I was on the Bylaws Committee up until the time I
11 was appointed and confirmed as national adjutant. I
12 wrote those as a member of the Bylaws Committee. So
13 that makes the point moot.

14 MR. SMRT: Patriot Smrt, asking a question for
15 clarification. It seems that the command -- the
16 person in -- responsible as the chair for the
17 committee stated that they were held over from a
18 previous year. And you're sticking with that
19 statement, correct?

20 MR. OLIVAREZ: Apparently, I misspoke, because
21 I was -- when I -- we brought forward, we were under
22 the impression that they were brought over from the
23 previous year, not written by a former member of the
24 Bylaws Committee. So we did not get clarification
25 when he left.



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1 MR. SMRT: Well, the concern is, obviously, it
2 was forwarded by a -- an individual, not as a
3 committee, even though you signed off as a
4 committee, but they were previous years, sort of
5 rebroadcast, retyped, resent.

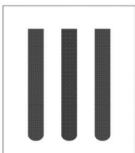
6 MR. OLIVAREZ: That's correct. --

7 MR. SMRT: It seems to me that that's just a
8 little too sly by half. One person submitted.
9 Usually, you can't have just one person submitting a
10 bylaw and then tagging it with the Bylaw Committee.
11 It has to be, you know, fully formatted, adjusted,
12 reviewed, assessed, then voted on.

13 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department --
14 Craig Wertheim, Bylaws Committee, Department of
15 Florida. Every bylaw that is submitted before -- to
16 the body was reviewed by the committee and voted on
17 by the committee. So they -- in other words, they --
18 whether -- regardless of where they were submitted,
19 how they were submitted, I -- you're shaking your
20 head, but whether it was submitted by Chuck or it
21 was submitted by --

22 MR. WETZEL: Whoever.

23 MR. WERTHEIM: -- the year before. And again,
24 I need clarification now because I didn't -- the --
25 because that does bring up a question now, was it by



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1 Patriot Adkinson [sic] or was it held -- brought
2 forward? Because that's an issue. But we did do
3 our diligence, and debated, and --

4 MR. WETZEL: Made corrections.

5 MR. WERTHEIM: -- made corrections, and again,
6 had it legally reviewed, and we did what we were
7 supposed to do regarding the bylaws. Now we need to
8 find out if it needs to be -- right.

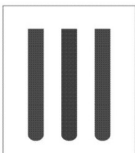
9 MR. GARCIA: Mr. Chairman, PNC Garcia. I need
10 clarification. I mean, you said last year, and
11 Patriot National Adjutant Adkins said that it was
12 before he got appointed as a national adjutant. If
13 I'm -- in my understanding, he's a national
14 adjutant, so he went from the bylaws to national
15 adjutant last year, but it was in 2023, which was
16 still under Commander Carder. Am I correct?

17 MR. WERTHEIM: No.

18 MR. GARCIA: No.

19 MR. SMRT: If you look at the dates of
20 submission of these, even though they're talking
21 bylaws chair, you have an 11-12-23, okay? And are
22 we going to walk back to find out exactly when
23 Patriot -- Patriot Adjutant was taken off the
24 committee and forwarded?

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: So the -- Patriot Adjutant was



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1 removed October. We still had the -- we had these
2 given to us in September when we started. We
3 reviewed them even after he was gone and proceeded
4 forward with the first five, I believe, that were in
5 front of us.

6 MR. ADKINS: Mr. Chairman, the Bylaws number 1,
7 Finance Committees, is not a holdover from the
8 previous year. Bylaws resolution number 2 is not
9 held over from the previous year. Bylaws number 3
10 was considered, but was -- you know, had some errors
11 in it.

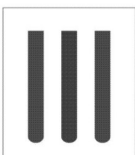
12 MR. REED: Language errors.

13 MR. ADKINS: Yep. So it was resubmitted with
14 the corrections that were, you know -- you know,
15 discovered last year. And Bylaws number 4 was not
16 considered last year. It was put in a couple of
17 years ago. It wasn't considered when we were up in
18 South Dakota.

19 MR. REED: South Dakota. Right.

20 MR. ADKINS: But you know, we -- when -- it --
21 we reviewed it again, we found some little bit of
22 problems, cleaned it up, and it's been resubmitted
23 as a new resolution. And Bylaws number 5 is a new
24 resolution.

25 MR. REED: It came to light in June, right?



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1 THE REPORTER: What is your name, sir?

2 MR. ADKINS: Chuck Adkins, national adjutant.

3 THE REPORTER: Not you.

4 MR. ADKINS: My apologies.

5 MR. WETZEL: That's not --

6 THE REPORTER: No, not you, sir.

7 MR. REED: Mitch Reed. Mitch Reed.

8 THE REPORTER: Thank you so much.

9 MR. REED: Senior vice commander, Oklahoma.

10 MR. ADKINS: Chuck Adkins, national adjutant.

11 MR. REED: There was one came in the latter

12 part of June, which was almost late. And we --

13 MR. OLIVAREZ: We're not -- we're not in June

14 yet.

15 MR. REED: Yes.

16 MR. SMRT: The concern is, if it was set aside

17 in a -- in a bin, in the hopper, like they do in the

18 -- in the Congress, just laying around, and if it

19 was going to be considered for future years, there

20 was more than enough time, obviously, for previous

21 or even new to be forwarded through the proper

22 channels of chapter to the department forward. You

23 know, I -- I'm still having a difficulty with that,

24 but I -- I'll reserve comment for a second issue.

