



5th District Meeting at Post 194

Date: 14 January, 2024

Meeting was opened in due form by District Commander Miguel Garcia, with the salute to the flag, Chaplain's opening prayer, POW/MIA Resolution, the pledge of allegiance led by the Sgt-at-Arms and reciting the Preamble of the American Legion.

Adjutant announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Roll Call of Posts by Adjutant Reaves: 13 Posts attending, 9 Commanders

Minutes: Motion was made to accept minutes of 10 December, 2023 meeting as posted on the District Website. Motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

Correspondence: None

INTRODUCTION OF DISTRICT OFFICERS AND GUESTS:

Vice Commander	Joe Maichle, absent/excused
Vice Commander	Randy Whisman
Adjutant	Deveron Reaves
Assistant Adjutant	Sonny Kirkwood
Finance Officer	Nancy Senter
Chaplain	Brian Hancher
Historian	Toshiko Moultrie
Judge Advocate	Troy Horsley, absent/excused
Sgt-at-Arms	Walter Rasco
Sgt-at-Arms	Tim Pratt
Service Officer	Eduardo Silva

Guests: 5th District Riders Chairman, Zane Koonce; Past District Commanders Joe Logan, Greg White and Lawson Dukes; Past National Commander, Clarence Hill; Northern Area Membership Chairman, Victoria Zeigler; Central Area Commander, Bob Matheson; Department NECA, Jerry Brandt and Department NEC, Jim Ramos were recognized in attendance.

Sgt-at-Arms escorted Post 194 Commander, Robert Rush, to the podium for his opening remarks welcoming the 5th District to Post 194. Post 194 Commander was escorted back to his seat.

INTRODUCTION OF DISTRICT CHAIRPERSONS:

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| A) ALR | Zane Koonce |
| B) Americanism | Robert Brewster, absent/excused |
| C) Baseball | Mark "Shannon" Wolford, absent/excused |
| D) Boy Scouts | Joe Maichle, absent/excused |
| E) Boys State | Michael Flanagan |
| F) Blood Donor | Mark "Shannon" Wolford, absent/excused |
| G) Children and Youth | Lena Heredia-Perez, absent/excused |
| H) Disaster Prep | Shawn Beal, absent/excused |
| I) FHP Cadet Academy | Robert Brewster, absent/excused |
| J) Law and Order | Barry Litsky |
| K) Oratorical | Cindy Anderson |
| L) POW/MIA | Denny Luke |
| M) SAL Advisor | Walter Rasco |
| N) School Medals | Deveron Reaves |
| O) Shooting Sports | James Nelson, absent/excused |
| P) Social Media | Virna Luke, absent/excused |
| Q) Website | John Padgette, absent/excused |

REPORTS FROM DISTRICT CHAIRPERSONS:

- A) **ALR, Zane Koonce**, there are 705 total members in the 5th District that includes 360 Legionnaires, 213 Auxiliary, and 132 SAL members. Donations have included 45,721 miles, 5348 hours and \$7766 in contributions for the month of December. There have been over 500,000 miles rode since June. He also thanked Posts 137, 197, 54, 129, 250, and 202 for agreeing to be a stop on this year's Unity Ride for 2024. These Posts actually cover two (2) different routes. We are looking forward to having a great ride.
- B) **Americanism, Robert Brewster**, was absent/excused. No report.
- C) **Baseball, Mark "Shannon" Wolford**, was absent/excused. No report.
- D) **Boy Scouts, Joe Maichle**, was absent/excused. No report
- E) **Boys State, Michael Flanagan**, the time has been extended for candidates because only 354 out of 530 vacancies have been submitted. All of the Posts within the 5th District have paid for their delegates. If you want to increase your number of candidates, there is no limit on how many candidates you want to submit because there is plenty of room. We need to fill in the spots. Alternates are selected based on how quickly and fully registered with Department. Make sure your delegates are fully registered. Orientation will be held on 4 May, 2024 at Post 129. There will be more information put out once everything has been verified. Registration will be open from 10 January, 2024 to 20 March, 2024.
- F) **Blood Donor, Mark "Shannon" Wolford**, was absent/excused. No report.
- G) **Children & Youth, Lena Heredia-Perez**, Commander Garcia reported the there was a great turnout for the Northern Area Ball last night and was well attended.
- H) **Disaster Prep, Shawn Beal**, was absent/excused. No report.
- I) **FHP Cadet Academy, Robert Brewster**, was absent/excused. No report.
- J) **Law and Order, Barry Litsky**, reported that if you submit any names for Law Enforcement Officer or Fire Rescue personnel to the Department, the paperwork needs to be turned in by 17 April, 2024. If not, they will not be recognized by

National. He also mentioned that if you have any problems, please let him know so can help.

