

AMERICAN LEGION POST 519

Executive Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday Feb 3 2026. Time: 5:15 pm. Location: Post 519 Palm Springs

Commander:

· One rap of the gavel...

- This meeting is about to open.
- All officers will take their stations. Sergeant-at-Arms, clear the hall and close the doors

· Three raps of the gavel... stand at attention

Colors in place, face our Nation's flag **Hand Salute ! 2 !**

Un-cover ...for the opening prayer through the POW/MIA ceremony

Chaplain, please offer an opening prayer.

Chaplain

Thank you God for blessing us all. Thank you for your wisdom and leading us along our journey to serve our fellow comrades.

John Picken

Sergeant-at-Arms only, re-cover. Sergeant-at-Arms, prepare to place the POW/MIA cover on the Empty Chair. Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th National Convention, encourages all American Legion organizations to implement the Empty Chair Ceremony at all meetings. As a continual physical symbol of the POW/MIAs and the cause for which we stand, namely their return or full accounting.

A POW/MIA Empty Chair is placed at all official meetings of The American Legion, as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America. This is a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves for this vital endeavor!

Sergeant-at-Arms, place the POW/MIA flag on the Empty Chair.

Sergeant-at-Arms only, un-cover

Please face the flag and join me in the 'Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag'.

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

- Everyone re-cover
- Remain Standing
- Please join me in reciting the preamble of the Constitution of The American Legion, slowly and in unison.

For God and Country,

we associate ourselves together

for the following purposes:

to uphold and defend

the Constitution of the United States of America;

to maintain law and order;

to foster and perpetuate

a one hundred percent Americanism;

to preserve the memories and incidents

of our associations in all Wars;

to inculcate a sense of individual obligation

to the community, state and nation;

to combat the autocracy

of both the classes and the masses;

to make right the master of might;

to promote peace and good will on earth;

to safeguard and transmit to posterity

the principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy;

to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

- One rap of the gavel ... seat the members
- I now declare this meeting of American Legion Post 519, Department of California, Executive Committee Meeting convened.

3. Order of business, roll call, adjutant

Commander – John Picken	Present
Adjutant – Allen Lane {stand in}	Present
Assistant Adjutant – Ernie Meeker	Present
1st Vice Commander – Ernie Meeker	Present
2nd Vice Commander – Lee Wilson	Running late
3rd Vice Commander – Kevin KOCH	Excused
Finance Officer – Garth Gilpin	Present
Chaplain – McCarvie Crawford	Present
Service Officer – Allen Lane	Present
Sergeant at Arms – Jeff Cole	Present
Judge Advocate – Skip Burt	Excused
Historian – James Snow	Excused
E-Board 1st Year – Mike Beresh	Present
E-Board 2nd Year – Doug Cron	Present
E-Board 3rd Year – Ron Webster	Present
E-Board 3rd Year – Rusanne Anthony	Present

Quorum: Confirmed.

John Picken

Thank you. So we have some upcoming district 21 meetings. March 15 to post 53 in Hemet. May 17, post 852, in Temecula. And then it's already been almost a year department convention, June 25 through the 2627 28 My apologies. I wrote that down wrong somehow. In June Visalia, fun time, you guys need to go at the district meetings, usual times. Sal's at eight. PCC is at nine. The American Legion is at 10 o'clock. This will note about the PCCs. The last few district meetings, we haven't had a PCC meeting because there haven't been enough of our past commanders attending. At this time, we'd like to introduce our Distinguished guests, Sergeant arms.

Jeff Cole

Guests; David Brambila, Jess Saucedo.

John Picken

He's commander. Okay. Minutes were distributed by email from last meeting. I need a motion to approve the executive board meetings from the last meeting.

Ernie Meeker

I'll make a motion.

John Picken

Ernest Meeker makes the motion.

Doug Cohn seconds any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, Any abstentions?

Passes. We're moving right along here.

Now we'll do the officer reports, post commanders report. This is going to be abbreviated because I think we might have taken care of something I was going to be reading this, but I will cut it short.