25 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: I'm sorry. I -- Patriot

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1 Schaltenbrand --

2 MR. REED: Department.

3 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: -- Department of Kentucky,
4 commander. I don't remember seeing Mister -- or
5 Patriot Adkins' name on the bylaws list from that
6 time period. So --

7 MR. OLIVAREZ: He was on the list and then was
8 removed exactly right when he was appointed as
9 adjutant.

10 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: What year -- what -- when?

11 MR. ADKINS: In October.

12 MR. OLIVAREZ: He was -- he was removed before
13 October 1st.

14 MR. REED: Right.

15 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: Before October 1st?

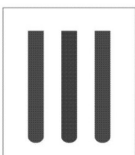
16 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes.

17 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: Okay.

18 MR. ADKINS: Now, the question I have for the
19 Department of Kentucky, they are submitting a
20 resolution --

21 MR. SCHALTENBRAND: Name, please.

22 MR. ADKINS: -- which is -- oh. Again, Chuck
23 Adkins, national adjutant. Which is a rehash of a
24 resolution they submitted last year. So if we're
25 going to apply these rules to the first five, should



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1 not the same rule apply to them?

2 MR. SMRT: Explanation, Adjutant Kentucky. We
3 have cleaned up, just as others have, but we brought
4 it to the department at the department convention,
5 got a vote from the department, and followed every
6 rule of the bylaws to submit it to the Bylaws
7 Committee from the department, signed by me and
8 forwarded to the adjutant. We used the system
9 appropriately. Yes. As of our -- that was the date
10 of our convention.

11 MR. ADKINS: Once again, the NEC by the bylaws
12 is allowed to draft -- Chuck Adkins, national
13 adjutant, is allowed to draft and submit resolutions
14 to be considered by the NEC between the national
15 conventions and to the Supreme Body during the
16 convention.

17 MR. WETZEL: Excuse me. My -- Raymond Wetzel,
18 senior vice. This is my first year on the Bylaws
19 Committee. I have a -- I have a lot to learn. I
20 understand that. But some of you may or may not
21 know me. I'm a very transparent type of person, and
22 I'm above the board. And I take exception to the
23 fact that some of you guys are thinking that we're
24 trying to slide things through underhandedly. I
25 guarantee you that you can ask any one of these, I



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1 was the biggest pain in the butt there was because I
2 ask questions all the time --

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes, he did.

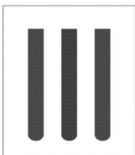
4 MR. WETZEL: -- about everything. So I'm
5 telling you right here and now, anything that you
6 see written here was discussed very thoroughly,
7 corrected very thoroughly, sent off to the judge
8 advocate, came back with corrections, and re-voted
9 upon. So you're talking about the bylaws? Well, we
10 did it. We are the Bylaws Committee, and we did it
11 by the bylaws. I'm telling you that right up front.
12 So like I'm saying, I do take things personal, even
13 though I shouldn't, I do, because we are men of
14 honor, supposedly.

15 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Yeah. I was going to say,
16 and women.

17 MR. WETZEL: And women, too. We are patriots
18 of honor, and -- let's put it that way. So take it
19 any way that you want to take it, but that -- I --
20 I'm telling you up front. Any questions that you
21 have, they were all done above the board, bottom
22 line.

23 MR. OLIVAREZ: Patriot Middleton.

24 MR. MIDDLETON: Patriot Doug Middleton
25 (phonetic), a delegate from Georgia. Sir, we're not



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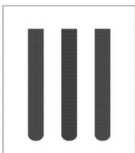
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1 questioning your integrity. Don't -- please do not
2 -- do not think of it that way. Many of us have had
3 many years of experience on this committee. And we
4 have found from time to time, in the best -- even
5 when we think everything is the way it's supposed to
6 be, there -- exceptions happen that are
7 unintentional. Like several years ago, the Bylaws
8 Committee worked long and hard all year long, but
9 because of a thing that the adjutant did, the bylaws
10 were not submitted to the -- to the NEC in a timely
11 manner, and all that work was thrown out the -- by
12 the convention because the rules were not followed.
13 Well, it had nothing to do with the Bylaws
14 Committee. It actually was an administrative error
15 of the adjutant at that time, which was not Chuck,
16 by the way.

17 So we're not -- we're not meaning to question
18 the integrity. We've all been where you're sitting,
19 pretty much, many of us for many years. But we want
20 to make sure that the bylaws are followed by not
21 only the Bylaws Committee, but the convention, et
22 cetera, et cetera. So yeah, it -- it's -- the best
23 bylaw -- the best bylaws that we can make will be
24 because of some very robust discussion of people
25 with differing opinions. And ultimately, that gets

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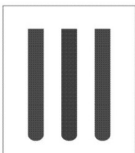
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1 decided by the Supreme Body. We'll all get to stand
2 up if we have something we want to say, we'll get
3 one shot, maybe two if we get, you know, permission
4 to speak a second time. But there -- there's no --
5 please, there's nothing about integrity,
6 transparency, or anything else here. We -- we
7 appreciate the work that you do, but we want to have
8 a robust discussion to make sure that all the
9 perspectives and points of view are -- are
10 presented.

