

THE AMERICAN LEGION



STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SUSTAINED MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

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Tab 1

THE AMERICAN LEGION

PREAMBLE

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 the Great 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.

PURPOSE/ENDURING PRINCIPLES

During the Fall NEC 2012, Resolution 64 was passed calling for the development of a long-term membership plan (copy of resolution 64 included in Tab 3).

This document is the result of Resolution 64. It incorporates several other resolutions that will be highlighted within the strategic plan. The overall mission of the plan **is to increase membership and post development by creating a culture of growth.**

A large portion of the plan was developed around the resolutions created from the 21st Century Report (copy of resolutions included in Tab 4) and further confirmed thru the following “**Enduring Principles**” listed below that were first introduced to us through our Preamble:

- 1. For God and Country.** *A basic foundation of the American Legion is the recognition of the influence of Almighty God in all of our worthwhile endeavors as we strive to accomplish what is right in the eyes of God and maintaining loyalty to a grateful nation in our service to America’s veterans, their families and their communities.*
- 2. Provide service to all veterans and ask all eligible veterans to be members.** *A veteran is a veteran, regardless of race, religion, gender, creed, age or war era, and is eligible to belong to The American Legion as long as he or she meets the prescribed eligibility requirements in the national constitution and no unwarranted action will be taken at any level of the organization that may lead to barriers that hamper the membership growth, support of programs and active community involvement of The American Legion. The capability of this organization to support and provide service to all veterans regardless of war era hinges on asking all eligible veterans to join and support our programs.*
- 3. A presence in all communities where there are veterans.** *Every community should have the benefit of an active American Legion post to provide service to veterans and their families. As long as all of the required obligations are met for the establishment of a post, no individual post, county, or district shall have the authority to deny any member(s) the opportunity to start or revitalize a post.*
- 4. Posts serve as pillar of their community.** *We believe that each post is a community based wartime veterans organization known for helping all veterans, families and children in the community and where social programs and events will not supersede the reason The American Legion was founded in 1919 and where the image is associated with “Service First.” We should know the needs, wants and desires of the local community and fit our programs into their plans.*

- 5. Essential leadership and mentorship.** *All levels of The American Legion leadership are urged to develop a standard for its leadership to include a knowledge about programs, activities, goals and objectives of the organization in order to do their best and be more proactive toward the needs of those we serve. This also entails developing a continuing education and training program. All new members are entitled to be properly informed about The American Legion and all should be welcomed into the organization and provided a mentor to further develop their knowledge.*
- 6. Cultivate an outreach program for all those still serving.** *All levels of The American Legion are urged to develop a comprehensive plan to educate and provide service to Active, Reserve Component and National Guard military personnel currently in uniform, retired, and separated about the value and benefits derived from The American Legion to include the value of membership after the service is provided. This includes outreach to the local military student groups in colleges and universities.*
- 7. Foster a family and welcoming relationships at all levels.** *A wholesome and cooperative relationship with all levels of the American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion is vital in order to assist all veterans and their families by our mutual programs and activities.*

Tab 2

Membership & Post Activities Committee Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth

MISSION STATEMENT: To Increase membership and post development by creating a culture of growth.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE:

Grow membership progressively over the next five years and beyond using the following strategies: *Create Brand Awareness; Communication; Training/Education/Leadership Development; Post Development and Revitalization; Membership Recruiting & Retention.* (Resolution 64, Tab 3)

PRIORITIES:

CREATE BRAND AWARENESS – Target members and non-members to create awareness of who we are and what we do. (Resolution 52, Tab 4)

TACTICS:

1. Create and promote a tagline that best describes The American Legion. (1st year)
2. Develop marketing expertise to lead new marketing focus and development of a comprehensive marketing plan to increase clarity of brand awareness of The American Legion as the Premier Veterans Service Organization. (1st year)
3. Encourage new corporate partnerships with veteran friendly organizations that have the same values as The American Legion to increase the benefits of being a member. (2nd year)

COMMUNICATION – Ensure dissemination of accurate and essential information to all members and the general public. (Resolution 51, Tab 4)

TACTICS:

1. Utilize all internal media to encourage membership to join us in this five year membership plan. (1st year)

2. Encourage departments develop a media relations team. (1st year)
3. Communicate The American Legion's story to the nation's military components, with emphasis on eligibility. (1st year)
4. Collect all members' email addresses to encourage correct timely dissemination of information and any calls to action. (1st year and continuous)
5. Increase PSA in local media channels. (ongoing)
6. Increase presence in social media. (ongoing)

