Dominion Command Poppy & Remembrance Committee Meeting of the Whole

Meeting Minutes

21 March 2023

Our Mission is to serve Veterans, which includes serving military and RCMP members and their families, to promote remembrance and to serve our communities and our country.



DOMINION COMMAND POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WHOLE 21 March 2023, 1200, HRS EST – ZOOM MEETING MINUTES

File: 35-1

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DOMINION COMMAND POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WHOLE 21 MARCH 2023

Attendees:

Dominion Command Poppy and Remembrance Committee:

Berkley Lawrence - Chair

Derek Moore - Vice-Chair

Peter Merola - Member

Carol Pedersen - Member

Daryl Alward - Member

Ernie Tester - Member (phone attendance)
Freeman Chute - Committee Coordinator
Nicole Thomas - A/Committee Coordinator

Provincial Command Poppy Chairs and Representatives:

BC/YT - Jim Diack AB/NT - Scott Sadler

MB/NWO - Gail Conrad Davey

ON - Brian Harris

Lisa Dinsmore

QC - Terrance Deslage
NB - Antonin Chevalier
PE - Dave Blacquiere

Other:

OSI - Darren Reid TVS - Peter Merola

P&R Division - Shelby Sutherland

Lia Taha Cheng

REGRETS:

SK - Roberta Taylor
NS - Clarence Dawe
NL - Phillip Wood

ANNEXES:

Annex A P & R Committee Meeting Minutes – 13 October 2022

Annex B Veteran Support Partnership Program – Application Form

Concussion Legacy Foundation Canada Operation Brain Health

Annex C Resilient Parents... Resilient Communities (RPRC) – Funding application

Annex D Branch Status Report Amendments

Annex E Poppy Stories 2022 – Digital Performance & Wrap up report Annex F Profile of ECD Children's Books for Military Kids – Proposal

1. OPENING RITUAL

The meeting commenced at 1200 hours on Tuesday, 21 March 2023 via Zoom video conferencing. The chair conducted the opening ritual.

2. POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REMARKS

The chair welcomed the committee members, Provincial Command Poppy Chairs and guests and relayed his appreciation for their commitment to the Poppy and Remembrance Division.

3. NEW BUSINESS

The chair entertained requests to add new agenda items. The following items were added for discussion:

- a. Poppy Manual section 403.ii.g Support of Cadet units
- b. Use of Poppy Funds for the Poppy Banner Program. This item was <u>not</u> brought to New Business as discussion confirmed that Poppy Funds cannot be used to support the program.
- c. Zone and District Poppy Fund accounts. This was <u>not</u> brought to New Business as it will need to be brought as a resolution in the next Dominion Command Convention to have the current rulings changed. The current status is that Zone and District levels may <u>not</u> hold Poppy Funds.
- d. Further descriptions to the definitions in 400 and 500 sections of the Poppy Manual. This item was not brought forward in New Business.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

<u>Minutes Approval</u> – The 13 October 2022 Poppy and Remembrance Committee Meeting minutes are attached at Annex "A".

MOTION: It was moved that the 13 October 2022 Poppy and Remembrance Committee Meeting minutes be approved with the following amendment:

New Business: Annual Veterans Visit. That the following motion: It was moved that the fund allocation in Section 403.ii.h in the attached minutes be increased from \$25 to \$30 be changed to reflect the following increase in the amount of \$35.

5. CONCUSSION LEGACY FOUNDATION CANADA FUNDING REQUEST

<u>Background:</u> As a second phase to *Project Enlist*, The Concussion Legacy Foundation Canada is requesting support for *Operation Brain Health*, which encourages Veterans to exercise, sleep properly, eat well, and build cognitive reserve to improve their brain health and performance (Annex B). The aim:

- 1. Improve daily lives of those within the Veteran community who are navigating the effects of traumatic brain injury (TBI);
- 2. Increased awareness about concussions and related long-term health conditions among Veterans; and
- 3. Increase accessibility to research initiatives seeking to address these longterm effects in Veterans.