- K) **Oratorical, Cindy Anderson**, the 5th District does have one (1) person going to the Area competition. There will be more information to follow with exact dates.
- L) **POW/MIA, Denny Luke**, had no report at this time.
- M) **SAL Advisor, Walter Rasco**, all squadrons made January goal. Six (6) Squadrons are at 100%. Congratulations to the following Squadrons: 194 – 113.64%, 372 – 116%, 54 – 117.58%, and 197 – 128.57%. Squadron 233 is coming along very well with 62% membership. Twelve Squadrons have made February goal. Presented a check to Commander Garcia for \$110 from the Jacksonville Icemen 5th District hockey night. Commander Garcia added that a fun time was had by all and if you have the chance to go to a game, please do.
- N) **School Medals, Deveron Reaves**, had no report at this time.
- O) **Shooting Sports, James Nelson**, was absent/excused. No report.
- P) **Social Media, Virna Luke**, was absent/excused. No report.
- Q) **Website, John Padgette**, was absent/excused. No report.

FINANCE REPORT:

Commander Garcia mentioned the lack of an EIN for the 5th District finances and the reasons behind it. The problem needs to be fixed asap. It has been brought up at previous 5th District meetings to discuss with the Posts on helping to straighten it out. The Finance Officer reported on the complete finances of the 5th District as follows:

5th District Financial Report for December, 2023 (presented at 14 January, 2024 5th District Meeting)

Previous Account Balance - Checking (Beginning 1 December, 2023)	\$ 10,069.19
Deposits	
• Interest accrued	\$ 0.85
• 50/50 Proceeds and sigh-in	\$ 40.00
Total Deposits	\$ 40.85
<u>(Note: \$50.00 is kept on hand to make change at meetings)</u>	
Withdrawals	
Gift Card – Contest prize – December	\$ 25.00
Total Withdrawals	\$ 25.00
Checking account ending balance as of 31 December, 2023	\$ 10,085.04
Previous Saving Account Balance as of 1 December, 2023	\$ 3,208.12
Interest earned	\$ 0.27
Savings account ending balance as of 1 December, 2023	\$ 3,208.39
Previous CD balance	\$ 573.76
Interest earned – November, 2023	\$ 1.56
CD Balance as of 1 December, 2023	\$ 575.32
Note: CD will mature as of December, 2024	

Finance Officer Nancy Senter reported on the following information after reporting on the finances of the 5th District:

- Read letter to the members to be approved by the 5th District to comply with the current banking regulations. Whichever Post chooses to accept, they will need to report the numbers with their 990's for tax purposes.
- Motion was made to accept a letter of concept and understanding.
- Motion was seconded with a hearty discussion on the intrinsics of how to properly handle the paperwork and the forms dealing with the IRS and the bank.
- Motion was passed with approval when a Post is chosen from the District Finance Committee. This will be presented again and voted on once a Post has been approved with an EIN.

A motion was made to accept the finance report as stated, subject to audit. Motion was seconded and passed by the members present.

DISTRICT VICE COMMANDER'S REPORT (MEMBERSHIP):

Vice Commander Wiseman reported for Vice Commander Maichle on the following information:

- Department Membership Chairman, Bruce Carl, sent out an email stating that the Department made goal! Congratulations to the 5th District for reaching January's goal of 80% because we were at 81.95%.
- Post 194 has reached 92.97% membership.
- Next month's goal is 85%.

Commander Garcia added to the report the following information:

- Recognized the following Posts that reached the 80% goal – 9, 37, 54, 88, 129, 194, 202, 244, 250, 283, 316, and 372. The remainder of the Posts are right behind the goal.
- Last year, the 5th District missed the 100% goal by 1.8%. We have always been a week behind until this year. We are currently ahead of the 80% goal by 1.8% and is on track to make 100%.
- Let's keep it going after the 400 and 400AD list.
- Check your Post's PUPL list and double check your roster to make sure they are on the 2024 list.
- The next goal is 85% on 7 February, 2024.

Vice Commander Wiseman had no report at this time.

DISTRICT COMMANDER'S REPORT:

Commander Miguel Garcia reported on the following information:

- Mentioned the Department Commander's recent visit and a question was raised about Woman's Veterans represented at Department level and not District level
- Talked to several members and 5th District and Post leadership on the situation on not having Women Veterans representation at the district level and had a sit-down meeting to move forward with a plan of action
- Read letter on Women Veterans and their challenges. There are a multitude of issues with the stress levels of Women Veterans.

