

Department Executive Committee Meeting  
Saturday, March 10, 2018  
Buffalo, Minnesota

The following were present: Department President Donna Arends, Department First Vice President Jean Walker, Department Second Vice President Mary Hendrickson, Immediate Past Department President Carol Kottom, NEC Shirley Frederick, 2<sup>nd</sup> District President Kristen Donnelly, 3<sup>rd</sup> District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Lynn Duffy, filling in for President Kat Benjamin, 4<sup>th</sup> District President Lynn Olson, 6<sup>th</sup> District President Vicki Bibeau, 7<sup>th</sup> District President Karla Minnick, 8<sup>th</sup> District President Anna Eells, 9<sup>th</sup> District President Doreen Norgaard, 10<sup>th</sup> District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sandra Locker filling in for President Jody Hassing, Department Secretary Sandie Deutsch and Parliamentarian Dee Dee Buckley. There were 5 guests present. 1<sup>st</sup> District President Cheryl Nymann and 5<sup>th</sup> District Sonja Dauphin were excused for personal reasons.

Department President Donna Arends called the meeting to order with a continuous opening. Jean Walker gave the opening prayer, Mary Hendrickson led the Pledge of Allegiance and Dee Dee Buckley led the Preamble.

President Donna welcomed everyone to the meeting. She gave an overview what she has accomplished so far this year, thanked everyone for what they do and stressed that to be positive and bring issues to her.

A roll call was taken and each of the Executive Committee members gave a brief synopsis of their first 3 months in office.

2<sup>nd</sup> District President Kristen Donnelly – Having her year be a complete “AL Family Year”.

3<sup>rd</sup> District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Lynn Duffy – working on membership and having a Dog Race to keep things interesting.

4<sup>th</sup> District President Lynn Olson – Working on starting a Junior program in her District, 4<sup>th</sup> District was honored to have President Donna and Membership Mary carry the Auxiliary Flags in the Winter Carnival Parade in St. Paul.

6<sup>th</sup> District President Vicki Bibeau – AL Family is working together this year and the Leadership Training was very well received. 6<sup>th</sup> District had 2 of these training sessions. Getting new members to get involved. Attended her first Junior Conference, was very impressed and gives credit to the Senior members in mentoring the Juniors.

7<sup>th</sup> District President Karla Minnick – enjoyed working with the Units and learning new things all year long, helping problem Units to keep running.

8<sup>th</sup> District President Anna Eells – District is stagnant right now. Anna will be meeting with Moose Lake in May to try and reorganize them.

9<sup>th</sup> District President Doreen Norgaard – trying to collect membership. Junior Conference will be in April.

10<sup>th</sup> District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sandra Locker – had many rallies and have been well attended.

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Mary Hendrickson – attending functions, dinners and found how hard the Gift Shop committee works at the Distribution Day.

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Jean Walker – attending functions and was able to fill in for President Donna in Maple Grove when the National President was there.

Past Department President Carol Kottom – attending the National Creative Arts Festival

NEC Shirley Frederick – attending the NEC meeting in Indianapolis and was asked again to guest speak at the Hackensack Senior Center.

Department Secretary Sandie Deutsch – keeping very busy in the office, helping the Convention Corporation President finds places to hold conferences and conventions, heading up new fund raising programs. V4V application has been sent in.

President Donna Arends has been having a great time visiting all the Units and is very excited to go on the National Presidents Tour in April.

A motion was called for the approval of the October 26, 2016 Executive Committee meeting minutes. Mary Hendrickson made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, was seconded and approved.

A motion was called for the ratification of the email vote of November 17, 2017 to lease a new color copier. Jean Walker made a motion to approve, was seconded and carried.

A motion was called for the ratification of the email vote of December 18, 2017 to purchase an additional 250 cookbooks. Carol Kottom made a motion to approve, was seconded and carried.

A motion was called for the ratification of the email vote of January 18, 2018 to purchase a new server and software. Anna Eells made a motion to approve, was seconded and carried.

President Donna called upon Treasurer Jan Lauby for her report. Jan handed out a sheet that shows where our finances are at currently and also where membership stands. So far our investments have been doing extremely good. Online dues are way up from last year. As far as fundraiser income, the label project has brought in 180.00, credit card royalties 896.00, Emblem Magnets 2,584.93, greatest needs 190.00. Strategic Fundraisers have profited in Handbooks 1,001.00, Bracelets 3,539.84 and Cookbooks 6,389.39. Payment has been made for the additional cookbooks so we need to sell them. Sandie Deutsch brought up the blue Department Shirts. We still have a supply and would like to discount them just to deplete the inventory and come up with a new idea. They were all paid for about 5 years ago. Anna Eells made a motion to take the shirts to Department Convention and sell them for \$10.00. The motion was seconded and carried. The Department Staff will take them along to Department Convention in July.

