

# **Dominion Command Poppy & Remembrance Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**24 October 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  
24 OCTOBER 2023, 1200 HRS EST – ZOOM  
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**DOMINION COMMAND POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE  
MEETING  
24 OCTOBER 2023, 1200 HRS EST – ZOOM**

**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
Lia Taha Cheng	-	Committee Coordinator
Nicole Thomas	-	Assistant Committee Coordinator

**Other:**

P&R Division	-	Shelby Sutherland
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**ANNEXES:**

Annex A	-	P & R Committee Meeting of the Whole Minutes – 21 March 2023
Annex B	-	Government of Canada to Mark the End of an Era press release
Annex C	-	John Babcock

**1. OPENING RITUAL**

The meeting commenced at 1200 hours on Tuesday, 24 October 2023 via Zoom video conferencing. The chair conducted the opening ritual.

**2. POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REMARKS**

The chair welcomed the committee members and thanked them for taking the time to meet today as it is a very busy time for everyone with the Poppy Campaign just around the corner. The chair also 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 and will be dealt with under agenda item #11 entitled "New Business":

Additions:

- a. Branch 02-004 General Stewart Poppy Campaign
- b. Poppy Manual 403.ii.k Coin Sorting Machine
- c. Poppy Manual 403.ii.a and c
- d. Poppy Manual 501.ii.a
- e. Zones and Districts to hold Poppy Funds request

#### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Minutes Approval** – The 21 March 2023 Poppy and Remembrance Committee of the Whole meeting minutes are attached at Annex A.

**MOTION:** It was moved that the 21 March 2023 Poppy and Remembrance Committee of the Whole meeting minutes be approved.

**CARRIED**

#### **5. 2023 PILGRIMAGE OF REMEMBRANCE**

This year's Pilgrimage of Remembrance took place from July 8<sup>th</sup> to July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Thirty-one Canadians had the once in a lifetime opportunity to visit historic battle sites in France and Belgium. 2023's program was significant. It saw the incorporation of new sites that better conveyed Canada's war time stories and marked the resumption of the program since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the two-week adventure, Pilgrims were invited to share feedback of their overall experience, with 24 of 31 attendees submitting their post-Pilgrimage survey responses. Pilgrims were also provided with some resources to assist in their post-Pilgrimage presentations to youth groups, Legion Branches, etc., including this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eB6eFGMbGo>.

#### **6. 2023 POPPY CAMPAIGN**

This year's Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Campaign runs from 27 October to 11 November and will include the following initiatives:

##### **a. Poppy Stories**

The Legion is once again proud to present "Poppy Stories", an initiative that allows Canadians to scan a lapel Poppy with their smartphone. With every scan, users will be introduced to a fallen soldier with a story to remember. The stories expand on where and how soldiers grew up, their family history, pre-war careers, and even some of their passions. This year, 50 new stories have been added that focus on peacekeeping. Visit [PoppyStories.ca](http://PoppyStories.ca) on a smart phone starting October 27. Promotional resources have been developed and Branches have been encouraged to use and share them. They are available [HERE](#).

## **b. National Youth Remembrance Contests**

The Legion National Foundation, with the support of The Royal Canadian Legion, has made some important updates to the National Youth Remembrance Contests, including:

- i. A fresh new look

Contests resources have been updated with a new look and feel that resonates with the younger generation.

- ii. A new Video Contest

A new Video Contest has been introduced to inspire Intermediate and Senior levels students to promote Remembrance through multimedia video production. Videos are uploaded to YouTube and then submitted directly to Provincial Commands via the online entry form available at: [www.remembrancecontests.ca](http://www.remembrancecontests.ca)

- iii. A new name of the Literary Contest

The long running Literary Contest has been renamed the Rabbi Bulka Literary Contest. Renowned for his dedication to the men and women who served Canada, Rabbi Reuven Bulka was often referred to as 'Canada's Rabbi'.

- iv. An updated program booklet

The Youth Education Programs Booklet has been updated and renamed as 'Complete Guidelines for Literary, Poster and Video Contests'. This new resource is available in a limited-edition print version, and a printer-friendly PDF version.

