



**American Legion Post 543
General Membership Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 22, 2025**

Meeting Minutes

- 1. The meeting was called to Order at 7:00 PM –Vice Commander Phillip McGhee.**
- 2. The Vice Commander ordered the advancement of the Colors and a hand salute.**
- 3. The Vice Commander ordered Opening Prayer – Chaplain Templeman.**
- 4. The Vice Commander recognized the POWs and those Missing in Action, as well as honored them by referring to the empty chair.**
- 5. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander with audience participation.**
- 6. The Vice Commander led the Members in reciting the Preamble to the American Legion Constitution.**
- 7. The Vice Commander reviewed the four pillars and how the Post supports over 70 programs.**
- 8. The Vice Commander inquired of the meeting attendees if there were any other Vietnam era Veterans in the audience who had not received their 50th Anniversary commemorative pin and certificate for their service. There were none.**
- 9. The Vice Commander asked if there were any Veterans visiting the Post for the first time.** The Vice Commander welcomed the Guests and asked them to introduce themselves. Vice Commander McGhee then welcomed Guest Mark Rampey and Robert Gomez. Both Mark and Robert Joined Post 543.
- 10. The Vice Commander then introduced Joe Kinzer, Lieutenant General (R) and with Honor Guard Members Bill Morgan and Kirk Davis presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation for his Leadership in the development of Post 543.**

11. The Vice Commander then introduced Mrs. Rosey Greer Shoudy, Brunswick County “Toys for Tots” Distribution Lead. Mrs. Shoudy presented a short presentation on the Mission, Goal and Overview of the Toys for Tots program and schedule in our Brunswick County area.

12. The Vice Commander took a Roll Call of Officers.

- Officers Absent were:
 - Doc Liberty, (Judge Advocate/Parliamentarian)
 - Michael Carton (Post Commander)
 - Chuck Francka (Historian)

13. The Vice Commander announced that there was a Quorum in Attendance.

14. The Vice Commander requested the Chaplain brief the Membership regarding any sick call Members:

- The Chaplain requested the Membership to remember Mark Lieberman, Gary Croden and Rosemary Carton in their prayers.

15. The Vice Commander requested a motion be made to approve September 24, 2025, General Membership Meeting Minutes. *A motion by Post Member Steve Muir and Seconded by Aaron Largent was made to approve September 24, 2025, General Membership Meeting Minutes* No discussion was required. *The motion carried, and the voice vote was unanimous.* – Vice Commander.

16. The Vice Commander called on Post 543 Finance Officer Report – Tim Edman

17. The Finance Officer provided the Membership with the current view of accounts by type and use of each of the various line items. The Finance Officer also provided the membership with the Budget Line Totals. The Finance Officer explained what the Operational Funds were accounts 411 and 4842. We have spent 15.9% of our FY26 Financial Budget.

- 18. The Vice Commander requested a motion be made to approve September 24, 2025, Finance Report.**
- 19. *A motion by Post Member Rick Sessa and Seconded by Post Member Dan Bennet was made to approve October 22, 2025, Finance Report. No discussion was required. The motion carried, and the voice vote was unanimous.***
- 20. The Vice Commander invited Gary Purcell (2nd Vice Commander, Membership) to the podium to provide the Membership with an update.**
- 21. The 2nd vice Commander, Membership, that the number of Total paid members to date is 154.**
- 22. The 2nd vice Commander, Membership reminded the Membership that the 2026 Goal is 269 Members, and that we are 115 members shy of our 2026 100% goal.**
- 23. The Vice Commander invited Steve Muir (Post 543 Resource Officer) to give an update on the current active cases he is working on behalf of the Post.**
- 24. Steve Muir informed the Post Membership that he will be chairing Project 250 for the Post. Project 250 is an American Legion Program to remind us that the United States will be celebrating the 250-year Anniversary. Post 543 Resource Officer will be looking for volunteers to join him on this mission.**
- 25. The Post 543 Resource Officer informed the Membership that his team had 7 Active cases being worked on.**
- 26. The Post 543 Resource Officer informed the Membership that a Member of Post 543, a WWII and Korean War Veteran, was under Hospice care. The Resource Officer also provided an update on Post Member Paul Witmer.**
- 27. The Vice Commander invited the Active-Duty Support Member (Steve Claiborne) to update the Membership on the USMC Activities in support of the Thanksgiving Holiday.**
- 28. USO Camp Lejune Turkey Roll, Thanksgiving meal for Enlisted Marines, St. James Thanksgiving Dinner Busses and WWBE Warrior Games.**

29. The Vice Commander called on Post 543 Public Relation Officer (Jim McKriskin to the podium to provide his Report an Online Option for Renewing Post Member Membership, Post Member Applications and Donations.

30. The Post 543 Public Relation Officer gave the Post Members an example of how Post members may use their Credit Card, or Venmo or use of a QR Code to make these fund transfers.

31. The Vice Commander called on Post 543 The Sergeant-at-Arms/House & Entertainment Report – Rick Sessa

32. Sergeant-at-Arms Rick Sessa informed the Post 543 Membership that the US ARMY Field Band Concert slated for October 26th has been canceled.

33. Sergeant-at-Arms Rick Sessa and the House and Entertainment team have arranged a Bus Trip to Ft. Bragg on November 5th. The Bus will leave the HWEC at 8:30am and return to HWEC at around 9:00pm. 40 passengers are required to attend, and the cost will be \$75 p/p. The Sergeant at Arms introduced Post Members Lou Panigutti and Phillip McGhee to elaborate on the planned trip.
The Bus Trip may be postponed due to the Government Shut down

34. Sergeant-at-Arms Rick Sessa reminded the membership of the Post 543 “Salute to Veterans Dance” at the Homer Wright Event Center on November 14th and tickets are available after the General Membership Meeting at \$15/p/p or \$25 per couple.

35. The Vice Commander called on Post 543 the Adjutant Report – Doug Pratt

- **November Meetings**
 - ExCom Meeting (11/17/25)
 - Post 543 Honor Guard Meeting (11/19/25) will be held starting at 1800 hrs.
 - Post 543 General Membership Meeting (11/19/25)
 - The SENC Veteran’s Day Parade scheduled for 11/08/25
 - The Veteran Day Ceremony at the HWEC will be held on November 11, at 11:00am.

36. Department Vice Commander George Freeman provided an explanation of the Rededication of the St. James Veterans Memorial.

37. General Membership Meeting Closing Prayer – Chaplain Templeman

38. The Vice Commander requested the colors be retired –Vice Commander McGhee

39. The General Membership Meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM. – Vice Commander McGhee

Douglas Pratt

Douglas Pratt
Adjutant

Mike Carton

Mike Carton
Commander