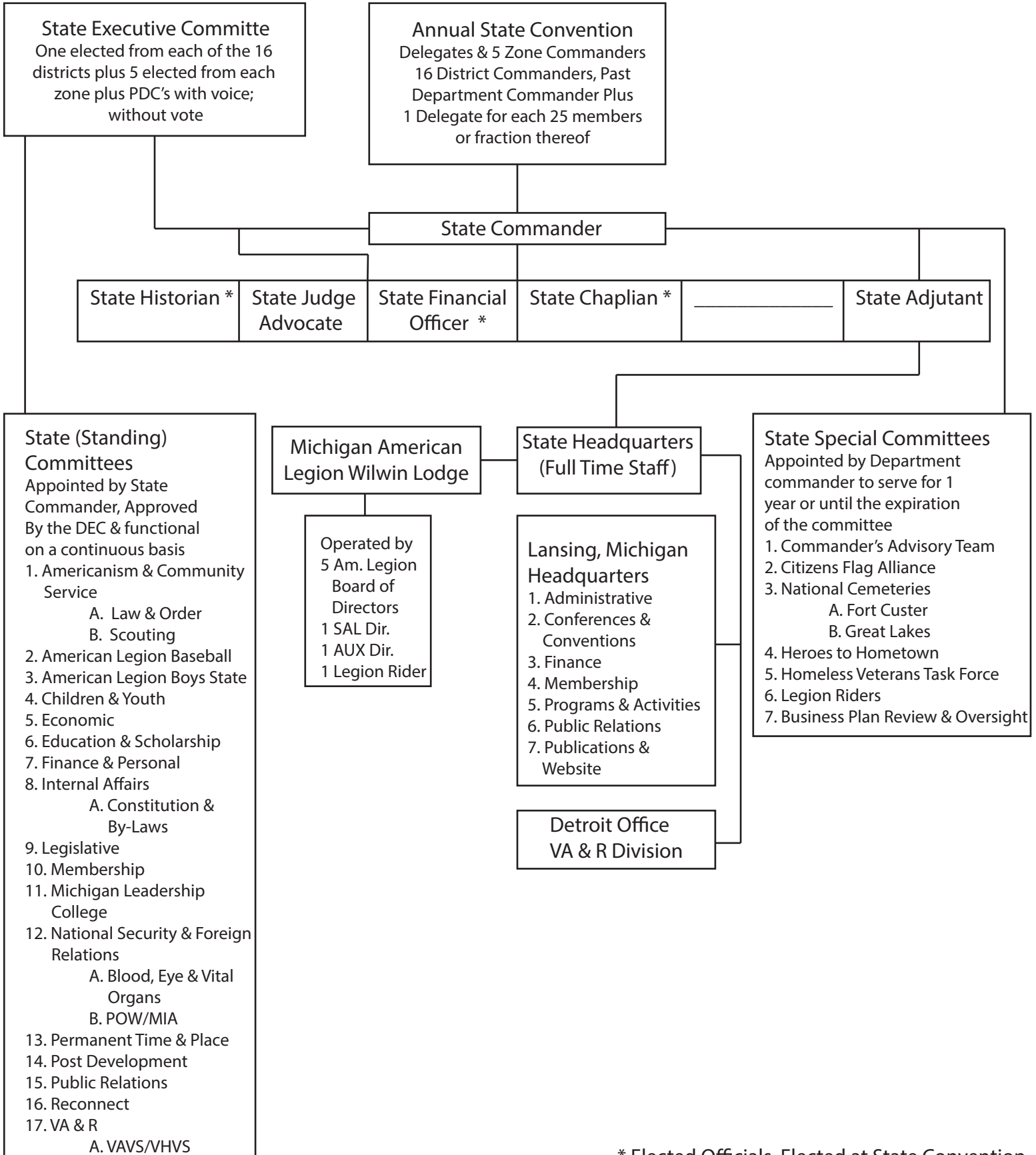


**THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN**

**STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN
(5 YEAR PLAN)**

**Approved by the Department Executive Committee and Adopted June 28, 2011
Amended and approved by the Department Executive Committee July 27, 2013
Amended and approved by the Department Executive Committee February 18, 2015**

The American Legion Department of Michigan Organizational Chart



* Elected Officials. Elected at State Convention

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Not addressed in this Plan are Vets in the Classroom and Blood and Vital Organs programs.

