

Department of Maine, VFW

Council of Administration

Minutes



22 June 2025

Poland, Maine



*Department of Maine, VFW
Council of Administration Meeting*



22 June 2025

Commander Amy Meuchel asked that everyone present either turn their cell phones off or put them on vibrate during the Council of Administration meeting.

The Department of Maine Council of Administration meeting was convened on 22 June 2025 at Poland Spring Resort, Poland, ME. Commander Meuchel opened the meeting IAW the Manual of Procedures at 8:30am.

Introduction of Guests by Commander Amy Meuchel:

Steven J. SanPedro > National Council Member, Maine & National Legislative
James Ware > National Veterans Service Committee

Introduction of Past State Commanders: James Bachelder, Steven J. SanPedro, David Williams, Keith Davis, Kevin Woodward, Christopher Armstrong, Herman Littlefield, Robert Bernard, Anthony Kimble and John Bouchard.

Roll Call: Conducted with the following noted: Roll Call was conducted at this time with 34 Present, 1 absent, 1 Excused, and 1 vacant members noted.

Commander Meuchel- Present	Service Officer Ware - Present
SVC Day- Present	Guard Bernard - Present
JVC Stevens- Present	Color Guard Captain - Present
ADJ Lambert- Present	Americanism/Loyalty Day McInnis – Present
QM Williams- Present	Community Activities Lambert - Present
JA Reilly- Present	Scouts Davis - Present
SG Libby - Present	Credentials/PRO Sawyer- Excused
Chaplain Woodward - Present	A&D SanPedro - Present
IPSC Kimble - Present	Hospital/VAVS Blair - Vacant
Chief of Staff SanPedro- Present	Membership/Legislative SanPedro- Present
District 1 CMDR Watson- Present	National Home Demers - Present
District 2 CMDR St. Pierre- Present	Vets Advisory Curtis - Present
District 4 CMDR Slininger - Present	VSO Kimble- Present
District 5 CMDR Carter -Present	SVA Meuchel> Present
District 6 CMDR Littlefield - Present	Youth Day> Day- Present
District 7 CMDR Harmon – Present	Commanders Special Project> Reilly- Present
District 8 CMDR Lambert- Present	Website> MacWalters- Present
District 9 CMDR Lane – Absent	Beals House/ Grants/ Homeless Vets> Lane- Absent
District 10 CMDR Goodman – Present	Inspector Saucier> Present
District 11 CMDR McInnis - Present	

At this time, Commander Meuchel led the members present in the reciting of the Congressional Charter.

Any members wishing to speak must go through their respective District Commander for permission to speak. Also, Council members and Chairman are asked to make their reports brief when presenting them and stay within their reporting parameters.

Reading of Minutes: QM David Williams motioned to accept 5 April 2025 minutes as emailed and printed, 2nd by COS Steve SanPedro, motion was voted and passed.

Quartermaster Report: 2025-2026 budget was voted and approved at convention. Should end the year \$7-8,000 in the green. Motion from finance committee to raise Quartermasters rent from \$300 to \$600, motion carried. Motion to approve Quartermasters report by IPSC Anthony Kimble, 2nd by ADJ Carl Lambert, motion carried.

Audits/Poppies: Poppy The new year order forms will be emailed out to the new quartermasters and a copy of each post was given to each District Commander.

Grants:

Adjutant > Lambert: Need to make sure we are meeting deadlines that have been giving.

Commander > Meuchel

Positive:

SVA: nothing to report

Historian: Getting a lot of great pictures and articles in.

Ways and Means:

Negative:

SVA: Nothing to report

Historian: None

Ways and Means: sell! Sell! Sell!

Sr Vice Commander > Day

Youth: Positive Remarks: I am getting reports again! Problem Areas: Reports are mostly the same Posts. Recommendations: More training!

Jr Vice Commander: Stevens

Patriot Pen/ VOD/ TOY: The topic for both VoD & PP this year is: "How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?" 1. Start planning to advertise in your communities & schools.

2. Be familiar with the rules. Last year, two VoD entries were below the required time, & one included the student's name. At the post level, all three of these students could have been allowed to re-record.