Good evening all. As most of you know I asked for Comrade Amato Salinas, Salinas to resign or to be removed from his appointed positions back in December, which he did. The next day, he rescinded the resignation. I advised him that he could not take back his resignation. He insisted that I did not follow the bylaws of Robert rules in processing his resignation, I stand by the current bylaws of post 519 and Robert's Rules that back up my decision. Quote, post 519 bylaws, Article Five, section 1c the commander shall appoint the following officers of the post, Adjutant, finance, officer, historian, Judge Advocate and service officer, Roberts Rules, 5028,

32 the power to appoint includes the power to remove, unless by law is restricted. Therefore, as Commander, I acted within my authority to remove the Judge Advocate, slash parliamentarian. This interpretation of my authority is backed up by the department judge advocate in the following email, basically in regard to your email, the citation the bylaws, which I already read to you, they fully agree on what I said. The above opinion, prepared by John Hudson, Department of department, associate judge advocate, the American Legion Department of California, is confirmed in regard to your email. What I basically cited was that Mr. Salinas was saying that we had to go by department bylaw. Bylaws in regards to appointed officers department, Judge Advocate says, No, it's only for department. Bylaws does not fall down to district, area or post. That's why we have our own bylaws. If our bylaws don't cover it, we follow Robert's Rules, end of story. Thank you for listening to that. That was my report. First vice?

Ernie Meeker

Nothing to report at this time.

John Picken

Thank you, sir, Adjutant, you have anything for us?

Allen Lane

I have nothing to report, commander.

John Picken

Thank you. Second Vice Wilson?

Lee Wilson

Sir, nothing to report. Got a new TV. It looks great. The old sign looks like that if somebody looking to take that one home, put it there. Raj, please do so. And next week, I'm going to do a presentation of the proceeds that we made for my brother's show. I want to get a nice photo and all that kind of stuff. Okay, show off the front of the board. And then finally, I guess real quick, I'm going to be, I was invited to be a guest speaker at the patent museum. It's on Saturday, March 14, 10am I'm going to be speaking about the Palm Springs fallen heroes and trying to round up help Star Families, speaking with Jeff Cole after tonight, to try to get the ALR involved to like, escort Star families there and stuff like that. It'll be pretty cool. So anyways, I'm really honored proud to do that kind of stuff. So Saturday, March 14, 10 o'clock that museum, that's all, sir.

John Picken

When you're out there, say hello to the VFW chain. All right. Third vice is not here. Finance officer?

Garth Gilpin

We passed out the quiet bank statements as of December, January, 31 we have \$125,300 the bank. In addition to that, we have a four items coming in. The chip adder Lee has a \$500 donation for a homeless veteran, PNC has a \$1,200 check that was erroneously paid the Jim Lawson money is coming in Lee addressed me here next Week. We have a discovery credit card lawsuit was settled nationwide. Prepayment penalty for 10 years the post we filed and we'll get \$4,247 for that good work. Measure J The \$63,000 I discussed with the Secretary this afternoon, the status of our payment.

First payment, it's been all our paperwork has been approved by measure J It's gone to the procurement office for their review, and they will issue a purchase order type event, and once that's done, six to \$3,000

now, measure j 4 payments of \$63,000 will be received in quarterly payments. The first payment will go to the kitchen contractor who has procured the equipment for us. It will be stored free until we need it. We're shooting for May, June installation. The contractors lined up the following, after that, we will have, we have monies in the total amount for a new air conditioning system, which will be installed prior to a new roof on the back half of the building. The air conditioning system is our architect was hired by the general contractor. Is awaiting recommendations on whether we need a swamp cooler or air conditioning unit for the kitchen, and then we, once we get the approval from the city as to how they want the kitchen kept cooler, we will then proceed to give contracts out for the air conditioning and followed up by immediate Roof Repairs, the roof replacement, the office area will be redone.

The contracts are being reviewed every year and a half old when we sent some out, received them, and they'll be updated for cost, cost differences. And one area of concern was since the city lost a lawsuit on having to use prevailing wage monies on all projects sponsored by the city money, the contracts will be amended for prevailing wage measure. J has a fund set aside for cost overruns on initial estimates, and if we have the prevailing wage thing, that would be one week, if we overrun our \$255,000 allocation, we will be able to apply for prevailing wage relief and get money for that.

