

American Legion, Edward L. Grant Post 75

43 Main Street, P.O. Box 42

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Minutes of the in-person meeting that was held on October 11, 2023.

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

Officer Roll Call:

Commander - John Milot	Present
1st Vice Commander - Dick Hynes	Present
2nd Vice Commander - John Hefele	Present
Adjutant – Joe Landry	Present
Finance - Dave Labonte	Present
SGT at Arms - Matt McGrath	Excused
Chaplain - Bob Markunis	Present
Historian - Steve Szilniczky	Present
Service Officer - Shannon Nesbitt	Excused
Quartermaster - Frank Coughlin	Present

11 Members were in attendance.

Meeting was called to order by Commander Milot at 1900.

- Opening prayer offered by Chaplain Bob, Colors posted by Dawn Anderson, acting as Sgt. At Arms, Pledge of Allegiance recited by all, Preamble of the Constitution of the American Legion recited by all, and a moment of silence was requested by Commander Milot to honor the dearly departed.

Reading of Minutes for the previous meeting:

- Copies of the previous month's meeting were distributed. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the August meeting. The motion was accepted, and the minutes are posted on the Legion Post 75 website. (There was no meeting in September, due to the storm).

Reading of Communications and Bills: (Joe Landry and Dick Hynes)

- A thank-you card was received from the family of Elizabeth (Betty) Ober for the donation that the Post made to the Franklin Food Pantry in her memory.
- A thank-you card was received from Eileen Watkins for the Post's participation in Bruce's funeral.
- A donation was received from Eileen Watkins for \$2,000.00 in memory of Bruce.
- A donation of \$50.00 was received from Donna and Brian Robie in memory of Robert Ullenbruch
- A thank-you card was received from Colin Manocchio who thanked the Post for the scholarship money that he received.
- Two letters were received from the Department regarding Associate memberships in the American Legion.
- An invitation was received from Post 440 in Newton, MA regarding the banquet for Commander Sandra Davis on Saturday, November 18th.
- A banner was received for our flagpole because of our \$100.00 donation to the Child Welfare Foundation.
- A check for \$100.00 was received from Kelly Forest and Sharon Seegers, the daughters of Thomas (Buddy) Seegers to show their appreciation for the care their father had received in the Hospice unit at the Brockton VA Hospital.
- Dick reported that he spoke to Jan Prentice at the Senior Expo that was held at the Franklin Senior Center recently. She asked if she could join the Sons of the Legion auxiliary. Dick told her that this was not possible at this time.

Finance Officer report (Dave Labonte):

- Copies of the financial report for August and September were passed out to all members. Dave noted that the August report was the busiest that he's seen, with 24 transactions being done. The September report was not as busy, with only 1 transaction taking place.
- Dave gave out information on "PUFL's" (Paid Up For Life) in case any members wanted to take advantage of this.
- A motion was made and seconded to accept both reports. The motion was accepted, and the financial reports were posted on the Legion Post 75 website.

1st Vice Commander report (Dick Hynes):

- Dick reported that our target for membership is 55%. Our post is currently at 73.3%, which he said is good. We are in 6th place out of the 28 posts. Our current membership is 55 members, and our goal is to reach 75 members. He noted that Plainville is currently at 100%.
- He thanked Joe for doing a good job in renewing memberships online.
- He mentioned that Post 462 in Boston is a "holding Post" for members who are not assigned to a specific Post. There are two members in that Post who live in our area. One is Richard Sousa from Franklin and the other one is Scott Boudreau of Medway. They will be contacted to see if they want to transfer to our Post.

2nd Vice Commander report (John Hefele):

- John reported that he recently went to the VA in Brockton along with Pat Doyle and Matt McGrath to have pizza with the Veterans.

- He reported that Larry Bederian, the former VFW Post Commander is confined to his house and would like to have people visit him. It was recommended that people call his wife Janet first so that she knows who will be going.

Quartermaster report (Frank Coughlin):

- Frank has four pairs of uniform pants and four jackets in case anyone wishes to purchase them. There are 3 black braids on order.
- He noted that National Buddy Check Week will be October 16-20.

Chaplain report (Bob Markunis):

- Bob reported that Bingo will be held at Cedarwood Gardens on the 21st of October at 1:45pm.
- A movie will be shown on the 30th of October at 2:00pm at Magnolia Heights.
- He reported that donations of \$160.00 were collected at the recent Harvest Festival that was held in downtown Franklin. This money will support Operation Care Package.
- Weekly visits to Dave continue, but it is getting more difficult to get members to participate.
- Donations for items to sell from the Methodist Church continue to be received.
- 8 boxes for Operation Care Package have been sent to Eric Gotham.
- Two families who wish to remain anonymous have received packages.