INCREASE TRAINING/EDUCATION/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT –

Improving knowledge of The American Legion by implementing educational tools and encouraging leadership development at all levels. (*Resolutions 50 and 52, Tab 4*)

TACTICS:

1. Encourage departments to develop membership training teams and long term plans for membership growth. (1st year and continuous)
2. Encourage growth of the LEAD Program, ALEI and Department Legion Colleges. (1st year and continuous)

POST CREATION, DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION – Develop new posts, revitalize or consolidate existing posts to promote growth within The American Legion. (*Resolutions 48, 49 and 52, Tab 4*)

TACTICS:

1. Encourage Departments to conduct post evaluations to identify areas that may need post revitalization, consolidation or new post development. (1st year)
 - a. Revitalize posts as identified.
 - b. Encourage the development of new posts where revitalization efforts have not been successful.
 - c. Form new posts in communities with significant veteran populations.
2. Improve community awareness of your post by being active in your community. (1st year)
3. Encourage every post to welcome all members and guests. (1st year)
4. Identify and use the proper membership tools at all levels to achieve growth. (1st year) (*See reference materials, Tab 5*)

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITING AND RETENTION – Increase membership by developing a comprehensive recruiting and membership retention strategy.

(Resolutions 48, 49 and 51, Tab 4)

TACTICS:

1. Establish membership teams at all levels. (1st year and continuous)
 - a. Develop a retention strategy at every level of the organization.
RETENTION MUST BE THE FIRST PRIORITY TO INCREASE OUR MEMBERSHIP.
 - b. Develop and implement a strategy for transferring members from the Department headquarters post into traditional posts.
 - c. Increase emphasis on traditional recruitment. *(Especially at post level)*
 - d. Evaluate current reward and incentive programs at all levels and make recommendations for change, if necessary.
 - e. Encourage all levels to develop a working relationship with their military senior leaders to offer an opportunity to join The American Legion to all eligible members of the Active Military, the National Guard and Reserve components. *(See reference material, Tab 5)*
2. Ensure all new members feel welcome and are invited to participate. (1st year and continuous)
3. Continue to enhance the membership renewal process.
4. Having successfully completed the VA claims process, Department Service Officers are encouraged to invite eligible veterans to join The American Legion or renew their membership.
5. Offer participants in The American Legion programs, and their families, the opportunity to support such programs through membership in The American Legion Family, if eligible.

Tab 3

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

**Resolution No. 64: 5-Year Membership Plan
Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions
Submitted by: Subcommittee on Resolutions**

WHEREAS, The Membership & Post Activities Committee and the Internal Affairs Commission have demonstrated to the National Executive Committee that they are confident that The American Legion can grow its membership if there was a commitment from national to the post level in developing and implementing a long-range plan at all levels of the organization; and

WHEREAS, The essential element in growing our membership is developing new posts in communities where we have a population of veterans that are not members of The American Legion and consolidating posts where advisable; and

WHEREAS, They believe that the direction provided by the 21st Century Report is more relevant than ever, and that the necessary membership tools already exist to grow our posts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That the National Executive Committee, having full confidence in the ability of the Internal Affairs Commission and the Membership & Post Activities Committee, does hereby direct that they develop an integrated five-year strategic plan for the purpose of developing posts and growing membership; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That once this plan has been accepted by the National Executive Committee, that it will be revised as required at the end of each membership year and those revisions shall be reported to the National Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the five-year strategic plan for growing membership shall be presented to the National Executive Committee at its May 2013 regularly scheduled meeting; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That while it would be expedient to task only the Membership & Post Activities Committee with developing a five-year plan, that the National Executive Committee does hereby direct the National

Commander and National Adjutant to make available to said committee any and all resources currently available to draft such a plan, and the National Adjutant is authorized to expend reasonable travel funds in order to bring no more than seven Legionnaires, not including the Chairmen of Internal Affairs and Membership & Post Activities, with the required experience and knowledge in membership to no more than two meetings in Indianapolis for the purpose of finalizing the plan; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That every community having a significant population of veterans deserves the opportunity to have an American Legion post, and no department shall thwart or impede such an initiative.