11 MR. OLIVAREZ: PNC Taylor.

12 MR. TAYLOR: PNC Fred Taylor. I think the
13 tricky part of it is this for all of us to
14 understand, when we do business at a convention,
15 whatever doesn't get passed by the body becomes
16 moot. And I'll give you an example. We have, at
17 the end of the convention, the commander's going to
18 gavel. Five minutes later, a new commander is going
19 to stand up there, same day, same meeting virtually,
20 except it's a new year. Whatever didn't get passed
21 when that gavel stop -- goes down and the new
22 commander takes over, it has to be done next year.
23 I don't know if that process was followed here. I
24 have no idea. But I think that is the substance of
25 the question, who submitted it, and when they



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1 submitted it, I think everyone shares.

2 MR. WERTHEIM: So these were all submitted in
3 September. They were reviewed. So --

4 MR. FRANKLIN: Name?

5 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
6 Florida. They were all -- they were all submitted
7 in September, reviewed, debated, voted on, approval,
8 six yea, zero nay. November 12th, 2023 is when we
9 had voted and signed off. In between that -- in
10 between that, it had been submitted to the JAG for a
11 review, came back, and after that review, we had
12 voted, and it was done. So we went to a meeting of
13 -- we had a meeting. We had a discussion. We made
14 changes, went to the JAG, came back. We -- if there
15 were any changes by him that would have to be done,
16 that was done. Then we voted, and that's how it
17 ended up.

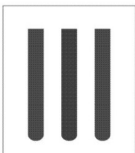
18 MR. OLIVAREZ: Adjutant Smrt.

19 MR. SMRT: Yes. Smrt, Department of Kentucky.
20 I'm assuming you're referencing only those supposed
21 bylaws that have the modern stamp of the Bylaws
22 Committee?

23 MR. WERTHEIM: Yes.

24 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes. Correct.

25 MR. SMRT: Because obviously, no changes can be



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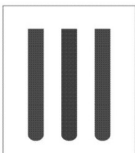
1 made to things submitted to you by departments?

2 MR. OLIVAREZ: No. Correct.

3 MR. SMRT: As a point of, you know, just
4 historical reference, for the longest time, the
5 order attempted to keep a one person, one small
6 group at bay, where bylaws -- not resolutions, but
7 bylaws amendment, and that's something that could be
8 discussed at a later time, how the conflict of
9 calling a amendment is being called a resolution,
10 and how there are two separate versions of that in
11 the bylaws themselves, makes that confusing, we
12 tried to make sure that it had the work laid up from
13 the lowest level. There were many years where
14 commanders, by virtue of having unique control of
15 other individuals, submitted things, but didn't have
16 the stamp of a department. So it wasn't really
17 organic. It was selectively moved. And that's why
18 we're concerned about a single individual pushing
19 something in. Yes, the committee finally reviews it
20 after some consideration, some legal opinion, or
21 review. Obviously, the JAG is not a member of the
22 committee.

23 MR. OLIVAREZ: Right.

24 MR. SMRT: And then you have to move forward.
25 And you ratified that what you're seeing, and



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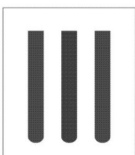
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1 presenting, and date stamping is then either
2 approved or rejected, based upon your thing for
3 submission to the body. Obviously, we'll still have
4 a robust discussion of this on the floor. We're
5 just trying to point this out early, that that's the
6 first example of things. So if there's a ruling
7 that you're going to go, I don't know what you want
8 to do, or you just want to move forward, the only
9 question I have now is, will we, as Kentucky, be
10 able to defend our bylaw resolution here at this
11 committee before we defend it on the floor? Because
12 your motion was to just accept everything, leave,
13 you know, or close the meeting and -- and --

14 MR. OLIVAREZ: Worry about --

15 MR. SMRT: Got it. If I may point a personal
16 privilege, just promise I'll release the mic for a
17 while. Every one of these summaries for the
18 original packet that was sent out was listed, you
19 know, as the 2024 dash whatever number given to it,
20 and just a generic summary of what was contained in
21 that as a short crib note or reading CliffsNotes
22 before you started digging in. With the exception,
23 notable, and personally frustrating, 2024-14 was
24 written up in its summary with an editorial opinion.
25 We in previous years have asked that no one render



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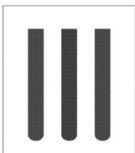
1 "an opinion," you render, as a committee, either
2 your approval or disapproval to forward, but you
3 don't disparage the nature of what the amendment is
4 in your summary. And that is a little frustrating,
5 that it's sort of like adding a little cheating at
6 the end when it says, "If approved, this will hamper
7 and restrict the Bylaws Committee from carrying out
8 its diligent duties and responsibilities as
9 currently defined in the bylaws." I'm not sure who
10 wrote that statement, but that is already indicating
11 an opinion and a direction of the committee instead
12 of just presenting exactly what we have asked the
13 committee to review as the resolution that came from
14 the Department of Kentucky. Comment, sirs and lady?

15 MR. GRAY: Keith Gray, Bylaws Committee,
16 Department of Arizona. To answer your first
17 question, we will review each one today
18 individually, not as a whole. So that would -- out
19 of turn, so we'll get that correct. So yes, you
20 will have -- yes, you will have time to do it. Yes?
21 I'm not -- yes, you'll have time to defend it here
22 in this community prior to moving forward.

