

**2017 NATIONAL RIDERS CONVENTION
MEETING MINUTES
Norfolk, Virginia**

Meeting called to order by President Don Cox, August 12, 2017 at 2:00pm EST.

Invocation by Jeremiah Botkin, Riders National Chaplain. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Saad, Riders National Sergeant-At-Arms. Mission statement read by Don Cox.

Motion needed to ratify the agenda for a slight adjustment. Motion, 2nd, no discussion, passed.

Motion needed to adopt the Convention Rules. Motion, 2nd, no discussion, passed.

Roll Call: 64 in attendance: 10 National Officers, 1 Past National President, 7 Departments, 36 Chapters, 54 Voting Members and 12 Non-Voting Members. Motion made to accept roll call, 2nd, no discussion, motion passed.

President Cox: When the officer reports are given, 1st Vice George Cummings and Department of IA President may not be here. They will be excused when it's time to watch their daughter get installed as the National Juniors President. When they return, they will give their reports.

Need motion to accept the 2016 National Convention minutes as posted. Motion made, 2nd, no discussion, passed.

Question asked what is the number of voting delegates for 2/3's vote: 36. Majority number of voting delegates is 28.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

FL: We have 25 chapters, 672 members. We reported \$1.6 million in programs. We have the Walking Cane Program. Any Veteran in need of a cane can fill out the paperwork and we'll get you a Hurrycane.

AK: We have 2 active chapters, 10-12 members each, and we do 2 rides a year.

GA: We have 4 chapters, 88 members and still growing.

IA: We 4 chapters, looking to open 2 more. We do a lot of fund raising and purchase many items for veterans in need.

IN: Not in attendance.

KY: We have 5 chapters, 2 more are interested. We have 133 members. We are doing an annual ride, hosted by the Department. We also fill back packs for homeless vets.

MI: We have 9 chapters, 183 members and still growing.

MO: Billy Spencer, our 1st Son's Department President, couldn't be here. Can't remember how many chapters we have but membership is at 374. Our big fund raiser is for Camp Hope. Just completed our 10th year and have raised a total of \$35,000.

President: We are going to suspend from our regular business to welcome the outgoing National Commander, Harold Chapman.

Commander Chapman said the riders are doing great. He said we'll be getting more recognition and he's so proud of us. Thank you very much.

Joe Chenely thanked us for the hospitality shown them at the Mid-Year in Missouri. He's going to let the rest of the AMVET family members know about us. He said one of the things he was tasked to do is bring us all together. He didn't realize that Riders weren't fully embraced. He doesn't know why we weren't but we will be now. We are going to be in Florida for the Mid-Year in 2018. At the National Convention, I want to see all bikes lined up out front. Thank you very much.

President: Ok, I'd like to return to regular business with Department Reports:

NY: We have 8 chapters, 2 more in the works. Programs reporting are weak, but we're working on that. We are heavily involved in the Food Banks in NY, Suicide Prevention and Honor and Remember.

George Cummings request that him and Natalie Cummings be excused so they can attend their daughter's installation as the Juniors National President.

OH: We have 19 chapters, 392 members and hope to charter 2 more this year. June conference went well. We had 2 visitors from National Riders – Don Cox, President; National Secretary, Karen Cox; as well as Jim Whitcraft, National JA. We give \$5000 each year to the Fisher House during our Poker Run, hosted by Chapter 51. We've raised a total of \$32,000.

WI: Not in attendance.

Motion to accept all Department Reports as 1 single vote, 2nd, no discussion, passed.

President: Move from regular business to welcome our incoming AMVETS National President, Marion Polk.

Commander Polk: He said he will work with us. Our programs reporting is outstanding and it gives them fuel to fight with in Washington D.C for veterans and their families. Riders do a fantastic job and he appreciates it. Open door policy. Don Cox told him he's invited to our Mid-Year in Florida at the end of April 2018. He accepted the invite.

Back to regular business.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

President: The officer's will give their reports as well as their committee reports.

