

PROCEEDINGS

of the

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

PRE-CONVENTION

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Friday
August 24, 2018
10:00 AM**

Minneapolis Convention Center
Room M101A+B+C, Mezzanine Level
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Reported by: Denise L. Hinxman

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. . . At 10:00 a.m., August 24, 2018, the Pre-Convention Meeting of the National Executive Committee of Sons of The American Legion was called to order by National Commander Danny J. Smith, Nebraska, and the following proceedings were had:

CALL TO ORDER and POSTING OF COLORS
Danny J. Smith, Nebraska
National Commander

Please rise. The colors of our country being in place, join me in a hand salute by the numbers. One, Two.

. . . The National Executive Committee rendered a right-hand salute to the Colors.

The Chaplain will now invoke the blessing of God. Please uncover. Chaplain Noble, please approach the podium.

INVOCATION
James Noble, New Jersey
National Chaplain

While we're assembled, I received information today -- and I'll ask for a moment of silence -- for the prayers of Thomas S. Deacon, U.S. Vietnam veteran, passed away last Saturday on the 18th at the age of 80. He's the brother of Past National Commander Michael Deacon.

Good morning, Lord. Thank You for a wonderful day that You have given us. As we continue our work in this meeting, we ask Your guiding hand in all we say and do.

We serve side by side for the good of the Sons of The American Legion and the entire American Legion family. Amen.

... Chorus of amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Chaplain.

In memory of our departed comrades and the comrades of all veterans, let us stand in silence.

... At this time, the National Executive Committee observed a Moment of Silence.

POW/MIA REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY
Danny J. Smith, National Commander

To maintain a high awareness that a vigil should be maintained so that no POW or MIA will be left unaccounted for, the Sons of The American Legion designate a POW/MIA empty chair at all meetings.

This is a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for as a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty,

and a full accounting of those missing, let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor.

And the POW/MIA flag is being displayed at this time.

National Vice Commander Mark Cannito, please lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Mark A. Cannito, South Carolina
National Vice Commander

... The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You may recover.
National Vice Commander Don Ramirez, please lead us in the recital of the Preamble to the Constitution.

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE S.A.L.
Donald S. Ramirez, California
National Vice Commander

... The National Executive Committee recited the Preamble to the Constitution of the S.A.L.

BLUE STAR BANNER CEREMONY
Danny Smith, National Commander

Serving as a constant reminder that servicemen and women on a daily basis are putting themselves at risk to ensure our freedoms, the Sons of The American Legion display a corporate Blue Star Service Banner at all

meetings to serve as a symbol of our support of all the military personnel serving this great country.

Let us never forget that every day these individuals are protecting our liberty. And the Blue Star Banner is in place.

You may be seated. National Adjutant Anthony Wright will now call the roll.

ROLL CALL

... The National Adjutant, Anthony W. Wright, called the Roll, and the following members were present:

NATIONAL OFFICERS

National Commander
Danny J. Smith (NE)

National Vice Commanders

Kenneth P. Warner (PA)
Mark A. Cannito (SC)
Jay E. Marsden (MO)
Joseph R. Navarette (NM)
Donald S. Ramirez (CA)

National Adjutant
Anthony W. Wright (PA)

National Assistant Adjutant Emeritus
Harold E. Thompson, Jr. (NE)

National Assistant Adjutants
James "Ed" Sheubrooks (FL)
Robert J. Avery (NY)

David M. Ridenour (IN)
Scott A. Williams (VA) - EXCUSED
Scott J. Thornton (OH)
Jeffrey E. Hicks (NJ)

National Chaplain
James Noble (NJ)

National Historian
Jerry J. Cole (NE) - EXCUSED

National Judge Advocate
Joseph Paviglianti (NY)

National Sergeant-At-Arms
George B. Sevick, Jr. (NE)

National Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms

Brian K. Waters (PA)
Lyle G. Larson (KS)
Raymond P. Giehll, III (IN)
Matthew Chebro (GA) - ABSENT
Gregory A. Falco (NY)
David L. Rippe (NE)

