

American Legion

Palm Springs Post 519

Executive Committee Meeting **MINUTES** 06/07/26 JULY

JOHN PICKEN

Meeting is about to open. All officers will take their stations, sergeant at arms. Please clear the hall entrance and close the doors. Stand at attention. Salute. 2.
Uncover for the opening prayer through the pow mia ceremony.

Chaplain

Thank you for blessing us, God, with your wisdom and our love and respect for Post 519 Thank you for allowing us to work for our fellow comrades. Thank you again. Amen.

AMEN

JOHN PICKEN

Sergeant at arms only, recover. 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 Mia's and the cause for which we stand, namely the return of full accounting. A pow mia empty chair is placed at all official meetings of the American Legion as a physical symbol of the 1000s of American pow Mia still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving 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 the defense of liberty and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor. Sergeant at arms place the pow Mia flag on chair, Sergeant at arms only uncover. Okay, please join us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Would you lead us in the Pledge. . .

Everyone

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.

JOHN PICKEN

Everyone recover. Please remain standing. Please join me in reciting the preamble of the Constitution of the American Legion slowly and in unison. . .

Everyone

For God and country, we associate ourselves together, Constitution of the United States of America to maintain law and order, to foster and perpetuate 100% Americanism, to preserve the memories, to inculcate the sentence of individual obligation to the community, state and nation. Faculties are both classes and mass, to make a right and master might promote on earth, to safeguard and transition to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy, to concentrate and sanctify our conference by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

JOHN PICKEN

Be seated. I now declare this meeting of the American Legion Post 519 Department of California, executive committee in order. roll call, adjutant. . .

Allen Lane

commander - present.

Adjutant – present.

second vice commander, Lee Wilson - Excused

Third vice commander, Kevin - HERE

finance officer - Excused

chaplain Crawford - here

service officer Allen Lane - here

Sergeant at Arms Beresh - here

historian James Snow - here

E, board third year Ron - here

E, board Rusanne - here.

Allen Lane

We do have quorum.

John Pickens

Great. Thank you. Tom, this I'm going to have you sit in for the whole beginning, so you see that it's not much different, and then I'll introduce you.

John Picken

Please be seated. I now declare this meeting of the American Post 519 Department of California Executive Committee convened. Before we go on, I'm going to do some announcements. I received resignation letters from the first vice commander Ernest Meeker and from one-year executive board member Doug Crohn. I need a motion to accept and vote. Motion to accept his resignation.

Rusanne Anthony

I make a motion to accept Ernest Meeker and Dr. resignations.

John Picken

We have a motion by Royal Sand. I need a second.

Allen Lane

I'll second that.

John Picken

Any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Installation of our offices will be at the next Tuesday meeting, at our general membership meeting, at 5o'clock We're also going to be installing ALR executive board. Also, and the third announcement I have, I would like to introduce Thomas Co. Francesco. That right, Francesco? Francesco, my nominee for Judge Advocate, Thomas. Would you stand up and just announce who you are, what you've done?

Judge Advocate

Okay, I've known quite a few of you from being here as a member for I think 16, 17 years. Gosh, what can I say? You know, any your experience, your military experience?

Judge Advocate

Oh, I was in the Air Force for four years. Actually, six years. Six was in Vietnam in 1968. For my career, I worked for AT&T for most of my career. I was a statistician, just like an analyst, and then for the last half of my career, I worked with business customers, large business customers. That's it.

John Picken

Okay. Anybody have any questions for Thomas?

Rusanne Anthony

I do. So for judge advocate. Judge advocate. So, are you are you familiar with our bylaws? I will be. I will be. Okay. And connecting with other judge advocates along like district level and department. I expect that will come. Yes. Okay.

John Picken

So what we're going to do, Thomas, is ask you to step outside briefly while we conduct a vote, and we'll let you know. I need a motion to approve Thomas as a judge advocate. I'll make that motion. Second. Any discussion?

Raible

May I ask why you chose him? He didn't say much about himself,

John Picken

So I've known Thomas for since I started here. His partner passed away a couple years ago. Very good members of the post. Very adamant about supporting this post. Whenever we have special events, he's always here to help out in discussions with him. As I told Rosanna earlier, he's willing to take the training that we're going to provide for him, get it up on speed for the bylaws, and by general membership meeting, I'm sure he'll know the bylaws backwards and forwards. I've already forewarned him of his duties. District is willing to train him as a judge advocate, and he's willing to take on that training, and go to the meetings and be forceful in that area.

Raible

And he's retired.

John Picken

Yes, I'm going to say yes. He is retired.

Raible

God knows, I don't want those.

John Picken

He also volunteers, and he didn't say this. He volunteers at the museum. I think across here, he's a good guy as far as I'm concerned.

Raible

Okay.

John Picken

Anybody else have any discussion? Okay. We have a motion on the floor and seconded. All in favor, except from Thomas as our judge advocate. Please say aye. Aye. Any nays? Any abstentions? Would you ask him to come back in, please? Kind of creepy in here. Creepy? Yeah, this is the quietest meeting.

Allen Lane

That was very quiet.

John Picken

Thomas, welcome to the judge advocate. Now. Now run. You want to take a seat over here, Thomas? I sure will.

John Picken

Perfect. All right. As far as I know, there are no listing of District 20-One meetings, except that District 20-One wants to have their September meeting here, which I'll bring up later. The exec. executive board minutes from last meeting were posted. I'd like to get on the website. I'd like to get a motion to approve those minutes.