Qualifying the Department of Michigan's Strategic Long Range Business Plan

This Business Plan has been adopted by the Department of Michigan's Executive Committee (DEC) on June 28, 2011 to be used as a guideline under the control of the Commander and the Department's Business Plan Review and Oversight Committee. Adoption of the changes and programs within this document may require changes in the Department's Constitution and By-Laws or a Resolution to adopt, with the approval of the Department Internal Affairs Committee, and further approval by the Department Executive Committee.

CHANGES TO THE PLAN:

Changes to the Plan can be made by any Legionnaire within the Department of Michigan by submitting their ideas in writing to the Department's Business Plan Review and Oversight Committee. The Committee will review each idea whether it warrants adoption or in the case of deletion to the plan, warrants deletion. Changes to the Michigan American Legion Wilwin Lodge Plan must be submitted in writing to the Wilwin Board of Director's CEO.

INSTITUTING THE PLAN:

The Department of Michigan, through its Commander shall establish a Department Business Plan Review and Oversight Committee. This Committee shall meet two times annually; at the Fall Conference and at the Spring Conference. The purpose of the committee is to review, investigate, and recommend, but not control the Commander's agenda nor be involved in any day to day operations of the Department. Committee members shall serve without compensation from the Department. One committee member shall consist of the Chairman of the Internal Affairs Committee, and one Past Department Commander. Applications will be received and reviewed for the best candidates to sit on the Committee and appointed at the discretion of the Commander.

CONTINUITY OF THE PLAN:

This plan shall be reviewed annually for additions and subtractions to fulfill the future needs and changes of the National American Legion and the Department of Michigan to make this an ongoing document. All Additions and subtractions must be approved by the Department Executive Committee.

PART I

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN'S STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of The American Legion, Department of Michigan is to honor and serve by enhancing the lives of all veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and country, we advocate for veterans education for our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security and to adhere to the principles and purposes of the Preamble of The American Legion.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of The American Legion is to become the premiere service organization and the foundation of every community in the State by providing support for our veterans, our military, and their families; by shaping a positive future in an atmosphere of fellowship, patriotism, peace and security.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN ARE:

1. To add continuity to the overall operations of the Department of Michigan moving forward into the 21st century in all areas of operations including Administration, Zone and Districts, and Blue Cap Legionnaires at the Post level.
2. To cease the continuous downward spiral in membership; and give Legionnaires a new and supportive vision into the future.
3. To concentrate our efforts by bringing the entire organization in the "Hi-Tech" era of operations.
4. To encourage all Committees to take a more active role in their operation by delegating applicable workloads to all committee members; to make all committees more productive; and to cover more avenues of interest for the Department of Michigan and its members.

5. To encourage Posts to become accustomed to the internet and Department Web-site and use the "Internet" exclusively to communicate with Department.
6. To encourage all Posts to become "High-Tech" savvy to attract our younger veterans.
7. To encourage all members of the Department Executive Committee to develop new ideas, programs, and changes in future Department operations consistent with moving forward into the 21st century.

GROWTH AND SUCCESS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

The growth and success of The American Legion, Department of Michigan depends on how well the membership keeps the Department financially secure and able to bring our programs forward into the future. The following programs are critical to the well-being of the Department.

1. 100% membership renewal of old members; 100% renewal of DMS transfers; and a continuous effort to sign new members to the Organization.
2. Fundraisers through raffles and other means to support the programs of the Department.
3. Rebates from National and State sponsored programs aimed at our membership in funding new and future programs.
4. Post cooperating in addressing self-promotion and participating in State sponsored and sanctioned programs.
5. To solicit advertising to offset expenses to the Michigan Legionnaire.
6. Address economic situations with the State of Michigan.
7. The avoidance of raising membership dues for as long as possible. This can be avoided only through a 100% membership renewal, signing up DMS transfers, and obtain new members to replace those that have passed away.