Past National Commanders

Jeffrey C. Frain (AZ) - EXCUSED
Michael K. Seaton (CA)
Robert A. McBride (OH) - EXCUSED
J.R. Stillwell (IL)
John J. Smolinsky (MA) - ABSENT
Robert H. Faust (CA)
James R. Hartman (MD)
Gregory D. Reis (IL) - ABSENT
Grant M. Jamieson (MI) - ABSENT
Charles E. Gannon (MD)
John M. Sherrard (CA) - ABSENT
David P. Stephens (IN)
Christopher R. Cerullo (NY)
Frederick L. Hartline, Sr. (OH) - EXCUSED
Douglas P. Bible (MN)
Richard L. League (MD) - ABSENT
David R. Faust (WI)
Robert A. Worrel (IN) - ABSENT

Eugene L. Sacco (CA)
 Roland D. Matteson (AZ) - EXCUSED
 Joseph M. Mayne (MN)
 John T. Dietz (KY) - ABSENT
 Jack E. Jordan (TX) - ABSENT
 William E. Matoska (MD) - ABSENT
 Byron J. Robichaux (LA)
 Richard L. Cook (OK)
 Kevin N. Winkelmann (TX) - ABSENT
 Clifford A. Smith (MA)
 Steven C. Laws (NC) - ABSENT
 Neal C. Warnken (KS)
 Michael J. Deacon (IA)
 William L. Sparwasser (MD) - ABSENT
 Earl R. Ruttkofsky (MI)
 Raymond P. Giehll, Jr. (IN)
 Thomas E. Cisna (IL)
 Mark E. Arneson (GA) - ABSENT
 David L. Dew (TX) - ABSENT
 James K. Roberts, III (FL)
 Christopher J. Huntzinger (PA)
 Joseph W. Gladden (MD) - ABSENT
 Michael W. Moss (CO)
 Kevin L. Collier (AK)
 Brian J. O'Hearne (MA) - ABSENT

Roll Call of Detachments

Alabama, NEC
 Alaska, NEC
 Arizona, BOTH
 Arkansas - ABSENT
 California, ALTERNATE
 Colorado, NEC
 Connecticut, NEC
 Delaware, NEC
 Florida, BOTH
 France - ABSENT
 Georgia, BOTH
 Hawaii - ABSENT
 Idaho - VOICE ONLY
 Illinois, NEC
 Indiana, NEC
 Iowa, BOTH

Kansas, BOTH
 Kentucky, BOTH
 Louisiana, ALTERNATE
 Maine, NEC
 Maryland - ABSENT
 Massachusetts - ABSENT
 Michigan, BOTH
 Minnesota, NEC
 Mississippi, NEC
 Missouri, NEC
 Montana, ALTERNATE
 Nebraska, ALTERNATE
 Nevada, ALTERNATE
 New Hampshire, NEC
 New Jersey, BOTH
 New Mexico, BOTH
 New York, BOTH
 North Carolina - ABSENT
 North Dakota - ABSENT
 Ohio, BOTH
 Oklahoma, NEC
 Oregon, NEC
 Pennsylvania, NEC
 Philippines - ABSENT
 Puerto Rico - ABSENT
 Rhode Island - ABSENT
 South Carolina - POSITION VACANT
 South Dakota, NEC
 Tennessee - ABSENT
 Texas, BOTH
 Utah, ALTERNATE
 Vermont, NEC
 Virginia, NEC
 Washington, NEC
 West Virginia - ABSENT
 Wisconsin, BOTH
 Wyoming, BOTH

Commander, that completes roll call. You have a quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Anthony. I'll

take the script back when you're done.

... Laughter.

Couple notations: I would ask National Historian Jay Cole be noted as excused. They're doing the history book judging.

I would also grant voice only to Jack Youngs from the Detachment of Idaho. He's the Detachment Commander, in the absence of their NEC and alternate. Voice only.

I now declare this 2018 Pre-Convention Meeting of the National Executive Committee regularly convened.

Reading of Minutes

The minutes of our previous meeting were printed and distributed. With our new format, they are quite large. But we received no corrections.

So is there a motion to accept the minutes as printed and distributed?