3. Advise VoD entrants to limit background noise.

4. Post & district chairs should attend MOLD school for more training on these programs.

5. Post & district chairs need to utilize the the online system for entries.

6. Inform your winners to be prepared to read their essays if they become the department winner.

Judge Advocate > Reilly:

Commanders Special Project: Honor Flight Maine has been selected as the Commander's Special project this year. We are not setting a monetary goal. Instead we are looking to sponsor as many guardians as we can. The cost to send guardians is \$500 per guardian. Donations can be mailed to me

Mark Reilly

5 Academy Pl #62

Saco Maine 04072

Fundraising events will be held throughout the year

Surgeon > Libby

Blood> Nothing to report

Safety and Drug Abuse> Nothing to report

Chaplain > Woodward:

Chaplain > The timeliness of graves registrations that I am receiving has improved greatly.. Thank you to all concerned. Still having issues with getting the reports from most of the posts. The number of reports that I received is far less than what was shown at the Memorial Service. There is a lot of information not provided on the reports received.

WAA > The theme for this year is “KEEP MOVING FORWARD” National Wreaths Across America Day will be held on Saturday, December 13th. 2025. Thanks to those individuals and Posts that participated last year. As you look at the financial report there was a limited number of sponsorships throughout the department for the year. Send checks to me for sponsorships or process them online with the information provided in GO's.

MOLD> This year's training will take place 23 and 24 August at Madison and Windham. Please see the GO's for additional information and application. Officers at Post and District levels should make every effort to attend as it will benefit you at all levels within the department.

IPSC/ VSO> Kimble: Looking forward to working with our Service Officers

District Commanders Reports: Commanders presented their reports at the CoA meeting (*See Attachment 1*).

Recess for National Home: Collected \$476 for National Home.

Report of Committees:

Americanism/Loyalty Day _ Mc Innis:

This is the final report for 2024-2025 in Americanism/Loyalty Day per the Department of Maine Website(vfwme.org)

District 1— Post 6187, Post 9389

District 2—Post 1605

District 4--Post 109, Post 3381, Post 11553, Post 4633

District 5—Post 7865

District 6— Post 3108, Post 9437

District 7—Post 2197, Post 7738

District 8—Post 8835, Post 9, Post 9526, Post 887, Post 1285

District 9— Post 9787, Post 1603, Post 1641, Post 3335

District 10—Post 10643, Post 10879, Post 6859

District 11—Post 5744, Post 6977, Post 7997, Post 9935, Post 9394.

This means only 29 posts out of 41 posts in the Department of Maine have reported in Americanism/Loyalty Day in 2024-2025!

Community Activities > Lambert:

Need to continue to use the website reporting.

Website> MacWalters: Talked about Department emails for officers and chairmen.

Credentials – Sawyer: Excused

Credentials:

Legislative:
Public Relation:

National Council Member, Maine/Membership/Legislative/Finance – SanPedro:
NCM, M

It was a great privilege to be the National Council Member for Maine.

Membership: Program: The 2025 – 2026 Membership program is out. We have 23 Posts that have completed a Recruiter Event and submitted the proper paperwork to me. We have 33 Posts and 8 District that have reached or exceeded 100%. We have 20 of those Posts and 7 Districts that have reached 102% or more. We have 7 Posts and 1 District that need 10 or less Members to reach 100%. The Department is at 101.96% with 6385 Members. We need 3 Members to reach 102%. Great job by all I have no doubt we will hit this next milestone. We have some work to do but can reach 100/102% again this year. Many Posts waited until the last minute to make sure they met the requirements outline in the Membership program. Posts are not getting involved and participate in community events. We continue to have unpaid Post and District Officers. We need to continue with a positive attitude in our efforts towards the 2025-2026 VFW year and Membership program. The goal has been set and it is 101%! Post Leadership must be creative with the way they seek Membership. Commanders and Membership Teams need to work those rosters to ensure they have reached all their members. We have to work really hard to keep the Members we have since we already did the work to get them. We need to reach out to those that have expired in the pass and try again to get them back. More Recruiting Events need to take place. More of an effort needs to be put on community involvement. We can't afford to sit back and wait we need to get out there and Recruit New Members. Officers of your Post or District should never become unpaid. They should be setting the example and paying their dues on time or even early.

