

American Legion, Edward L. Grant Post 75

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Minutes of the in-person meeting that was held on June 11, 2025.

Meetings are normally held at 23 Hutchinson Street, Franklin, MA
on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 1900.

Officer Roll Call:

Commander - Dick Hynes	Present
1 st Vice Commander - John Milot	Present
2 nd Vice Commander - John Hefelee	Present
Adjutant - Joe Landry	Present
Finance - Dave Labonte	Present
SGT at Arms - To be appointed	---
Chaplain - Bob Markunis	Present
Historian - Steve Szilniczky	Excused
Service Officer - Shannon Nisbett	Excused
Quartermaster - Frank Coughlin	Present

10 members were in attendance.

Meeting called to order by Commander Hynes at 1900.

- Colors posted by Acting SGT at Arms Lori Scholl.
- Opening prayer offered by Chaplain Bob Markunis.
- POW/MIA flag and chair placed at all meetings of the American Legion as a physical symbol of the thousands of POW's and MIA's still unaccounted for.
- Pledge of Allegiance recited by all.
- Preamble of the Constitution of the American Legion recited by all.
- Officer Roll Call.

Reading the minutes of the previous meeting:

- Minutes of the previous two meetings had been posted on the Post's website so that members could read them beforehand. Members who were present at the meeting were given hard copies for their evaluation.
- After a discussion was held, a motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes. A vote was taken, and the minutes were accepted.

Reading of Communications and Bills: (Dick Hynes)

- None.

Finance Officer report (Dave Labonte):

- A copy of the financial report for the previous month had been posted on the Post's website so that members could read it beforehand. Members who were present at the meeting were given a hard copy for their evaluation.
- John Hefeale said that the \$439.00 cash that he gave Dave for the poppy sales was not shown in the report. Dave said that he had received the money during the month of May, but he deposited it in June so that's why it didn't appear in the May report. It will be listed in the June Report.
- Elaine Watkins said that she was sorry that she couldn't help with poppy sales on Memorial Day so she donated \$200.00 to the Post.
- Denise Knott said that she was grateful to the Post for helping her with her membership. She paid her 2026 dues, and the Adjutant will process her renewal after July 1 so that she'll be paid up for 2026 instead of 2025.
- Dick said that we received a check from the estate of Bob Catalano that represented our share of the interest that the estate earned. We will receive another check in the fall that will represent our share of the proceeds of the estate.
- After a discussion was held, a motion was made and seconded to accept the financial report. A vote was taken, and the financial report was accepted.

Post Commander report (Dick Hynes):

- Toby Whelan will not be joining the Post as she has moved to Springfield, MA.
- Dick put an agenda together for this meeting. He said that this might not be a permanent thing that he'll do.

1st Vice Commander report (John Milot):

- The 2025 goal for Post membership is 92 members. We are at 80, which is 86.9% for the year. This puts us 24th out of 28 Posts in the District.

2nd Vice Commander report (John Hefeale):

- None.

Historian report (Steve Szilniczky):

- None.

Quartermaster report (Frank Coughlin):

- None.

- Dick said that he was glad to see Frank at the meeting, as he had been given the wrong medication.

Chaplain report (Bob Markunis):

- Outreach events are ongoing. Flag Day ceremonies were held on June 14th at Magnolia Heights and were held on June 15th at Benchmark at 1100 and at Enclave at 1300.

Service Officer report (Shannon Nisbett):

- None.

Unfinished business (Dick Hynes):