DENNIS HENKEMEYER: Motion by Dennis Henkemeyer, National Executive Committeeman, Detachment of Minnesota.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: We have a motion on the floor to accept the previous meeting's minutes as printed and distributed.

ILLINOIS NECman: NEC from Illinois seconds the motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: And duly seconded.

Any discussion? Seeing none, all in favor of accepting the minutes as printed and distributed signify by saying aye.

... Chorus of aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Says here: "Greetings by National S.A.L. Liaison Paul Brown." While he works his way up front, I want to say welcome to Minneapolis, to our 47th Annual Convention and The American Legion's 100th National Convention. If you're around all week, I hope you take that in.

I don't think too many of us will be around to see the 200th. No offense, but I don't think any of you are going to make it.

But enjoy yourself. Have a good time. At this time, National Liaison Brown. Good to have you with us.

... Applause.

**Greetings
Paul Brown
National S.A.L. Liason**

First off, I'm glad to see that everyone made it. And I'm glad you're all here. And like before, I'm glad

to be part of the team.

I didn't bring my sword with me this time, but it's been an interesting year. And I think all of us have gone through it quite well. And we're in the process now -- I want to announce for everyone -- and I think you may have got the email from me -- but we were trying to get a report as far as the progress of the strategic ad hoc, the plan, the report that's given by the ad hoc committee, the strategic plan, and give you an update as far as where we were with that.

But we're going to wait, and that's going to be available prior to fall meeting so you guys have a chance to review it before we get together for fall meeting again.

But please take the time to review that when that does happen. But welcome to Minneapolis. Have a great, successful convention, and we'll talk to you later in the weekend.

... Applause.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Liaison Brown. It's been a pleasure working with you this year. Look forward to our future endeavors as we move forward. I

know hopefully you and Doc will get along. Doc can be a little cantankerous.

NATIONAL LIAISON PAUL BROWN: Do you know something I don't?

... Laughter.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: I think what we've been doing this year has been working out fantastic with the communications with the next leaders coming through and our national leadership at the headquarters.

So hopefully the future leaders keep that going, keep adding to that document, and it's all good. It's all good.

We're going to get into the reports here. We have a few commission reports this morning.

And first I'd like to call on Don Culver, the Vice Chairman of Internal Affairs, to come forward for his report.

I will let you know that Mark -- I'm going to play the over-60 card on that one -- Mark Tansel asked to be excused due to work commitments. So Don's going to take care of the business today for Mark.

Good morning.

REPORT - INTERNAL AFFAIRS
Donald Culver, Vice Chairman
Internal Affairs Commission

Good morning. I'd say "hi, y'all," but I don't want to sound like J.J. Good morning, gentlemen.

Internal Affairs Commission received four pre-convention resolutions for our consideration.

Chairman Tansel conducted two conference calls to both discuss and determine the plan going forward on these four.

Calls were on July 28th at 8:00 p.m. and August 8th at 8:00 p.m. All commission members were in attendance.

The first one was S.A.L. Resolution 1: Pre-Convention NEC 2018 National Convention Travel Reimbursement for NECmen of the Sons of The American Legion. Originator was the Detachment of Mississippi.

After a lot of discussion, the commission determined, by unanimous vote, that we needed to hold the resolution, work with Finance -- and I have done that already prior to this meeting -- and asked them to do a study, both near term and on the out years, as to when they thought that this could be incorporated.

The way the resolution was written, it was open-ended. It said when "funds become available." You

can't just leave that hanging out there in thin air.

Okay.

We've also asked Finance to report back to us at the spring meeting with their recommendation for Internal Affairs to review and decide where we're going to go with this thing.

Are there any questions? Hearing none, I'll move on to the next one.

S.A.L. Resolution 2: Pre-Convention NEC 2018. This was a candidate resolution endorsement of Ned Fox from California for National Vice Commander.

Originator was Detachment of California. By unanimous vote, the Internal Affairs Commission voted to receive and file the resolution.

S.A.L. Resolution 3: Pre-Convention NEC 2018. Another candidate resolution, endorsement of Gary P. Nelson, New Jersey, for National Vice Commander.

Again, by unanimous vote, the Internal Affairs Commission voted to receive and file the resolution.

Any questions?