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> The Concussion Legacy Foundation Canada is requesting 75K to help fund this portion of their study. The project outcome measures will include:

- Engage directly with an additional 1,000 Veterans in their Support Networks such as direct peer support, brain pledge enrollment, Support Line, and inperson events;
- 2. Engage 25,000 Veterans in Operation Brain Health recovery & performance programming;
- 3. Recruit 500 additional Veteran and Veteran family brain pledges; and
- 4. Reach the remaining 350,000 Veterans and their families through earned media, social media, and PSAs on concussion recognition, research initiatives, and other education and awareness content.

MOTION: It was moved that the P & R Committee approve the request for 75K to fund the second phase of the project. (Approved by electronic vote 25 January 2023)

CARRIED

6. RESILIENT PARENTS ... RESILIENT COMMUNITIES (RPRC): INTERVENTIONS TO ENHANCE RESILIENCE AMONG VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES

<u>Background:</u> HiMARC (Heroes in Mind Advocacy and research Consortium) at the University of Alberta submitted an application in 2021 to request funding for a national project that will support and enhance resilience in families of Veterans (Annex C). It was presented to the Dominion Executive Council (DEC) on 24 April 2021 and the request for funding in the amount of \$599,700 over a three-year period, thus \$199,900 installments each year, commencing in 2021, was approved and subsequently approved again in 2022. For the approved funds of \$199,900 to be released in 2023, the following recommendation is presented for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION: That \$199,900 be provided to HiMARC in 2023 as per the

previously approved funding request, fulfilling the third and last installment of this funding request

MOTION: It was moved that the P & R Committee approve the third and final installment for \$199,900 to be released.

CARRIED

7. ADAPTATION OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR MILITARY KIDS

<u>Background:</u> Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR) is looking for funding to adapt early childhood storybooks, that are research-based books, created in Australia by Dr. Marg Rogers and a team of researchers from the University of New England, in Armidale, Australia (Annex F).

The books are written using a strengths-based, resilience-based approach. They are designed to build resilience and to support children's understanding about:

- parents working away (in any family)
- military family life
- parents who have given their health in service (e.g. veteran's children's resources).

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> CIMVHR has committed funding to adapt, print and distribute 3 of the 12 books for military families. They are seeking a project partner(s) to help fund the adaptation, printing and distribution of the remaining books for Canadian Military Families, with a commitment to adapt those outlined by Military families in Canada as most relevant and necessary. They are seeking \$72,300 – \$100,000 to fund this project.

MOTION: It was moved that the P & R Committee approve the request for 100K to fund the adaptation, printing and distribution of the children's books

CARRIED

8. POPPY MANUAL REVIEW

Here are recommendations for changes in the Poppy Manual:

a. section 401- Eligibility

<u>DISCUSSION</u>: The use of subsections under 401 would allow for more clarity on how Poppy Funds should be spent. This is probably one of the most important sections as it is the foundation as to how donations are made. Each of the six paragraphs should be identified as 401 (a) then 401 (b) etc.

RECOMMENDATION: Paragraphs in Section 401 should be identified as 401 a to e.

MOTION: It was moved that Section 401 be identified as 401 a to e.

b. Section 401 – Note at the end of the Section. Note: Affiliate Members are <u>NOT</u> eligible for Poppy fund uses.

DISCUSSION: Membership status has no bearing on the eligibility of the Poppy Trust Fund program expenditures. It is clearly identified in section 401 para 3 that "The basic purpose and obligations of the Poppy Trust Fund are to assist Veterans as defined in Subsection 101.d of the General By-Laws and their families. In this regard any use of Poppy Funds must focus on directly supporting Veterans and their families." Veterans and their families can benefit from any of the approved uses of Poppy Trust Funds even if they are not members of the Legion.

RECOMMENDATION: Delete the note in section 401

MOTION: It was moved that the note in section 401 be deleted.