Legislative: At a National level the VFW is being heard and is gaining support for the GUARD VA Benefits Act and equal support to oppose the Veterans Choice Act. All four of our Legislators are on board with us and have supported the GUARD act. I have had both Senator King's and Congressman Golden's office reach out for support with their bills or comments for press releases. We have been seen at the State House and there is no doubt that they know we support LD -182 that will give permanent fund to Maine Veterans Homes. We continue to get support from our Legislators but we can't get bills like the GUARD Act, Major Richard Star Act, TAP assistance and many more passed. The Governors Budget was passed without the a line item for the Maine Veterans Homes so our only hopes are that LD -182 passes and is funded. We must continue to put pressure on our Legislators at the State and Federal level to hear our concerns and respond to them by passing these bills into laws. We can do this by reaching out to them by email or by the call to action that are sent out. I recommend that more Members sign up for the VFW Action Corp. This will help spread the work of all the things the VFW is doing and other things going on that are important to Veterans. You do not have to be a VFW Member to sign up for it.

Finance: The 2024 -2025 budget is on track and we are current operating in the black/green. We have established the 2025-2026 budget thanks to Quartermaster Williams. We continue to see profits from our CD since we are still getting some good rates. QM Williams did a great job keeping me informed and we have a good working relationship this past year. He continues to do a great job keeping the Department books and budget in good working order. A few individual budgets have gone over their budgets this year. The 2025-2026 budget is very tight with very little room for people to exceed their allotted budget. Continue to keep doing what we are doing. Each Chairman and budget owner must work hard to stay within their allotted budget. It is our duty to be good stewards of the Departments monies.

National Home > Demers: Provided update on how much the Posts in Department has donated to National Home. Did not provide Adjutant a copy of report.

Service Office > Ware Positive remarks:

1. Office report for June 24 - May 25:

Vets interviewed 668

Correspondence Rcvd 3,718

Sent 515

Phone calls 1,893
Claims filed 447
POA 106
Ratings cleared 1,117
Ratings reviewed 922
Appeals filed 1
Appeals conducted 20
Granted 6
Denied 2
Hosp. vets visited 7
Outreach 102
Amount of benefits for vets and their families 3,561,939.34

2. Upcoming NVS training:
NVS SLT 21-26 Sept.2025 Annapolis MD
April NVS scores: Brandon 100%
James 90.63%

3. Upcoming events:
NVS Visit 22-23 July 2025
National Convention 9-13 August 2025

4. I Attended the following events:
A. MMCN 13 th Annual Conference 18 June 2025
B. NVS training 26-30 April 2025 in Annapolis
C. MVCC April-June 2025 Zoom meeting
D. Attended 3 veterans funerals
E. Attended NAMI conference in Augusta
F. Attended VA outreach event in Skowhegan

5.What's happening at VA:
A. Togus is making progress on the New CLC units
B. The new Substance Abuse Treatment center is due to open later this year.

Problem Areas

Office Workload

Equipment

Staff accreditation

Recommendations

I we are fully staffed now and making progress on our filing backlog and case workload.

We are still available in the office daily to serve our veterans. Please call (207) 623-5723 for an appointment and walk ins.

If you call and leave a message please leave a return phone number. If you send an email please leave a return phone number so we can reply.

Staff has received new computers and support equipment from VA as per NVS/VA agreement.

We received cards to allow us to access, Maine State surplus.

Needs

Replace out dated Reference books with updated copied.(on as need basis)

Maintain office equipment and supplies as budgeted.

Scouting > DavisAreas:

None

Recommendations:

Lets make this year the best in Scouting. Get out there, locate Scouts working on their Eagle and assist them as needed. Then nominate them for Scout of the year or for one of.

Beals House/ Homeless Vets/ VMS> Lane: No Report Provided

Homeless Vets: -.

VMS:

Beals House:

Veterans Cemetery South> Bachelder: The new grounds crew are keeping up for now.

The new Cemetery Supertendant is creating documentation that has never been done. We have been asked the same questions from the past 3 Supertendants but it was not documented. We are hoping this will help verify the need for more staff to cover all the work it takes to care for these grounds. We still have the construction of the new nitch walls and the completion of the preplaced cremation vaults in Section B. We are looking forward to having all the chain link fencing removed. Watch for an announcement about the dedication of the Women Veterans Memorial. We need the construction to be completed before we can plan a date.

VAVS> Vacant

Inspector> Saucier:

All Districts Were Inspected and only 3 Post were not reported as inspected. Getting inspections done sooner.