Department President Donna called on Secretary Sandie Deutsch to give an office report. Sandie went over the new Scrip Program which was started to raise funds for the Girls State Program. It will be up to the Department Executive Committee to spread the word and get members to participate. Sandie then went over the donation requests that she has sent out to try and money in for the Auxiliary. For the Girls State computer fund, we have received 250.00 from the Bloomington VFW, \$300.00 from the Richfield Unit, \$300.00 for the Richfield SAL and the Shakopee Mdewakantons tribe and received a letter stating that if we receive 1,000.00 in donations they will match the \$1,000.00. More letters have gone out. The V4V Grant application has been submitted and will be used for the \$5.00 bill shower. This will allow us to give up to \$20.00 per veteran. Sandie asked the Executive Committee what their thoughts are on continuing with the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation formation. It is a very time consuming process and our Judge Advocate Greg Colby advised there will be more costs

involved other than the IRS 800.00 application fee. He recommended to get an attorney to assist with this as besides the IRS you have to deal with the State of Minnesota. Carol Barbknecht feels in the long run it would be well worth the cost to the Auxiliary as we could receive donations and grants from many places. It was decided to continue with the process and go to members that have knowledge of foundation formation for assistance. Secretary Sandie will continue to complete the application as time affords it. The National Secretary Conference was brought up. The main item was that every Department needs to adopt a Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. Sandie's recommendation is to make each one a part of our Policies and Procedures. Sandie include a copy of the National Presidents Tour itinerary.

President Donna gave an update on her project donations – to date \$16,634.50 and the Honorary Junior President Courtney is at \$1,805.00 to go towards school supplies for the homeless children. Donna is asking to continue to provide donations as she needs more to reach her goal.

Next on President Donna's agenda was Charter concerns.

Sandie Deutsch reported in District One – Emmons Unit 317 has completed all of the steps to turn in their Charter. They did all of this without notifying the Department Office with their intentions. Kristen Donnelly made a motion to accept the Charter, was seconded and carried.

Kristen Donnelly – District Two – Judy Ackerman has been working with Truman and they are up and running. Winnebago is continuing to operate at this time.

Lynn Duffy – District Three – The Eagan Unit will be receiving their Charter shortly with 11 Charter members. Sandie is working with Commander Flynn to set up their first meeting.

Lynn Olson – District Four – there are no concerns at this time.

Vicki Bibeau – District Six – Akeley is established again this year. They are at 100% this year. Royalton is again having issues in keeping the Auxiliary open. There are 53 members and they would like to transfer to Brooten as that Auxiliary does things. Sandie brought up what the Department and District 7 did between Montevideo and Granite Falls who wanted to turn in their Charter. After having a joint meeting, Montevideo agreed to mentor Granite Falls and help them get on track again.

Karla Minnick – District Seven – Karla has been working with Renville and they seem to be okay at this time. Karla is working with Tammy Moll in Atwater at this time. Karla will also check on the Russell Unit as they have only one member paid at this time.

Anna Eells – District Eight – Anna will meet with the Moose Lake Unit on May 12 to help them organize.

Doreen Norgaard – District Nine – visited the Ada Unit. The membership packet was sent back to Department Headquarters. Many of the members have transferred to the Department Unit 1982. A motion was made by Kristen Donnelly, seconded and carried to accept the Charter of the Ada 26 Unit. Plummer has new leadership at this time.

Sandra Locker – District Ten – Tri City (New Brighton) Unit Charter - Sandy Locker has been working Karen Schwalbe who has health issues at this time collecting their member dues. Sandy

is looking for a member of Tri City to help take membership at this time. President Donna called for a motion to accept the Charter of Hinckley Unit 388. Jean Walker made a motion to accept the Charter, was seconded and carried.

NEC Shirley Frederick came forward with her report. Shirley handed out her report to all members of the Executive Meeting. Shirley reported that the Foundation has funds available for grants. The National Audit came back with no issues. Shirley stated that everyone must be aware of Fraud and have the proper items and procedures in place. Shirley stated that Department Secretary's turnover is very high. Minnesota is very fortunate to have a Secretary in place for quite a while. Sandie stated the main reason for the large turnover is the Past Department Presidents that try and run the offices. She doesn't have any issues in our Department. Shirley reported that the National Headquarters is in the process of moving into their own building. National is looking to change the February NEC meeting to a different time so members would have the ability to attend the Washington Conference if they so desire. Shirley went over the National Code of Conduct. Shirley went over the Risk Management Assessment and they need to go through this, as a group and go through and fill out the form.

Shirley then went on to announce that she has withdrawn her name as Candidate for the NEC position for 2018-2020. She has spent the last 10 years on an Executive Committee and would like to step back and mentor new members in taking Leadership roles.