Allen Lane

I'll make that motion.

John Picken

Motion made by the adjutant. Second. Second. Mike Buresh. Seconds. Any discussion? All in favor?

Speakers

Aye.

John Picken

Any nays? Abstentions?

Raible

One abstention.

John Picken

Thank you. Okay. Okay, post the minute officers' reports. I'm going to hold off on mine for right now. Adjutant, do you have a report?

Allen Lane

I have nothing for that. But as a service officer, can I go ahead?

John Picken

go ahead and do the service officer? We'll get that out.

Allen Lane

I have a lot of people at the Veterans Village that have reached out to me. I've got a few that are in need. The biggest thing they need are jobs for people who have no qualifications. Makes it kind of tough but would love to hear feedback on that. I have someone who has their deposit that they need, and he's struggling with that, trying not to keep him from going homeless. I also have a meeting set up

at the end of July to go there and introduce myself at the Veterans Village itself. So I am looking forward to that. Working with, I believe her name is Brandee over there.

John Picken

what's the date on that?

Allen Lane

30th, July 30.

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah. Okay.

Allen Lane

And if someone wants to attend with me, please let me know. Happy to bring you on board. And that's all I have, sir.

John Picken

The 30th, I believe. Yes. Go ahead.

Raible

I have a project at home that I need some help with, but also for my business, kind of heavy lifting stuff, paid cash by the hour kind of thing. That would be perfect. You know, I'm a woman. I live alone, so I want to feel like you know these people are vetted, and I can feel comfortable.

Allen Lane

Agreed. No, absolutely. I know some of them, but I don't know them, so I'm very hesitant to do those kinds of tasks, just because it puts everybody in an awkward position, I'd rather avoid that completely. I was hoping to go to Home Depot and these kinds of places that hire a lot and see what they know. Plus, a lot of them don't have cars, so must have nearness to the village itself, and it's just over the bridge there, Lowe's, Home Depot, and there's a whole slew of other shops there. But that's my goal. Thanks.

John Picken

This is just the people at Veterans Village, right?

Allen Lane

I'm trying to help everyone in the valley, but right now I'm concentrating at the village because they're all veterans in a cluster.

John Picken

I'll let you guys talk about that after the meeting. Briefly, the 30th, was that their back-to-school deal they were doing where they're going to have booths set up. You were going to go there for that?

Allen Lane

You know, I'll have to ask because all she did is ask me if I can come to the community center on the 30th, and I said Yes.

Rusanne Anthony

Okay.

Allen Lane

I need to get more information.

John Picken

I put it out to Lee Wilson because he's usually a point of that. He's obviously out of town. They asked if we wanted to come in and use a table there to set up and hand out brochures or whatever. But I don't know if it was the same event. And I never got anything. I gave her a phone call and basically said that I haven't had anybody to volunteer to help out. But if you are, that's the same event that might be killing two birds with one stone.

Allen Lane

That's great. Yeah.

John Picken

Okay. All right. Thank you.

Allen Lane

I'll get back to you on this.

John Picken

Thank you, service officer. We do not have a first vice. Speaking of that, this is part of my report because we do not have a first vice. We're going to have to have another election. We are.

John Picken

Now, the way I read our bylaws, and I could be 100% wrong. We have to announce it at a general membership meeting, and then maybe have the vote at the next membership meeting because it's a special needs deal. I have to. I keep on reading it, and I get muddled in the wording. I'm going to go to higher person, and the judge advocate, and I will confer on this and try and figure this out along with the district judge advocate because this has never happened to me before as a post commander.

I'm sure it's happened many other posts, and probably here too. What I know they've done in the past is they would move up. Second vice would end up being the first vice, but that is not what our bylaws state. That's happened in the past here, when we had a commander who left. The first vice took over that position for three or four months. We have to work that out. So be prepared for another bloody election. Hopefully, it'll be quick and simple. We're going to have to, you know, look for candidates and do the whole shebang again. Thank you, Ernie. So keep that in the back of your mind. I'm going to do the research and get a bunch of information. I will email everybody promptly when I know and figure everything out. Yes?

Allen Lane

Is the other one an elected position?

John Picken

Which one?

Allen Lane

Doug.

John Picken

Doug is appointed.

Allen Lane

Appointed. Okay.

John Picken

And I will be looking for an appointed position down the road, the first-year executive member, as far as I'm concerned, is not super high priority. We do want to get somebody in there, preferably two people, if we can. I must look to see if anybody below a commander's spot can actually have dual positions. Not that I would want three year and one year together, but if a sergeant arms or a historian wanted to be one year, they could do that as an appointee. Remember, appointees technically do not have a vote in the executive board at general memberships, they do, but at the executive level, appointees do not have votes. So just keep that in mind. I'm working on that. Thomas and I will work on that together, along with the adjutant.

Okay, so we don't have finance. I do have a financial report, Sergeant at Arms. I need you to hand this up, please. This is our profit and loss from January to June. Pretty much, he's highlighted with a yellow marker to key points. Our net operating income was for this six-month period \$9,730 Looks like the bar sales were 147, Bar expenses were 80,000 Gross sales were 67,000. Again, this is Garth's expertise. Our net income for January 1st to June 30th was \$89,911 And on the back page, you have our accounts. Bank account is 18,000. This is as of June 30. Membership is at 34000 which hopefully we can use some of that for the community. Measure J funding 61000 Building fund is 58000 So if you look at the Measure J funding and the building fund, we have 119,000. Yeah, color guard 4,838. Baseball 12,000, and the writers is 6,000. So, anybody. anybody have any questions that we can try and answer on this? Rusanne, you have any comments? I know you're the financial guru.