S.A.L. Resolution 4: Pre-Convention NEC 2018, Blue Brigade Date Alignment. The originator was Detachment of

Oklahoma. By unanimous vote, the Internal Affairs Commission voted to approve the resolution as presented.

That concludes my report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Don. You've heard the Internal Affairs report. Those resolutions will be presented by our Resolutions Chairman John Jennings, the ones that will be acted upon.

Is there a motion to accept the Internal Affairs report by Vice Chairman Don Culver?

TOM LANDER: Tom Lander, NEC, Alabama, I make a motion to approve the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It's been moved to approve the Internal Affairs report.

MATT PARSONS: Matt Parsons, Alternate NEC, California, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Matt. And duly seconded.

Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all in favor of accepting the Internal Affairs report signify by saying aye.

... Chorus of aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Resolutions, John Jennings. Good morning.

RESOLUTIONS
John Jennings, Chairman
Resolutions Committee

Good morning.

. . . Chorus of good morning.

You can all do better than that. Good morning!

. . . Chorus of good morning.

There you go. Real quickly. The S.A.L. Resolution 1, Pre-Convention Reimbursement, which you have already heard the stance from Internal Affairs for it to be sent to Finance for further evaluation, that is also a recommendation.

So as a delegate to the 47th NEC, I make a motion, John Jennings from Florida, to send this resolution back to Finance for further evaluation.

DENNIS HENKEMEYER: Dennis Henkemeyer --

JOHN JENNINGS: NEC, I'm sorry.

DENNIS HENKEMEYER: Dennis Henkemeyer, National Executive Committeeman, Detachment of Minnesota, I second that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It's been duly moved and seconded to send this to Finance to study --

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE PAVIGLIANTI: That's the action of the Commission to be approve; you don't need a motion out of that to move that. The Commission has made that action.

There can be discussion of that action by the Commission, but it doesn't need to come from the Subcommittee on Resolutions. They made that action.

RON ROBERTS: Ron Roberts, NEC from Mississippi, the originator of the resolution. I have talked of this with several of the officers. And I understand the reasoning.

There is a question, however. There comes a time when you refer things to committees, it's called a black hole, isn't it, Mr. Brown, our liaison?

Sometimes things disappear into a black hole. I'm wondering how long it's going to be sitting in Finance before something comes back to the NEC, the governing body outside the convention.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: I think the recommendation was spring meeting.

RON ROBERTS: Spring meeting a year?

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: 2019.

RON ROBERTS: 2019.

That's nice to be specific, too, because it's been referred to the Finance Committee before because the date was specific and we couldn't make it by the date. So we left it generally open-ended.

So there will have to be some reaction. So that was my question. So spring NEC they're going to have a final comment from the Finance Committee after they do their research to determine a long-range projection of the budget of income and expenses?

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Correct. The record will show that, and it will come up under unfinished business.

RON ROBERTS: Thank you. That's all I wanted to say.

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE PAVIGLIANTI: Come up under the Internal Affairs Committee.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Internal Affairs.

Any further comments?

JOHN JENNINGS: Resolution 1 NEC -- excuse me, that's another page.

Resolution 2, which was the Endorsement of Ned Fox for National Commander, was received and filed.

Resolution 3, Pre-Convention Endorsement of Gary Nelson for National Vice Commander, that one was also received and filed.

On to S.A.L. Resolution 4, Pre-Convention NEC Blue Brigade date alignment originated out of the Detachment of Oklahoma:

"WHEREAS, the Sons of The American Legion is a growing organization as part of The American Legion family; and

WHEREAS, recognition of accomplishments is a viable part of the Sons of The American Legion that gives members the incentive to keep our membership growing; and

WHEREAS, the membership goals are set to achieve our final year-end goal; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion, in regular meeting assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 24-26, 2018, that the Sons of The American Legion change the date of compliance for qualification for the Blue Brigade Award to be in line with our final membership goal for 30 days prior to National Convention."

As an NEC from the Detachment of Florida, I make a motion we accept this resolution as written.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It's been moved to accept S.A.L. Resolution 4, Pre-Convention NEC 2018, the change of the rules to the Blue Brigade. Is there a second?