23 MR. WITTSCHACK: Name, please.

24 MR. GRAY: I did. Did you catch it?

25 MR. WITTSCHACK: Keith Gray.



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1 MR. GRAY: Keith Gray, Bylaws Committee,
2 Department of Arizona. Everyone will be reviewed
3 individually at the committee moving forward. To go
4 back to the other four, they were submitted prior to
5 the national adjutant being appointed. My first
6 notes that I have on them would be the meeting on
7 October 3rd. So that means they were submitted the
8 month prior, to get that under the water. As far as
9 the last half, remind me again?

10 MR. TAYLOR: Who wrote the opinion?

11 MR. GRAY: Oh.

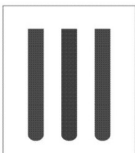
12 MR. TAYLOR: Who wrote the opinion?

13 MR. SMRT: The editorial opinion rather than a
14 generic summary, so as not to prejudice --

15 MR. OLIVAREZ: Robert Olivarez, chair. That
16 would've come from the national judge advocate.

17 MR. SMRT: Again, sir, he's not a member of the
18 committee. This was reviewed even in past years
19 that the national judge advocate has no voice in
20 your committee, other than to render opinions and
21 assistance to you. And if he wrote this, he doesn't
22 have authorization to do that. It -- it's merely,
23 supposedly, supposed to be a quick summary, not a,
24 oh, hey, if you do this, you're going to suck.

25 MR. GRAY: So we need to make the correction on



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1 the record when we go to the body to disregard that
2 statement.

3 MR. SMRT: Well --

4 MR. ADKINS: That's a little hard to do.

5 MR. SMRT: Thank you. The shot is already out.
6 Hopefully, it just grazes our ear.

7 MR. ADKINS: Patriot Adkins, national adjutant.
8 Last year, we had these same members complain that
9 the judge advocate did provide a review. Regardless
10 of how it was written, what I asked for is we set
11 the judge advocate's review aside and discuss the
12 merits of them without them. And that's what we
13 did. Does it make it hard to pull back? I agree.
14 Yeah, it does. It's out there. But I would ask
15 that all members of this fantastic organization do
16 their best to set that aside and vote on the merits
17 of the bylaw in itself.

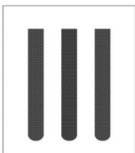
18 MR. MIDDLETON: Ladies and gentlemen, you have
19 an open motion on your floor.

20 MR. SMRT: Yeah.

21 MR. ADKINS: Well, the discussion. This is
22 discussion.

23 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
24 Florida. I withdraw my motion.

25 MR. REED: He didn't really get it out.



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1 MR. WERTHEIM: Yeah. The motion to adjourn, to
2 vote and with -- adjourn.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: A second to withdraw?

4 MR. WETZEL: I would --

5 MR. SMRT: It never got a second.

6 MR. WETZEL: Yeah, I did. Raymond Wetzel,
7 senior vice, California. I remove my second.

8 MR. SMRT: I thought someone second. You --

9 MR. WETZEL: I did -- I did second.

10 MR. SMRT: Oh, you did?

11 MR. WETZEL: Yes, sir. I did.

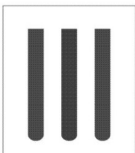
12 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yeah.

13 MR. SMRT: So you have to withdraw the motion
14 and the second. Both done.

15 MR. REED: Both done.

16 THE REPORTER: I apologize for interjecting.
17 I'm having a lot of difficulty keeping the record
18 clear, having multiple people speaking up, and not
19 at a microphone, and not indicating who they are
20 first. So if you have something to say, please
21 loudly state your name, followed by whatever
22 statement needs to be made. Please and thank you.

23 MR. FERGUSON: And everybody say Bylaws
24 Committee. You may be a department commander, but
25 you're a bylaws committee.



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1 MR. REED: Right.

2 MR. MIDDLETON: State your name, sir? I'm
3 sorry. You weren't in the microphone.

4 MR. FERGUSON: Oh, I'm sorry.

5 MR. ADKINS: This is Chuck Adkins, national
6 adjutant. Anytime you hear that somebody speaks and
7 does not state their name, poke the guy next to you,
8 and he will, you know, have them stated. Don't
9 enjoy the poking there.

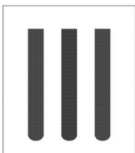
10 MR. MCINTOSH: McIntosh. Here's another
11 microphone for you.

12 MR. SMRT: Thank you.

13 MR. WETZEL: I got --

14 MR. OLIVAREZ: Go ahead.

15 MR. WETZEL: Raymond Wetzel, Bylaws Committee.
16 Personally, I did not read the summaries because we
17 didn't have the summaries when we were voting and
18 discussing the bylaws. So this, the summary, is a
19 afterthought, you know, written by the judge
20 advocate. So all I'm saying is that you guys are
21 asking us to vote on its merits. Well, we -- we
22 voted on the merits before we even had a summary
23 presented to us by the judge advocate because, first
24 of all, the judge advocate did not know anything
25 about these bylaws when we were voting on them. So,



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1 I mean, if you guys say that you've been on the
2 Bylaws Committee, then you know that this summary is
3 the very last thing that is written once they are --
4 once they are presented out to us. You know, these
5 were just put -- presented to us 15 days -- well,
6 what was it ago? A week ago --

7 MR. OLIVAREZ: A week ago.

8 MR. WETZEL: -- two weeks ago by the -- by the
9 adjutant. So that was the first opportunity that
10 we've had to read a summary, but we did not have the
11 summary when we were voting on it. All we had was
12 the resolutions that were presented to us to vote
13 upon, and -- or to correct, or to whatever we did
14 with them at that point in time. So just, you know,
15 all the bylaws were voted upon on its own merit.