VMS> Armstrong: Nothing to report at this time.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: Motion made by District 7 to get emails for Department officers and chairman, seconded by QM David Williams, motion carried.

Good of the Order: Year end audit 12 July at 10 am at the Winslow Post 8835.

Guest Remarks:

>Steven J SanPedro: Good meeting.

>Adjutants Final Comments: None.

Any Other Business: None

Past State Commanders Final Comments: Steven J. SanPedro, David Williams, James Bachelder, Keith Davis, Kevin Woodward, Christopher Armstrong, Herman Littlefield, Robert Bernard, Anthony Kimble and John Bouchard.

Commanders Final Comments: Thank you all for the support lets have a great year.

There being no further business, closing ceremonies were conducted IAW VFW Rituals at 9:50 am Chaplain Woodward gave the closing prayer. Our next regular meeting will be at the COA at Bangor Grand Hotel on 11 October 2025 at 1pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Carl Lambert

Carl Lambert, Adjutant
Department of Maine, VFW
24 June 2025

Anthony Kimble

Anthony Kimble, Commander
Department of Maine, VFW

Attachment 1 – District Commanders Report:

District 1 > Cmdr Watson

Update to complaint called to State Bingo Commission. Large shout out to the veterans of Post 9389 and others for successfully testifying to the state gaming commission and state elected members of the House. Their unrelenting drive and commitment lead the way for a rewrite of that portion of the law. We are now able to provide bingo games for children, fundraisers, events, carnivals, nursing homes, and schools.

New Problem – 9389 Auxiliary – See District Commander.

Positive Areas:

Post 6187, Fort Fairfield, membership currently 114.81 %. Bonded. Ten flags flown daily. Coordinated with school administration on next year's VOD/PP joint topic, including September dates to brief the middle and high school. Planning on re-utilizing Scholar's App for VOD/PP administration. Coordinating with and purchased materials for senior seminar project for Emma Bragg. Ms. Braggs project will create a poppy field surrounding the rear of the Post memorial. Two Post 6187 veterans will serve as her mentors. Special thanks to the 6187-house committee, collaboration and efforts on a 100% reconstruction of the lounge area which upon completion is totally awesome. Utilized \$750 for a comrade in distress, Desert Storm Veteran requiring assistance for vehicle to continue commuting to work. Spring outreach begins in May, Loyalty Day and Day of Service planned. May 4 th day of Service highlighted nationally by VFW PR firm. Coordinated with Fort Fairfield Potato Blossom Festival planning committee on this years festival, July 12-20. Committee highlighting Post 6187 on 6 of the 9 days of festival. Post conducted general elections for 25-26 as well as delegated to state convention.

Post 9389, Caribou, membership currently 102.05%. Bonded. Post fly's US and POW/MIA flags daily. Post holds Bingo twice per week. Members volunteer with a food pantry each month for 4 hours. Members are active with the Red Cross monthly. Post donated hall two times for memorial luncheons and three Community events. Members served as military honor guards and flag presenters at a funeral. Members donated hall for veteran's cemetery meetings. Complete community service with handicapped students once a week. Post donated hall for Marine Corps league meetings. Post donated hall to AARP tax Services Jan-Apr 3 days a week. Post coordinated with the Agency on Aging to hold elderly meals at post each week starting in May plus the Carl Foundation will begin meals for 1 month for the community. Post provided worked base learning opportunities for Job Corp Students at the post, they were mentored by two Post members. Post honored 6 students with volunteer service awards via PVSA. Post is beginning to hold monthly dances with full bar. Post is holding the 1st annual basket raffle in honor of Armed Forces Day and Day of Service. Post confirmed little league sponsorship for 2025. Post Commander continues to represent at VA clinic in PI for stake holder's group, also will continue to serve on Congressman Goldens vet panel for academy appointments. Post Commander convinced city of Caribou to invest in Flags and poles for the city. Post will Provide two scholarships for High School Grads in 2025. Post held general elections for 25-26. District and Post will sponsor Memorial Day Parade, hold a ceremony at the city's veterans park, and will support the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Maine Veterans Cemetery at Caribou.

Training Conducted at District Meetings Since the Last Council of Administration (CoA) Meeting:

None.

