



The American Legion, Post 22

Membership Meeting - Minutes

April 16th, 2025, at 6 P.M.

Opening Ceremonies (Commander) (6 P.M.).

- Post and salute the Colors
- Chaplain offers prayer (remove cap)
- POW/MIA empty chair (Sergeant-at-Arms)
- Pledge of Allegiance (re-cover cap upon completion)
- Recite Preamble of Constitution of The American Legion
- Roll call to determine if quorum is present (min of 10 members): There were 37 members in attendance.

Follow with officer roll call:

Present/Absent/ Excused

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| a. Commander (R. Skjoldal)                    | X |   |
| b. 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander (D. Dosch)  | X |   |
| c. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander (R. Jendry) |   | X |
| d. Adjutant (D. Harris)                       | X |   |
| e. Finance Officer (P. Rodriguez)             |   | X |
| f. Chaplain (K. Donnell)                      | X |   |
| g. Historian (J. Miller)                      | X |   |
| h. Sergeant-at-Arms (A. Anable)               | X |   |
- Minutes of previous meeting – Electronically posted on website:  
<https://www.alpost22rcsd.com/mtg-minutes-etc> (Adjutant)
  - Introduction of guests and prospective new members (Applicable host)
    - New members: Raja Abbott, USMC local plumber (owns Veterans Plumbing); Ivan Keller, USA Retired works for an underwater diving company in RC; Patrick Roseland (not new but never received a coin) City Council member Ward 5; Harold Ball, (also not new, but never received a coin) USA .
    - Guests:
      - Department Membership Chair, Bill Peters and Department Vice Commander for Districts 3-8 Kevin Hempel: Running for Department Commander 2025 - 2026.
      - Each spoke on why Post 22 should vote for them. They were asked to step out of the room for the vote.
        - A vote was taken, and Post 22 selected their choice. This selection will be announced at the Department convention in June when we award our 14 votes.
  - Financial Report (Harris) as of: 4/16/2025

- Business Account: \$
- Membership Acct: \$ (Regular membership deposits/withdrawals; debit of \$45 to pay for pheasant pins).
- Benevolence Acct: \$ (Deposit from Business Acct. of \$500).
- Americanism Acct: \$ (Deposit from Business Acct. of \$500; Donations of \$4,525 so far for Boys State-trying to raise \$6,300 to cover the cost for 18 boys).
- SAL Acct: \$ (Deposit \$160 for NCAA BB boards).
- Honor Guard: \$ (No Deposits; Debits of \$33.53 for phone bill).
- Scholarship Sav Acct: \$.
- Capital Improvements Savings: \$ (\$1,000 deposited from Business Acct. and \$773 from Queen of Hearts).
- Loan: (\$). We Pd \$2,429.47 on loan in March.
- **Executive Committee update:**
  - The April meeting will be held on April 19th: Nothing to report.
- **Membership** (Harris/Dosch): 2025 Membership year starts 1 July.
  - **TAL Goal is 548**
    - renewals/new members to date: **557 for 102% of goal.**
      - New members:
        - Doug Harris (16)
        - Don Dosch (4)
        - Ryan Skjoldal (3)
        - Ernie Sanford (2)
        - Lyle Tolsma (2)
        - Don Fuller (2)
        - Randy Decker (1)
        - Robert Reister (1)
        - Mike Ball (1)
        - Gary Stanley (1)
        - Corby Hall (HG) (1)
      - **Transfers In: 40** (28 of those were from the National Post 500 group...these were locals who wanted to be part of our Post)
  - 2025 SAL **Goal is 51**
    - SAL renewals/new members of **56 for 108% of goal**
- **AL Riders Report** (Ernie Sanford):
  - Next meeting will be on April 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M.
  - **May 25** – Planning to do a motorcycle parade and car parade at Ft. Meade.
  - **22-24 July** – Will be doing a run through Bear Tooth.
  - Melanie Martin just had a surgery and is recovering.
  - Mike Wood had a neck operation and is recovering.
  - Fun day the 30<sup>th</sup> of each month at the Post. Play games etc.
- **Honor Guard** (G. Stanley):
  - **24 June 25** – We will be having a dart tournament here at Post 22 @ 1500.