The event, my home on February 19,

Liberace impersonator will be there. We sold out all the tickets. We received this month, \$23,200 from the modernism people. That money which was previously approved to be paid off for s. VA loan five years ago, when covid hit \$23,200 has been sent and pay off that loan. There's a balance of about \$3,000 which I've set up for 10 payments, \$300 per month for the rest of year. So the SBA loan will be prepaid or paid off by the end of the year. Scott brasser Memorial, we have donations from individuals, \$347 the plaque has been ordered. It's approximately \$750 and the Legion approved at the last meeting to pay up to \$800 so we'll pay, pay the difference of the 347 and the 750 and I don't know the timing on the arrival of the plaque. I don't have a financial statement profit and loss for January.

I've been extremely busy getting urine wrapped up, possibly have it by next, next week. One item that good, good concern to me is our membership. We currently have \$35,000 in membership. This This money is designated to go to Community Relations, community improvements for veterans. I would estimate that we should have that budget in place by the

June takeover of the new elected officials. I was approached today by MAC and he is going to introduce a new program in the American Legion baseball for younger people to get them started in pre baseball activities. I think it's an excellent idea. He's been instructed to get a budget put together for that which you can present to the general committee as part of our disbursement of the \$35,000 the new program we joined in December the 29 Palm Springs, airport transportation service. We donated \$2,500 this year. We need to at least match that next year and possibly increase it more. Any ideas you have on programs, please contact themselves and give instructions on getting a budget together. I wouldn't recommend spending all 35,000 but we need to start spending some of that money on community. I've been affiliated 10 years with the post, and this the first time I remember ever have money in this area? So it's a really good compliment to the post. Our donations have been great this year, and membership has improved paid. And it's just it's finally, some time, we can start doing something for the community. Any questions?

Lee Wilson

Yes, sir, (applause to Garth) all the money we're getting for measure J We're really getting started on this. That's a big, big, big deal. I think that's cool. Garth, you deserve a ton of credit for that.

Garth Gilpin

Thank you.

Jeff Cole

I second that, but I do have a couple of questions. We talked about donation for a homeless veteran from one of our members. Maybe we should approach the idea of having a separate fund for providing for our homeless veterans, if they need some help, if there's a way we can set up a program to divvy up some of that \$35,000 to them. I know there's a vet that hangs out fireside bar. He's homeless. He sleeps on the street. He comes in and gets enough money from the VA or Social Security, like \$500 a month, that's all he gets. He sits there all day long. So maybe we can figure out a plan. We can get it and we'll talk about this, maybe at the general membership meeting, get everybody involved. But I'd love to get a program going that we can do that.

John Picken

I know one time, the VFW used to have something similar to that, right?

Jeff Cole

right, we would just write a check or send them to a hotel because they are homeless. So you have to wait for me. We had three approvals for a certain amount.

John Picken

Again, those who don't know, our visitors, measure J is a program put on by the city of Palm Springs, which Garth and our past adjutant and bonder were very instrumental, along with Lee Wilson putting together a PowerPoint in getting those funds direct to us, which the total was 5000 Okay, which goes to re doing this building. This happened, so that was a great boom to us. And again, hats off to Garth for doing that. Thank you very much. Anybody have anything else for Garth?

Allen Lane

Perhaps we can do backpacks for the homeless as well. You know, that way we could pass out to other people. You know, maybe not give them everything, but, you know, socks, underwear, you know, personal hygiene stuff. My sister does that back home in Missouri, and I could ask her and throw my suggestions to you.

Victor

Just something to add on to Officer Lane, the sons do that. maybe we can join with the sons in doing that, because they have little packets that they get together and give out to the homeless that has socks and stuff.

John Picken

I believe Joe already has a plan like that too. So we'll get together and talk about that. I'll talk to Danielle and talk to Greg. Thank you very much. Okay, moving right along. Chaplain Crawford, you have anything?

Chaplain Crawford

No.

John Picken

E board one, Beresh?

Mike Beresh

Nothing at this time.

John Picken

Okay, that's fine. E Board two, Cron?

Doug Cron

nothing at this time.

John Picken

Thank you, sir e boards Rusanne Anthony?

Rusanne Anthony

One thing I have, Commander is I started, it was an experiment, really Sunday social, and that was only to see if veterans would come in and just sit down and talk with each other, because we have nothing veteran based here at this post. So it was just basically we had a couple of them come in, simply sit down and talk, talk about their military experience, bring their spouse, because the spouse is essential to the successful better.