- v. A new website: [www.remembrancecontests.ca](http://www.remembrancecontests.ca)

A new website was created, with full contest information, resources, and submission procedures.

## **c. Remembrance Day Ceremony locator**

The Legion will have national television and radio ads promoting Remembrance Day and encouraging people to attend their local Legion Branch's Ceremony. The public service announcements will invite listeners to visit [www.Legion.ca/ceremony](http://www.Legion.ca/ceremony) to find their local event.

To ensure local Remembrance Ceremonies are included on the online ceremony locator, Branches hosting or supporting a Remembrance Day Ceremony have been encouraged to add their event as soon as possible online at: [www.Legion.ca/add-your-ceremony](http://www.Legion.ca/add-your-ceremony). Branches are also encouraged to view and share the national television and radio public service announcements with broadcasters in their area to help promote Remembrance

Day. The PSAs and accompanying letters to send to local broadcasters are available online [HERE](#).

#### **d. National Corporate Support for the Poppy Campaign**

The list of businesses who wish to support the Poppy Campaign is available on the portal at <https://portal.legion.ca/2023-campaign>. The chart below indicates each business's scope of participation.

- Volunteers on site: Businesses allowing Legion volunteers to distribute Poppies at their locations.
- Poppy Box on site: Businesses requesting to have Branches supply Poppy boxes at their locations.
- Point of Sale with Branch support: Businesses will collect donations through Point of Sale (PoS) transactions. Branches are requested to supply Poppy boxes and will receive donations collected directly from that location. Branches may download and print the 'Please take a Poppy' tent card as optional countertop signage for these businesses.
- Point of Sale with Dominion Command support: Businesses will collect donations through their centralized Point of Sale (PoS) transaction system. Dominion Command will supply Poppy boxes directly to the locations. Branches will receive funds collected in their area following the campaign via a Legion electronic transfer of funds (EFT).
- Corporate Donation: Organizations that have chosen to make a donation to the National Poppy Fund on behalf of their employees and/or customers. Dominion Command will supply the Poppy boxes directly to their locations.

#### **e. Pay Tribute**

For the fourth year, The Royal Canadian Legion has partnered with HSBC Bank Canada to make it safe, secure, and easier than ever to donate and wear a Poppy with touchless HSBC “Pay Tribute” tap-enabled donation boxes.

HSBC Bank Canada and The Royal Canadian Legion have distributed 1,000 Pay Tribute Poppy Boxes that empower Canadians to make a donation of \$2, \$5 or \$10 with a simple tap of a payment card (credit or debit), or through a payment app on their mobile or wearable.

Once again HSBC Bank Canada has generously covered the cost of manufacturing the boxes, the tiptap device rentals, kitting, fulfillment, and shipping. As a cost of doing business, there is a fee associated with using the Pay Tribute platform to collect donations, just as there is a fee for using PoS devices at local Branches. The 5% processing fee for the Pay Tribute Poppy boxes is made up of the interchange fee, the card brand/assessment fee, the payment processor fee, and the device developer fee. As in previous years, no charges will be collected by Dominion Command or HSBC Bank Canada.

This year, we have 380 Legion Branches participating, up from 281 in 2022. Training sessions, including box set-up, troubleshooting, dashboard, and best practices, were offered from 17-19 October with 100 Branches participating. Branches have been reminded to ensure that Pay Tribute boxes are returned immediately following the Poppy Campaign to avoid late fees.

In order to comply with Québec's Bill 96, An Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec, all Pay Tribute boxes for Quebec have been updated. The French text on the headstones is now first and is 50% larger than the English text below.

With RBC's proposed acquisition of HSBC Bank Canada, there is the likelihood that the tap-enabled Poppy boxes would need to be redesigned. If this occurs, feedback from past campaigns will be considered and a survey of all Branches who participated this year will be distributed. More information will follow in the new year.