PETE SIERMINSKI: Pete Sierminski, Colorado, NEC, second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, sir. Any discussion?

(No response.)

Seeing none, all in favor of S.A.L. Resolution No. 4 Pre-Convention NEC 2018, signify by saying aye.

. . . Chorus of aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Just to clean up a couple of things before I give the mic to John. We did have a duly made motion and a second on the other resolution.

So I'm going to ask Dennis Henkemeyer, do you want to withdraw your second? And I'm going to ask John to withdraw his motion so we can clean that up on the record, the resolution on the reimbursement.

DENNIS HENKEMEYER: I think I was the maker -- John was, I'm sorry.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: If you want to do that.

DENNIS HENKEMEYER: Dennis Henkemeyer, National Executive Committeeman, Detachment of Minnesota and --

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Just a minute. S.A.L. Resolution No. 1, Pre-Convention NEC 2018, is the one we're talking about.

DENNIS HENKEMEYER: And I remove my second for Resolution No. 1.

JOHN JENNINGS: And John Jennings as NEC from the Detachment of Florida, I'll withdraw my motion for acceptance of the Resolution 1, Pre-Convention.

While at the podium, if you don't mind, I know it's not in the script; but, guys, I want to spread thanks to Mr. Bob Brown for this past year. He's been an asset to the group. Pete Sierminski, I know he's leaving and going other places.

Dole (phonetic), where are you at?

DOLE: Right here.

JOHN JENNINGS: I want to thank you for everything you've done. And Andy Dadds for his work. He was unable to attend because of other obligations, but the guys that worked diligently for the NEC.

And if you would please give them a big round of applause.

... Applause.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Are there any other chairmen that need to address this NEC meeting this morning with any information pertinent to this group and not wait until the convention? None?

**OLD BUSINESS, NEW BUSINESS and
FOR THE GOOD OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**

Is there any unfinished business to come before the Pre-NEC Convention meeting? Perfect.

New business? Is there any new business? Any new business?

(No response.)

You guys are making my day.

Does anyone have anything for the good of the Sons of The American Legion?

JIM ROBERTS: Mr. Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Sir.

JIM ROBERTS: Jim Roberts, Past National Commander, Detachment of Florida. Hopefully everybody got a copy of the minutes from the spring NEC meeting and the subsequent minutes from the Internal Affairs Commission of The American Legion and the Internal Affairs Subcommittee on

the Sons of The American Legion regarding our strategic plan.

We all had opportunities to have discussion on the strategic plan. It was pretty good discussion. We were noticed several times in the minutes, if you read the minutes, that this was not the final report of the committee; it was an outline and not a plan as it's written in the minutes of the National Executive Committee -- the National Executive Committee meeting.

And then we get the minutes from the National Internal Affairs Commission of The American Legion that indicated that the Sons of The American Legion's Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee final report was presented.

It was tasked by the chairman of the Internal Affairs Commission of The American Legion in March of 2016, and that report was passed by the National Executive Committee and forwarded to the IA Commission of The American Legion for action and direction.

If we continue on to the subcommittee notes from their particular meeting, they made three motions. They made three motions for the Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee report.

Motion 1 was that the Sons of The American Legion strategic plan be approved for implementation by the established organization of the Sons of The American Legion with the assistance of the Internal Affairs staff liaison to their program, as needed, with oversight from this commission, being the Internal Affairs Commission or the subcommittee, as well.

Secondly, the Sons of The American Legion Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee, which was directed by this commission on March 19, 2016, now be dissolved for the completion of their mission.

There was concern at the spring NEC meeting by several members of the National Executive Committee, to include myself as a Past National Commander, that what we would vote on and what we would approve would ultimately be the final product. Several of us had questions.

Thirteen detachments voted against the resolution for those reasons. Read the minutes of the NEC that you all participated in.

I'm here to tell you that plan or that outline - because, if you remember correctly, I said that this was a list of things to do, not a strategic plan. A strategic

plan is a lot more in detail and a lot more in depth than what we voted to approve.

So we get an email, and Liaison Brown did mention in that email that we were not going to get an update here for this meeting because of things that were happening at National headquarters.