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

EXTERNAL MISSION STATEMENT

It shall be the mission of all future Department Commanders to assure that the Department of Michigan moves forward into the future by continuing to serve faithfully in promoting the four (4) pillars of The American Legion by:

1. Continuous promoting of all Veterans within the State of Michigan through the Department's VA&R programs.
2. Recognizing all youth within the State of Michigan through our Children and Youth programs.
3. Promoting programs of Americanism throughout all Michigan schools and communities.
4. Supporting all State and National programs regarding National and Homeland Security that are supported by the National Organization.
5. Promoting The American Legion's programs and purposes throughout the State and to make its citizens more knowledgeable on whom we are.
6. Guiding our Committees and committee chairmen toward achievable goals and work toward continue success into the future.
7. Promoting member volunteerism in our Veterans Hospitals, Community, and Nursing Homes throughout the State of Michigan.
8. Changing the attitudes and overall work ethics of our Committees by taking a more active part in promoting The American Legion.

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

INTERNAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND CHANGES

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Department of Michigan is to become 100% integrated with all Posts, Department Executive Committee (DEC) and Standing Committee personnel by electronic info systems for greater communications, teleconferencing and web-site information.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the Department of Michigan is to have an operation which is 100% user friendly with all Posts and Legionnaires throughout the State; by accepting electronically transferred funds from Post membership; and by electronically recognizing internal and external problems before they become a burden on the Department; to bring a continuity to its programs.

OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the Department is threefold, and therefore, each entity must be handled separately:

1. Department Level.
2. District and Zone Levels.
3. Blue Cap Legionnaires at Post Level.

Since the Posts are autonomous, this plan will not affect the Posts level except through changes by resolutions that are approved at the Department level.

FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Feasibility studies must be done for the following avenues in order to bring the Department of Michigan in line with other States and/or give Michigan an additional edge in their service to veterans.

1. Incorporate all American Legion youth programs into one 501c(3) non-profit corporation for the purposes of soliciting outside money to fund these programs. This includes American Legion Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports (not an official program of the Department of Michigan), Education and Scholarship including Oratorical and Children and Youth, including subcommittee programs that fall under Children and Youth, i.e., Student Trooper and Boy Scouts of America. Note: A 501c(3) Michigan Legion Foundation was formed in 2014 and has recently been granted non-profit status by the Internal Revenue Service.
2. Consider renaming the Michigan American Legion Boy's State program back to "Wolverine Boy's State" to allow more flexibility in the recruitment of our youth.
3. Establish an emblem sales division as a profit center for the Department.
4. Hire a full time membership person; a person who would travel and promote the Department of Michigan throughout the State at a higher level than the current Membership Chairman and staff are able to do.
5. Hire a full time Programs Director for the purpose of promoting all Department programs throughout the State at a higher level than the current internal program administrative assistants are able to do.
6. At the Department Convention each year a First, Second, and Third Vice-Commanders be elected along with the Department Commander. The First Vice-Commander will automatically become the Department's Membership Chairman, the Second Vice-Commander will automatically become the Department's DMS Coordinator, and the Third Vice-Commander to be assigned Department duties at a later date.
7. Eliminate or combine "non-action" committees within the Department.
8. Reduce the membership fees to \$25 for Student Veterans while they are in school and/or form an American Legion Post at all Universities and Colleges.
9. Form a Department Speakers Bureau to obtain speakers consisting of Past Department Commanders and Legionnaires for the purposes of promoting The American Legion and its programs to other organizations and groups.
10. Make it mandatory that the Post Commander or their representative be present at a minimum of two (2) District meetings throughout the year.
11. Work to develop programs that are consistent with young veteran's lifestyles in order that they fit into and feel comfortable joining local posts.