- Ami Ritter has been appointed as the new 5th District Chairman for Women Veterans. She will head the 5th District Women Veterans Committee going forward and will start putting together some resources to present to members at a later date. District Vice Commanders and any Service Officers will need to work together to get any information out to whomever needs it.
- Every Post should look into the future in getting a Post level position if necessary.
- If you need anymore information about the Committee, please contact Amy Ritter, Commander Garcia or the 5th District Vice Commanders and will be more than happy to get you on track.
- Thanked Ami Ritter for taking on this endeavor. Hopefully we can make a dent in our community and our district.

DISTRICT CHAPLAIN'S REPORT:

District Chaplain Brian Hancher reported that the 5th District Four Chaplain's Ceremony will be held at Post 9 at 1300 on 4 February, 2024.

POST REPORTS (should be written and submitted to the Adjutant to include Membership percentage and upcoming Post events)

ANYTHING FOR THE GOOD OF THE LEGION:

- Post 9 mentioned that there are gun raffle tickets available, 1 for \$5 or 5 for \$20
- Post 233 mentioned all of the help they received from different Posts within the district to help get the Post up and running again and back on track. They will more transparent as the time goes forward
- Northern Area Membership Chairman, Victoria Ziegler spoke on membership. All Area Districts made the 80% goal. You are doing a great job. Visited Posts 9, 54 and 283 for an Adjutants call.
- Central Area Commander Bob Matheson mentioned that he is running for the high office of Department 2nd Vice Commander. Remember, the Posts are the ones who are The American Legion and raise the monies for your programs. Keep doing your programs. It's the Posts that implement the programs and are the foundation of The American Legion. Membership, training, Veteran assistance and Veteran Suicide Prevention are key points that need to be a main focus for all of us and a top priority.
- NECA Jerry Brandt spoke about making sure that you are doing your buddy checks! He is also running for the high office of NEC next year. Mentioned problems with the three (3) year membership renewal plan. Information is not getting out to the members.
- NEC Jim Ramos spoke briefly about the legislative agenda coming up. Two items of interest that is needed to pass the State Legislature: 1) The Boys and Girls State need to be a line item for \$200,000. 2) The American Legion National Convention will be held in Tampa, FL in 2025 and will need \$250,000 for transportation to and from the sites during the Convention. He mentioned that he will be running for the high office of NEC next year.

- Ami Ritter mentioned several upcoming events as follows:
 - 26 January, 2024, the city of Jacksonville will be holding a standdown to coincide with Employment Resources event on 27 January, 2024
 - 3 February, 2024, Nassau County will be holding a Vets-4-Vets event
 - Post 9 supports Pickett Elementary in which will be torn down in June, 2024 and will be consolidating three (3) elementary schools into a state-of-the-art two (2) story new building.
 - There will be handing out flyers on 27 January, 2024 and 3 February, 2024 if parents are interested in enrolling a student in a particular school.
- NECA Jerry Brandt added that National Commander, Daniel Seehafer, will be visiting the Southern Area 21 January – 29 January, 2024. If you want to meet with him, sign up to attend the Southern Area Ball, located at the Caloway Armory in West Palm Beach, FL 33406 on 27 January, 2024.
- 5th District Service Officer, Ed Silva spoke about VA Claims. Reminded everyone that Service Officers cannot work on people's claims. You have to be careful on information you put out as a Service Officer. They will have to meet with a County Service Officer. Let them take care of the claim. They will have to contact the Veteran's Administration Regional Office (VARO). They will like to rename Post Service Officers to Resource Service Officers in the future. You don't want to get sued down the pike at a later date.
- Commander Toshiko Moultrie spoke about the grand opening of the Prostate Cancer Support Group on 10 February, 2024, 0900-1600. There is a partnership with the Mayo Clinic. She also mentioned that money can be made by working different stations passing out water during several city event runs. Children are also encouraged to attend and help out.

Meeting was closed in due form by District Commander Miguel Garcia, Chaplain's closing prayer, retrieval of the POW/MIA flag and the salute to the flag.

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 1310 WITH THE CLOSING PRAYER.

UPCOMING EVENTS

District Four Chaplains Ceremony – 4 February, 2024 at Post 9 at 1200

Next District Meeting – 11 February, 2024 at Post 250

Super Bowl Sunday – 11 February, 2024

5th District Training – 16 March, 2024 at Post 137

For God and Country,
Respectfully Submitted,
Ron Reaves, 5th District Adjutant