CARRIED

c. Poppy Manual - GLOSSARY

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Since someone's Membership status with the branch/Legion has no bearing on the eligibility of the Poppy Trust Fund program expenditures, the following definitions in the Glossary should be deleted.

- Affiliate Members Persons who are Affiliate Members are not eligible to receive Poppy Trust Fund assistance.
- Associate Members Persons who are Associate Members are not eligible to receive Poppy Trust Fund assistance. The only exception is those persons who are residing with their parents, who are wholly dependent upon them for support and are not receiving welfare assistance, a pension from any government source, or funds from employment insurance, employment training or similar government program. There are few, if any, Associate Members who meet this criterion.

RECOMMENDATION: The following definitions should be deleted as they are not referenced in this manual.

MOTION: It was moved that the definitions be deleted.

CARRIED

d. Section 402.ii. Compensation of a bugler and / or piper for Remembrance ceremonies.

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Small communities often have difficulty finding a local person capable of playing the bugle or great highland bagpipes to enhance the dignity of their Remembrance service. They either use recorded music and associated amplifier systems or compensate someone from outside their community to come to their Remembrance ceremony and play. Compensation is now being made using branch funds.

RECOMMENDATION: Add section 402.ii.b "up to 50% of the cost of a bugler and/or piper to a maximum of \$100.00 during the Remembrance Day ceremony only".

MOTION: It was moved that section 402.ii. add item b. "up to 50% of the cost of a bugler and/or piper to a maximum of \$100.00 during the Remembrance Day ceremony only".

CARRIED

e. Section 402.iii.f - emergency assistance, which is defined as shelter, food, fuel, clothing, prescription medicine, medical devices /equipment, and necessary transportation. Assistance cannot be continued over an extended period but may be offered more than once to an individual.

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Cell phones are becoming a necessity for daily life, especially in navigating appointments, access to crisis lines, mental health supports, and addiction supports. Further it helps to combat isolationism for those Veterans, who do not have access to social supports. For homeless Veterans that the Legion is trying to assist, this would be essential.

RECOMMENDATION: Adding the assistance for purchasing cellphones, with no fixed plans attached, that can be reloaded with minutes, i.e.: burner phones, would assist homeless or near-homeless Veterans to maintain contact with the various organizations such as the Legion, VAC, etc. while trying to help leave the streets.

<u>MOTION</u>: It was moved that section 402.iii.f be amended to the following: emergency assistance, which is defined as shelter, food, fuel, clothing, prescription medicine, medical devices /equipment, prepaid cellphones, and necessary transportation. Assistance cannot be continued over an extended period but may be offered more than once to an individual.

CARRIED

f. Section 402.vi.c - distribution of Poppy and Remembrance material, as authorized by Dominion Command to be used in schools.

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Legion Branches should be able to purchase Books/Material that is age appropriate for teachers to use to teach students why they should remember. (NOTE: the authorized Dominion Command material does not work in all cases, it is not one size fit all.). Materials, when possible, should be provided in the language of the school.

RECOMMENDATION: That Section 402.vi.c be changed to: 402.vi.c - distribution of Poppy and Remembrance material, to be used in schools.

MOTION: It was moved that section 402.vi.c be changed to the following: distribution of Poppy and Remembrance material, to be used in schools.

g. Section 403.i.a Prior to funds being utilized for "special uses", the Branch Poppy Trust Fund Committee must obtain approval for the proposed expenditure at a general meeting of the Branch. And section 403.i.b. The request for funds should include – the amount, the intended recipient(s), the current balance of funds held in trust at the time the request is made, the purpose of the request and the date of the General Meeting at which the decision to request approval was given.

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> It is suggested that both these sections be amended to include special use expenditure could be approved at an Executive Meeting and not only during a General Meeting. This would accommodate small branches that only hold one General meeting per year.