Tom McNamara, 2nd Vice: From last year September 2016 thru now, the riders have reported over \$5.1 million/with 1.6 million miles ridden and 178,000 hours. The breakdown per member amounts to \$5,176. This is not a competition, however, The AMVETS have 200,050 members and reported \$11.7 million. Their breakdown on how much was reported per member is only \$46. The Son's reported \$10.2 million with 20,000 members which breaks down to \$513 per member. The Riders only have a little over 2500 members. It's the movers and shakers that make it happen.

We did away with the President's Choice Award, so that we could give back to our members. We began a scholarship award of \$1000 to 5 individuals. We only had 3 applications submitted so we had \$2000 left over. We also have a Death Benefit but we've only received 1 request so we paid out \$200. We only made \$1000 on calendar sales and gun raffles, so we'll go back to 1 fund raiser per year. We don't want to raise dues and the fund raisers have helped us not to raise them.

LRP (Long Range Planning): Some of it has been slow getting done, just like the SOP's but we have completed quite a few items on the 1-year plan. All documents are on our website (amvetsridersnational.org). Get on the site and see what's there. Motion to accept the 2nd Vice's report was made, 2nd, no discussion, passed.

Rob Quick-PNP (Past National President): The mid-year was very successful and although the floods hindered some, we were able to get the National President in. Post 48 did an excellent job. MO-1 had to give it up because of the floods. Next years Mid-Year will in a new post being built, and it's coming along great. In fact, it's the home post of the sitting president and national secretary. Mid Year in Florida is a great place to go.

At this past Mid-Year, we chose the location for the 2019 mid year. It will be hosted by post/chapter 51 in Ohio. It will be a great place also because we hope we can pull in the members from the Northeast; NJ, NY, NH, PA, etc. We try to pick centrally located places. Motion made to accept PNP's report, 2nd, no discussion, passed.

Jim Whitcraft-JA (Judge Advocate): He spoke of being asked if we were incorporated. He checked into it and after checking with several possible states it could have been filed in, realized we were not. As of 12/12/2014, we are incorporated in Ohio. It is located at the Department of Ohio AMVETS HQ's. It is good until 12/12/2019.

There seems to be some confusion between Chain of Command and Communication. Chain of Command are issues that come from a chapter and moves up the chain for resolution. Communication is getting information disseminated to the membership as well as getting questions answered and getting connected to the proper officer for the situation while following Chain of Command.

SOP's are slow coming in. It was asked if they.

SOP's are nothing more than your standing rules, which are pertinent to your department and chapters. The SOP's I have received so far are from: MI Department, MI-23 and MI-1988; KY Department, KY-61, KY-64, KY-119, KY-123 and KY-125. Kudos to KY for getting them all in. FL-2, FL-312 and FL-2298; LA-7; Department of MO; and OH-76, OH-149 and OH-1983.

It was discussed that we need a glossary of terms and their definitions. We have decided to develop an Officer's Manual and add the glossary to this document. The officer's manual will list duties, steps and

time-lines in order to be effective in your job. Tom McNamara is working on it. It will also have the meaning of what a “member in good standing” is.

National is proposing 2 SOP’s to present on the floor, for discussion and ratification.

1st SOP: The Qualifications for being an Elected National Officer:

- Must have held either a Department Officer position for 2 years and either attended 1 of 2 national meetings (Mid-Year Rally or National Convention) or sat on a National Committee for 2 years, or held a position as a National Appointed office for 2 years.
- There is no qualification to be appointed to a National Appointed Position.
- Qualifications as National President: Must have been an elected national officer for 2 years.

Motion was made, 2nd, no discussion, passed.

2ND SOP: The number of National Officers allowed from 1 department:

- 2 elected and 1 appointed or 2 appointed and 1 elected.