#### **f. The First Poppy**

On October 20, Royal Canadian Legion Dominion President, Bruce Julian presented the symbolic First Poppy to Governor General Mary Simon. The First Poppy presentation is the ceremonial start of The Royal Canadian Legion's annual Poppy Campaign. Provincial Commands have now followed suit and have presented the First Poppy in their Province to their Lieutenant Governor.

#### **g. Poppy Trademark**

Following direction and guidance from our intellectual property lawyers, The Poppy & Remembrance Committee is in the process of developing a formal Poppy Trademark program to safeguard the Poppy insignia as a symbol of Remembrance. The new trademark terms and conditions and procedure to request use of the trademark will be shared in 2024. Since it is expected that the application process will be more rigorous in the future, individuals have been encouraged to request approval well before the beginning of the Poppy Campaign for future years. If you see any Poppy trademark infringements, please report them to [poppytrademark@legion.ca](mailto:poppytrademark@legion.ca).

#### **h. Digital Poppy**

Following the development of a draft memorandum of understanding (to be reviewed and approved by DEC and the LNF Board), the Legion National Foundation has sent out a "Digital Poppy Returns for 2023" email to the 42,000 individuals who created a Digital Poppy over the past 5 years. This, in conjunction with a marketing campaign lead by the presenting sponsor HomeEquity Bank, should increase [www.MyPoppy.ca](http://www.MyPoppy.ca) website traffic and hopefully result in an increase in donations.

### **7. USE OF POPPY FUNDS – FUR LAKE VETERANS RETREAT**

Saskatchewan Command has requested approval to use Provincial Poppy Funds to

support the Fur Lake Veterans Retreat (Box 90, Holbein, SK, S0J 1C0). This retreat will be used by Veterans and their families. Those who use the retreat will be asked to either make a donation and/or help with the construction of the facility, in order to help keep the retreat operational. There will be a main building, some cabins, and separate lots for hook ups (water and power).

The land has been leased to them by the Government of Saskatchewan (the 5-year term is from May 1, 2023, to March 31, 2029, and will be re-evaluated close to the five-year mark). The organization is presently working on achieving a not-for-profit status and has requested Poppy Funds to have power hooked up to the retreat. Total cost for the project is \$12,431.71.

Saskatchewan Command is in support of this project and have referenced article 403.ii.a Housing Accommodation (repair) of the Poppy Manual as it will assist Veterans in a facility designated for their care.

**DISCUSSION:** The committee did not support this request. There are a few unanswered questions, including: is there a specific Veteran support program that would be part of the retreat, what will happen after the 5-year lease is up, etc. The committee has requested more information and will review the proposal again at that time.

## **8. POPPY MANUAL – SPECIAL USE EXPENDITURES: CADET UNITS**

The below provides background information on the sections within the Poppy Manual that reference support of cadet units.

403. This section provides guidelines for the use of Poppy Trust Funds considered 'special' in nature. Branches must submit an application for use of funds in this Section to their Provincial Command Offices, on the approved form, prior to the funds being used. Making the same expenditure to the same recipient in subsequent years will require a new submission. Also refer to Section 603 of this manual.

403.i.e. For each Special Use Expenditure outlined in this article, Branches are limited by the maximum percentage of the account balance as specified in each use. Multiple allocations may be made in each category of use, however, the total amount allocated under each individual use may not exceed the maximum percentage. Example: you may donate to several cadet corps or squadrons in the same year, provided that the total does not exceed 20% of the balance in your account as outlined above.

403.ii. Authorized Special Use Expenditures. In all cases, and subject to prior approval by Provincial Command, a Branch or group of Branches may make an allotment not exceeding the specified amount in each case. All percentages are maximum amounts.

403.ii.g. Support of Cadet Units: (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. Cadet units are defined as Sea Cadets, Army Cadets, Air Cadets, Navy League Cadets and Junior Canadian Rangers. An allotment would be for assistance to Cadet units, not reimbursements for individual expenses. See “Example” in Subsection 403.i.e.

As per the above, Branches have been permitted to donate to several cadet corps or squadrons, *multiple times per year*. Therefore, the intent of the following amendment is to ensure that each cadet corps or squadron is only receiving one donation per year from the Branch. To note, the total of the combined donations cannot exceed 20 percent of the balance of the Branch Poppy Fund.