RECOMMENDATION: That section 403.i.a and b be changed to the following:

Section 403.i.a Prior to funds being utilized for "special uses", the Branch Poppy Trust Fund Committee must obtain approval for the proposed expenditure at a general meeting or Executive Meetings of the Branch. And

section 403.i.b. The request for funds should include – the amount, the intended recipient(s), the current balance of funds held in trust at the time the request is made, the purpose of the request and the date of the General Meeting or Executive Meetings at which the decision to request approval was given.

MOTION: It was moved that section 403.i.a and b be changed to the following:

Section 403.i.a Prior to funds being utilized for "special uses", the Branch Poppy Trust Fund Committee must obtain approval for the proposed expenditure at a general meeting or Executive Meetings of the Branch. And

section 403.i.b. The request for funds should include – the amount, the intended recipient(s), the current balance of funds held in trust at the time the request is made, the purpose of the request and the date of the General Meeting or Executive Meetings at which the decision to request approval was given.

CARRIED

h. Section 403.ii.g Support of Cadets

<u>DISCUSSION</u>: It would be nice to be able to purchase Cadet Medal of Excellence through this funding initiative.

RECOMMENDATION: That acquisition of the Cadet Medal of Excellence expenses be included in Paragraph 403.ii g. or, specific direction be made in Paragraph 403.ii g, that the Cadet Medal of Excellence is not an approved expense from the Poppy Fund.

MOTION: It was moved that section 403.ii.g be amended to include the purchase of Cadet Medal of Excellence

CARRIED

i. 403.ii.l Transition Programs for Veterans: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to 25 percent of the current balance for the purpose of funding transition programs related to the training, education and support needs of Veterans. Provincial

Commands will be responsible to maintain a list of qualifying programs within their respective commands.

<u>DISCUSSION</u>: Add 2 sub sentences to decrease confusion as to where poppy funds will be used for veteran transition programs.

RECOMMENDATION: Add the following paragraphs to section 403.ii.l

- 1. Donations to BSO-OSI Veteran's Initiatives at the branch level, (i.e. Op VetBuild, Buddy Check Coffee).
- 2. Donations to BSO-OSI Command Veteran's Initiative Programs and, for the research, development and evolution of these programs and projects.

MOTION: It was moved that two points would be added to section 403.ii.l

- 1. Donations to BSO-OSI Veteran's Initiatives at the branch level, (i.e. Op VetBuild, Buddy Check Coffee).
- 2. Donations to BSO-OSI Command Veteran's Initiative Programs and, for the research, development and evolution of these programs and projects.

CARRIED

i. Sec. 403.ii – Addition to this section

WHEREAS the current list of Special Uses for Poppy Funds does not include custommade, adaptable sports equipment or recreational gear for Veterans diagnosed with an OSI, injury, or permanent disability.

WHEREAS custom-made, adaptive sports equipment promotes safe mobility for injured or disabled Veterans. A custom-fit is imperative when participating in action sports such as wheelchair basketball, tennis, or rugby.

WHEREAS custom-made sports equipment can have a significant monetary value. Disabled Veterans on a limited income should not be denied physical and mental recovery because of their financial restraints.

WHEREAS sports and recreational activities improve a Veteran's mental health and promotes life-long rehabilitation.

WHEREAS a Veteran can feel isolated after an illness or injury. Sports and recreational activities promote camaraderie and self-confidence in a healthy, supportive environment.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED to amend Section 403.ii, with the addition of item (p) Custom-Made Adaptable Sports Equipment & Recreational Gear: (prior Provincial Command approval is required). Up to 25% of the current balance to support the financial assistance of custom-made, adaptable sports equipment or recreational gear for Veterans diagnosed with an OSI, injury, or permanent disability.

Action: Item will be tabled. A new motion with clearer wording will be brought forward to

the Committee before the next DEC meeting with an electronic vote taking place if needed.

Secreterial note, 27 March 2023: the following motion was put forward for an electronic vote: to amend Section 403.ii, with the addition of item (p) Custom-Made Adaptable Sports Equipment & Recreational Gear: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) up to 25% of the current balance towards the purchase of adaptable sports equipment or recreation gear for Veterans diagnosed with an OSI, injury, or permanent disability.