Rusanne Anthony

There's no balance sheet.

Raible

Yeah, I don't want to bore anybody here, but I'd love to get the breakout of the bar expenses, for example, I'm kind of a you know PNL nerd, so I'm just curious and would like to learn at some point in time, like how do we allocate the overhead of the building maintenance, you know, and is that part of the bar expenses?

John Picken

No. Okay. Overhead for the post does not fall under the bar. As I mentioned in our House committee meeting, the bar canteen is a business venture of the post. American Legion does not recognize that. So therefore, the building would not fall under that. Repairs to the bar equipment would be, obviously, but the maintenance of the building, the maintenance of the meeting hall and the dance hall, and everything else is falls underneath the building fund.

Raible

So 80,000 is mostly foods, beers, sodas, supplies?

John Picken

Yes.

Raible

Okay.

John Picken

Yes. Now we have reduced our operating costs on the bar over the last three years. Not that I want to brag about my wife, but she does most of her shopping for the post, and she shops around. She'll spend my gas money on picking up stuff at Sam's and Smart and Final. We do a lot of shopping at Amazon, and we get the best prices that we can. So she's done a really good job on doing that.

Allen Lane

That's good to know.

John Picken

I thank her so much for that. Anyways, can I get a motion to approve this budget as it stands right now?

Allen Lane

I'll make that motion.

John Picken

Motion second by Kevin. Discussion, questions. All in favor.

Speaker

Aye.

John Picken

Any opposed?

Raible

Is it appropriate for me to vote?

John Picken

Absolutely. Yes, you can. You are a member of this board now.

Allen Lane

Is that a yes or a no?

Raible

It's yes.

Rusanne Anthony

Well actually, I did prepare a budget. It's just Garth hasn't gone through it. So next time. . .

John Picken

He comes back on the 15th.

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah, it won't be this next Tuesday, but we'll have next next executive.

John Picken

So that passes, the motion passes.

Kevin Koch

Oh, great!

John Picken

Approve the budget.

Allen Lane

Excellent.

John Picken

Did you get a copy?

Allen Lane

Yes.

Rusanne Anthony

Approve the financials, not budget.

John Picken

Sorry. Thank you.

Allen Lane

The finance report.

John Picken

Thank you. Finance report, not the budget. You mentioned budget. Got stuck in my head. Okay, so that's the finance. Chaplain Crawford, do you have anything?

Crawford

Yes, Commander. Go ahead. I held another barbecue this weekend. We came out with about 480 bucks. So in the past two weeks, we've gotten over 1,300. I mean, the past two months, Memorial Day and the Fourth of July, we probably made over 1300 bucks.

Kevin Koch

Good work.

Rusanne Anthony

Is that part of the?

Crawford

I don't think so.

Rusanne Anthony

No, I don't think so. No, that was not just deposited.

Crawford

Yeah, no, I just deposited the money Monday. Okay.

John Picken

And let me back up to the BSO's report. I forgot I was going to mention this, and it slipped my mind as we started moving on. Allen has been helping out with Nona Potter and working with their family along with Joe O'Connell and Andrea's wife Maureen has been helping out a lot, and they've coordinated together. And we're trying to get them or her situated in a better place, excuse me. Just want to say thank you again for Allen doing that, and you when see Maureen, say thank you for helping out there, and Joe O'Connell too. Anyways, been a long road for her. It's a heartbreaker. Let's see. See, we don't have an E board 1e, board two, Anthony. Got anything else for us? E board two, Webster. Great, thank you. Newly appointed judge advocate. Got anything for me, sir?

Judge Advocate

No, sir.

John Picken

Sargeant at arms, Beresh? Last but not least, historian Snow?
Everybody, pull up a chair. Lee Wilson Jr. . .

James Snow

I don't really, everything as far as historians know, but the last Thursday, I can probably bring that up as far as the story because the history of the post. You know, we did the interview last week for NBC. I don't know if you guys saw last Thursday, and we had another story on the news. We came in and did a story basically trying to, was through the Ford sponsorship that I mentioned last meeting, and so we, you know, we ran a story on NBC, and we told the story about the roof, you know, the history of the post, and hopefully that kind of generates some donations to bring this place back to its original luster. So what I said on my part, you know, we interviewed the commander and myself. I interviewed myself, but that was last Thursday, and it's on there. I have, I have it on the website or the Facebook page if you want to go check it out. But share it, please, because it might get out to the community and hopefully get some more donations for the post. And that's all I really have as far as historian stuff. And I really don't have anything as far as communication stuff. You want me to hold off on that?

John Picken

Go ahead.

James Snow

Okay. For the July, oh, installation officers on July 14th. Should we? I'm going to film that, right? You want me filming that? Sure? Last year again, like I. Well, going to reinstall two, so can you do that at the same time?

Rusanne Anthony

All right.

James Snow

Yeah, yeah. July 17, I'll be having surgery. I found out.

John Picken

I'm sorry, you're going to do what?

