



**DOMINION COMMAND
PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, July 4, 2024, 2:00 p.m. ET**

In Attendance

Sharon McKeown	PR Committee Chair (ON Command)
Donna McRury	PR Committee Vice Chair (NS-NU Command)
Dale Johnston	Member (BC-Y Command)
Rosalind LaRose	Member (AB-NWT Command)
Ernie Tester	Member (MB-NWO Command)
Carolyn McCaul	Member (ON Command)
Mary-Ann Latimer	Member (QC Command)
Jack Clayton	Member (NB Command)
John Yeo	Member (PEI Command)
Tom Young	Member (NS-NU Command)
Nujma Bond	PR Committee Coordinator
Leah O'Neill	Assistant Coordinator

Regrets

Law Power	Member (NL & L Command)
Nathan Hoffmeister	Member (SK Command)
Michelle Courtney	Member (BC-Y Command)
Dion Edmonds	Assistant Coordinator
Paulette Cook	Occasional attendee (QC Command)

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

1) Opening

Sharon

- a) Welcome remarks

Sharon welcome Committee members to the meeting, noting this would be the last meeting before Convention in August. Sharon thanked everyone for their support to the Committee.

Sharon took a moment to recognize the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

2) Discussion

All

- a) National items affecting PR

Nujma

Nujma highlighted a collaborative Canada Day event hosted by a Branch in Toronto, Ontario in which SportsNet Radio was invited to host their morning show from the patio of the Branch where they were having a free community breakfast and afternoon BBQ. The radio hosts promoted the Legion Branch as well as interviewed Nujma who was able to promote many key Legion initiatives, from the Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships to Ontario Command's Operation Service Dog - and - how Legion Service Officers across the country are there to help all Veterans. Learn more [here](#). Nujma encouraged all committee members to foster relationships with media in their communities.

Nujma touched on the emotional commemorative ceremony for the Unknown Soldier held in St. Johns Newfoundland also on July 1. The event was spearheaded by Newfoundland and Labrador Command, and was [televised nationally](#), as well as through live stream on the Legion's [Facebook page](#).

- b) Regional PR updates

PR reps

Nujma for Jack (NL)

Nujma shared the NL update from Law Power (NL Command) who was not able to attend the Committee Meeting:

"With respect to the July 1st Memorial Day Service, I would like to say that the local, National and International coverage of the event was fantastic. It was wonderful to see the rest of the country learn about the contributions of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Royal Newfoundland Regiment specifically. A big shout out and congratulations goes to both Berkley Lawrence and Frank Sullivan for managing this event on behalf of The Royal Canadian Legion from the get-go. On Executive Staff of Comrade Paul Hillier and Brenda (Slaney) Pender were also instrumental in making it happen. There was a strong turnout of both Legion members and Veterans as well as. The weather although poor for the arrival of our Unknown Soldier to the Province, it was probably not as bad as he was it in Northern France 100 years ago. The actual July 1st Funeral Service and interment at our National War Memorial weather turned out to be a bit wet but cleared off somewhat later. Overall, it was a tremendous success and the partnership between the Royal Canadian Legion and the Canadian Armed Forces was seamless. See you all in St. John, NB and safe travels over the summer."

Jack (NB)

Jack shared their Command's focus is on preparing for the Dominion Convention, being held in Saint John New Brunswick in August. While very busy with that, the Command also has other

events underway including a Youth Leadership Camp, Poppy seminars across the province, and provincial meetings.

Tom (NS-NU)

Tom commended Newfoundland Command on their ceremony, noting it was very emotional. He also offered his well wishes to Alberta Command as they prepare to host the Legion Nationals in August.

Tom shared that Second World War medals were found in Annapolis Valley, belonging to Albert Lynds Brown who was born in Saint John New Brunswick. The Command is trying to track down the Veteran's family to return the medals.

Tom indicated that June was very busy with honours and awards and Branch anniversaries throughout the province.

John (PEI)

John shared that PEI was in its busy tourist season. There will be festivals throughout the summer, often with Branch colour parties invited to take part. Branch commemorations for D-Day went very well. This summer, John was also delighted to read two articles written by local young people to recognize Veterans and serving members.

John mentioned a concern that some Member Benefit Partners do not serve Eastern provinces, and that they are mostly limited to Ontario.

(Action item: Nujma asked Dion - who oversees the program – he indicates most partner items are indeed available nationally not just in ON. If a particular benefit is not available in a region, that service is not normally promoted there. We will discuss further with PEI which member benefits they may have been referring to, and update in the next meeting.)

Mary-Ann (QC)

Quebec Command held D-Day commemorative events in conjunction with Cadets. Quebec also celebrated Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day a few days before Canada Day.

Carolyn (ON)

Ontario Command will hold its provincial track and field event in mid-July in Toronto. 500 athletes are expected to participate. Other updates:

- Ontario Command donated \$500,000 to Operations Service Dog (Wounded Warriors Canada), bringing their total donations to the program to \$2.2 million.
- The Command recently launched its Ontario Legion Wine, with \$2.50 from every bottle going to Veterans programs. Watch the commercial [here](#).
- The Ruck to Remember fundraising initiative continues in August.
- Carolyn highlighted the Sportsnet radio show at their Toronto branch, and shared a [clip of the interview](#) (starts at about the 17:50 mark and wraps up at 27:00).
- The Command's Branch survey is now closed, with 92.5% of Branch participating. The data is being reviewed and the report updated.

Ernie (MB)

The D-Day parade was successful, and Ernie was pleased to see so many school children involved.

The Command Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee met with the Manitoba Métis Federation. The meeting was very educational, as Ernie was not aware that the Métis were not recognized in the War(s). This is something the Command wants to address.

(Action item: Nujma provided an update on the Métis situation in MB to the Legion's National Executive Director Steven Clark who indicates Ernie is invited to present this issue at the fall DEC meeting; at which time the organization may determine a national view on this matter is also warranted.)

The summer will be busy for the Command as they travel to meet with Branches across the province.

Roz (AB)

The Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships will be held in Calgary, Alberta in August. The Command has been busy with preparations.

Roz recounted the story of a 106-year-old Veteran, born in Nova Scotia, who recently passed away. His remains will be returning to Alberta, where the Legion will honour him with a commemorative ceremony.

(Update: Roz later provided this [link with information](#))

A successful Veterans Dinner was held in Red Deer with the help of Cadets.

Dale (BC)

BC-Y Command has been busy developing social media training for Branches. They will soon be visiting Zones to conduct the education, to be passed on to Branches. Other updates:

- The Command office is moving.
- A person who had vandalized a cenotaph in 2023 has been caught.
- The open rate for the BC-Y Command e-newsletter is growing from 30% to 60%.
- The Command is actively recruiting Legion Riders.
- 30 Branches celebrated the anniversary of D-Day. Branch 06 in Cloverdale was highlighted as an example of how to successfully promote an event through social media.

3) Any other business

All

Ernie asked Committee Members if any of their Commands have had success in advocating for license plates for Veterans with less than 3 years of service. Dale encouraged Ernie to reach out to Michelle at BC Command as she faced a similar challenge and may have advice. Sharon added that Ontario Command had a similar 3-year criteria, and it was a Veteran who was denied a plate that advocated for and changed their province's policy.

4) Adjournment

Sharon

Sharon and Donna thanked committee members for all their hard work and for keeping the Committee updated on Command activities. The meeting was adjourned at 2:52