Motion made, 2nd, discussion: Tom Serianni FL-312, wanted to know how it’s decided if there are 5 or 6 from one department wanting to move up to National if they can only have 2 at most. Jim explained that it will work itself out. FL-44 asked what if no one wants to run for office; He was told there’s never been a case like that at national, and he doesn’t understand the problem. Mr. Fiore made a comment (not word for word) that it was ok, you do what you want then. Larry Saad, RNSAA interrupted when things got out of hand and told Mr. Fiore (not word for word) that none of the FL officers showed up to committee meetings the day before, except their department president and that they should have been there to discuss any issues. Jim told everyone that they can adopt the same thing at department level so that not one chapter can run the whole department. A vote was called for, 1 nay, the rest were ayes. Ayes have it, motion passed. These 2 SOP’s will not take effect until after this convention.

5 Resolutions were presented:

(THE RESOLUTIONS LISTED BELOW ARE ONLY A BRIEF DECIPTION; TO READ THE COMPLETE RESOLUTION, GO TO THE RIDERS WEBSITE)

Resolution 01-2017 Subject: Riders Unified By-Laws, Article V: Section 5.8 (Dues Remittance) Submitted by CBL Committee. Change the due date by 30 days (from February 1st and 15th to March 1st and 15th) for a completed roster and dues remittance to the Riders National Secretary. Recommend adoption by the CBL committee. Motion made to adopt this resolution, 2nd, no discussion, motion passed.

Resolution 02-2017 Subject: Riders Unified Constitution, Article 7, Membership Section 7.2, Submitted by KY-123. Change the meaning of a Riding Member (in States where allowed). Recommend adoption by CBL committee. It must have 2/3’s vote to pass. Motion made to adopt this resolution, 2nd, discussion: FL-2 Vince Stretar asked if they still must meet every other

requirement as before – the answer is yes. IA-31 Jim Sadler commented he didn't think it needs to change. No other discussion; called for the vote, motion passed.

Resolution 03-2017 Subject: Riders Unified By-Laws, Article V, Members Section 5.2.A, Submitted by KY-123/Department of Kentucky. This resolution mirrors the above Resolution 2-2017, which is in the Unified Constitution. Motion made, 2nd, motion passed.

Resolution 04-2017 Subject: Riders Unified By-Laws, Article VII Section 7.2 Department Convention requires that Election of Department Officers will be done by hand or by voice vote. Resolve would change it to voting by hand, voice, or secret ballot. Motion made, 2nd, discussion: Rob Quick, PNP5 said all resolutions must go through National JA for approval. Called for vote: motion failed.

Resolution 05-2017 Subject: Same as Resolution 04-2017, other than that it is also listed in Article VIII Section 8.3 Chapter Convention. Motion made, 2nd, no discussion, called for a vote: motion failed.

Motion made to accept JA's report, it was 2nd and passed.

George Cummings-1st Vice We have 125 Chapters, 2,234 Riders, 334 Supporters and 113 members whom we have no idea what their status is; whether they are riders or supporters and whether they are AMVETS, Son's or Auxiliary. We need accurate numbers; we need ALL info filled in on the rosters when submitting to your department and to the National Secretary. If they are not filled out completely, they will not be accepted nor will they be valid and they will be returned. If they are a new member and don't have a membership card from their parent organization yet, then mark it by putting in "NEW".

11 Chapters have folded but we have picked up 14 new charters, so we are moving forward. At mid-year we plan to have a Quality Chapter patch for the 'recruiter of the year'. This patch will have the year on it and it will be based through the National, not the Quartermaster.

We are missing many revals this year. I'm making a motion to suspend those chapters and give them 30 days to get them in and to also give the National Secretary time to check her records in case she did receive them. Motion was 2nd, Discussion: Are these new chartered chapters? Answer: No. Also asked is if we can penalize them more money; Answer: cannot charge more than what is in the By-Laws. Motion passed. There were 24 chapters who possibly have not revalidated.

Motion made to accept 1st Vice's report, it was 2nd and passed.

