



**DOMINION COMMAND
PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Tuesday, May 26, 2020, 1:00 p.m. ET
(Zoom video meeting)**

In Attendance	Owen Parkhouse	-	Chairman
	Sharon McKeown	-	Vice-Chairman
	Nathan Lehr	-	Member (NL & L)
	Kenneth Ouellet	-	Member (QC)
	Chris Strong	-	Member (AB/NWT)
	Nujma Bond	-	Committee Secretary
	Dion Edmonds	-	Ass't Committee Secretary
	Leah O'Neill	-	Ass't Committee Secretary
Regrets	Stephen Gallant	-	Member (PEI)

MINUTES

1. Opening

Owen

The meeting began at 1300 hours (Eastern). This meeting was held by Zoom videoconference.

- a. Owen welcomed the committee members, acknowledged the challenges we are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic and thanked everyone for participating by Zoom video conference.
- b. Owen referred to the November 2019 meeting notes for review. There were no questions or concerns by committee members.

2. DEC PR Committee report update

Owen

- a. Owen reviewed the DEC PR Committee report that will be presented to DEC in June. A few points of discussion:
 - Wonderful stories of the Legion doing good work during the pandemic are being shared in the media. Commands, PROs and Branches are encouraged to share their stories with Dominion Command to help share with a wider audience.

- The Dominion President is receiving media attention around the Legion's financial struggles as a result of the pandemic. The Legion has not received clarification around how the Emergency Community Support Fund will help Branches and he continues to push the government for assistance.
- Ken suggested all Commands approach their Provincial governments to discuss support options and tax relief.
- Owen reinforced the importance of staff and volunteer training, and highlighted that as some Legion Branches are starting to re-open, now is a great opportunity for Branches to ensure their members and staff are ready and trained to welcome people back to the Legion.
- Leah provided an update on the Legion.ca website refresh. The Join and Renew webpages have been updated and a new MemberPerks page was created. Additionally the top menu is under redesign to better highlight the member login option.

3. Strategic plan alignment : Public Relations

Owen/All

a. Sharing stories

i. Mask proposal

- The proposal brought forward to DEC for a national program for Branches to create non-medical face masks will likely not go forward due to the fact that regions are already in the midst of local initiatives. Note that Legion Supply will be selling face masks starting in early June.

ii. Stories

- A number of articles, and most recently a video from Tom, were produced to share stories of Legion initiatives during the pandemic, such as mask programs, helping with groceries and prescription deliveries, Veteran and member check-ins, and more.

iii. Branch funding

- Ken noted the criteria for the use of funding through the New Horizons federal grants for seniors programs was expanded to include helping the community during the pandemic.
- Dion highlighted that the Federal government's Emergency Community Support Fund does not help Branches struggling with operational costs as a result of the pandemic. Funds can only be used for specific program costs. The Dominion President is pushing the government for financial support and will be sending a follow up letter to the Prime Minister's office and will copy the leaders of the opposition parties.

iv. Long term care facilities

- The Dominion President released a statement on the horrific state of long-term care facilities, and will be sending a letter to the Prime Minister, copying all Provincial Premiers. It will be shared publicly through our channels.

b. Remembrance Day in November: PR implications

- The Poppy and Remembrance Committee is looking at options for the Poppy Campaign and Remembrance Day ceremonies in the event COVID19 impacts those initiatives. Options include the digital Poppy; use of QR codes and other ways to donate at Poppy Boxes; also online options for Remembrance Day.
- Nathan mentioned that Newfoundland adapted the Battle of the Atlantic ceremony, simplifying the ceremony to one wreath layer and saying the Act of Remembrance. The Command is also exploring ways to commemorate Beaumont Hamel on July 1.
- Chris commented on how the pandemic greatly impacted New Zealand's Poppy Campaign which resulted in a huge decline in donations.

4. Any other business

Owen/All

a. Other topics for discussion

- Nathan shared that some Branches in Newfoundland & Labrador are able to offer curb-side takeout, and curbside steak & lobster fundraisers.
- Chris indicated most Branches in Alberta will begin to open the week of June 1. The Command has had 2 meetings with Provincial ministers requesting municipal tax relief for Branches.
- Ken indicated Branches in Quebec remain closed. The Command is encouraging their Branches to continue checking their email and voicemail, and to check in on their members through Buddy Checks as standard practice.

5. Adjournment

Owen

Meeting adjourned 1:50 p.m. ET.

Next meeting: Date to be determined