



Minutes for the meeting of American Legion Post #34 Wednesday February 16, 2022

- I. Call to Order – Commander Jere Axe called the meeting to order at 1900 hrs. Commander Axe led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance, recognized the POW/MIA empty chair and in the absence of a Chaplain, Commander Axe offered an opening prayer
- II. Roll call of officers: Commander Jere Axe, Adjutant Doug Hiepler, Finance Officer Jessika Hiepler, 1st Vice Thomas Cole, 2nd Vice Carlton Perry all present. Chaplain, Sgt at Arms, and Service Officer are vacant at this time
- III. Reading of minutes of previous meeting conducted by Adjutant Doug Hiepler. The minutes were accepted without question. Doug Hiepler utilized an electronic device that recorded audio during the meeting
- IV. Introduction of guests: District Commander Erin Magee was present and recognized
- V. Post Service Officers Report:
 - a. Adjutant: D. Hiepler advised that we have an estimated 600 Legionnaires at Post #34. We currently have an estimated renewal rate of 89%. There are increased benefits from having higher renewal rates, so members are encouraged to renew and spread the word to other members to renew as soon as possible
 - b. Finance Officer: J. Hiepler advised that our ending post bank account balance last month was \$6456.77. She reports that the new balance is \$6148.82. She did not report on the post account, or the small games of chance account
 - c. District Commander Magee: District Commander Magee interjected at the completion of the finance report. Magee reviewed the a timeline of events and occurrences that he spoke of at a previous meeting. He indicated that he was called to this post a few months ago to review post finances after learning that the post had mentioned the threat of closure. Magee said that after conducting an independent review of the post finances, he found that there were a number of inconsistencies by the person in charge of the finances (J. Hiepler) and illustrated to the members in attendance several failures of the post accounting:
 1. Only had 1 person in charge of finances. Only 1 signor on post expenses to include a recent transaction over \$5,000 in which only J. Hiepler had knowledge of.
 2. Failed to have an independent audit annually
 3. Post received about \$70k in PPP loans but the applications suggest the post had 16 employees, which has not been vetted. One PPP loan was forgiven, the other was not – due to an apparent untimely forgiveness submission request
 4. A loan of \$400k was taken out on the post and its property. It was indicated to be used for repairs and building improvements by J

Hiepler; however, J. Hiepler has not produced any receipts at time of report.

5. Magee requested banquet hall records to be provided but to date no records have been surrendered. Magee has copies of banquet rentals where the checks have been made out to Brandi [Brandi Erisman AKA Brandi Massias].
6. The desktop computer, and subsequent records contained therein, from the manager's office has been destroyed at the time of this meeting. In addition, a file cabinet drawer from the manager's office cannot be located. J. Hiepler interjected and reported that the computer became inoperable and she took it to "the dump". J. Hiepler also indicated that the filing cabinet got wet due to a roof leak and she destroyed all of the records
7. Liquor Control officers have an ongoing investigation for the misuse of funds from small games of chance proceeds. The small games of chance annual report has not been filed for several years, with the last one believed to be filed in 2016.
8. The post has no meeting minutes from any meeting in recent time.
9. There is a \$10,000 (approximate) mechanic's lien against the post by The Exterior Company (TEC) for non-payment of a service contract.
10. There is a current "slip-and-fall" lawsuit against the post due to an injury sustained by a customer

At this time, District Commander Magee called for the immediate resignation of the Post Finance Officer Jessika Hiepler. J. Hiepler agreed to immediately resign replying "you can have it". J. Hiepler responded by explaining that she has records but was never asked to furnish them to District Commander. She reported that she spent \$30k to a contractor, \$30k to an engineer/architect, upgraded the banquet floor, put in a new bar at the banquet area and upgraded the beer delivery system to a draft beer system. J. Hiepler claimed that the computer crashed "not on my time – that was when Robin had keys to the office". J. Hiepler resigned effective immediately.

Immediately following J. Hiepler's verbal resignation, the Post Adjutant – Doug Hiepler announced his immediate resignation as well. The Post Commander Jere Axe accepted the resignations.

- VI. New Business: Past Commander Jim Vollrath moved to fill the executive board vacancies. Vollrath nominated Charles Melhorn, a legionnaire who is a Police Lieutenant and was present at the meeting to serve as the Post Finance Officer effective immediately. Charles Melhorn accepted the nomination and the members in attendance voted unanimously to approve

Scott Brennan, a Legionnaire who was present at the meeting was nominated to serve as the Post Adjutant effective immediately. Scott Brennan accepted the nomination and the members in attendance voted unanimously to approve

VII. The meeting was adjourned.