This is an important process that we are going forward to do. And I understand that National is making significant changes in staffing, but that should have no bearing on the report that was to be given here either to the NEC or to the general membership of this organization as to what we were to do to move forward with the strategic plan or what we were going to do to the planning process, because again it's not a plan.

So, Mr. Commander, I don't know what we do. But if a report was to be presented to the membership of this convention, as I said at the NEC meeting, we've done ourselves a disservice.

I think by not presenting something to the membership of this convention, we again do ourselves a disservice because we now have to wait another year for the entire membership of this organization to come

together in Indianapolis, Indiana, to hear what we're doing and where we're at.

I do appreciate the time. I do appreciate the committee for the work they've done, because it shouldn't be a negative on them because they've done a lot of work. But we all had concerns.

Several had concerns in this room about what the process was going to be moving forward; and, unfortunately, I think we're here at that point now where what we were afraid was going to happen has indeed happened.

Thank you for your time.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: I have one question, Jim, and maybe many of you out there have that same question.

You speak of the concern that we would wait another year. If the final plan was to present that final report at the fall NEC, would not that have already been next year? We're not really creating an issue by waiting another year if that final report was not supposed to be given until the fall meeting?

Aren't we back on the original time schedule, then?

JIM ROBERTS: I think even if we didn't approve a final plan, we at least would be providing updates to both

the National Executive Committee and to the general membership of the organization, not necessarily a final report.

But it appears now that we don't even have a subcommittee or an ad hoc committee left to do it, because the National Internal Affairs Commission has said in their minutes that they effectively dissolved that committee.

So where do we go from here?

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Liaison Brown, do you want to address that? You're a little closer to what's happening at national headquarters with their decision.

LIAISON PAUL BROWN: I think, to back up a little bit, what was presented at the spring was an outline of moving forward and pretty much to flesh out the details of the plan what exactly was going to happen. That was being put back to each of the individual committees and commissions within the organization to come up with the details of the plan and any resolutions that would be forwarded, this body would be voting on each individual part of that as the committees and commissions brought their portion of it forward.

So, yes, this group is going to be making the final decision on each and every part of it. But it's not going

to be in one big tablet brought down from the hills; it's going to be -- each part is going to come up and people will decide whether that was the intent of the NEC moving forward or not.

So the whole entire scope of it is going to be multifaceted. And some parts are going to move a lot quicker than others. And we didn't want to have to -- part of the reason for doing this is things that could be easily solved, we didn't want to wait two years to figure out the details of things that were harder to flesh out.

I think that was the intent of what the ad hoc committee put forward. So I wanted to address that.

As far as, just in small details, last May it was announced -- for those who didn't get the details in the email -- that National headquarters has reduced staff by 44 positions in total.

And to do that they've offered early retirement to a lot of positions, and a lot of people have taken -- I think they've reduced 33 positions as of to date.

One of the things that has occurred is that there's been restructuring within the Internal Affairs Commission's divisions, which are the Membership Division and also Internal Affairs; that's a combined division now,

and out of 17 employees, it looks like they may be reducing it down to 12 employees total.

So as people have been leaving, we've been figuring out how to do this and that. We've been tasked out with things that were deemed to be a priority above this, which is unfortunate but where we're at.

But Chairman Newman felt that by delaying it and making sure that we had a fuller report to give people so they had time to review it and plenty of time before the fall meetings, it was much a bigger priority than trying to rush something together just to have something together for this convention.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Would it be fair to say that American Legion Internal Affairs, or whoever finally approved the report, approved the fact that those actions are being handed down to specific commissions and committees to develop and carry on and basically handing it over to them, to say: You develop your plan and bring forth resolutions?

LIAISON PAUL BROWN: Yes.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Therefore dissolving the main structure, filtering that down to the next level and asking them to develop their own material?

LIAISON PAUL BROWN: Which, as Past National Commander Roberts said, in the wording where they said to be administered and overseen by Internal Affairs staff and by the commission.

In other words, the Internal Affairs Commission understands that this is a work in progress, and they're committed to making sure that this continues to the end.