You know, absolutely duty personnel, and just visit with each other and talk and meet each other. A lot of veterans won't come here because they just think it's a place to come drink. Was

way more than that. So it was just, we had four veterans show up for it. I didn't know what to expect. I don't know if I'm going to do it again. It was just, let's give it a shot and see if it goes.

Allen Lane

Talk to me more about that. Happy to help with you.

John Picken

Appreciate it the concept, as I said at the House committee meeting today, we needed to keep the post 519, invite somebody out of that before the House Committee approved something like that. I love the concept. Maybe it should have been a I'm sending out an invite to everybody from Roseanne, and that way we don't take the liability for the incident on that again. I love the concept. I really do. It's a great one. Appreciate it. Nothing else. Don't you have something?

Ernie Meeker

Should we have a motion on the finance?

John Picken

Thank you for bringing that up. I appreciate that. I was got ahead of myself, so I need a motion to approve the Finance Report. Adjutant makes a motion. Any seconds. Jeff back there a second. Any discussion?

Rusanne Anthony

Thank you. Financials.

I'm sorry we should have a profit and loss statement before voting on financials.

John Picken

Perhaps we could do that during general by that time, you'd have it you want to make a motion that we table to general motion. We table this until we can see it. Okay, any, just any body. Want to second that second? Okay, so let's vote on that first invite any discussion on tabling that motion, all in favor? (aye in crowd) any opposed? abstentions? That motion passes, which alleviates the first motion which was approved. So we're going to make a motion to or need a vote on it. So if you don't want it, no, All opposed? I hate when we do the law. It gets confusing. Okay? Eboard three, Webster?

Ron Webster

Nothing, nothing to report.

John Picken

Okay, our new judge advocate will be skip. Bert coming back after his recovery from surgeries. Hopefully he'll be here next week, however, caveat to that, he has family who is very ill in Florida, and you may be taken off for that. We'll see that. We'll play that by day. Service Officer lane?

Allen Lane

The only report I have is that I am getting a lot of calls. I appreciate everyone spreading the word that I'm the new service officer and I'm here to serve.

John Picken

So I love that. Thank you. Officer. Have you done any training yet?

Allen Lane

It doesn't start till March, but I've gone through the online material.

John Picken

Yes, perfect. Thank you very much.
Sergeant at arms Cole?

Jeff Cole

How about I tell you where our event went? We ventured outside of the post about this event. The post on this event. Part of this mentioned earlier, we don't have a lot of the Afghan Iraq events coming in my generation younger ones. So we're trying to do like pop up events in different locations and try to maybe recruit, bringing our younger, my generation of veterans. So for people that thought it should have been here, yes, most of all our events are but we do want to go out and do a pop up events and try to get the younger generation in. So that's why we did go to another location that was good. 20 bikes show up. Many showed up. We had people from the post show up. So overall, it was good show.

John Picken

So overall, it was good show.

Jeff Cole

I already had a discussion about why he went to a different location. I felt that the money should come here for the borrower, but I understand he's trying to get the younger generation, which don't come in here, so we got to play the scales.

John Picken

Thank you. Jeff?

Jeff Cole

Perhaps we can combine the two the social and that event, and invite them here and see if we can get someone to show up, plan to do the bike night here in March. So that gives us two months to I gotta put a request form for the House committee, but maybe start pushing it. This makes it hardest as the liquor license and the second hand people, the people that really can be here, and the hassle of getting to become in, it was just easier to go somewhere else and network and meet veterans at another location, and that location just happened to be owned by a veteran himself too.

Allen Lane

So I understand that. Is it possible just spit balling here? Could we meet in the front area rather than going into the bar all that way.

John Picken

Maybe, I don't know, we'll have to have a discussion. Sounds like a committee thing to me that should conclude all that.

we had a couple late comers, district 21 first commander, please stand up. Jesse Salcedo and our sergeant of arms for district, I can never remember the name.

John Picken

Would you tell people your name? Please? Steve George, thank you. Thank you very much. Appreciate you guys for coming in. I asked district 21 to come in to observe our meeting today. I appreciate them coming in, going back to committee reports, first one house committee, and we'll just go right into membership after that.