James Snow

July 17, I have surgery on my nose.

John Picken

Okay.

James Snow

And I think it's probably related to the, It's something you can probably look into more. The Pact Act, you know, the burn pits. It's been known for veterans around 1015, years later on. It's been exposed to a lot of toxins. You know, respiratory problems. So I'm getting surgery on my nose. I have a deviated or a perforated septum. It's one of the things you do. but it's common nowadays where veterans are getting perforated septum's, and I think that's what I have. So they're going to fill it in.

Resources page. There's a website or the page. We have a page on resources. You and I can probably sit down and go over some things we probably add to the resource page that can help you out as far as being the VSO. Let's see what else. I think that's pretty much it for right now. There's a resource page. Other than that, I think that's about it. Along, sorry.

Crawford

Just real quick, who do I talk to you or Lee about having a flyer on the web page? Because I thought there was supposed to be a flyer for my barbecue, and I never saw it on the web page, and I didn't see it. So who do I talk to about that?

James Snow

web, well, either one. I can put it on both the website and Facebook. But for Facebook, I usually go to Facebook and I just grab them and I put them on the website.

Crawford

Okay.

James Snow

So if you have, if it's not on there, just hit me up, and I'll put on the website.

Crawford

All right. That's it.

Allen Lane

Do you have one made up already?

Crawford

No, no. This was for these last events.

John Picken

Okay, speaking of that, are you barbecuing again for an event? Lee Wilson put you down as barbecuing for something.

Crawford

I forget what it was.

John Picken

Labor Day? No, I don't think so. I don't know. I'll have to look at it. James, just briefly, concerning the NBC report that you put out with that lady, I got a text from Lee Wilson. It goes, "My friend, comedian Richard Weiss saw you and James' story on KMIR, and said he'd do a fundraiser for PTSD issues for

free. I told him I would it would have to be on a Saturday after August. He asked me to look at the calendar and see if we can pick a couple of Saturdays that might help. But that guy saw it. He's volunteering to do a fundraiser to help. With PTSD, so that's kind of cool thing. And as I said, thank you very much, sir. As I said, finally, Kevin?

Kevin Koch

Sir, third vice. First off, boys and girls state we sent six individuals: two males and four females. The males were from Palm Springs High and La Quinta High in Orange County, and then females were from Palm Springs High and from Desert Hot Springs. Unfortunately, one of our students, a male, a day or two before the end of the program, was sent home with two other individuals. I'm a little upset that a he did not notify me, but also they didn't notify me as the sponsor. Because of that, I drove an extra car to Norco to pick up people, and I didn't need to. However, what occurred from my intel finding out this happened? Apparently, the boys were being boys and racing in the hallway, and weren't able to stop and punched a big hole in the drywall of the dorm. That happens. What they should have done is future marine right there. He wants to be a law enforcement. What he should have done at that point is said, "Look, we did this. We screwed up. We can pay for it. It was an accident, or we were screwing around. It was an accident. They put a poster over it and covered it for the week and didn't report it.

Kevin Koch

They're doing elections, and there's posters all over the hall. So when the posters came down, and it wasn't this, it's a big hole. And so they put the screws and said the whole hall, 50 of the 800 individuals would be sent home, unless they didn't hand over who did the hole, and so three individuals ended up going home. So it's a learning lesson. First time away from home in that. So that being said, for the district, they elect the governor, lieutenant governor, and our district had the attorney secretary of state, which is one of the third highest. So we have squared away people, and some of those people are the ones that go on to nationals. But yeah, so my concern for the future: driving two SUVs back and forth to Narco puts me at liability for parents. they used to do pickups either in Indio or Banning, and then go to Norco and then go up. But the busses have gotten so expensive. We need to maybe take a look at the district for how many are in this area, and maybe do a small bus just there and back. Then, if that's the case, that the liability for an accident is picked up or whatever. So we'll work on it and we'll improve. But the ones who went, some it wasn't what they expected, but all of them, you know, that they actually set up a government and do that. They did not meet the governor. They met one of the judges, I believe, for the state supreme court. But all of them said it was a very productive learning experience, and they enjoyed, and they were glad they went. And I have a after-action email to them: the good, the bad, the ugly, to push on up to district.

That being said, second, the elephant in the room kind of email from Chip Atterbury. I was disappointed in seeing it because I did not see the incident that occurred, but I was there right before and right after, and not to go into excessive detail, but I was paying my bill, and the register he moved me to the register next to Chip. I said nothing to Chip. I was paying my bill, and Chip kind of got on my case. He got in my face and said, "Well, at least this time you're not swearing and storming out of here. I'm like, Chip, that wasn't me. You know, you got the wrong guy here. You know, that's the first vice, and didn't say anything too much more.