- 12. Transfer the Commander's automobile automatically to the Adjutant each year; the Adjutants vehicle to the Department Public Relations Officer, and trading in or selling the vehicle after the 3rd year.**
- 13. Redistrict our Districts and Zones and/or provide a more equitable basis for paying our District and Zone Commanders.**
- 14. Work out a program between the Michigan Licensed Beverage Association and our VA&R Department in establishing a program to identify and help homeless veterans and veterans in distress.**
- 15. Establish a program with the Student Veterans of America to establish programs at the campuses at all Universities and Colleges in the State of Michigan to promote our VA&R programs and answer questions posed by the students regarding their concerns.**

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PLAN

Recommendations to consider are:

1. Make Legion Riders a program and committee of the Department.
2. Move Student Trooper from the Americanism Committee to the Children and Youth Committee.
3. Move the Blood & Vital Organ Sub-Committee to the National Security Committee.
4. Eliminate the Contest and Supervisory Committee. (Completed: June, 2014)
5. Make Junior Shooting Sports an official program of the Department as a sub-committee of the Children and Youth Committee.
6. Incorporate certain permanent special committees into working committees by assigning individuals to a Standing Committee; i.e., ADA Compliance to Time and Place (without vote); Custer and Great Lakes National Cemeteries to the National Security or VA&R Committee; Citizens Flag Alliance to the Americanism Committee; Heroes to Home Town to the VA&R Committee; Homeless Veterans to the VA&R or National Security Committee. Input from the Special Committees to the Standing Committees will be on record and reported on the floor at all Conferences through their respective committees.
7. Adopt a teleconferencing program for monthly meetings and require periodic teleconferencing meetings by Department and its Commander with his or her DEC and other key personnel. Note: A phone conference call service has been established via www.freeconferencecall.com and is now available for use by Department heads.
8. Strive to get all Legion Posts on My-Legion.com. Note: Currently there are 230 Posts registered to use My-Legion.com, but only 173 posts have accessed it since January 1, 2014.
9. Develop a training seminar plus a motivation seminar DVD for the DEC and Committee persons to use at the 30 Day Meeting or Fall Conference. Note: Department had one at the 2015/16 - 30 day meeting.
10. Set up a credit card system at all conferences and conventions to sell more Legion merchandise. This merchandise can include Department and National Legion, Boy's State, Baseball, Wilwin, or any other authorized fund raising merchandise.
11. Require that the Membership secretary follow up on all unpaid DMS members to collect dues for Department, and or find out their current status. Note: Clarification and guidance on budget and execution is needed to achieve this mission.

12. Mandate that all bills and receipts be turned into Department from all Committees to assure the proper accounting. There shall be no special accounts within any Committee.
13. Eliminate the utilization of office employees by Committees for the purpose of aiding their programs unless these programs are local and the employees can also be involved directly in performing their daily internal workload.
14. Mandate that each District have a Committee Chairman corresponding to Department and that Department has available the minutes of each Department Conference and Convention on line for these Chairmen to do the proper reporting at their District Meetings.
15. Establish a “full-time” programs director who can promote and address aggressively all Department programs. A programs director would also be responsible for keeping an alumni list from the Boys State program to actively promote the Boys State program for the purpose of soliciting funds and support. (This program is missing the opportunity of doing fundraising through its alumni).
16. Hire and/or train a grant writer for the Department. If needed, hire an outside independent grant writer on a percentage basis.
17. Have all winter (spring) conferences in Lansing to coincide with the Legislative Reception.
18. Establish a “Vets in School” sub-committee of the Americanism Standing Committee for the purpose of having our war-time Legionnaire veterans/heroes speak on their experiences to our youth.
19. Organize a booth or office space on all Michigan Universities, Colleges, and Junior College campuses for the purposes of promoting the Departments programs, membership benefits, and to make available our VA&R Service programs. Manning the booth or office should be done on a part-time basis by local Legion Post volunteers and, therefore, at no cost to the Department. Also, work with the “Student Veterans of America” to promote the American Legion on these campuses.
20. Work with the Michigan Department of Military Affairs to get the American Legion into our State armories for the purpose of promoting our programs and services that are available to them and their families before and after being deployed.
Note: In process as of September 2014.
21. Make the required 30-Day Meeting for the Department Executive Committee a two day event in order to give these leaders a chance to absorb more detail and critical information required to do their job more efficiently and effectively including reviewing the Department’s Strategic Long Range Business Plan.