Historian report (Steve Szilniczky):

- Steve noted that he is still hoping to get a file cabinet for the Post's historical items. He would also like to get a visual display case created for the Senior Center and the Town Hall. John Hefele is working with the VA office at the town hall regarding this.
- He continues to work with the people who run the Special Olympics at Gillette Stadium regarding the Post members giving out awards to the winners.

Unfinished business:

- Dick mentioned that we have four tickets to the Department Commander's Banquet. A discussion was held to see if our Post would like to place an advertisement in their program book. It was decided that we would not participate.
- Dick mentioned that the Rifle Detail recently participated in a funeral for a deceased Veteran. Unfortunately, the rifles did not fire because of a malfunction with the clips. Apologies were made to the family members, who told the squad that it was not a problem and that they appreciated the fact that they showed up. The Rifle Detail then went to John Hefele's house to get them fixed. Once this was done, the detail went back to the cemetery and rendered honors at the gravesite with Taps being played by Tim O'Toole. The family members were given the blank cartridges and were grateful that the Post went the "extra mile" to make things right.
- Dick noted that the Post is required to send in 5 reports to the Department on an annual basis and that there are 4 that still need to be sent in. He will work with Joe to get this done.
- A "watch party" will be held at Franklin TV for the upcoming Army-Navy game on December 9th. There will be no admission fee and those who want to attend will need to bring their own "booze". Pizza will be purchased at George's Pizza, which is just around the corner from the station. There will be a limit of 30 people who will be able to attend.
- The \$50.00 raffle permit fee for the Poker Tournament in Walpole is due. This is a big money-maker for the Post, and we will continue to participate. Craig Bradford will need to be contacted to make sure that the Post is able to pay the income tax that is due. Dave pointed out that he sent a check for last year's tax, but it was returned to him. He was told that the payment must now be paid online, and he wants to get Craig's help in doing this.
- Annual dues will increase from \$28.00 to \$35.00 in 2024. \$5.00 of the increase will go to National and \$2.00 will go to the Department. The Post currently charges \$40.00 for annual dues (\$28.00 to the

Department and \$12.00 to the Post) and a discussion was held on what we should charge once the increase takes effect. After discussion, it was decided that we will increase the Post's dues to \$50.00 (\$35.00 to the Department and \$15.00 to the Post) and if anyone needs financial assistance because of the increase, we will assist them with this. A motion was made and seconded to accept the increase in dues. The motion was accepted, and the dues will be increased to \$50.00 for 2024.

- Joe Collins asked if members could pay their dues five years in advance instead of annually. He suggested that members could get a discount if they did this. Commander Milot will consult with the Judge Advocate to see if this is legal.

New business:

- Commander Milot noted that the Registry of Deeds invited members of the Post to celebrate and honor Veterans of Norfolk County on Wednesday, November 8th. One Veteran from each town would be named in their yearly book. After a discussion was held, it was decided that we would not participate.
- Dick suggested that we place an ad in the Elks magazine and the Franklin Connection. He will put something together on this. A motion was made and seconded for placing the ad. The motion was accepted, and the ad will be placed.
- There was a "Reach Across America" event on September 11th at the Bourne National Cemetery where volunteers cleaned the gravestones. It started at 9:30am and finished at 1:00pm. This year, 300 people signed up and we will try to put a group together for next year.
- The Harvard School of Dental Medicine will offer free exams and cancer screening to Veterans on October 28th from 9:00am to 12:00pm as part of their "Give Vets a Smile Day".
- Dick mentioned that there is a large problem in the American Legion pertaining to Posts who admit non-Veterans as "Associate" members. He said that the problem got so bad, the states of Oregon and Washington State were not allowed to attend the National Convention. And locally, the Dover MA Post is currently allowing non-Veterans in as Associate members.
- Frank mentioned that on December 16th, there will be a "Wreaths Across America" event. Each year, we donate 10 wreaths to this cause. A motion was made and seconded to purchase 10 wreaths. The motion was accepted, and the wreaths will be purchased.

For the good of the Legion:

- The Commander of the VFW Post and members of our Post met with Shannon Nisbett to consider an idea that Ernie Carruthers came up with regarding the 45 monuments on the common for the Veterans who were killed in action. He suggested that a wreath be placed at the monument of each Veteran on the day he died. This wreath would be used for all ceremonies. Two wreaths would be needed as there are two Veterans who died on the same day. Taps would be played and there would be a short reading.
- Commander Milot suggested that a committee of Post members go to Tri-County Vocational School to make them aware of the Boys State and Girls State programs.

Closing the meeting:

- Chaplain Bob led the members in prayer and Colors were retired by Dawn Anderson, who was acting as Sgt. At Arms.
- The meeting was adjourned by Commander Milot.