



**MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA**



MINUTES - QUARTERLY MEETING - OCTOBER 24, 2020

OPENING CEREMONY:

The meeting was opened per ritual by Commandant Larry Heard at 0901. The Mission Statement of the Marine Corps League was read. Commandant Heard recognized the Past Department Commandants in attendance including Bernard Bledsoe, Randy Barnes, Al Yates, and Joe Barbee.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS AND DETACHMENTS:

Department officers in attendance included:

Commandant Larry Heard
Sr. Vice Commandant Bill Miller
Jr. Vice Commandant Rex Delk
Judge Advocate Lisa Delk
Jr. Past Commandant Al Yates
Adjutant/Paymaster LuAnn Miller
Chaplain Mickey Edwards
Sergeant-at-Arms Levi McKenna

District Vice Commandants in attendance included:

District 7 – Marty Habecker
District 9 – Tim McClelland
District 10 – Tim McClelland

Appointed Positions:

Boy Scout Coordinator – Mickey Edwards
Newsletter – Al Yates
Web Sergeant – Brent Eaton
Historian – Bernard Bledsoe

Detachments in attendance included:

Detachment 970 - Middle Georgia
Detachment 1040 - 1st Sgt Charles F. Waller
Detachment 1196 - Maj Stephen W. Pless
Detachment 1260 - Maj Lawrence Des Jardines
Detachment 1311 - MajGen Warren R. Johnson
Detachment 1333 - Waycross
Detachment 1373 - Central Georgia
Detachment 1402 - Columbus
Detachment 1424 - Byron

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Commandant Heard noted that the minutes of the July 18, 2020, business meeting are available and have been posted on the Department website. Bernard Bledsoe moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and accept the minutes as posted. Barbara Brammer seconded the motion, and it was approved. The minutes were accepted as published.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Sr. Vice Commandant Bill Miller reported that a thank you note for flowers was received from the family of Rodney Heard.

REPORT OF PAYMASTER:

The Paymaster's report was read. Harry McCann moved to approve the Paymaster's Report as submitted pending financial review. Bernard Bledsoe seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Adjutant/Paymaster Miller reported on the status of membership cards. National Headquarters has transitioned to a new plastic card for 2020 renewals that will be issued to a member one time only. The new cards do not include a membership expiration date. New members will receive the new plastic membership cards. Members who transfer will not receive a new plastic membership card. Replacement membership cards are available at a cost of \$10.

PRESENTATION:

A Chaplain's Bell was presented to the Department of Georgia Commandant and Chaplain from Russ Vermillion, Bill Miller, and LuAnn Miller.

REPORT OF MEMBERS SICKNESS OR IN DISTRESS:

Chaplain Mickey Edwards reported that deceased members since the last meeting include William A. Hamby (Detachment 1260), Fred Griffin (Detachment 1326), Jon M. Payne (Detachment 1020), Walter Horne (Detachment 564), and Charles W. Smith (Detachment 1303).

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Judge Advocate: Judge Advocate Lisa Delk reported that she is focusing on making sure Detachments are compliant with National and Department Bylaws and helping Detachments create or amend their Bylaws. Department officers have visited 11 Detachments in the last quarter. Out of the 30 Detachments in the Department, Detachment 1339 is closed, 3 Detachments are in the process of being closed, and 2 other Detachments are being reviewed for closure for noncompliance. Reasons for noncompliance include not having the required minimum number of members, not being current on Georgia Secretary of State filings, or not being current on IRS 990-N filings and having tax-exempt status revoked. Remember that 990 filings are due by November 15 of each year, and copies of the 990 filings should be immediately sent to the Department Paymaster with a courtesy copy to the Department Judge Advocate. Eight Detachments have submitted their Bylaws to the Department Judge Advocate, and the Bylaws of 2 Detachments are compliant. Judge Advocate Delk wants to post Detachment Bylaws on the Department website. This will allow Detachments to see what other Detachments have done, which may assist them with addressing procedural issues in their own Detachments. Two separate issues involving politics were brought to the attention of the Department Judge Advocate. As a not-for-profit organization, we must abide by the Department of Revenue Code for 501(c)(4) organizations. You cannot, as a representative of the Marine Corps League, take part in anything political.

Jr. Vice Commandant: Jr. Vice Commandant Rex Delk talked about methods to bring people into the Marine Corps League. He noted that you must have your speech ready. On his Marine Corps League card, he has meeting information that he can easily share with prospects. Jr. Vice Commandant Delk recommended that Detachments get their renewals in early so they will be reflected on the September 30 roster. Right now, the rosters do not look good because Dues Transmittals were not submitted early. He suggested contacting delinquent members and pitching what your Detachment is doing. He also noted

that National no longer issues invoices for renewals, but suggested that Detachments could send self-addressed, stamped envelopes to members. Barbara Brammer suggested a form letter that Detachments can download and send to their members. Jr. Vice Commandant Delk said he will prepare a sample letter. Terry Holland suggested having business cards that include a place to write prospect information and putting member candidates on a prospect list so you can notify them of upcoming events. It is more important to get their information than it is for them to get yours.