**MOTION:** It was moved that section 403.ii.g. of the Poppy Manual be amended to the read: “Support of Cadet Units: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) *Once a year*, 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. Cadet units are defined as Sea Cadets, Army Cadets, Air Cadets, Navy League Cadets and Junior Canadian Rangers. An allotment would be for assistance to Cadet units, not reimbursements for individual expenses. See “Example” in Subsection 403.i.e.”

**CARRIED**

## **9. REQUEST FOR FUNDS – MARKETING THE POPPY CAMPAIGN 2024**

The marketing department will once again actively promote the Poppy Campaign through a series of social media and on-line initiatives as part of the 2024 marketing plan.

Below are the details on the initiatives taking place between October and November 2024.

- Social media paid ads (X(Twitter)/Facebook/YouTube/Google): \$100,000
- Paid media buy (TV/Radio/Out of Home Signs) to encourage moment of silence/visit a local ceremony on November 11: \$75,000

The committee members determined that they would like to support this request for funds.

**MOTION:** It was moved that funding in the amount of \$175,000 for the 2024 marketing campaign be approved.

**CARRIED**

## **10. LAST SECOND WORLD WAR AND KOREAN WAR VETERANS**

In the months prior to his passing, the Government of Canada developed a strategy to observe the passing of the last First World War Veteran (Mr. John Babcock of Seattle), including a military funeral, half-masting of flags and a National Day of Mourning. After his passing, further details were confirmed as attached at Annex B: Government of Canada to Mark the End of an Era press release.

The Legion communicated his passing with Commands and Branches as attached at Annex C: John Babcock.

For the last Second World War and Korean War Veterans, advance guidance must be developed for Commands and Branches to recognize the passings. This guidance will result from coordinated proposals involving both Poppy and Remembrance and Rituals and Awards Committees, with final approval to be given by DEC. Legion guidance will complement official Government of Canada plans and the marketing and communications department will manage distribution of the guidance to Commands and Branches at the appropriate time.

**DISCUSSION:** The committee determined that the recognition strategy observed for the passing of the last First World War Veteran was appropriate and should be repeated when the time comes to recognize the Last Second World War and Korean War Veterans.

## **11. NEW BUSINESS**

As referenced at item 3, the following new business items were raised:

### a. Branch 02-004 General Stewart Poppy Campaign

Branch 02-004 General Stewart indicated that their Poppy Fund account was very healthy and that this year they would be taping over the money slots on the Poppy donation boxes to not collect funds. This decision was made to support Canadians who are not wearing a Poppy because they cannot afford to donate. The Branch felt that by not asking for donations, more Canadians will wear the Poppy in support of our Veterans.

**DISCUSSION:** Poppies have always been distributed freely. Donations are not required; however, the option to donate should always be available should an individual wish to make a donation. The Branch taping over the money slots could result in the generalized message that The Royal Canadian Legion does not need donations which would negatively impact the Branches who may be struggling to raise Poppy Funds. In order to support the Legion's mission to serve Veterans and its mandate to participate in the Poppy Campaign, Branch 02-004 is asked to not tap over the money slots on the Poppy donation boxes.

### b. Poppy Manual 403.ii.k. Coin Sorting Machine

The below provides background information on the section within the Poppy Manual that references coin sorting machines for Legion Branch Poppy Campaigns.

403.ii.k. Coin Sorting Machine: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to 10 percent of the cost or maintenance cost of a coin machine designed to count/sort/wrap coins collected during the annual Poppy Campaign. Group funds or larger Branches may make application under this Section for a greater percentage, the approving authority will

be the Provincial Command.

Since donations are also received as paper bills, the intent of the following amendment is to include bill sorting machines to count bills collected during the Poppy Campaign.