Tab 4

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 48: Diversity and a Veteran is a Veteran (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 27, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 27, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion, founded in 1919, as a fraternal veterans' organization based upon firm comradeship born out of war service, and dedication to equitable treatment for all veterans, particularly the disabled, their widows, and their orphans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion affirmed its continued commitment and support to all our comrades, their children, their widows and orphans and the generations to come during the Minneapolis Convention, September 6-8, 1994; and

WHEREAS, A veteran is a veteran, regardless of race, religion, gender, creed or age and is eligible to belong to The American Legion as long as he or she meets the prescribed eligibility requirement; and

WHEREAS, American Legion posts are made up of war time veterans from all walks of life, who gave of themselves, sacrificed so much and asked for so little in return to become eligible to be a member of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of elected and appointed officials at all levels of The American Legion to ensure that our governing document, the National Constitution and By-Laws is strictly enforced and adhered to; and

WHEREAS, By virtue of membership in The American Legion, members are entitled to certain benefits including access to any American Legion post; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #27 (NEC, October 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That The American Legion strongly recommends that every level of The American Legion (departments, districts, counties and posts) review its Constitution and By-Laws and those of superior bodies within the organization to ensure it is in compliance with the rules that govern this organization; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a veteran is a veteran, regardless of race, religion, gender, creed, age, or war era, and is eligible to belong to The American Legion as long as he or she meets the prescribed eligibility requirements; and, be it further

RESOLVED, Departments, districts, counties and posts dedicated to the programs of The American Legion are urged not to take unwarranted actions that may lead to barriers that hamper the growth, support of programs and active community involvement that may adversely affect the growth of The American Legion; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That we operate with a common focus, derived from cooperation and fraternal relationships developed from working together at all levels of the organization, for the sole intent and purpose of carrying out the duties and responsibilities commonly shared at each level of The American Legion; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 27, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled, "Diversity and a Veteran is a Veteran" (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 49: Disenfranchising (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The December 2011 change to the charter of The American Legion created the need to examine and edit language within certain resolutions of the organization in order to bring a resolution into compliance with the Charter, and gave opportunity to correct deficiencies in other resolutions, the subject herein being one as originally set out in Resolution No. 28, NEC, October 2006; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 28, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 28, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The number of American Legion posts has shown an annual reduction at a time when veterans' population is increasing; and

WHEREAS, This trend must be reversed if The American Legion is to afford every veteran an opportunity to become a member; and

WHEREAS, Every community should have the benefit of an active American Legion post that supports American Legion programs; and

WHEREAS, The original 21st Century Report recommended an American Legion post for every high school in the community in order to offer appropriate American Legion programs to high school students, which today is still a very valid concept but because of the consolidation of schools in the communities across the Nation does not provide adequate number of posts for all the eligible veterans to become a member of a post in their local community in order to provide this support; and

WHEREAS, Departments are urged to review the veteran population data in the counties in their state as compared to the location of posts and if there is not a post for every 200 veterans located in the local community there should be a major emphasis to start new posts in order to service all veterans as well as the local school systems with The American Legion programs; and

WHEREAS, A reduction of Posts directly reflects the decline in membership within each Department; and

WHEREAS, A strong presence within the community begins with an active American Legion Post; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee on January 15, 1923, approved a resolution to allow the establishment of new posts regardless of location and without undue outside interference; and

WHEREAS, Resolutions approved at the 1965 National Convention in Portland, Oregon and the 1971 National Convention in Houston, Texas, recommended that new post development be a priority project of department commanders; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #28 (NEC, 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That the formation and revitalization of American Legion posts be a recommended priority which only the Department Commander or the Department Executive Committee controls in accordance with Article IX Section 1 of the National Constitution; and, be it further

RESOLVED, As long as all of the required obligations are met for the establishment of a post, no individual post, county, or district shall have the authority to deny any individual(s) the opportunity to start or revitalize a post, that the final decision on all post charter applications will be made by the Department Commander or Department Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That no post charter will be cancelled without the department attempting to revitalize the post in question and attempts made by the department to start a new post within the same calendar year for every post submitted for cancellation to the National Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments are urged to form new posts in communities where there exists a large veteran population in order to provide veterans an opportunity to choose which post they desire to belong as well as make it more convenient for the veteran; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 28, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled “Disenfranchising” (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 50: Training and Education (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 30, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 30, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Their specific assignment was to study "the future needs of the veterans to which The American Legion needs to adapt its programs and activities as we enter the 21st Century"; and