CARRIED

k. Section 501.iv.c (Assistance Not authorized). It states that the following assistance is not authorized. "home care, housekeeping services or grounds keeping such as grass cutting, leaf raking, snow removal, etc. (contact VAC regarding the use of the VIP Program)."

<u>DISCUSSION</u>: A Branch Service Officer (BSO) should refer to the Provincial Command Service Officer (PSO) to see if any other assistance or benefits would apply to the Veteran or surviving spouse. There are specific criteria to receive VIP services which sometimes only become known once a PSO has complete access to the Veteran's VAC file.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the wording in the bracket be changed to "Forward the request to the Provincial Command Service Officer, to determine if other benefits may be available through the Veterans Independence Program (VIP)".

MOTION: It was moved that Section 501.iv.c be changed to the following: home care, housekeeping services or grounds keeping such as grass cutting, leaf raking, snow removal, etc. (Forward the request to the Provincial Command Service Officer, to determine if other benefits may be available through the Veterans Independence Program (VIP))

CARRIED

I. Subsidized Meals on Wheels for Veterans and/or dependent spouses living at home.

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Until 2015, support to Meals on Wheels, or similar programs, was allowed with conditions. In 2015, Dominion Poppy and Remembrance Committee recommended that the activity no longer be allowed as there was no 'means test' for the provision of meals.

Veterans and dependents who are VAC clients and receiving home care, can have their home maker prepare meals. Thus, they receive a balanced and nutritional diet. Veterans and dependents living at home and who do not qualify for VAC benefits, may not have a balanced diet because they are caring for themselves.

Determination whether Meals on Wheels should be funded, should be the responsibility of the branch Service Officer and Poppy Fund Committee based on situational conditions of whether the Veteran and/or dependent are able to prepare proper meals and not as a

'means test'. By sharing the cost of each meal, 50/50, the veteran would be paying the food portion of the cost and the Legion would be paying the preparation cost of the meal.

RECOMMENDATION: 50% of the cost of a Meals on Wheels provided meal, be permitted up to 52 meals per year per Veteran and/or dependent.

MOTION: It was moved that 50% of the cost of a Meals on Wheels provided meal, be permitted up to 52 meals per year per Veteran and/or dependent.

DEFEATED

m. Transaction Fees for Credit or Debit Card Use

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Canadians are becoming a cashless society as evidenced by the popularity of the Tap to Donate boxes arranged through Dominion Command. Many branches now use Point of Sales (POS) machines that allow comrades to pay dues, make purchases from the branch or to make donations using their credit or debit card.

Companies who provide POS machines, charge the branch a rental fee and either a flat per transaction fee for debit or a percentage of the charge when a credit card is used. These transaction fees are deducted automatically from the money paid to the branch for each transaction. Branches accept these conditions as it is a cost of doing business and the ease of use means more income for the branch.

I recall reading that while HSBC underwrote the cost of the Pay to Tap boxes (POS machine), the fee for each transaction, made through a Tap to Donate box, would be taken from the branch share of the donation.

If this is correct, then there should be no reason why the merchant fee charged to the branch for Poppy Fund donations and sale of Poppy merchandise such as wreaths, made through the branch POS machine could not be reimbursed to the branch from the Poppy Fund.

<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> That branches be allowed to recover transaction fees from the branch Poppy Fund for fees associated with Poppy related transactions; and reimbursement should be based upon application and with proof of the fees. No expense related to the rental or purchase of a POS machine be allowed as these are not expenses that would be exclusive to the Poppy campaign nor season.

<u>MOTION:</u> It was moved that branches be allowed to recover transaction fees from the branch Poppy Fund for fees associated with Poppy related transactions; **and reimbursement should be based upon application and with proof of the fees.** No expense related to the rental or purchase of a POS machine be allowed as these are not expenses that would be exclusive to the Poppy campaign nor season.