President Donna called upon Raleen Tolzmann. Raleen announced that she has been endorsed to run for the NEC position for 2018/2020. She will relinquish her Alternate NEC position if she is elected. The Department President will have to appoint a person to fill out the Alternate NEC position for one year. The Alternate NEC appointment will be all contingent on a Resolution passing that will be brought forward at Department Convention in July.

President Donna recessed the meeting at 12:15 p.m. for lunch.

President Donna reconvened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Carol Barbknecht, Finance Liaison to the Audit Committee was called upon to give the annual Audit report. Carol is filling in for Chairman Louise Kleiboer who was unable to attend. Carol explained the purpose of the Audit Committee. It is a Risk Management Committee, not a committee to go over numbers. If members see anything that doesn't seem as it should be, please report your findings to the Audit Committee and/or the Department Executive Secretary. This is all confidential and names are not named. The Audit report from our external auditing firm was as it has been. The Audit report and 990 was approved as written by the Audit Committee.

President Donna called upon Carol Kottom, Governing Rules Chairman to go over the proposed Resolutions to be brought to the 2018 Department Convention. The purpose is to review only, not approve at this meeting and make any necessary changes. The Resolutions (in short) are as follows:

1. Alternate NEC Vacancy – purpose is to make a provision for the Alternate NEC position
2. ALA Department of Minnesota Dues Increase – 2020 Auxiliary year – increase of Senior dues to \$12.50 and dues to \$3.50 for Juniors.

3. Housekeeping #2 – clarification purposes of existing Standing Rule
4. Housekeeping #1 – to clean up typos and add “Executive” after National and before Committeewoman.
5. Minnesota Creative Arts Funds Distribution – as we cannot make the check out to the facility we must change the rule to issue the check to the applicant.
6. National Candidates Fund – As there is an excessive amount in the existing fund and continues to grow, now will have caps as to how much can be in the fund and when it goes below an amount, funds will go back into the account.
7. National Candidates Fund – Per National Headquarters the name of the fund must be changed. The word Candidate cannot be part of the title. A suggestion is to name it the National Leadership Fund. This resolution would change the title in four different places. If this passes the Department Office will also have to change all of our account titles in our bookkeeping system.
8. Trophy and Awards – Resolution is to specify where the awards are to be submitted to and the dates they are to be submitted by.
9. NEC/Alternate NEC What Year Elected – the purpose is to have both position terms to be in the same years.
10. Poppy Expenditures – to add verbiage to match the National organizations wording.
11. Washington Conference – changing the wording as to when the Department will pay allowable expenses to those listed in the Standing Rules to attend.

Carol Kottom stated that she didn't want to have a Resolution that would entirely eliminate the Washington Conference as National is considering going back to participating in the Conference as an organization.

Marsha Bible asked about the Creative Arts Festival. She questioned that some of the Veterans have no bank account and how would they cash the check? We could give them a check, money order or gift card, but not cash. Carol will make the change to this Resolution proposal.

The Executive Committee thanked Carol for all of her hard work and also for setting up the meeting space in Buffalo.

President Donna asked if there were any questions. Anna Eells asked about the Code of Conduct and who is responsible for making the decision of someone abusing alcohol and/or drugs. It is up to each member to determine what is or is not inappropriate behavior. This is a Unit issue and must be dealt with at the Unit level and use the guidelines set by the National American Legion Auxiliary for discipline. Lynn Olson asked about bringing alcohol into a Unit meeting. It must be specified in your Unit Standing Rules. Anna Eells asked if when our Department photographer takes pictures, could the individuals see the pictures and approve what they would like put in publications. Each person should look at the picture and approve the photo when they are taken.

President Donna called upon Secretary Sandie for announcements. Sandie stated that there was an issue brought up in the October meeting regarding clarification in the Employee Handbook on Discipline, Misconduct and Performance Issues. Sandie is still researching this and will bring her findings to the next Executive Committee meeting. Sandie shared a few thank you that Veterans sent into the office from things received at our Gift Shop. Sandie announced that the Department Convention 2019 will be a Friday through Sunday in Willmar. We are going to see

if that will increase attendance. Sandie explained how venues are determined for our events through the Convention Corporation. The main reason we are having issues is that the Districts of The American Legion continue to insist that we have a hospitality night and bring in food and drinks. It is against the law to do that and as contracts are signed years in advance, the venues have honored what was signed. Future venues will not allow that in the contracts.

After President Donna's closing remarks she called upon Jean Walker for the closing prayer and announced the gift exchange will take place after adjournment.

There being no further business, Donna called for a motion to adjourn. Carol Kottom made the motion, was seconded and approved.

Sandie Deutsch, Department Executive Secretary