Unknown speaker

On what occasion would there be for a bartender to sign people in?

John Picken

Well, our bartender is a member, the one in most of our bartenders members, two of them are not our saying has always been, if you would invite them into your living room, go ahead and sign them in, but they can't.

Unknown Speaker

They got to follow the rules, okay? The bartender in question is a member of one of our affiliates, and I've already had a verbal discussion with him, and we will have a letter of reprimand going to him next week.

John Picken

We will handle it from there. Lee Wilson?

Lee Wilson

Do we really need to do a letter of reprimand isn't just, Hey, man, don't do this again. This is a House committee issue. I just think that's wrong. Well, let's just put this more friendly. It's not the first time. It's not the first time. Not friendly.

John Picken

Anybody else have any discussion?

Lee Wilson

Commander, I brought this up, and I brought it up, and I'll be up front with me if we get our posts closed down again, we're not making any money. Purely, that's it. Bartenders don't get tips. Writers don't get anything. If we're shut down again, we keep pretending like it's okay to

do this stuff until we shut down, then we go into a freaking panic about what we're going to do. It's hard enough, I'm talking right now as a baseball commissioner. It's hard enough for me to get money and go out and raise without a venue. This is my venue. This is where I'm supposed to be trying to bring people into the post. We get gated by ABC, and then what happens? I get it. It's not pretty. I get it. We talked about putting up signs to tell people, let people know. But the bottom line is, if we get busted again, please tell me why we're doing I don't get it. We talked about this for like, three, four years now.

John Picken

Just as a side note, before I get to you, Lee, we do have one or two members here who keep calling the health department, ABC on us. Okay? So they keeping track. The reason we got hit by the Health Department last week was because somebody called and complained our members are trying to close us down. It's fascinating. It's really an asinine thing to do. Okay, we're here for our veterans, our veterans and their families and their guests, to keep everybody happy, a place for them to socialize. Okay, it's hard enough to get four people to come to social hour, right? We need to be able to keep open so we can make money for this post, so we can do all the hard work that's been, you know, set up there in the long run, once we spend the money that's already in the accounts, we got to have Bill, build it back up. Lee, you have something?

Lee Wilson

As I recall, we never were closed down for alcohol. We were not closed. We were on probation, and that was because they got past our 96 year old door Lady made it to the bar, and we're served to have that correct. That's correct. I think overall, this is a big nothing burger. Let me say this again, nothing burger. I believe abc will not ever come in here and go. Oh, we look at your sign in list. Oh, let me see this person. Let me see your ID. It's never gonna happen. And I think we're overreacting. We got to look more open and friendly, rather than like finding excuses not to let people in, I think we should find excuses to let people that's my point.

John Picken

ABC recently closed a post down for that reason. I can't remember which one it was. I don't remember.

Sorry. I disagree with you. Lee, I think that's a very cavalier attitude. We need to protect our bar and our ABC license is what keeps us in operation. We have to be diligent to make sure that people that come in our door are here legally. And I. It's members only. We earned this right, and I just don't think, I think we need to be diligent on that. You're right. And last item before we move on, our ABC license is specifically for a veterans organization. It's not like the Elks, it's not like any other organization. It's not like Starbucks, it's not like fireside bar. It's specific to veterans. And if you look up the ABC law that finds a veteran, unfortunately, it says an American veteran, that law needs to be changed to allow our Canadian compatriots to come in we fought the same wars. That's something that has to be handled at the department and national. That's my opinion. Done with that one.

Thank you very much. Did you have anything on membership? Yes?

Ernie Meeker

we are doing really good on new members. We've got seven since the last well, there's actually probably 10, maybe 10 or 11 total since last month. We've got two or three transfers in the works. We had two that was approved last that we need to approve for last month, our numbers are, we have a total of 46 new members, up from 43 from December, we have a total of 491 members that are paid. And I just am mailing out letters of for the people that haven't renewed their subscriptions yet. I just sent I'm sending out a bunch of new letters, and we've already are starting to get some of those back, so our numbers are going to be going up, and I'm going to be working on the transfers from post 1000 and our percentage is at 85.73%