And they recognize that rather than putting the implementation of this on a National Commander's head or on the National Adjutant's head within the organization, that since the true oversight for this S.A.L. program is within Internal Affairs Commission, that they're going to keep driving the bus because they also command -- direct the staff that would be coordinating liaison, making sure these things are getting turned in and adjusting it to the intent of what the original ad hoc committee had moving forward.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Okay. Thank you. And those folks that have been involved in that, the chairman and your commission's committees, I appreciate your work.

I know there were some tight deadlines. I think we did pretty good on getting the information in. And

hopefully you've seen further development on those plans from each commission and committee.

Anything else?

BOB BROWN: Commander, Bob Brown, NEC from Georgia. Some of you may be aware, we just lost one of the most outstanding members from our Detachment. He's also a very significant part of this national organization as well, a past recipient of the Rigsby Award for Volunteer of the Year, served on that committee, commissioned for many years in the VA&R.

Mr. Doug Murphy passed away, and we'd like to mourn his loss and commend his spirit to the Squadron of Everlasting. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Bob. Take an extra moment on Sunday, when we have a memorial, to remember Doug and keep him and his family in your prayers and keep his memory alive. Thank you.

Anything else for the good of the Sons?

JOHN JENNINGS: Mr. Commander, John Jennings, NEC from the Detachment of Florida. I'd like to say thank you for a job that's been a tough, ambitious year.

I know that your leadership dictates how we accomplish our tasks. I do want to thank Judge Advocate

Joe, I want to thank our National Adjutant, because they work diligently.

And the emails that you NECmen and Alternates got this year with some of the resolutions prior to coming up, they were a valuable asset, which I think is something that's been worked on.

I know I've reported it for a couple of different years that we needed to get some information into the NEC's hands prior to meetings.

So I want to thank you, Commander, for those efforts and National Adjutant Wright and Joe P. for all of your efforts. Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, sir. Anything else for the good of the Sons?

FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Final announcements. I know National Adjutant Wright has a correction he'd like to make, I believe.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Thank you, Commander. Under roll call, I need to make a correction on that.

Past National Commander Roland Matteson, for those that were paying attention, he's not deceased, he is ill, and we'll mark him as excused.

I just wanted to make that note.

... Laughter.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: I'm sure he appreciates that.

Any other final announcements? Once again, you know, you guys have made this a memorable year, and I thank you for your efforts. It's easy to be a good leader when you have good, dedicated people following. And I appreciate all your work and your dedication to this organization.

If there is no further business to come before this National Executive Committee meeting, the National Chaplain will now lead us in the closing prayer.

While he's coming forward, a reminder that we'll start promptly at 1:00 with the opening session of convention in Ballroom A, street level of this convention hallway.

BENEDICTION

James Noble, National Chaplain

Thank you, Commander. Please uncover.

Lord, help us to continue and end each day in such a way that it will be a golden day of service.

May You give us guidance so we can continue to do the work for the betterment of those less fortunate. Amen.

... Chorus of Amen.

CLOSING REMARKS
Danny Smith, National Commander

Until we meet again, let us remember that our obligation to our country can only be fulfilled by the faithful performance of all our duties of citizenship.

Let service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of the Sons of The American Legion.

Let us ever be watchful of the honor of our country, The American Legion, our organization and ourselves; that nothing shall swerve us from the path of justice, freedom, loyalty and democracy.

RETIREMENT OF THE COLORS and ADJOURNMENT

Please cover. With the colors of our country in place, join me in hand salute. Two.

. . . The National Executive Committee rendered a right-hand salute to the Colors.

I now declare this 2018 Pre-Convention Meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion adjourned.

. . . The Sons of The Americana Legion Pre-Convention National Executive Committee Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION

I, DENISE HINXMAN, Certified Court Reporter, do hereby certify;

That on Friday, August 24, 2018, I was present and took verbatim stenotype notes of the Meeting entitled herein, and thereafter transcribed the same into typewriting as herein appears;

That said meeting was taken in stenotype notes by me, a Certified Court Reporter, and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction as herein appears;

That the foregoing transcript is a full, true and correct transcription of my stenotype notes of said meeting.

Dated at Reno, Nevada, this 6th day of September 2018.

DENISE HINXMAN, CSR, RDR, CRC