- A meeting will be held tomorrow night by the Memorial Day Parade committee to discuss this year's parade. Dick said that there were a few things that went wrong but a lot went right. The new parade route made a big difference. The rifle team went to the Dean College monument and the two cemeteries before the parade was held, and this meant that the parade didn't have to stop. A separate rifle team participated in the Norfolk Parade.
- Frank was able to get the National Guard Band for the parade and Dick thanked him for his persistence in getting this done. Dick also expressed a desire to have a military Color Guard at next year's parade. Frank will try to get one as well as a military band.
- Dick noted that two \$500 scholarships were given to Franklin High School graduates. They were Patrick O'Toole (the son of bugler Tim O'Toole) and Mason Yared, who needed the help. Dick also noted that we now have two connections with the Guidance Department at FHS that will assist us with Boys and Girls State as well as the Trooper program.
- We sponsored two candidates to Boy's State and two candidates to Girls State. The two girls were Ella Hutchinson and Ratika Gumba. The two boys were Cole McEnery and Patrick McIntyre. The District paid for Patrick's fee, thanks to John Milot's connection as the District Chairman for the County.
- June will be a busy month for the "Fallen Heroes" ceremonies on the common. Dick said that this is because D-Day happened in June.
- Dick said that the Post's "Strategic Planning Committee" would meet to evaluate how the Post spends its money as well as to identify charities that we can contribute to. This committee is made up of Dick Hynes, Dave Labonte and Matt McGrath. It meets every three years. The last one was held at Dick's house and "lots of bottles of wine" were consumed. Dave said that his house would also be a good place to have this meeting because he has a pool.
- Nominations for Post Officers were completed, and the same slate of Officers will be maintained so a vote by acclamation was held. The Adjutant cast his vote for the standing slate.
- Dawn Anderson has stepped down as Sgt at Arms. She recently moved to Milbury, and she felt that it wouldn't be fair to continue in this role if she was not going to be at most meetings. She will remain a Post member.

New business (Dick Hynes):

- The Strawberry Stroll will be held on Friday, June 13 from 1600 to 2000 and the Post will attend this event. This time, the stroll will extend from the town bridge to the library and the Post's location will be across from Dean

College instead of in front of the Post Office. John Milot will get back to those who will be attending as far as the time for setting up.

- Dick said that we need to find out if Franklin High School or Tri-County School has an ROTC program and if they do, we need to get involved with it. John Hefeale will find out if they do have this program.
- Dick noted that the CPR (Consolidated Post Report) needs to be completed by July 1. This report tells National what the Post did for the year so that they can show Congress what is being done. Dick said that only 68% of the Posts in the District have completed this report.
- Dick reported that the cost for Girls and Boys State will be increasing next year. The early bird fee will go from \$375 to \$400 and the regular fee will go from \$400 to \$450. This year, they expected to have 300 attendees, but they only had 240.
- The Post needs to get involved with the "Department Oratorical Contest". The winner is awarded at the annual St. Patrick's Day dinner and gives their speech there. Then, the winner goes to the State competition and possibly the National competition.
- Dick said that Lisa McPhee, the Department Adjutant will be setting up her office at different Posts once a month. He suggested that we have her come to our Post.
- Dick said that Ed Foti will be making his home available for a summer party again. This will be held on Saturday, July 26 and the rain date being the following day. Attendees will be encouraged to bring a salad or appetizer and should notify Dick so that he'll know what people are bringing.
- Denise Knott noted that the Senior Center will be losing their nurse because of budget cuts by the town. The nurse would need a \$20,000 grant to continue in this role. Denise will donate money to the Post for this purpose. Dave will maintain any money for the grant in a special account. The nurse is trying to find a grant that will allow her to stay on in this role.
- Dick mentioned that Jeff Roy had reached out to him to tell him that he was going to be honored at the first-ever "Military Appreciation Day" ceremony which was held recently at the State House. Dick received this award because of his "contributions that reflect the strength, resilience and dedication of our local military community" and for "his service and efforts to keep the memory of our 45 fallen soldiers alive with moving ceremonies at the Veterans Memorial on the Franklin Town Common". He will call Jeff to see if Jeff can assist in getting a grant for the nurse.
- John Hefeale said that roughly 8 out of 10 people at the parade would have donated money for a poppy if the Post had a "Venmo" account. Dave said that he will investigate getting one for the Post.
- Dave Labonte won the raffle (\$45.00) and he donated it back to the Post.

For the good of the Legion:

- None.

Closing the meeting:

- Chaplain Bob Markunis led members in prayer.
- POW/MIA flag retired by Acting SGT At Arms Lori Scholl.
- Colors retired by Acting SGT at Arms Lori Scholl.
- The meeting was adjourned by Commander Hynes.