John Picken

love it. Good job, Ernie. You do a great job on the membership. Ernie comes here once a week to do membership here for people to come in and sign up. He maybe gets one to each time, maybe not, but most time, he gets somebody during that whole month. So it works out that way. Communications Committee, we've been James or we already talked about fundraising, so we're good there. That would be the end of the I'm sorry, we already did Finance Committee budget report. Do you have a budget report? Of course. Okay, that's fine. And everybody should have a copy of the bylaws that are being worked on. In those bylaws there are, in my opinion, and it's just an opinion I should step away. There is a paragraph in there that gives the executive board the power to prove appointed positions. If that happens, we're going to be in a worse case than we did with what happened to my right in the past. Okay, I believe that section should be completely struck. I'm just bringing it up so you guys can think about it. When we have our meeting next week, we start talking about bylaws again. That's going to be high on my list, even though we've already talked about it and it's highlighted in here. I think that needs to be changed. Jeff, you have a question?

Jeff Cole

I agree, because it takes away the voice of remembers, if you're giving it solely on the integrity we're talking about appointed positions. Okay, are you referring to the appointed commissions should be approved by the executive committee and removal also approved by the Executive Committee, rather than the commander. Correct? I fully agree with you. Why do we need a commander if we have that in there.

John Picken

Yeah, exactly, just like when we have we have committees for a reason. That's why we appoint committee chairs. They run the committees. They bring it to the executive board, okay, things like that. If you first of all, it's going to slow the process down, probably by hash anyway, just my personal thoughts on that. We can talk about it next week. That's my thing on the bylaws. Anybody else got any questions or statements about violence? Thank you.
Okay, old business,
as Ernie mentioned. In the House committee, our roof needs to be replaced, or, excuse me, repaired, as we have numerous leaks. The company that put up the existing roof, Castro, is scheduled to come out early March. Unfortunately, they're backed up, hoping we get a few

more people to come out and give us an estimate on just doing repairs. We're not going to replace the roof right now. Replace the roof right now, until the building gets approved for whatever we need to do. The warranty on the roof was only five years. Like I said, it was done 2018 which is 708, years ago now. Baseball fundraiser with special guest singers, brought in approximately \$3,000 along with, I think about \$1,000 for boys and girls.

Unknown speaker

State, pardon. 820 \$820

John Picken

thank you. I just went by what I was told. 820

okay. Then, as Garth mentioned, he has the modernism event coming up later this month, February 19. He's leading the charge on this project.

John Picken

Again, the money is that modernism is charging. Is coming back to the post that's paying that small business loan that we took out during covid and we only you said \$3,000 left.

We borrowed 25,000 and we hadn't paid on four years. It was 26 something balance.

We have, okay, new business.

I already went over this about the complaints about the kitchen, spurred in the spectrum for two weeks ago, and I got the following verbal from the inspector before he sent me the written, which I received this morning. He goes, I find nothing notable to verify the complaints. So you have passed. You still have your aid. We already talked about part tenure issue. I turned the volume all the way down, tell Mark to call in. Okay, so we talked about that new TVS installed, beautiful TV. Lee and I have talked about a little modification we have to make on it, but it's it's beautiful. I that, hey, Ron in the future, pass it on to Sergeant arms, and then he can take care of it. Thank you. In the future, in the future, okay, hey, guess what's happening in next month, nominations, nominations. Next month in April, general membership meeting in June will be the election. So start thinking about who you're going to nominate. I've heard that there's at least three people running for commander. At least one of them was in this room, maybe two.

Okay, I have an email from a gentleman named Roger Conway, need my glasses because my email prints out so small. I've talked to him a couple of times on the phone. He goes, John a quick out lane. I would like to propose to create a veteran community, homes for elderly and disabled veterans in Palm Springs. I have met with Councilwoman Grace Garner and tunnel to towers. Both conversations were encouraging. If post 519 would support this concept. I will continue to collect information for a marketing plan. The post could create a list, a listing of potential clients for such a facility, and a suggested price point for individual rents. I have experience in grant writing. Have obtained federal grants from Department of Justice and Department of War, defensive I do not want to launch such an effort unless there is support for it. As I've mentioned. I am a committee of one, and has so assume no commitment to date. Very best. Dr, Roger Conway, DPA, so he wants to get 519 to sign off on helping to support sponsor, whatever the case may be, in setting up this community homes for the elderly and disabled. We will bring this up again at the general membership meeting. I wanted to give you guys a little food for thought. I think it's a great idea. It, we can follow up on it. Be wonderful. Maybe we can expand it to district and area. Yes, sir, come out of the funds we're talking about