WHEREAS, The Internal Affairs Commission is the subordinate body to formulate and recommend policies and to oversee the implementation of adopted policies relating to activities conducted for organizational purposes; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is fundamentally a patriotic organization, dedicated and devoted to advancing the ideals of America—justice, freedom, democracy, and loyalty; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has always touted these basic principles, they do not come without exacting a price for the rank and file; and

WHEREAS, Service and membership go hand-in-hand, so do progress and growth through active support and participation as a result of education and training; and

WHEREAS, Our world is a universal information database, with its leaders and forerunners being those that use these powerful tools as cornerstones to ensure a quantitative and qualitative edge over other systems and/or groups; and

WHEREAS, This must be accomplished through the effectiveness and abilities of our leaders at all levels of the organization; it is essential they are given

the opportunity, the orientation, and knowledge about American Legion programs and activities; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #30 (NEC, 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That all levels of The American Legion leadership are urged to develop a standard for its leadership to include a knowledge about programs, activities, goals and objectives of the organization in order to do their best and be more proactive towards the needs of those they serve; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That leadership at all levels (National through Post) are urged to recommend to all candidates for office to consider taking and successfully completing the on-line version of The American Legion Extension Institute course; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That every department of The American Legion be encouraged to start and staff a comprehensive training seminar/college (also known as Legion College) for the purpose of training its leaders; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the National Organization of The American Legion develop a training environment, seeking a better-trained cadre of leadership that may include the use of computer technology/communications, written materials, teleconferencing, other electronic media, workshops, conferences, and seminars; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That all levels of The American Legion be strongly and resolutely urged to develop and execute a continuing education program pertaining to The American Legion programs for leadership and members; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 30, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled "Training and Education" (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 51: Veteran Outreach Program (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The December 2011 change to the charter of The American Legion created the need to examine and edit language within certain resolutions of the organization in order to bring a resolution into compliance with the Charter, and gave opportunity to correct deficiencies in other resolutions, the subject herein being one as originally set out in Resolution No. 29, NEC, October 2006; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 29, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 29, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The number of American Legion posts has shown an annual reduction at a time when the veteran population is increasing; and

WHEREAS, This trend must be reversed if The American Legion is to afford every veteran an opportunity to become a member; and

WHEREAS, Training seminars such as Membership Workshops and Legion colleges are provided to educate The American Legion membership about benefits and services to all veterans; and

WHEREAS, Every community should have the benefit of an active Legion post that supports Legion programs; and

WHEREAS, Active Duty installations, Reserve Centers and National Guard Armories are located in communities and are an active part of that community; and

WHEREAS, Today's military force is an all volunteer force; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is composed of an all volunteer membership; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution No. 29 (NEC, 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That all levels of The American Legion are urged to develop a comprehensive plan to educate and provide service to Active, Reserve Component and National Guard eligible military personnel currently in uniform, recently retired, and separated about the value and benefits derived from membership in The American Legion; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That all levels of The American Legion are urged to develop a recruiting campaign targeted at eligible military personnel currently serving on Active Duty, in the Reserve Components and The National Guard, and, as well develop a working relationship with The Adjutant General of the state, reserve center commanders and active duty military installation commanders; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 29, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled "Veteran Outreach Program" (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 52: The American Legion Post Operations (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The December 2011 change to the charter of The American Legion created the need to examine and edit language within certain resolutions of the organization in order to bring a resolution into compliance with the Charter, and gave opportunity to correct deficiencies in other resolutions, the subject herein being one as originally set out in Resolution No. 31, NEC, October 2006; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 31, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 31, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is composed of individuals having a basic common bond by serving their country in a wartime period; and

WHEREAS, These citizen soldiers, while serving on active duty defending the principles of our democracy, have received a high level of useful discipline and training, and through these associations and experiences during military life, plus the application of prudent logic and wisdom, have built the activities and programs of our great organization; and

WHEREAS, It is critical that this rich tradition be preserved for future generations, and in order to remain informed and competitive with other groups and associations, doing business through time-tested methodology must always be subject to reflection, review, and change as necessary, in order to maximize influence in our communities, states, and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Our quality service to veterans which they have earned and deserve, can be dramatically enhanced if The American Legion urges the following at all levels of the organization:

1. ensure post operations are legal
2. provide continuous training
3. include hands-on instruction
4. utilize new technology i.e., Internet, email, office automation, public relations
5. make appropriate changes as necessary
6. current leaders serve as mentors by teaching, guiding, counseling and tutoring those being passed the mantle of leadership; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #31 (NEC, 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That all department, district, county and local American Legion leaders are urged to develop a leadership plan that stresses the need of mentoring and training of all post officials in such areas as:

1. **Developing and executing post mission statements**
2. **Developing and executing a five-year plan to include description in each of the following areas: post activities, programs, budgets to include financial projections, membership and public relations/communications**
3. **Development of a constitution and by-laws to include proper charter filing, incorporation, report filing to include Consolidated Post Report, maintaining a proper check and balance system to include audit, risk management (liability, property and event insurance), and proper writing of resolutions**
4. **Formation and training of committees based on the size and mission of the post in the local community**
5. **Develop programs in conjunction with the Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion to welcome new veterans into the community with emphasis on welcoming our wounded warriors home through the "Operation Comfort Warriors" program to their communities**
6. **Reaching out to all veterans in the community and listening to their concerns; and, be it further**

RESOLVED, That departments, districts, and counties are urged to develop an integrated coordinated assistance visit plan, or sometimes referred to as Post Responsibility Audit (copy in Officer's Guide and Manual of

Ceremonies) so every post is visited by one level of leadership at least once a year to review the aforementioned areas with the post leadership; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Legion believes that each post is a community based wartime veterans organization known for helping all veterans, families and children in the community and where social programs will not supersede the reason The American Legion was founded in 1919 and where the image is associated with “Service First”; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That when referring to an American Legion post in all official documents, publications, signage, and advertising that the word “post” be used instead of club, hall or other term; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 31, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled “The American Legion Post Operations” (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

Tab 5

Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth Mission Essential Task Guidelines

Priority No. 1 – *Create Brand Awareness*

Is The American Legion a household name in the state? YES_____ NO_____

If yes, what is being done to maintain and enhance The American Legion as a household name?

If no, what are the department's plans to become more recognizable as the preeminent veterans service organization? When will it be implemented?

Year 1_____ Year 2_____ Year 3_____ Year 4_____ Year 5_____

Is the department actively promoting programs to the general public?

YES_____ NO_____

If yes, how and what program(s) are the department actively promoting?

What is the plan to continue building awareness for these programs for the future?

If no, when will the department actively promote these programs?

Year 1_____ Year 2_____ Year 3_____ Year 4_____ Year 5_____

Priority No. 2 – Communication

Does the department have a media/public relations team? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, what are their responsibilities and how are they being utilized?

If no, when does the department expect to have a team in place?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

(The Public Relations Toolkit is available from the National Headquarters to assist in conducting, planning and evaluating public relations at all levels of the organization.)

How is the department communicating with its members? How often?

Newsletter _____

Email _____

Personal Contact _____

Other _____

Does the department have a website? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, how is it utilized to assist in providing information to members and the general public?

If no, when would the department have a website set-up?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Is the department communicating with the general public? YES _____ NO _____

If so, what is being done and will this generate other opportunities for the general public to be involved with The American Legion?

If not, when and how would the department implement a plan to communicate with the public?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have a relationship with local media outlets?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, explain the relationship.

What is the plan to build a stronger relationship with media outlets so they can continue to help tell The American Legion story?

If no, when and what plans are being made to establish a relationship?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Is the department maintaining an email database?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, how is it being utilized? Does it include non-members?

If no, when and what plans are being made to create an email database?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Priority No. 3 – Training/Education/Leadership Development

Does the department have a training/education team? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, explain what their responsibilities are.

How are they being utilized effectively?

If no, when does the department expect to have a team in place?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Are there requirements for post/district/department officers to take and pass the American Legion Extension Institute?

YES _____ NO _____

(The American Legion Extension Institute can be taken online by any individual or taught in a classroom format.)

If yes, please explain.

If no, when and what plans does the department have to implement a requirement for current and future leaders to take the American Legion Extension Institute?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have a mentoring process in place to develop new leaders?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain.

If no, when and what plans does the department have to implement a process to mentor new Legionnaires for future leadership roles?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have a Legion college? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, when and where is it offered and what is the purpose?

If no, when and what plans does the department have to implement a department Legion college?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have a process in place to select and send candidates to the National American Legion College (NALC)?