Then I had to come back to get something, and I'm walking out, and something just occurred between Garth and Chip, and there were kind of people in between and pushing and that, but all I heard was Chip swearing heavily, and I'm like, "Hey guys, you know, no swearing in here. And Chip went after me and said, "He" Touched me, he touched me. He has no right to touch me. I said, "You're right, but you don't have to swear. "I can swear all I want. I was in the Air Force. All we do is swear, and I could swear all I want." And he kind of went off on a tangent, and I'm like, "Calm down, guys. And at that point, Garth walked. I didn't see, but to read his email that he got punched twice, if somebody punched me, I'd be saying they shoved or punched me. I'd be upset. Not he touched me, and we've had this occur in a previous incident this last year, sadly here, and with the investigation and all that, Well guys, I'm a

teacher. You don't touch people. Touching is totally wrong, even if it's meant friendly. But we warn the individual repeated, you can't touch people. And I don't know. I don't want to make speculation, but I don't see Garth being malicious in doing that to do a police report and to make the deal there was, we kind of shoot ourselves in the foot all the time with that. We have a lot of personalities and with bias and individuals, and yes, we we've got two major factions in the post. We all know that, kind of, and other groups. But his accusations in general, saying we don't support gays or minorities, we've had gays and minorities on the board. We have a way to go. We can use more women on the board. 50% of the population. I'm glad. Guess what? Texas sent a big delegation to observe California using women in boys girls state, and for the first time, the governor was a girl, and the majority there were girls, and they did well. So, you know, moving that forward, where I would suggest for the commander, things have occurred in the past, and this where somebody does something, and it goes out to many people, and many people don't know what's going on, whether it's just the board or what. That an email from you, hey, this is serious and it's being investigated, or that way others don't send because today I didn't get the email from you with the video, so I can look. But I've heard from everyone who's seen the video that it's a touch. I couldn't pull it up. Yeah, so Mike's going to show me on his phone, the video, but Commander asked Mike, myself, and the new judge advocate to look at it and to make a recommendation. But there's a police report and

John Picken

we're not going to do a recommendation until after we hear back from the police department. Right?

Kevin Koch

So there's a legal action, and not a legal action. He never brought charges through us officially. It is serious, and he would if he was punched, absolutely or what. But at this point, it's kind of a muddle. But we're just going to look at what we must see. You know, was it a touch, or what? Because the precedent has been a warning to the individual. I know people were upset with our first vice, and he brought it up in his email that Ernie lost it for whatever reason and swore and walked out, and that's quite serious.

And Chip brought it up, and I know he wanted to apologize with the election, and it was said keep the election going. But people didn't know he resigned. Now that he has resigned, it kind of solves that one. But we shouldn't have swearing. We should go by the book. We should go by the rules. You know, there's a process to everything, and we all care about this place. And I know we've said it time and time again: we shoot ourselves in the foot. With you know, I try to get people in, and I do fundraising, and we destroy ourselves with police reports and people fighting. If it was just a touch, I realize there's frustration in that.

James Snow

Amen.

Rusanne Anthony

You got to also remember there was a lot of alcohol involved that day.

Kevin Koch

And ironically, with the voting prior, I didn't vote on any of it in the previous general meeting or what or board meeting when Chip said to drink and I supported that because it's income for us and then it came back to kind of bite us

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah, we're all adults and we're all responsible for our own actions. I'm just saying that that incident with Garth.

Kevin Koch

Yeah.

Rusanne Anthony

I know those two were hammered. I know because Chip was working the election, and I talked to Chip and I talked to Garth. Yeah, just you know. So how do you know?

Kevin Koch

And I know.

Rusanne Anthony

I would suggest just let the police do their investigation and let it die.

John Picken

Well, again, that's my goal, but we have to cover our bases. So that's why I assigned the three people to the investigation. Their final results of that investigation will be held until we get a police report. But also, it's upon the grievd party to file official paperwork. As I said in the House committee this morning, nothing's been.

Kevin Koch

He went the police route rather than through the Legion.

but we have an obligation as a board. There's an accusation made, but if we look at it and say it's a touch, and we warn Garth, don't do that again. Nobody's allowed to touch people. You think it's friendly. You think, but drinking or not, you can't touch. I get in trouble as a teacher. A kid with a Z's Farms had a beanie on, and I just touched the beanie. "I'm suing you. You slapped me." You know, I'm like, good lord. Yeah.

John Picken

I appreciate you guys and judge. You'll figure all this out as we go along.

Kevin Koch

We will look at it. I will make a separate statement as to what I saw go, and then we will make a statement as a group of three that we watched the video and was it malicious or not. But like I said, having been a part of it, unfortunately. If somebody shoved or punched me, I'd be he punched me, not bringing up after swearing. Well, he touched me twice, you know. Well, touch, punch.

John Picken

There's, yeah. So anyway, thank you, Kevin. I appreciate it.

Kevin Koch

Thank you, sir.

John Picken

Okay. Okay, we're going to pass on the rest of that for now until we have further developments in the whole deal. I'm going to do the House Committee report. So the things that we talked about, we talked about how well July 4 was with the barbecue and bringing in some money for the post. We approved several events, and you guys have probably got a hell of a lot better memory than I do. We were holding Lee Wilson's karaoke thing for a reason, and I know we did it for? I can't remember what it was for.

Rusanne Anthony

We did a vote on the karaoke's happening once a month, so we kind of did a blanket vote to approve all future karaoke's because they're monthly. The only thing that they're going to need is maybe a license.

John Picken

and that was it. So we're, I want for us to continue providing an ABC license for those karaoke events. I wanted to bring it to the executive board, so the executive board is on board with the House committee in spending \$102 and some change each month for that particular thing is protecting our posts, and a question came up-a very good question: Why do we have to do an ABC? The karaoke people have a tendency to bring in their friends to sing karaoke, which is probably a good thing because most of us here can't carry a tune. There's a number of people that do get up on that stage, and they do a very, very good job of singing. So we're going to continue as long as the executive board agrees, which most of us, the House committee too, that we continue doing the ABC. Is that what we just? That's what we discussed, right? Yes.