16 MR. OLIVAREZ: Patriot Smrt.

17 MR. SMRT: I must -- I'm back at the
18 microphone. Smrt, Department of Kentucky, as well
19 as delegate from the chapter. Frustrating and gives
20 one pause. Once again, I point out, adjutant has no
21 other responsibility, other than to render opinion
22 and assistance to the committee -- or excuse me,
23 judge advocate, and does not have any place to be
24 the author of the things. I have multiple years of
25 past experience on the Bylaws Committee. It was our



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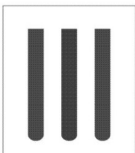
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1 duty, not only to review and -- and work with, if
2 people submitted in time, to help them get it
3 correctly for the process, otherwise we had to
4 accept and vote only on what was submitted from the
5 department. But once we assembled our packet, then
6 we as a committee had to put together the summary.
7 We didn't job it out to anybody else.

8 Now, that may have been unique to, you know, us
9 who had been on previous committees. And I just
10 want to forward out, that is equally disturbing that
11 this was farmed out, again, to the judge advocate
12 and then just cut and paste because it's your
13 document. And if you gave someone else the
14 responsibility for your document, shame on you,
15 guys.

16 MR. ADKINS: Chuck Adkins, national adjutant. I
17 can remember during the years 2016 and 2017, where
18 the -- where the judge advocate was live on the
19 bylaws meeting and was able to give real-time
20 opinions on resolution amendments that were going to
21 be considered as resolutions. Thank you.

22 MR. ABBEY: To point privilege, Ed Abbey,
23 parliamentarian pro term, freshly confirmed. A
24 motion was made to adjourn, seconded. It cannot be
25 withdrawn. It has to be voted up or down per



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1 procedure.

2 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay. Calling vote to adjourn.

3 All those in favor? All opposed?

4 ALL: Aye.

5 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay.

6 MR. ABBEY: And actually, the vote would be nay.

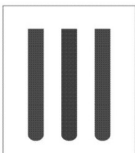
7 GROUP: Nay.

8 MR. ABBEY: Okay.

9 MR. OLIVAREZ: Patriot Middleton.

10 MR. MIDDLETON: Doug Middleton, delegate
11 Georgia. First of all, just a little personal
12 privilege. If you look at Page 81 of 94 of the
13 current bylaws, number two there, you'll notice, if
14 you look at the members that actually wrote the
15 original version of this -- of these bylaws, three
16 of them are right here. So there is a bit of
17 knowledge here.

18 In previous years, certainly, I know when I was
19 chairman of this committee and as -- also as a
20 member, we never published a synopsis of the bylaws.
21 We simply looked at them in committee, made our
22 recommendations, made the little notation at the top
23 there, how we voted and yes or nay -- you know, vote
24 -- you know, the committee, yea or nay. We -- and
25 we had the actual judge advocate in attendance at



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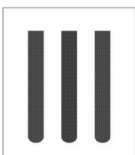
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1 our meetings. So we were getting real-time legal
2 advice as to whether the bylaw was legally
3 sufficient or whatever, however you want to do it.
4 I would strongly suggest that you go back to that.

5 I don't doubt for one minute that you guys
6 voted on these bylaws, yea, nay, or whatever it was.
7 And I don't know who -- you know, if -- why the
8 judge advocate felt a requirement to, you know,
9 annotate every single one of these things with an
10 opinion. That opinion should've happened in
11 committee, been discussed in committee, and -- and
12 accepted or denied, whatever. So I would suggest
13 that it -- as you move forward, that you no longer
14 do that synopsis thing. Just give us the
15 resolutions, you know, one through whatever, and
16 when we -- when you -- you'll vote on them; you'll
17 bring them to the floor, and hopefully, we'll have
18 robust discussion about each and every one or if you
19 do your job well or whatever it is and it's an
20 obvious thing, there won't be a robust discussion.
21 It will simply pass. But we don't need this
22 additional, you know, anecdotal whatever it is, this
23 is my opinion. Whatever it is it is this particular
24 case, I have to admit, and I don't know how I'm
25 going to vote on that, but it is very prejudicial,



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1 and you can't put the genie back in the bottle.

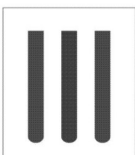
2 So you know, saying, you know, and I hope you
3 do, guys, gals, you shouldn't consider what the
4 adjuvant said in the thing that you sent out to
5 everybody and everybody's read, you know, and just
6 vote whatever. It's out there. Just don't do it
7 again, would be my suggestion. Thank you.