Dan MacDonald-Treasurer On 9/1 /2016, after the last convention, we had \$55,679.01 in the bank. We now have a balance of \$67,174.86. Some of the bills have not come in yet from this convention, which may amount to over \$11,000. Our budget ended up in a deficit. The budget is set up for the extreme.

Last year we started a Scholarship Fund and a Death Benefit so we could give back a little to the membership. We had 5-\$1000 scholarships to give away. We have \$200 for the Death Benefit. We only received 3 scholarship applications, and so we gave away \$3000 and received only 1 request for the death benefit, amounting to a payment of \$200. That extra \$2000 left over, rolled over into the Death Benefit. We start with \$5000 each year, so we now have \$6800 from last year plus \$2000 that

rolled over from the scholarship fund, giving us over \$13,000 for Death Benefit. I am requesting we raise the Death Benefit from \$200 to \$250.

We had an external audit covering the past 5 years, conducted by a CPA. There was \$5000 in the budget for a full audit, but it cost \$1500. Learned a lot of valuable things to use when budgeting and taking care of the finances. Plan to hire this CPA every year so we'll have a full audit of the books, for \$500 each year.

It was motioned and amended and rescinded several times on if and how much the National Riders wished to donate to Mike and Bev Munoz. Mike had a heart transplant and Bev lost her job because she has been spending all her time with Mike since the surgery. It was finally decided on \$3000 to donate. Motion was 2nd, and motion passed.

The finance committee recommended that the 5-\$1000 scholarships should be reduced to 3-\$1000 scholarships. It was made into a motion, 2nd and motion passed. They also recommended that the National set up a fund to help our members if in need. If a rider or supporter needs help, they can submit their request and receive up to \$500. Left over funds would roll over each year. Start out with \$2000 in the Member Support Fund.

We also donate to help support our AMVET's Family's projects. We give the AMVETS \$1000; the Son's \$500; the Auxiliary \$500 and the Jr's \$500.

We are doing away with the calendar fund raiser. We'll have 1 fund raiser a year and that is so we won't be forced to raise dues.

To see all the changes and the budget for 2017-2018, please visit the website. You may also review the National Officers Travel Expense Policy on the website.

Motion made to accept the Treasurers Report, it was 2nd and passed.

Old Business: None

New Business: Awards- President's Prestige Awards:

- Department Most Improved Award- Department of KY
- Chapter Most Improved: KY-125
- Chapter Rider of the Year: Richard Dean, MO-48
- Department Rider of the Year: Natalie Cummings, Department of IA
- Membership Award for Revalidation: Department of MO
- Largest Chapter Award: FL-2
- Chapter of the Year for Programs Reporting: FL-86
- Department of the Year for Programs Reporting: Department of KY
- President's Certificates of Appreciation Citation's: Went to all his National Elected and Appointed Officers; as well as they all received a shirt as a small token of his appreciation.

Election of Officers: The following were nominated at mid-year:

Sergeant-At-Arms – Larry Saad - No other nominations – Larry accepted position.
Judge Advocate – Jim Whitcraft - No other nominations - Jim accepted position.
Treasurer – Dan MacDonald – No other nominations – Dan accepted position.
2nd Vice – John Reando – No other nominations – John accepted position.
1st Vice – Tom McNamara – No other nominations – Tom accepted position.
President – George Cummings – No other nominations – George accepted position.
Jeremiah Botkin - Chaplain, Kathy Campbell – Communications Officer, Kelly Webber –
Publications Officer and Karen Cox – Secretary, were all reappointed.

Rob Quick, PNP5 installed all the newly elected and appointed officers. He then installed incoming National President, George Cummings.

Past President Cox was given a Ceremonial Vest from his officers as a parting gift. Incoming President George Cummings presented him with his Royal Blue beret, distinguishing him as a Past National President.

Motion was made to adjourn, 2nd, no discussion, motion passed.

The closing prayer was given by Jeremiah Botkin. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Saad.

Karen Cox
Riders National Secretary
9/10/17