Raible

Yeah, because the only thing that changes each month is the date. Correct. And we shouldn't have to.

John Picken

And that was just-it wasn't coming to a vote. It was just so everybody is in agreement, basically, with what we're doing. Thank you for stimulating my memory. We had a complaint against a member who was cursing in a canteen after leaving the general membership meeting, which everybody knows who that was, the House committee recommended a letter of reprimand beyond anything else. The executive committee needs to vote on that, and I will read you what I have written for that letter. Comrade Meeker, this letter is to notify you that your behavior in the post canteen on June 9, 2026 specifically cursing people as you were leaving due to being angry at what happened at the general membership meeting, was deemed unacceptable by the House committee and reaffirmed. Hopefully by you guys, by the executive board. Any further behavior in this manner will result in a suspension of up to 30 of up to 30 days. I wanted to put that proviso in there of up to 30 days. Sincerely, John Picken, Commander Post 519 signature by Allen Lane, Adjutant, and the CC to the Judge Advocate, does everybody like what that sounds like? Is there anything I should change?

Raible

I guess what's the qualifier for the up to 30 days? Which means it could be a day. It could be.

John Picken

Again, this, as I said in our House Committee meeting, the commander has a discretion to go up to 30 days. If the executive board says no, then we must confab and talk about it. And if we decide on 15 days, then that will be what it was. So, I just wanted to make sure we understand that. Are we all? Is that okay?

Allen Lane

I think it sounds good. Yes, I agree.

John Picken

So, I'm going to ask for a motion to approve this letter.

Raible

I'll make the motion to approve.

John Picken

Maggie makes the motion. I need a second.

Allen Lane

I'll second it.

John Picken

Adjutant seconds. Any discussion further? All in favor? Aye. Seven. Absent or nays? Abstentions. Motion passes. Okay. We will sign this letter. I'll get you a copy for your files. Copy for. I've already given you a copy for our files. Before at the end of the meeting, we'll sign this letter and officially mail it off. Thank you. As we already talked about the investigation, Kevin.

Kevin Koch

Yeah. Third vice, sir. To be fair, across the board, I don't feel like dumping on Chip, but Chip was swearing, and I just said calm down. And instead of acknowledging that, he swore more and told me he could. And it's not to the level or the same as Ernie storming through two rooms and that, but it's if one is being sent a letter, one should go to him once my statement is received and we're giving out for this incident saying garth don't touch people, hey please don't swear, you know, that's just to be fair across the board.

Rusanne Anthony

I actually disagree with that because people swear out in the canteen all the time. You censor one person like that, you put the whole canteen up for censorship. Ernie's situation is more isolated because it was an outburst. It was very loud, and it carried on into the canteen.

Kevin Koch

I agree, but I disagree. Being a board member and being real chill, saying hey, take it easy, and for him to get in my face and swear more and say he has the right to. Do we want people always swearing in here and screaming?

Crawford

Chip has a history of this, and I don't know if you guys were in the room at the last meeting. What did he say? He had his little outburst, and somebody called a point of order and told him that he needed to talk to us up here. He was out of order. And he told me he can talk to anybody he wants, anytime he wants, sitting right there.

Rusanne Anthony

Now that. . .

Crawford

But wait, let me finish. So now it's evolved into what? Telling Kevin, I can cuss. I can do anything I want. We got to stop this crap.

Allen Lane

You gave him the room. Now he's doing it.

Crawford

And they've been doing it for over like two or three years. They come in here with the same thing, and all it does is waste our time.

Rusanne Anthony

Okay, that's all it does. It's now, this is different because it's a repetitious behavior, and it's done in a membership meeting. That's sad. That needs to be addressed. Well, out in the canteen, when you're sitting there drinking and amongst people, and there's cussing going on. We can't censor that because it puts everybody out there who says a bad word up for censorship.

John Picken

I agree with you on that one. Mike?

Mike Beresh

There's a world of difference, though, from swearing and swearing out of anger.

John Picken

That's why I'm so pretty.

Mike Beresh

Agree. Agreed. Agreed,

John Picken

especially when soccer team loses. Okay.

Allen Lane

One more thing.

John Picken

Go ahead, Allen.

Allen Lane

One thing I would like to point out is the swearing is one thing, but the fact that he was drunk while on the election committee, while holding and monitoring an election, I think, is the key point we need to discuss in the group that's handling that and would like to have the other people that were in the room discuss that as well. The swearing is one thing, but to be drunk during your service at the time doing it during, you know, we're all adults, would just like that discussed during that, and that's all.

Rusanne Anthony

I think, but I . . .

John Picken

as was already brought up, let's not go off on tangents all night.

Kevin Koch

I don't, I don't want to dump on him, and I know the frustration.

John Picken

Hold on, hold on. But as Rusanne said, you must take it in the context of what it was, what preempted that cursing, anger, in Ernie's case, anger. in Chip's case, because he was angry at whoever because of what happened, I do agree with the fact that we, if somebody wants to complain and write up a

complaint of his doing the cursing, we'll have to take it to the House Committee and do the same thing. Don't have a problem with that. Okay, that's being fair. But until somebody files a complaint about that, our hands are tied. Yeah, pointing it out. I'm going to submit my document. That's correct.

Raible

Yeah, case by case.