8 MR. ADKINS: Chuck Adkins, national adjutant.
9 He met national judge advocate, not adjutant.

10 MR. MIDDLETON: Yes. That's correct.

11 MR. OLIVAREZ: PNC Siebels.

12 MR. SIEBELS: PNC Siebels. I want to --
13 totally agree with Patriot Middleton. Nobody's
14 attacking your integrity. That's not the point.
15 It's the end product that some of us have a problem
16 with. But let me go into the next stage of what I
17 want to say. I think this committee should be
18 elected, not appointed. That would solve a lot of
19 problems. I could write a book about that. But I'm
20 going to leave that with the committee. If you want
21 to bring that to the convention body, please do so.
22 But I do think is -- you could tell how many you
23 want, where they're from, that kind of stuff, but
24 they should be elected, should not be appointed.
25 It's a standing committee. I think that would solve



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1 a lot of problems. That's not going to happen this
2 year; there's a committee this year, but it can
3 happen next year. So I'm going to leave it with the
4 committee, if you want to keep it, or in the course
5 of Robert's Rules, I'll make a motion to move
6 forward. What do you think?

7 MR. OLIVAREZ: I do think -- I see -- I do
8 think it'd be a good idea to have some of the
9 committee's members elected, but we also have to
10 make sure that we have it across the board and not
11 just contained in one area or one specific region.
12 We have to make sure it's fair for everybody within
13 the order.

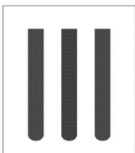
14 MR. SIEBELS: One could agree with that.

15 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes.

16 MR. SIEBELS: But I leave with the committee
17 then because if we don't, I'm going to bring it up
18 as motion on forward.

19 MR. OLIVAREZ: So we'll bring it up with the
20 committee and decide the best course of action for
21 this and then bring it forth in front of the NAC.

22 MR. SIEBELS: Okay. But please, don't take it
23 as personal. Nobody is attacking you. I have no
24 problem with anybody on this committee. But I do
25 have some problems with the end product.



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1 MR. ADKINS: Thank you, chairman. I do have
2 one -- this is Chuck Adkins, national adjutant. I
3 -- we did -- we kind of debated before on whether or
4 not the Bylaws Committee should be elected, and if
5 elected, by who, the NEC or the Supreme Body. But
6 the question is -- is does that not make them
7 national officers, and would give them a vote? And
8 be honest with you, I don't think the Bylaws
9 Committee should have a vote when they're in -- you
10 know, with the exception of within committee
11 deliberations. Ron, do you have --

12 MR. SIEBELS: If the Bylaws Committee has a
13 conflict of interest, then they don't vote.

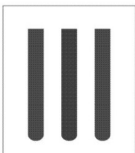
14 MR. ADKINS: Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Just trying
15 to make sure because, you know, it's like the judge
16 advocate. It's clear in there, even for the
17 adjutant, if there is something that they've
18 rendered opinion on, they get no vote, correct?
19 Smrt?

20 MR. SIEBELS: Yeah.

21 MR. ADKINS: Right? Judge advocate --

22 MR. SIEBELS: I just made the expectations
23 within that committee to work the details out.

24 MR. OLIVAREZ: All right. So my next question
25 is, which bylaws are the main root issues causing



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1 problems? So we can try to sort it out and process
2 to move forward with it?

3 MR. MIDDLETON: Well, I think you'll find that
4 out tomorrow.

5 MR. GARCIA: Okay. Mr. Chairman, Felix Garcia,
6 past national commander. I recommend you close the
7 questions from the floor and get this ball rolling.

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: Recommendation was to close. Any
9 questions from the floor? All in favor? Oh, go
10 ahead. Sorry. And sorry, discussion?

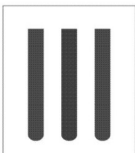
11 MR. MCINTOSH: Discussion. There's two bylaws
12 in a row on the National Finance Committee. And
13 while I've been on the Bylaws Committee a number of
14 times, I don't have any expertise on the internal
15 functioning of the Finance Committee -- I mean,
16 yeah, the Finance Committee. I would recommend that
17 you all ask the expert on the Finance Committee
18 since 2001, right over here in the orange.

19 MR. WERTHEIM: Orange? Orange? Real men wear
20 pink.

21 MR. ADKINS: He's got his flamingos on.

22 MR. OLIVAREZ: Oh. What was I saying? Oh, and
23 any other discussion?

24 MR. SMRT: Question. Smrt, Kentucky. I see
25 similar dates on the first couple. They're all



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1 dated, obviously, on the meeting supposedly of 11-
2 12-23. Can you explain the disparate six yea, zero
3 nay, on the first one. Nine approve and zero nay,
4 zero abstain, on the other one, same date? Did
5 people come in at a later time?

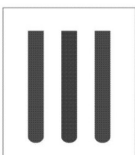
6 MR. OLIVAREZ: No. All of these bylaws were
7 all voted on by people, and I kept track. I just
8 happened to sign it on that same day once I was done
9 going through everything.

10 MR. SMRT: So the meetings and discussion could
11 be a different date?

12 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes. So this time, the sign on
13 date was probably the next month when we -- to sign
14 on after we went all through it and reviewed with
15 the secretary and everybody else to make sure I had
16 everything corrected. I didn't want to sign
17 something and have it saved and sent out without
18 having the correct yeas and nays. So I made it all
19 easy. Just wanted to all -- let everybody know I
20 did it at the exact same time. I didn't forget
21 anything, and I sent it all out.