- **2 – 6 July 25** – The Honor Guard will be setting up the beer tent during the Firecracker Tournament. Also, we will be conducting Color Guard for the tournament.
- Next meeting will be the of 28<sup>th</sup> of April at 6:00 P.M.
- Officer nominations/vote at their meeting on Monday.
- **SAL (J. Skala):**
  - Nothing to report.
- **Post 22 Auxiliary Report: Tony Fuller.**
  - Will have 13 Girls going to Girls State this year. Dominoes Pizza and 40 & 8 and the American Legion Family as well as other individuals donated funds to help pay.
  - Next Pancake breakfast will be on 18 May from 8 - 11. Taking place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday because of Mother's Day.
  - Next meeting will be April 28th at 6 P.M.
  - 10 May we will be hosting a rummage sale at Post 22.
  - Thanks to everyone for helping out with the Diaper/Wiper Drive. Goes to Mommy's Closet in RC and they have been very happy to get them. The drive is ongoing.
- **Americanism (D. Harris):**
  - The application for 2025 Boys State is now available at <https://southdakotaboysstate.org/>
    - I currently have **18 boys signed up for 2025 session.**
    - This year the bid for the bus to Boys State came in at approximately \$6,500 and there are only enough "West River" boys to fill it half full if they took the bus. That makes the price for each boy about \$300.
      - I have asked our 18 boys to work with each other and their parents to car pool. I've offered all who attend a \$100 scholarship that they can use to pay for their travel expenses if they choose.
      - If I have any who cannot find a ride, I will ask for volunteers from the Post to drive them up/back. The \$100 would then go to the volunteers.
        - Please consider volunteering so I have a list to work with if needed. See me after the meeting if you would like to help.
    - The District 1 and 2 orientations for Boys/Girls State will take place at Post 22 on 3 May at 1200. This is for Boys/Girls Staters and their parents as well as the Post/District Americanism Officers who are sponsoring them.
  - School Medal presentations begin in May.
- **Athletic Officer (Lyle Tolsma):** Not present
- The following information was provided:
  - The first games were played last weekend. 140 games this season from all 5 teams. If you would like to purchase a season pass, please contact Lyle and he will help you with that (post22rc@gmail.com).
  - Post 22 will be hosting the Jr. Class A State Tournament this coming year (2025) and they were also awarded the Sr. Class A Stater Tournament for 2026.
  - We are waiting to hear if Post 22 is awarded the 2026 and 2027 National Regional Tournaments here in Rapid City.

- This is the 100<sup>th</sup> year of Legion Baseball which started in Milbank SD. The National Commander wants to have a special tournament in Milbank SD where Legion BB started. There will be teams from several of the surrounding states. Everyone is invited.
  - Dates are: July 11 – 13?
  - 1 team each from SD, NE, MN, ND
  - National Commander will be in attendance.
- **Chaplain (K. Donnell):**
  - Deaths and Sick Call:
    - Deaths: **Robert L. Morrow**, he was a Korea Vet and a **member for 70 Years** (PUFL)
    - Sick Call: Melanie Martin and Mike Wood (Riders) are both recovering from surgeries.
- **Post Service Officer (H. Rossander):**

#### 1. Supreme Court Denies “Benefit of the Doubt” Standard in Close Disability Claims for Veterans.

In a significant recent ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court decided in a 7-2 vote that the Department of Veterans Affairs is **NOT obligated to grant claims for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to veterans** when evidence indicates the decision could go either way.