John Picken

Okay. Again, the investigation of the assault is underway. Continue with the House Committee. The kitchen redo is underway. Last. last three Fridays, food was provided for us by Riccio's restaurant. The food costs were either breaking even or just making a little bit of cash on the food themselves. But it's the bar intake that's helping us out. The last three Friday nights have been adequate for bringing in the money for the bar. We're going to do it again this Friday, and the Friday after that, the Suns are going to be providing the meal for Nick D. Enjillo, whatever, however you pronounce his last name. So that's going to be happening.

Kevin Koch

I'm just curious. I'm sorry, I'm not here. What are Richio? Are they bringing food over, or do they?

John Picken

I've been picking it up at their restaurant, bringing it over, putting it in a steam table, and we've had volunteers from the auxiliary and a couple of post members dishing the food out. Again, Suns are volunteering to cook on the 17th. The ALR is going to be cooking for the karaoke on the 18th. I think they're doing what they call the hot dog bun. We're also having the Suns installation on the 25th, with music provided by them. It's got. Rob Lon Fix Felix. Thank you, Ron Felix. And that was pretty much it. We talked about the letter of reprimand. Took care of that. Okay, that is the House Committee membership committee. I have not been able to talk to Ernie about our membership, so we're going to have no report on that. Hopefully, we'll have a better handle on it at the general membership meeting. Communications, you already discussed that. We're good. Finance report, or did that? So we're good there.

New business, again. We talked about July 4 was a great success for the canteen in raising money. That's pretty much all the new business. We've already talked about the effort to keep members coming in. We've got food catered. There's an ongoing investigation. We talked about that. Does anybody have anything that I missed for new business, Kevin?

Kevin Koch

Not new. Good update on the kitchen.

John Picken

Okay. You can hear all the banging going on right now. I talked to Garth or sent Garth a text. He was supposed to contact the contractor. They were supposed to be in here this week to start demoing. I'm waiting for a report back from Garth. You know, Garth's eight hours away in Portugal. He's still in contact. Still talking to me about the stuff that's going on.

I took a bunch of the equipment out of the kitchen and out of the office over the last couple days, put it into that pod out there. We must figure out what we're going to do with. All these bar receipts. Some people tell me you must wait seven years. Some people tell me two years. I haven't got a definitive answer on how long we must keep these. When I say bar receipts, I mean the bar dailies, which pardon?

Raible

not seven.

John Picken

I didn't think it was, but that's what I see when I looked it up. When I looked it up. It says most places keep seven years. We don't have storage for seven years. I was thinking two to three years.

Rusanne Anthony

What you must be able to do is, if you get audited, is have supporting documents, which in the case of statements would do that. Yeah. So, the little slips of paper, they've been summarized on a on a report, so I pitch them for my clients.

John Picken

Okay, well, again, I'm just I got boxes and boxes of these things, but I don't want to throw too much away. You know, I want to keep one or two years' worth of stuff and go through it. I took I took 85 pounds of old stuff to get shredded.

Rusanne Anthony

All it is a fire trap.

John Picken

Yeah, that's 135 bells. That's what it costs us to do 85 pounds. So, we're going to figure out another way of doing that. Somebody mentioned a barbecue.

Crawford

Yeah, why?

Allen Lane

There you go. Okay.

John Picken

District 20-One meeting on September 20. Here is a Sunday. Stuff will start 8o'clock in the morning with the Suns. That's it's two months away. We'll get everything ironed out. Somebody's already volunteered to bring in pastries and bagels and coffee and stuff like that. We'll figure out as we get closer how that's going to work. Rosanne's volunteered, but the district might end up bringing it themselves. I don't know yet. We'll find out more.

For The good of the American Legion, Rusanne, you had something you wanted to talk about the bill.

Rusanne Anthony

It's T C, just a really long.

John Picken

It's got an abbreviation, T C A G A or something.

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah, it's crap. Okay,

John Picken

before we go to that, you can find that McCarvey. You had something you wanted to do for Nona.

Crawford

Yes, I'd like to make a motion. Thank you, Commander. I'd like to make a motion that we donate \$500 to Nona. You get her over the next couple days until her daughter gets here.

John Picken

So, those who don't know, Nona Potter doesn't want to go back to her house. It's got no AC, but she slept in her car for one, maybe two nights. We found out about that. We got a hold of her daughter, who started a GoFundMe fund. They provided a hotel room for her for the next three or four days in Indian Wells, which is close to the granddaughter. Then she's going to Washington, but we don't know what her financial status actually is. I'm in full agreement with what Chaplain is saying here, if he has a motion, we need a second. Pardon?

James Snow

I'll make it 1000

John Picken

We technically we can't go over \$500, I wish we could. We made that mistake, and I got called on it when we did the U.S.O. thing. I still think it was an emergency, but again, if we classify this as an emergency, I guess we could do more.

Allen Lane

I think it could be an emergency. I mean, he did pass away, and her AC is out. I mean, you cannot live in a place with no AC. I mean, even for a couple of days.

Mike Beresh

My wife and I helped her out. I know you guys have, and I know a lot of other people have too. Plus, plus the GoFundMe. So yeah, if we can give her some more, I'm sure she could use it.

John Picken

Okay. Well, we have a motion for 500 You're boosting it to the 1000.

James Snow

Sure, I'll boost it.