22 MR. SMRT: How -- may I ask how many different
23 separate meetings then in and around that time that
24 the Bylaws Committee --

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: -- we have two meetings a month



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1 from --

2 MR. SMRT: Okay.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: -- October through last month.

4 MR. ADKINS: September.

5 MR. OLIVAREZ: Sorry. September. No, sorry.

6 No. For that we had two meetings a month in

7 October, all the way up until June.

8 MR. SMRT: And what's --

9 MR. WETZEL: Second and fourth -- second and
10 fourth Tuesday of the month.

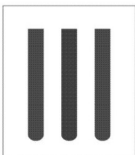
11 MR. OLIVAREZ: Second and fourth Tuesdays.

12 MR. SMRT: Okay. And specifically, for this, I
13 want to reiterate, it seems that the independent
14 actual committee that's being affected by this is
15 having to address, you know, or eat a possible
16 change to the committee operations. I don't see
17 coordination or discussion or submission because
18 once it's generated in the Bylaws Committee, we only
19 assume that you might have done your coordination
20 with the affected committee, but without the
21 chairman stating one way or the other. And that's
22 -- was Finance Committee coordinated for this?

23 MR. OLIVAREZ: No.

24 MR. SMRT: I find that as -- disturbing, sir.

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: Anything else? All right. We'll



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1 close the floor for questioning. All in favor of
2 closing?

3 ALL: Aye.

4 MR. OLIVAREZ: All opposed? Moving on with
5 resolution 24-001. We have proof that it was six
6 yeas and zero nays, and the National Committee
7 Section, National Finance Committee Paragraph J
8 reads, "The Finance Committee shall meet at least
9 twice each year once" -- yes. Oh. Oh, sorry.

10 MR. MIDDLETON: We've got a lot of questions
11 from the floor. You're wasting your time.

12 MR. OLIVAREZ: All right.

13 MR. REED: And ours.

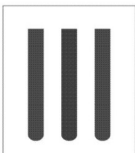
14 MR. MIDDLETON: Already done that.

15 MR. REED: That's right. We won't need to
16 open. Just bring to the body.

17 MR. OLIVAREZ: Does everybody approve the
18 readings to the body tomorrow? Again, I will ask,
19 is everybody -- the committee members, are you guys
20 okay with this resolution as the way it's written
21 and read?

22 ALL: Yes. Yeah. Yes. Yes.

23 MR. OLIVAREZ: Moving onto 24 -- 2024-2.
24 Everybody in the committee okay with the way
25 resolution is written and read?



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1 MR. WETZEL: Yes.

2 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Yes.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-3, all committee
4 members okay with the way it was written and read?

5 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

6 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024, are all
7 committee members okay with the way it was written
8 and read?

9 ALL: Yes. Yes.

10 MR. REED: -- Resolution number 4.

11 ALL: Resolution 4.

12 MR. REED: Okay. All right. Yes.

13 MR. MCINTOSH: I would -- are we closed to any
14 discussion from the floor?

15 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes.

16 MR. MCINTOSH: Okay. Enjoy tomorrow.

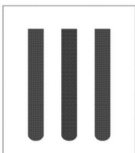
17 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2025 -- 2024-5, are
18 all committee members in agreement with the way it
19 was written and read?

20 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes.

21 MR. WETZEL: Correct. Yes.

22 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-06, are all
23 committee members in agreement with the -- that was
24 submitted, written and read?

25 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes.



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1 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-7, are all
2 committee members in agreement with the way it was
3 written and read?

4 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes.

5 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024, all committee
6 members agreement with resolution the way it was
7 written and read?

8 MR. REED: What, eight?

9 MR. OLIVAREZ: Eight. Sorry. Number eight.

10 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes.

11 MR. WETZEL: Oh, I said yes.

12 MR. REED: Oh. Oh.

13 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay. Number 20 -- 2024-9, are
14 all committee members in agreement with the way it
15 was written and read?

16 ALL: Yes.

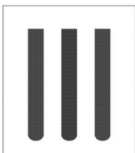
17 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-10, are all
18 committee members in agreement with the way it was
19 written and read?

20 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes.

21 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-11, are all
22 committee members in agreement with the way it was
23 written and read?

24 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-12, all



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1 committee members in agreement with the way those
2 are written and read?

3 ALL: Yes. Yes. Yes.

4 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-13, are all
5 committee members in agreement with the way it was
6 written and read?

7 ALL: Yes. Yes.

8 MR. REED: Say yes.

9 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 20 -- what was that?
10 Resolution 2024-14, are all committee members in
11 agreement with what is written and read?

12 ALL: Yes. Yes.

13 MR. OLIVAREZ: Resolution 2024-15 --

14 MR. WETZEL: This was submitted late. This was
15 -- after the time.

16 MR. OLIVAREZ: Are all committee members in
17 agreement with the way it was written and read?

18 ALL: No. No. No.

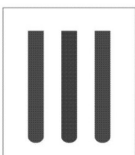
19 MR. WETZEL: No.

20 ALL: No.

21 MR. WITTSHACK: Are you going to ask why or --

22 MR. OLIVAREZ: Yes. I'd like to know why. Go
23 ahead, sir.

24 MR. WITTSHACK: There's no Article 14. You
25 can't --



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1 THE REPORTER: Sir, what is your name? And I --

2 MR. OLIVAREZ: Speak up.

3 THE REPORTER: -- just speak into a mic,
4 please.

5 MR. WITTSCHACK: Gus Wittschack, Bylaws
6 Committee. There is no Section -- there is no
7 Section 14. It's not in the bylaws.