District Commanders Activities Since the Last Council of Administration CoA) Meeting:

Continue to actively participate in all district/post activities as listed above. Co-ordinates with State liquor inspectors to obtain and utilize an event liquor license to utilize as a fund-raising event. Continues to work with the state of Maine on creating a VFW ATV club, to be used for recruitment, awareness, and fund raising. Works with Auxiliaries to continue to make a more rounded experience for posts and veterans as well as the community in all fund raising, community awareness and membership drives. Continues to represent and advocate for all veterans in the district regardless of affiliation. Continues to be present and represent district at funerals, memorial services and other events. Continues to provide Resource Officer duties both at Post and District levels..

District 2 > Cmdr St. Pierre: No Report

Problem Areas:

Positive Areas:

Training:

Commanders Activities:

District 4 > Cmdr Slininger:

Problem Areas: Merging Bangor Post 1761 and Hampden 4633 into one post.

Positive Areas: Opportunities' after merging Bangor and Hampden together

Training: None

Commanders Activities Assisted in the local conservation with their family fun day event. Attended the Katahdin Area Council, Scouts annual business mtg. and awards dinner, present one of Four Silver Beaver awards.

Working with Post 1761 on documenting the close out donations, a total of \$170,000.00

District 5 > Cmdr Carter: No Report provided

Problem Areas

Positive Areas:

Commanders Activities:

District 6 > Cmdr Littlefield:

Problem Areas: Trying to get Post Commanders and Post members to attend District meetings. We have 4 Posts in District 6 but our last meeting only 4 members attended and only one of those was a Post Commander.

Positive Areas: All Posts are working diligently on membership. Two posts are currently over 101%. They are all supporting the programs.

Training: None

Commander's Activities: Attended regular meeting at Post 3108 and my own Post 6131.

District 7 > Cmdr Harmon:

DISTRICT 7 IS OPERATING VERY WELL WITH RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS, I COMMEND BOTH POST COMMANDERS FOR THERE EFFORTS IN BRINGING THE DISTRICT JUST UNDER 115 % JOB WELL DONE. FUND RAISING, POPPY DRIVE'S. FOOD DRIVES AND PARTICIPATING AT V.A STAND DOWNS, HOUSE IN THE WOODS BREAKFAST SERVING OVER 100 PEOPLE AND RAISING MONIES FOR THEM. BOTH POST AND VETS INC WORKED TOGETHER, MAKING THIS A VERY SUCCESSFUL EVENT. THE PATRIOT PEN AND VOICE OF DEMOCRACY ARE MOVING FORWARD, WITH MORE TEACHERS BEING INVOLVED WITH STUDENTS. MIKE AND MAGGIE FROM 7738 WORK VERY HARD IN THE SCHOOLS AND FOLLOWING ALL LEADS. WE WILL BE INCREASING OUR BOND FOR THIS NEXT YEAR PLANNING A GREAT FUND RAISER FOR PRIZES BOTH POST ARE DOING MANY COMMUNITIES HOUR IN THE BOOTHBAY VETS PROJECT, AS SHOWN IN THE JULY AUGUST NATIONAL VFW MAGAZINE.

I THANK ANTHONY AND OUR STATE COMMAND FOR ALL OF TH SUPPORT THEY GIVE ALL OF US. AND LOOK FORWARD FOR THE

INCOMING COMMAND. Department of Maine District Seven TEAMWORK GETS THING DONE.

District 8 > Cmdr Lambert: No report

Problem Areas:

Positive Areas:

Training:

Commanders Activities:

District 9 > Cmdr Lane: No report provided

Problem Areas:

Positive Areas:

Training:

District 10: Cmdr Goodman:

Problem Areas: None to report at this time

Positive Areas: Posts are in working order and district 101% membership .

Training: None

Commander Activities: Continues to volunteer at Portland VA CBOC. Working with the VA HUD-VAS office to getting homeless veterans located in apartments.

District 11 > Cmdr McInnis:

Problems Areas: Post 9394 has voted to turn in their charter, Talks with them to merge with another post were no avail.

Positive Areas: District 11 is a 102.66 9% in Membership, Post 5744 is at 107.86% in Membership, Posts 6977 is at 101.08% in membership, Post 7997 is at 104.61% in membership and Post 9935 is at 101.86% in membership.

Training: None. Next District meeting on September 21, 2025 at Sanford Post 9935.

Commanders Activities:

Held District 11 Meeting in York Beach on May 18 th 2025.

Attachment 2 – Membership Awards Presented at convention.