John Picken

I thought that's what I heard you say. Oh, you said I'm sorry. So let me correct this. Then James said we should do 1000. So James is modifying the original motion.

Mike Beresh

I'll second the motion.

John Picken

Any other discussion? \$1,000 to Nona Potter.

Allen Lane

I think that's an absolute emergency, considering that she was sleeping in her car, she is moving to a different state, and her husband just passed away. I would like to declare that an emergency situation.

John Picken

Okay, that's fine. My two bits on it is Chuck Potter is a longtime member of his post, Korean war vet with two or three Purple Hearts. I think it was three. I think that it would help her a lot.

John Picken

Sorry about that. It's been a long week. Okay. Any other discussion on \$1,000 All in favor.

Speaker

Aye.

John Picken

Any nays? Any abstentions? Okay. Just as a reminder, appointees cannot vote. On stuff like that. I wish you could, but it's all good. Motion passes. Thank you so much. I will write a check to cash, go to the bank and get it to Joe O'Connell, who will deliver it to Nona or her family.

Crawford

If Joe's out there, should I say something to him, or. . .

John Picken

you can? But I think he's already gone for the day.

Speaker 3

Okay.

John Picken

I think he has taken off.

Mike Beresh

Okay.

John Picken

I can call him.

Crawford

Okay.

John Picken

Take care of that. Yes.

Allen Lane

Could we give it directly to her?

Crawford

I would prefer that Joe has it. She's a little bit overwhelmed right now.

Allen Lane

No, no, no. I mean give it to her rather than the girls, the family.

John Picken

Right. Oh, yeah. Yes. That's right. We'll have Joe. Yes. We'll deliver it to Joe. Joe will deliver it to whom he sees fit, which would probably be perfect. Granddaughter Sam Samantha, she's the one who lives in Indian Wells, I believe. Okay, thank you so much for that, Rusanne?

Rusanne Anthony

go ahead and talk about this. Okay, what has happened is there's a bill called "Take Care of America's Veterans. That's it's a 58-billion-dollar proposition that Congress is looking at passing through, and it's a good. We want it to pass. It does have 58 billion in programs, benefits, and other things for vets, but the problem with this bill is it takes away, it shuffles some money around, and it takes away from some disabilities for veterans that have tinnitus, tinnitus, and sleep apnea. It's going to reduce their disability, and it's going to be shuffled over to another disability for veterans. So, it's a shell game, and the American Legion themselves is supporting Take Care of America Veterans Act, but veteran groups like the VFW, DAV-they're pushing back on this because of the shell game of money, and that's what they want veterans to do: is to take a closer look at this, not give it a blank check pass. So what I'll do is, there's ways of as individual legionnaires are pushing back on this because it's Wiley, Commander Wiley, who's the commander of the American Legion that's pushing to pass this act. But it's really going to do more damage than good. So, I'll get more details for it, but it's a big buzz now with like if. do you guys know who Chris Yates is?

Kevin Koch

Yes. Yeah,

Rusanne Anthony

Chris Yates is now NEC. He's on the National Executive Committee. He's his big thing right now is push getting rid of this taking care of.

John Picken

That's where my confusion came in because two months ago, it seemed like he was pushing that. Well, but. . .

Rusanne Anthony

but that's just it. Yeah,

Rusanne Anthony

The American Legion was pushing it, is pushing it, but now people have gone in and read the fine print, and it's going to hurt us, not help that. You know, it's taken from one pot to give into another. This 50-8 billion is great, but don't rearrange the money.

John Picken

Yeah, it sounds like the way you've explained it, and I'm just trying to put into terms I can understand. Let's say I get \$100 for my tinnitus, and I get \$100 for my sleep apnea, and suddenly, they're going to reduce that to \$80 because they're going to fund somebody else's PTSD. Now, my question, and we've kind of talked about it, is that going to be back paid, or is it going to be from now on? Because now, now you're going. Now you're separating two classes of veterans, veterans who got the original, and then the veterans.

Rusanne Anthony

The way I read it is, since it's a funding bill, that it's going to take away from one group to support another group.

Allen Lane

That doesn't seem right.

John Picken

So is there a page or a website or a link that we can like call our congressperson or

Rusanne Anthony

let me give you all the details. I'll email it to all the details if we can e-blast this out to our members. I'm seeing an e-blast, but also put the link on the website and Facebook.

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah, we get it. Get the word out there. Tell people that they're supposed to get a hold of their congressman and say, "Don't vote for this bill. That's what. That's what the American Legion, not the overall American Legion, but the California Department of American Legion is pushing against.

John Picken

So it's cool. Thank you very much for bringing that to our attention, Rusanne. Does anybody else have anything for the good of the legion? Roundtable. Anybody going once, going twice. We will go into our closing ceremony. Again, I'm sorry. I get emotional when it comes to Chuck Potter.

Allen Lane

He's a good guy.

John Picken

I know. Is there any further business to come before the meeting? Stand at attention, uncover, chaplain. Please offer a closing prayer.

Crawford

Thank you, God, for blessing us with one of the most peaceful meetings and remarks. Thank you for watching over us. Amen. Amen.

Everyone

Amen.

John Picken

Recover, Sergeant at 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, let service to the community, state, and nation be ever remain objective to 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. Face the flag and salute.

I now declare this meeting of the American Legion Post 519 Department of California Executive Committee meeting adjourned. Thank you.

Minutes by Allen Lane