**MOTION:** It was moved that section 403.ii.k. be amended to read: “*Money* Sorting Machine: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to 10 percent of the cost or maintenance cost of a coin *or bill* machine designed to count/sort/wrap coins *or bills* collected during the annual Poppy Campaign. Group funds or larger Branches may make application under this Section for a greater percentage, the approving authority will be the Provincial Command.”

**CARRIED**

c. Poppy Manual 403.ii.a. and c

403.ii.a. Housing Accommodation or Care Facilities: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to 50 percent of the current balance, to repair or furnish housing accommodation and care facilities, including hospice facilities and hospital wards/rooms for Veterans.

**DISCUSSION:** The committee believes that funds used for repairs in this category should be minimal; therefore, the intent of the following amendment is to ensure that Poppy Funds are only to be used for minor repairs.

**MOTION:** It was moved that section 403.ii.a. be amended to the read: “Housing Accommodation or Care Facilities: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to 50 percent of the current balance, *to assist in minor repairs* or furnish housing accommodation and care facilities, including hospice facilities and hospital wards/rooms for Veterans.”

**CARRIED**

403.ii.c. Medical Appliances: (prior Provincial Command approval is required) Up to 50 percent of the current balance such as but not limited to, medical thermal imaging cameras and defibrillators which will assist in the care of Veterans within the community.

**DISCUSSION:** The committee discussed how their Provincial Command is addressing the special use requests in sections 403.ii.a. and c. There have been ongoing concerns that these uses sometimes may not directly support Veterans or their families. Therefore, the committee has requested that Provincial Commands share their application process regarding the criteria (e.g., number of Veterans who could access the medical appliance, percentage of Veterans at the accommodations, etc.) that must be met before they approve these requests.

**ACTION:** Provincial Commands to provide their criteria and DEC to discuss the above concern.

d. 501.ii.a.

501.ii.a. Ceremony (not authorized) a. expenses incurred for Remembrance Day ceremonies and Decoration Day ceremonies.

**DISCUSSION:** It was brought forward that some Branches would like to use Poppy Funds for the printing of programs and to purchase flags. The committee considered this request; however, it was decided to continue not allowing Poppy Funds for this purpose. Therefore, section 501.ii.a. will remain unchanged in the unauthorized Poppy Fund use section of the manual.

e. Zones and Districts to hold Poppy Funds request

Allowing Zones and Districts to hold Poppy Funds was initially discussed during the 21 April 2022 Poppy and Remembrance Committee of the Whole meeting and the majority of Provincial Commands did not support the request.

The request was subsequently brought up at the DEC meeting on 30 April 2022 and it was directed that the Poppy and Remembrance Committee revisit this request. At the following Poppy and Remembrance Committee of the Whole meeting on 21 March 2023 the following was included under new business at item c:

“Zone and District Poppy Fund accounts. This was not 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 not hold Poppy Funds.”

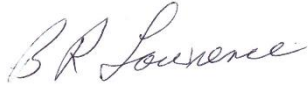
**DISCUSSION:** Some Branches in larger cities are working together during the Poppy Campaign and have setup joint Poppy Funds. These funds are not managed by the Zones or Districts but by the Branches themselves. In addition to combined Branch efforts and Provincial Commands already being set up to assist with larger Poppy Fund requests, joint Poppy Funds may be a solution for Ontario Command’s current concerns. Following the discussion, the committee maintained their previous position that Zones and Districts do not require their own Poppy Funds and recommended that Ontario Command propose this resolution at the next Dominion Command Convention.

## **12. NEXT MEETING OF THE POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE**

The next Poppy & Remembrance Committee meeting will be a Committee of the Whole meeting where all Provincial Command Poppy and Remembrance Chairs will be invited. It will be scheduled by Zoom in March 2024.

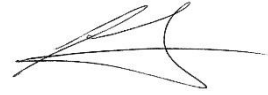
### 13. CLOSING RITUAL AND ADJOURNMENT

The chair concluded the meeting by thanking the committee members for their insight and valued input. The meeting adjourned 24 October 2023 at 13:25 hours EST and the chair conducted the closing ritual.



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Berkley Lawrence  
Chair



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Lia Taha Cheng  
Committee Coordinator