earlier. As far as for veteran community, we don't know where the funds are coming from, except that he's trying to make it where, kind of like homeless housing they have in Cathedral City, Cathedral City, or banning or whatever that the cities take on the project, and then they rent them out for minimal he's not looking for donations right now. He's just looking for support and see where it goes from there. I think it's a great idea. I will call him and tell him I presented it to the post. You see a post member. He is not a military person, unfortunately, is possibly a son. I have to talk again about that his daughters are disabled.

They were trying to get to get her into disabled quarters. That got her in right? But the bathroom wasn't set up for somebody with a wheelchair, so he's looking to get it set up for veterans, because it's really not set up for they say it's qualified for disabled people, but if you're in a wheelchair, you can't get into a bathtub.

John Picken

You need to get into a shower. And that's kind of what he's working on, a little bit of a personal issue, but he wants to do it for all vets. He talked like I said to grace. Garner grace. Connor's parents are both Marines, and they actually opened up their house for a disabled veteran to live there. So that's kind of cool, too. Just food for us Allen?

Allen Lane

perhaps there's a way that we could be at arm's length with this project, not committing, but assisting. And that way, it promotes us, and we help veterans and we get to move this forward.

John Picken

That's why I'm bringing it up here. So when we bring up the general membership meeting, we have a little bit more of a an idea of what we may or may not want to do. Thank you. Events coming up this Saturday, we have the ALA's Mardi Gras, and then we also have a couple of private events in the hopper, including March the suns are going to do an Italian night. I don't know if they I think they have a DJ for that, which would be our favorite, DJ Noriega, and that's the end of my new business at this time. Is there any for the good of the American Legion? Anything for the good of the American Legion, Commander?

David Brambila

Hello, post 519 Why the heck is this white cover here? I tell you why I'm here. I have a vested interest in this post. You guys recall three, about three years ago, we had to take over this post and make sure that we put it back in order. I was your ad hoc commander for about seven to eight months, and our district commander was part of that ad hoc committee. And May his soul rest in peace, the person that was here every day, Steve Lapham, really made sure that that you guys were being addressed on what your needs were, and make sure that we got you guys off suspension and back in good standing with the Department of California. I want to say, just hearing the finance report, just hearing everything that you guys are talking about.

Congratulate you all for all the hard work that you've done at plus 519 (applause). You know, as I go around all of California, I'm addressing posts and boards. My simple message is this, and those of you who get my the email blast the headquarters weekly the weekly newsletter

from the department. 10 years ago, the American Legion was 110,000 members. Today, we're a little bit over 55,000 members. That's half in 10 years. If we keep this up, the American Legion is going to be obsolete in five years. What's happening? Why is that? What's going on with the American Legion? Well, plain and simple, the American Legion are dying, our Korean War veterans, our Vietnam veterans, and even the few World War Two veterans are dying, and the war on terror veterans and the active duty personnel are not coming in and joining the American Legion. Why is that? Well, my theory is the culture. We have an issue with the culture in the American Legion, and we were here three years ago to address that culture. So as the E board, you guys are empowered to make recommendations to your membership. The membership runs this post, but you are the voice of this organization. Your recommendation that happens here carries a lot of weight at the membership meetings, so don't be afraid to utilize that voice, because you were elected and appointed into these positions to be the voice of your members. Palm Springs post 519 is the largest post in district 21 you guys have a large voice. Utilize it. Embrace it. That is something that that should be embraced, and you, as E Board members, should know you are empowered. You to have, you have a large voice in our district, but the larger voice is right here in your post. So as I'm going up and down these posts, here's the one thing that is killing us is the negative energy that's coming through. There's nothing wrong with disagreeing with one another. That is what board rooms are supposed to be. We're supposed to articulate our arguments, and at the end of the day, when the vote is casted by the membership, the membership rules this post. What we have a problem is that once the gavel gets hit and everybody goes their separate ways, all of a sudden, this toxic energy is going around all over your membership, so you have the voice to stop that. Do not give the platform to that negative energy, to hit this podium, to hit your club room, to hit anywhere the second you start hearing a negative comment about another board member, about another member in the American Legion, another district officer, anybody.