CARRIED

n. Branch Status Report Amendments

Attachment:

• Annex D – Branch Status Report Amendments

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Annex D outlines the proposed amendments to Section 615 d to f and the Branch Status report. Proposed changes reflect the Poppy Manual's allocation of funds, ensuring our reporting categories accurately reflect our fund allocations.

RECOMMENDATION: Annex D be approved.

MOTION: It was moved that the Branch Status Report Amendments shown in annex D be approved.

CARRIED

9. COMMITTEE UPDATES

a. <u>Biodegradable Wreaths:</u> Supply has reached out to the supplier and addressed the issues with the wreath and poppies. The supplier will address the issues mentioned (Poppy cut out not correct, center hole not centered and too big for the pin, discolouration of the poppy).

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Several Command Representatives brought forward complaints that they have received from Branches regarding the quality of the wreathes. They are being deemed as unusable as partners in the community do not want to use them due to their appearance and smell, causing a financial loss for the Branch. Branches in Ontario have refused to pay their provincial assessment.

ACTION: Follow up will be done in regard to refunds to Branches that were not happy with the wreath quality.

b. Poppy Trust Funds - Transfer of funds: Funds collected from our corporate partners (Starbucks, London Drugs, Holt Renfrew, and Pay Tribute) have been transferred into appropriate Branch Poppy Trust Fund Accounts in mid February.

c. Poppy Campaign:

- i. **Digital Poppy:** Digital Poppy campaign collected, \$219,029.00 this year. (LNF)
- ii. **Pay Tribute:** The Pay Tribute machines collected, \$356,335 this year. (Branches)
- iii. Online: Online donations were at \$276,404
- vi. Corporate donations: \$321,624.74

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> There are concerns from Quebec Command about Branches and businesses being fined for the Pay Tribute boxes not being compliant with Bill 101.

ACTION: P&R Division review possible solutions in making boxes compliant.

d. Poppy Stories: This new initiative featured 50 stories of Veterans. The site received

35,264 hits, 123,461 pageviews with Ontario having contributed to the most traffic on the site. Year two will feature 50 additional stories focussing on Veterans of Peacekeeping Missions.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. 403.ii g Support of Cadet Units

<u>DISCUSSION</u>: Since the reporting year for the Poppy Trust Fund account is no longer 1 October to 30 September but 1 January to 31 December, a discussion was had around eliminating the restriction of using the balance of the Poppy Trust fund account on 30 September to calculate the up to 20% of funds for the support of Cadet units. This is the only Special Use Expenditure that specifies what balance should be use.

MOTION: It was moved that the first phrase in Section 403.ii.g be changed to the following: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to 20 percent of the balance, to support and encourage Cadet Units that have assisted the Branch with the Poppy Campaign or other Remembrance activities.

CARRIED

b. Section 403.ii.h Annual Veterans Visit.

<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Contact with veterans, offering them a meal and camaraderie should be made available to veterans more than once a year. Legion Branches should have the option to organyse meals or visits out to veterans who canot make it to the legion at least twice a year should they have the staff and funds available to do so.

MOTION: It was moved that the first phrase in Section 403.ii.h be amended to the following: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to \$25.00 per meal, per Veteran/spouse, to provide a biannual visit to Branches and/or when not feasible due to the age/condition of the Veterans, to also host in a convenient location both for the Veterans and a spouse/ caregiver who is accompanying a Veteran, or a Veteran's surviving spouse accompanied by a caregiver to offer a meal and camaraderie.

CARRIED

11. NEXT MEETING OF THE POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE

The next Poppy & Remembrance Committee meeting will be scheduled in the winter by Zoom video conferencing.

MOTION: The 21 March 2023 Poppy & Remembrance Committee Meeting of the Whole be formally closed.

12. CLOSING RITUAL AND ADJOURNMENT

The chair concluded the meeting by thanking the committee members for their insight and valued input. The meeting adjourned 21 March 2023 at 13:45 hours EST and the chair conducted the closing ritual.

Berkley Lawrence

Chair

Freeman Chute

Committee Coordinator