YES _____ NO _____

(The NALC is held once a year in Indianapolis at the end of October.)

How are the NALC graduates utilized once they return to the department?

Is the department utilizing the LEAD program? YES _____ NO _____

(A LEAD booklet can be requested through the Internal Affairs Division to get an idea of what courses are offered.)

Is the LEAD training being used to enhance and develop other training venues?

What other training is offered for members?

Does the training team have the capability to travel to posts and districts to offer training for those who do not come to conventions and conferences?

YES _____ NO _____

How would this be implemented?

Priority No. 4 – Post Creation, Development and Revitalization

Is the department familiar with the revitalization and development process?

YES _____ NO _____

Does the department know National staff can assist and train volunteers by conducting district revitalizations?

YES _____ NO _____

Does the department have its own development and revitalization team?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, explain what their responsibilities are and how they are being utilized.

If no, when does the department expect to have a team in place?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have an annual goal for starting new post?

YES _____ NO _____

If so, how many new posts?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

How does the department identify a potential area to start a new post?

If no, what is the plan to implement a goal for starting new posts? When will the goal be in place?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have an annual goal for revitalizing posts/districts?

YES _____ NO _____

If so, how many revitalizations?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

How does the department identify a potential area to revitalize?

Use the Post Responsibility Audit form to gather information?

YES _____ NO _____

(Found at www.legion.org/publications in the Post Membership Team Training Guide on pages 6-11)

If no, what is the plan to implement a goal for revitalizing posts/districts? When will the goal be in place?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Priority No. 5 – Membership Recruiting and Retention

Does the department have a membership team?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, explain what their responsibilities are and how they are utilized.

If no, when does the department expect to have a team in place?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Do they focus on both recruiting and retention?

YES _____ NO _____

If no, when would the department require them to do so?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Do they assist with renewing and transferring headquarters post members?

YES _____ NO _____

If no, when would the department require them to focus on renewing and transferring headquarters post members?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the membership team offer training for posts/districts? YES _____ NO _____

Do they have the capability to travel and offer training directly at the post/district?

YES _____ NO _____

Does the department have an awards program in place to recognize members for their recruiting and/or retention efforts?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain.

Are the awards evaluated each year to ensure they are effective?

YES _____ NO _____

If no, when and what plans does the department have to implement a recognition program?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

How is the department service officer involved in the membership process?

If the service officer is not involved, when and what plans does the department have to implement a program for them to assist in membership?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have a relationship with all military components and installations located within the department?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, explain all relationships?

If no, when and what plans does the department have to establish a relationship?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Is the department aware through the Americanism, Children & Youth (AC&Y) Division at the National Headquarters there is a staff member who can assist with military outreach?

YES _____ NO _____

Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

Operation Comfort Warrior (OCW)

Heroes to Hometowns (H2H)

Family Support Network – 1-800-504-4098

Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

Reconnect

Is the department involved in any of the following programs?

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) YES _____ NO _____

Wounded Warrior Program YES _____ NO _____

Yellow Ribbon Events YES _____ NO _____

Adopt-a-unit YES _____ NO _____

Pre and post deployment briefs YES _____ NO _____

(The department is not limited to just these items. Any and all involvement with the military is highly encouraged.)

If not, what are the plans to do so and when?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department communicate with the military? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, how?

If no, when and what plans are being made to establish communication?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Does the department have a relationship and communicate with the National Guard's state adjutant general (TAG)

YES _____ NO _____

How will the department build upon and increase involvement with the TAG?

If no, when and what plans are being made to establish a relationship with the TAG?

Does the department have a relationship with Student Veterans of America chapters or universities located within the department?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, explain all relationships?

How will the department expand their relationship with these groups?

If no, when and what plans does the department have to establish a relationship?

Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____ Year 3 _____ Year 4 _____ Year 5 _____

Miscellaneous Items Not Covered

Please explain in detail other relationships, events and/or other procedures the department has implemented that is not outlined in one of the five priorities.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

- 1. 30-185 --- Why You Should Belong Brochure**
- 2. 30-120 --- Leadership Education and Development (LEAD)**
- 3. 30-106 --- Post Officer Guide**
- 4. 40-005 --- How We Help**
- 5. 58-022 --- Public Relations Toolkit/Handbook**
- 6. Post Service Officer's Manual**
(Upon revision this summer) will be available online at:
<http://www.legion.org/publications/161004/post-service-officers-guide>