8 MR. OLIVAREZ: Did you have anything?

9 MR. WETZEL: No. No.

10 MR. OLIVAREZ: Do you have anything? No? All
11 right.

12 MR. WETZEL: I have a -- I have a -- I've got a
13 question.

14 MR. OLIVAREZ: Go ahead.

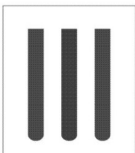
15 MR. WETZEL: Raymond Wetzel, committee member.
16 Is this adding a Section 14, or is it a change in
17 Section 14?

18 MR. WITTSCHACK: There is no Section 14.

19 MR. WETZEL: No, but that's what I'm saying,
20 because it says, "resolve."

21 MR. WITTSCHACK: Read the -- read the whole
22 thing.

23 MR. WETZEL: Oh, be changed. Okay. Yeah.
24 You're -- okay. I see it. Okay. My apologies. I
25 didn't see the last word. I wasn't -- I just --



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1 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: But -- Francis Figueroa,
2 Bylaws Committee.

3 MR. WITTSHACK: Page 40?

4 MR. WETZEL: 39.

5 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Shouldn't this be brought
6 to the floor by Georgia since it was submitted late?

7 MR. GARCIA: It's in Arizona.

8 MR. WITTSHACK: Arizona.

9 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Oh.

10 MR. WERTHEIM: Is that Arizona?

11 MR. WITTSHACK: Yes --

12 MR. WERTHEIM: Yeah, Arizona.

13 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Okay. My -- oh, I'm sorry.
14 I was looking at 16. I -- my apologies.

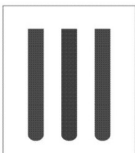
15 MR. OLIVAREZ: Okay. So that one's not going
16 forward. So 2024-15 will not be moving forward.
17 2024-16, is everybody in agreement with the way it
18 was written and read?

19 MR. WETZEL: Yes.

20 ALL: Yes. Yes.

21 MR. OLIVAREZ: Any other comments on any other
22 bylaws that will be presented tomorrow? Any other
23 patriots want for a question?

24 MR. SMRT: Patriot Smrt, Kentucky. Question.
25 Each meeting in the past that I have had experience



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1 with, we had robust minutes to follow. Did you
2 produce minutes? And if so, are those available for
3 review of each one of your meetings?

4 MR. OLIVAREZ: Secretary, do you have the
5 minutes?

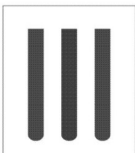
6 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Francis Figueroa, bylaws
7 committee. They recorded on the Google Meet, so
8 they're the recorded minutes. Yeah. So they're on
9 the drives. We would just have to get them from the
10 Google Drive. I don't know how we make that
11 available to the members.

12 MR. WERTHEIM: Adjutant, now you can speak.

13 MR. ADKINS: I'm listening to what she's saying
14 and thinking about how to go back and pull those and
15 then send them off to people who are interested.
16 It's --

17 MR. SMRT: Yeah. The frustration, as an
18 explanation, is I, as adjutant and former of
19 commander from numerous different positions, you may
20 have an audio recording, but that does not count as
21 the official minutes of any particular meeting.
22 They must be transcribed at which time then audio
23 recordings are destroyed because there can be only
24 one record. There can be only one.

25 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Yeah. It does -- it does



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1 both. The Google Meets transcribes it as well. So
2 we just have to pull it from the Google Drive, which
3 I'm sorry, I'm not all into the Google. But as soon
4 as we get it, we can definitely send that to you.

5 MR. MIDDLETON: Me, too.

6 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: And you as well.

7 MR. MIDDLETON: And department commander.

8 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: And department commander of
9 Kentucky as well. I'll have them send it out to the
10 masses.

11 MR. ABBEY: All, if I may, I appreciate the
12 labors that you're under. I appreciate the length
13 of the day, but everybody's starting to get a little
14 lax. Again, the transcriptionist needs your name and
15 your position, please.

16 MR. WERTHEIM: Craig Wertheim, Department of
17 Florida, Finance --

18 MR. REED: Bylaws.

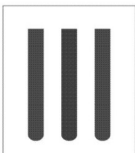
19 MR. WERTHEIM: -- Bylaws Committee. Motion to
20 adjourn the meeting.

21 MR. WITTSCHACK: Gus Wittschack, Bylaws
22 Committee. Second. Did you hear me?

23 MS. FIGUEROA-LOWE: Yes.

24 MR. WETZEL: I heard you.

25 MR. OLIVAREZ: All those in favor for



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1 adjourning the Bylaws Committee, say aye.

2 ALL: Aye.

3 MR. OLIVAREZ: All opposed?

4 (Meeting concluded at 6:07 p.m. ET)

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COUNTY OF ORANGE

I, LYN SI HERGERT, Court Reporter and Notary Public
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proceeding, and that said transcript is a true record of
the said proceeding.

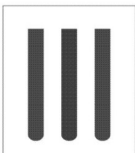
I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not of counsel for,
related to, or employed by any of the parties or
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Submitted on: June 11, 2025.



LYN SI HERGERT

Court Reporter, Notary Public



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