

Charles A. Woodford

American Legion Post 2007

March 23, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 1903 hours by the Commander.

Roll of Post officers was called with all officers and Executive Committee members present with the excused absence of Sergeant at Arms Gary Stacy and Kenney Green and Executive Committee Members Mary Monet and the absence Executive Member Robert Thomas.

Prospective member John Reveron was introduced by our member Joe Ocasio.

The Commander asked if there were any changes to the previous meeting minutes. No changes were noted, so minutes stand as written.

The **Membership Report** was given showing the Post with 134 of 151 paid members for 88.74%. We still need 17 more members to renew to make out 100%.

Finance Report – The Finance Officer reported we had a checking account balance of $6,748.75 available with and an additional $723.40 in savings. We also have $3,123.10 in a short-term Certificate of Deposit. A breakdown of funds held for the various programs was also provided. Steve Duff motioned the report be accepted subject to audit. Seconded by Jim Nickles. Membership approved.

Poppies – The Commander stated the Department had been having an issue with the quality of the poppies, but this issue should be fixed. There may be a delay in getting poppies as they work their backlog. We currently have sufficient stock on hand.

Veteran Affairs – The next meeting will be held March 31st at 7 p.m. at the VAC at 19 Public Square in Belleville. The Commander and Kori Bookman will be attending. If anyone has an issue they wish them to bring up to the commission, let them know.

Community Patriotic Observances – The Commander is working with the Swansea Park Board on an agenda for Memorial Day.

Honor Guard – We do not currently have enough members on the team to be able to perform at funerals. We may need volunteers for Memorial Day, one to hold the colors, the other for the bugle. Andrew Dunham volunteered as bugler. There was a discussion on uniform cost and availability. Todd asked about the possibility of Color Guard members that can no longer participate, donating their uniforms. This can be a

touchy subject as those members personally paid for their uniforms. Rich Gaebel says he can train people as needed.

Americanism – No Report

Boy Scouts – The Commander stated the Eagle Project at Messinger Cemetery has not started yet. Dave Devine stated the troop just received approximately 6 new scouts for their supported Cub Scout pack at their annual Blue and Gold dinner.

Constitution and By Laws – The Commander stated that Todd Herzog had sent proposed drafts for both the Constitution and Bylaws to all members. Todd stated he only received a few changes which were incorporated into the final draft. Todd motioned for acceptance of the revised Constitution. Seconded by Steve Duff. Membership approved. Todd then motioned for the acceptance of the revised Bylaws. Seconded by Steve Duff. Membership approved. The Constitution and Bylaws will be posted to the Post's webpage.

Gifts to the Yanks/Visiting Vets – Robin stated she would be visiting the homes on the 1st of the month to verify current vet information. The Commander stated that the Division Gifts to the Yanks Chair, Francis "Dutch" Jancek, says he cannot get an amount from Department on donations, but it is believed to be higher than last year's total. A new rule has been instituted that if a post does not donate, they do not receive gifts. The web page will open for orders on 1 October.

Children and Youth – No Report

Oratorical – No Report

Boys State – No Report

Other Committees

1. Annual Dinner – Barb Page is organizing. Currently set for 27 April. Doors open at 1730 with dinner served at 1830. Dinner will be pasta and salad.
2. Buddy Checks – Todd Herzog stated four members volunteered and contacted 148 members by phone, email or by post mail for those that we do not have a phone number or email address for. Volunteers were Todd Herzog, Barbara Page, Jim Nickles and Carol Davis. We are still waiting for one reply from a member. Robert Brotoski has moved to Wyoming and submitted a transfer to a local post. James Renolds is 103 and still in good spirits. Darryl Valpert is also doing well at 93 despite pain in his knees. Jerry Coawart's wife passed away, but he is doing well. He requested information which has been sent to him. Other member replies annotated in the Sick Call and Memorial to Departed Members sections.
3. Community Service – Steve Duff informed membership that he is in contact with the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to assist in conducting projects at Messinger Cemetery and that they may be willing to help with replacing the wrought iron fence around the Messinger plot. Davy Tree will remove the cedar tree in the middle of the plot once the fence is removed. There is also a large mulch pile that needs to be spread. He has also contacted the SAVE vocational school for trades in conjunction with SWIC to do some projects on the schoolhouse. He spoke with their Assistant Principal, and he will evaluate if they can perform the tasks. Todd Herzog, Joe Ocasio, Jim and Barb Page, Robin Ladtrick and Andrew Dunham plus 8 Swansea Improvement Association (SIA) members spent 7-1/2 hours in community service painting walls in the banquet/meeting area of the Swansea Improvement

Association. One member spent 28 hours over 3 days prepping walls by removing nails and other debris from the walls ahead of time. The Post donated $400 to SIA for paint and supplies.

4. Fundraising – McAlister's fundraising event netted $142.90 from sales and an additional $45 in donations. The next McAlister's event will be April 29th.

Sick Call – Louis Evans is having hip surgery on April 24. Howard Bateman can no longer drive. Don Parrone has had heart surgery and is in rehab. Ben Brown is in hospice according to his wife, Joyce, after having congestive heart failure. Kori Bookman is still healing from surgery.

Unfinished Business

1. Polo Shirts are now available. See the Commander to collect your order after the meeting.
2. The link from the VAC website to the Post's Facebook group page has not been fixed. Todd Herzog stated it did not go to the Post Facebook page as requested, but rather to the post's website. The Commander says he will look into having it redirected again.

Correspondence

1. The packet with program materials was received from Department.

New Business

1. School Award Reimbursement – Jim Page requested reimbursement for the school awards he purchased for the annual ceremonies. Membership approved the reimbursement of $82.49.
2. District Per Capita for 2025-2026 – The Commander stated this was paid yesterday, April 22nd, at the District Spring meeting. The cost was $15.10 which is 0.10 per member.
3. Tax Exemption Number – The Post needs to get its own exemption number. We are currently using National's. Steve Duff will look into it.

Memorial to Departed Members – George Laxon passed away on February 8th. He was a 49-year Legion member serving in the Army and in Korea. A prayer was given by the Chaplain.

For the Good of the Legion

1. Veteran's Townhall Meeting – The VA is hosting a meeting at the Swansea Moose Lodge on 25 March at 1630.
2. The Commander related the importance of paying your dues on time and being in good standing. A Legion member in northern Illinois allowed his dues to lapse and was affected by the tornadoes that swept through the area recently. Because his dues had lapsed, he was ineligible for emergency assistance from both National and Department Emergency Funds.
3. Messinger Cemetery Cleanup – A cleanup is scheduled for 28 March, 0900-1200.
4. Eagle Statue – we need to check if we have any of the Eagle statues left. The Commander believed we did not, but another member believed one was left. We need to verify if there is one left so it can be donated to High Mount School.
5. Women's Vet Fair – will be held 29 March at the Collinsville VFW from 1300-1600.
6. Stuff Duff proudly announced his granddaughter won 1st Place in the State Bowling Championships.

7. Rich Gaebel asked why our meetings were so poorly attended. We average only 15% of membership. Many members cannot attend due to health and/or transportation or distance. We needed to find a way to attract younger members.

30/30/30 results for a third of the $45 collected went to Rich Gaebel who donated his $15 winnings back to the Honor Guard program. The Pot of Gold name was pulled with Don Fitzgerald listed. He was not present, so the $131 pot will roll over. The pot for the next meeting on the 27th will be $146.

Next Meeting to be held on April 27th at 1730 due to the Annual Dinner. Executive Committee Meeting will be held via email.

Meeting adjourned at 2032 hours