The decisions follow an appeal by two veterans. Both veterans argued that their PTSD disability claims, which the VA considered close decisions, should have been granted under the long-standing “benefit of the doubt” standard. This rule historically favored veterans when evidence was equally balanced between approval and denial.

#### 2. VA Confirms Major Staff Cuts, Citing Need for Efficiency and Reform in 2025.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Doug Collins, confirmed significant changes are coming to the Department of Veterans Affairs, including the **reduction of roughly 80,000 employees** over the next few months. Collins emphasized that these staff cuts are not simply about budget savings. Rather they’re intended to streamline the VA’s bureaucracy and enhance efficiency. He insists these changes will ultimately lead to improved services, citing steady growth in veterans’ satisfaction rates, which have risen in recent years. Secretary Collins administration has criticized past expansions of the VA workforce, which grew significantly during both Trump and Biden presidencies.

- **Old Business:**
  - Facility update.
    - Multiple tall tables/chairs were purchased for the bar. We had a donor who paid approximately 50% of the purchase price. Thank you to that anonymous donor!!
- **New Business:**
  - Nominations (2<sup>nd</sup> Round) were opened for the 2025-2026 Officers. There were no additional nominees beyond those who were nominated at the March meeting.
  - Annual Election:
    - All Proxy votes messages must be delivered to the Adjutant (an email from the member (preferred), or typed Letter/note with the members’ signature).
    - Choose an Election Board of at least 2 members (those who are not running for office). The Election Board members were Harry Rossander and Frank Haleakala.

- The Adjutant collected the results from the Election Board and passed it to the Commander for announcements.
- **Post Officers:**
  - Commander: **Ryan Skjoldal**
  - Finance Officer: **Doug Harris**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Vice: **Don Dosch**
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice: **Jennifer Haleakala**
  - Chaplain: **Gary Stanley**
  - Historian: **Kelley Donnell**
  - Sgt At Arms: **Tony Anable**
- **Executive Committee** members: **There are 4 slots available** following the election of the Commander, Finance Officer, and appointment of the Adjutant who are automatic members of the EC (as per our Post Bylaws). The winners were:
  - **Lyle Tolsma**
  - **Randy Decker**
  - **Don Dosch**
  - **Tom Smith**
- All 2025 -2026 Officers were sworn in by Department Membership Chairman Bill Peters.
- **Good of The American Legion** (Any member):
  - DAV representative Speirs info: Ms. Speirs presented the information below.
    - DAV is open Monday - Friday 11-3 for free VA claims, and first Saturday of every month 9-11. No appointment necessary. Please allow at least 1 hour to do paperwork.
    - There's a new Caregiver Support Line: 1-855-260-3274
    - Vietnam and Era Veterans Reunion – May 2-4 at the Rapid City Ramkota
    - Vietnam Veterans Ceremony is May 3, 2025 at 9 A.M. at the Memorial Park War Memorial.
    - DAV Information Fair May 17, 2025, 9-3 at Post 22. 40 vendors will be present. We will have service officers present to do VA claims.
    - EAFB Commissary sidewalk sale May 16 & May 17.
    - 24 May at Hot Springs American Legion (6 P.M.) there will be a Rocky Mtn Oyster feed (and smoked pork loin).
    - The VA will only be offering 30 minutes massages now instead of 60.
    - Talked about "Claim Sharks" that charge you for their services. Utilize the DAV instead.
  - Volunteer Opportunities (Harris)
    - May 3<sup>rd</sup> events:
      - 11 A.M. – Lest We Forget Ceremony at the VFW Chapel and Rec Area, Sturgis SD. Just off I-90 at the Black Hills National Cemetery exit. Meant to recognize those South Dakotans who lost their lives when the USS Indianapolis was sunk in WWII. It should take about 30 minutes. Bring your own chair.
    - Fuller talked about Last Man Standing.

- Commander Skjoldal thanked the Department Commander nominees for coming to talk to us.
- **Adjournment:** at 7:28 pm. A social hour followed.