Sr. Vice Commandant: Sr. Vice Commandant Bill Miller reported that Department officers are figuring out ways to get our jobs done more effectively. To that end, he shared a Technology Brief, a copy of which is appended to these minutes, recommending the use of Microsoft 365 and OneDrive accounts as a repository for Department documents because it makes them shareable among officers. He explained the benefits of OneDrive, and Department officers shared the advantages they have personally seen using OneDrive. A discussion ensued about what happens when software changes or the platform is unavailable. Sr. Vice Commandant Miller noted the cost is \$5 a month for each OneDrive user account. ZOOM is \$15 a month, and the Department is looking at testing FreeConferenceCall.com which provides variable pricing. The estimated investment would be \$420-\$540 per year. To assist in recovering these ongoing costs, Department may consider increasing Department dues by \$1 per annual renewal, which would result in an estimated \$600 in additional revenue per year. Sr. Vice Commandant Miller noted that Department dues has not increased in at least 10 years. Bernard Bledsoe moved that the Department authorize the expenditure of \$600 to explore and develop this program with a report to the membership at the next Department Convention. Barbara Brammer seconded the motion, and it was approved. A question was raised about training materials. User documentation will be created as needed.

Commandant: Commandant Larry Heard reported that National is requiring bank information for all Detachments so that PLM funds may be electronically transferred. National will no longer print paper checks for PLM distributions beginning in 2021. It was suggested that Detachments could open a second account that would be set up solely for receipt of PLM funds. Paymaster Miller confirmed that this electronic transfer procedure has already been used successful on the Department level.

REPORTS OF APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Scouting Coordinator Mickey Edwards reported that Boy Scout activity had slowed down but now seems to be picking up. He noted that he is out of Boy Scout coins and requested approval to purchase more coins. Joe Barbee asked about Boy Scout patches, and Mickey Edwards polled the membership for their preference. Most members prefer the coin over the patch. Merrill Tyndall moved to purchase 200 coins. Joe Barbee seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Historian Bernard Bledsoe reported that the Marine Corps League will be 100 years old in 2023. National wants to put together information on Detachment and Department histories. Detachments need to put together information like a list of their Department Commandants since inception, chartering information, information about the Detachment's name and why that name was chosen, and things the Detachment members have done.

Department Web Sergeant Brent Eaton requested that information for the Department website be sent to him.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

2021 Department Convention Committee: Only one Detachment expressed interest in hosting the 2021 Department Convention. Detachment 1402 is willing to host a one-day or weekend Department Convention to be held at VFW Post 665 in Columbus, Georgia. James Peacock moved to accept Detachment 1402's offer to host the Convention. Ed Barbee seconded the motion, and it was approved.

TRAINING:

Adjutant/Paymaster LuAnn Miller presented training on locating forms on the National website, and proper completion of the Report of Officer Installation form. Training materials will be posted on the Department website.

The quarterly meeting recessed at 1047 and reconvened at 1057.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Brent Eaton moved that Department donate \$100 to VFW Post 665 for allowing us to use their facility for the quarterly meeting. The motion was seconded by Charles Nicholson and was approved.

James Berres, Unit Commander, forwarded information to Commandant Larry Heard regarding the Young Marines, which Commandant Heard reviewed with the membership. Marty Habecker made a motion to donate \$500 to each Young Marines unit in Georgia. The motion was second by Levi McKenna. Adjutant/Paymaster Miller spoke about the close relationship between the Marine Corps League and the Young Marines at all levels of our organization. Marty explained who the Young Marines are and what they do. The program is for youths between the ages of 8 and 18 and involves shooting, swimming, Marine Corps history, Marine Corps values, archery, and canoeing, among many other activities. The Young Marines were at the National Convention in Billings, Montana, hauling luggage for League members. They try to be self-sustaining by fundraising, but additional support is always appreciated. The motion was approved.

GOOD OF THE LEAGUE:

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The National Midwinter Conference is currently limited to 250 attendees. It will be held February 25-27, 2021, in Norfolk, Virginia.

The 98th National Convention will be held in Springfield, Illinois. Bill Milled noted that there is a campground 15 minutes away from the convention site.

Lisa Delk invited everyone to Detachment 1196's birthday ball. It will be held on November 14, 2020. Tickets are \$45/each. Also, tickets for a decanter and glasses were available at the quarterly meeting for \$5/each, and proceeds will go to host detachment.

Brent Eaton reported Detachment 1402 is hosting a birthday celebration on November 7, 2020. Tickets are \$35/each.