We're all comrades. Stop it, because the second you let them exhale their complaints, you've given them a platform, and now that platform that you've empowered them, and now it's going to move on to the next person. All it takes is one person to destroy a post. We've witnessed that before. Okay, we were here three years ago, doing that. Let's not let that happen again. I'm here as the I love this post. I was here for eight months. I get calls from some of you. I get calls from members. I got calls from auxiliary I get I got my ear to the ground, even though I don't want it. I get the calls.

But I'm not here throwing this white cap, because you know what this white cap means? Absolutely nothing. You guys. The blue caps are empowered. These district covers that are behind you. We're here to guide but at the end of the day, the decision is yours. So I implore you, utilize your voice and make sure that the membership's will is moved forward. And as long as you guys carry that principle with you, you're going to continue doing great things. You guys are doing great things now, and it's going to continue in the future. I guarantee it. So I'm glad to see the direction of post 519 and I'm just here to support. I'm just here to observe, and that is all. And thank you, Commander for allowing me to be in your meeting. I appreciate you very much. Thank You.

John Picken

anybody else have anything for the good of the American Legion? Anybody have anything else? You could just address us from there. 21 first place, go ahead.

Allen Medosa

at the area five meeting, we passed a motion to support the signing of SB. 690. Four. For those of you that don't know what that bill is, it's a SP 694. Delivers long overdue consumer protection for California veterans by prohibiting unaccredited actors from charging illegal funds for initial VA disability claims. It aligns California law with existing federal standards and ensures veterans receive the full value of their benefits they've earned through service. The bill passed the Senate with bipartisan support because the legislators understood a simple truth, veterans should not lose their earned benefits to predatory practices. So right now, it's before the governor's desk, and he's running for president, so he's looking to see you know who this is going to offend? If he signs it, he should have signed it already. So unless we put pressure on him to sign this bill, he's going to sit on it. So I encourage you, as opposed as individual members, to contact the governor's office and encourage him to sign this bill. Thank you.

Allen Lane

What was the bill number?

Allen Mendoza

Again, it's Bill six. SB, 694 state.

I do believe on our department website, there is a button to push to go to the where you can sign that bill or that put your name on the, you know, to tell people to do it. Yeah, our assembly member was the co author, Sabrina Cervantes, along with the Senator from San Diego, with our co authors and so, God bless them, they got this bill passed. So at the area five meeting we we passed the resolution to to encourage everyone to support this bill. So thank you, sir. Thank you.

John Picken

If I may just kind of dovetail on that, if you went to a private company who says they're going to get you VA benefits, they're going to take some money from you, this is to stop that happening. That's it.

Okay. Anybody else? Anything for the good of the American Legion? okay, if there is no further business, please stand attention. Uncover chaplain, please close.

Chaplain

Thank you God for allowing us to move forward and working towards the future of our post, your wisdom and our dedication will keep us moving in the right direction. Amen.

John Picken

Amen. Recover Sergeant arms. Please recover the pow Mia flag Till we meet again. Let us remember our obligation to our country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. That service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of the American Legion and its members. Let us be ever watchful of the honor of our country, our organization and ourselves that nothing shall swerve us from the path of justice, freedom and democracy.

John Picken

Face the flag. Two,

I now declare this meeting of the American Legion, post 519,
Department of California, Executive Committee Meeting adjourned.

Please pick up your trash, your glasses.

UPCOMING DISTRICT 21 MEETINGS

MAR 15- POST 53- HEMET

MAY 17- POST 852- TEMECULA

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

JUNE 25-26-VISALIA CONVENTION CENTER

MEETING TIMES ARE AS FOLLOWS

SAL'S 0800

PCC 0900

TAL 1000

Introductions of Distinguished Guests

(Sergeant-at-Arms)

JESSE SALCEDO DISTRICT 21 COMMANDER

AL MENDOZA DISTRICT 21 1ST VICE COMMANDER

February 3 2026

Respectfully submitted. Adjutant (acting) Allen Lane