The next quarterly meeting will be held in Warner Robins on January 23, 2021. We will be having another raffle with proceeds going to Detachment 1373 as host Detachment. The meeting site is American Legion Post 172 located at 1345 Radio Loop, Warner Robins, Georgia.

CLOSING CEREMONY:

There being no further business, the Quarterly Business Meeting was closed by ritual at 1121.

Submitted by:
LuAnn K. Miller
Adjutant/Paymaster
Department of Georgia
Marine Corps League

Marine Corps League Department of Georgia Document Retention Issue

Document Storage and Retention Issues

- Prior to July 2020, the Department of Georgia relied on individual efforts to store and access documents
- Paper files contained in plastic bins or file folders
- Difficult to share unless the individual officer responsible for the document had a copier/scanner to either email or mail a copy
- Much more difficult to organize and access documents
- Extremely high risk of losing data in the event of a theft, fire or other disaster
- Difficult for the officer to pass on to their successor

Recommended Solution: Microsoft OneDrive

- Since July 2020, Department of Georgia elected officers and Adjutant/Paymaster have been utilizing a single Microsoft 365 account with OneDrive
- Documents and files are stored in a safe location that is shareable and backed up automatically
- No more paper files
- Passing files to the successor is simply a matter of the Administrator adding them to the account and then removing the member who has access.

Other Benefits of Microsoft 365

- Each OneDrive account has 1TB of data storage
- Folders and documents can be easily managed from the computer just like any other folder or document on the computer
- Automatic data synchronization when a file is added, modified or deleted.
- The availability of other collaboration tools, such as Microsoft Teams
 - Example: The administrator can set up a Microsoft Team for a specific committee and invite the members of the committee as guests. This will allow for a single document location for collaboration as well as a safe and permanent document storage location.

What is the Cost

- During this trial period, Sr. Vice Commandant Bill Miller has been covering the cost for a single user account at \$5.00 per month.
- It is recommended that the Department of Georgia subscribe to at least 5 user accounts (Commandant, Sr. Vice Commandant, Jr. Vice Commandant, Judge Advocate and Adjutant/Paymaster) at \$5.00 per account per month at an annual cost of \$300.00. It would be advisable to add an additional user account for the Chaplain at an additional \$5.00 per month, totaling \$360.00 per year.

Marine Corps League Department of Georgia Video Conferencing

- With the advent of COVID-19, many individuals and organizations have been utilizing conference calls and video conferences to conduct business.

- Since July 2020, the Marine Corps League Department of Georgia has been testing various video conferencing platforms.
- After testing three platforms, it is currently using a Zoom Pro account that allows up to 100 participants at a cost of \$15.00 per month. As this is a test, Sr. Vice Commandant Bill Miller is paying for the account.
- The next test will be with FreeConferenceCall.com Video Conferencing which has most of the same features as Zoom but allows up to 1,000 participants. There are Detachments that have used this platform with success.
- While this account is free, it does have a “Pay What You Can” pricing model. If this were to prove functional, I would recommend that we contribute either the “Average Amount” at \$10.00 per month or \$120.00 per year, or the “Market Rate” at \$15.00 per month or \$180.00 per year.
- There are multiple benefits to the Department of Georgia subscribing to a video conference service:
 - Ability for the Board of Trustees to hold more frequent meetings instead of only meeting four times a year
 - An electronic invitation could be sent out via the Commandants Distribution List for any who wish to attend
 - Training sessions can be held without requiring individuals to travel to the training destination, thereby enabling more members to attend
 - The Board of Trustees is exploring the ability to record each online training session in order to upload the training to the Department of Georgia website for viewing
 - The video conferencing platform could be made available for committees to hold meetings, which would allow committees to be more diverse with individuals from all parts of the state being able to participate

How to Absorb the Cost

Based on the above information, it is estimated that the investment into data and video conferencing technology would cost between \$420.00 and \$540.00 per year, dependent upon the options selected. If additional user access accounts are added to Microsoft 365, each additional user is \$60.00 per year.

According to the Adjutant/Paymaster, the Department of Georgia can easily absorb this cost now and for several years. However, if we were to increase our expenses by \$600.00 per year, we should find a way to increase our income to offset the expense.

One way to do so is with the annual dues amount set by the Department of Georgia, which is currently set at \$4.00 per annual member. This amount has not increased for at least 10 years. According to the 30 September 2020 roster, we currently have 1,338 annual members (1,088 paid + 250 unpaid = 1,338). If the membership of the Department of Georgia were to approve increasing the Department’s annual dues amount by \$1.00, it would generate in excess of \$1,000 per year, which is more than sufficient to cover the technology expense with room to add other users if desired (District Vice Commandants, VAVS, Boy Scout Coordinator, etc.) as well as different services or enhancements to the Department website. According to the Department of Georgia Bylaws, changes to the Department of Georgia dues amount can only be approved by the membership at the annual convention.