RECOMMENDATION TO FUTURE STATE COMMANDERS:

The following recommendations are made for future State Commanders to become better informed and make their work easier and more productive.

- 1. Direct District Commanders to report all post visitation and any problems they encounter directly to the Commander monthly. Serious membership problems should then be forwarded to the New Post and Post Revitalization Committee for further action. The earlier in the year this can be done, the better it is for current year action.**
- 2. Make Committee Chairpersons understand that their committee is now a “working committee” and that they report to the Commander at Fall Conference or before what their programs are for the year. Talk to your Committee Chairman about their programs to see if they are in sync with what you want to achieve. Note: Every committee person must take an active part in the Committee and its programs to remain on the committee in the future. Make sure that all committee persons have complete knowledge of their assigned programs.**
- 3. Get local Posts and District Commanders to report to the Commander on new ideas and successes that should be incorporated into this Plan for future Commanders to review.**
- 4. Have Department Officers become more involved at District meetings, conducting short, informal seminars at these meetings.**
- 5. Create a commission to do feasibility studies on items of interest the Commander would like to see adopted (See section on “Feasibility Studies”).**
- 6. Put packets in every DEC’s folder at the 30-Day Meeting outlining your agenda, goals, programs and any other accomplishments you wish to accomplish during your term in office. Ask DEC members to give you feed back on how they will aid in achieving these goals, their time frame, etc.**
- 7. Have District Commanders report to Department on absenteeism of Posts attending the District meetings. A record should be kept on file at Department’s office for future reference. Follow-up contacts should be made by each District’s Commander.**
- 8. Consideration should be given to put educators or college educated individuals on the Education and Scholarship Committee; Financiers, Accountants, or Businessmen on the Finance & Personnel committee and National Leadership School graduates on the Michigan Leadership College committee.**
- 9. Make assurance that the State Commander treats all employees with respect at all times. Conflicts or problems with any employee should be discussed privately with the Department Adjutant for necessary action. When there is employee discipline of any type, signed documentation by both the Adjutant and employee must be put into the employees file to avoid the possibility of legal action later. As a commander, you**

must follow up to see if the situation was handled properly and the proper paperwork filed.

- 10. Recognize as many Legionnaires as possible for doing an outstanding job by giving them a "Certificate of Appreciation" or a personal thank-you telephone call during your reign. It means an awful lot to these Legionnaires and aids in continuing their service to the American Legion.**

PUBLIC RELATIONS

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Public Relations Department is to use media outlets as often as possible to keep the name of The American Legion before the public; to broadcast to all residents throughout the State how our organization serves with conscientiousness all our veterans, how the American Legion gives back to their community in service and presenting Americanism programs at all levels to our children and youth , and present our position on National and Homeland Security.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the Public Relations Department is to educate the entire population of Michigan as to what The American Legion stands for in serving the interests of our Veterans and the populous within the State of Michigan.

RECOMMENDATIONS WORTH LOOKING INTO:

It is the recommendation that the Department of Public Relations, as a professional team, create the necessary publicity to address the mission and vision of the Department by:

1. Spending the necessary funds to meet these goals.
2. Getting the name of The American Legion into as much news media as possible, “patting ourselves on the back” and promoting our programs to the public.
3. Encouraging local posts to write letters to the editor promoting their Post programs.
4. Giving regular veteran reports on radio and television, perhaps, doing a statewide short news broadcast concerning our veterans, good or bad.
5. Adding audio podcasting and/or video podcasting to the web-site in a regular Veterans Report.
6. Developing a web-site such as “michiganveteransreport.org” to spread the word keeping all veterans informed; to find new members’ and to promote The American Legion.
7. Finding sponsorship opportunities in places like mixed martial arts events, gaming tournaments, and other places where younger veterans attend to promote The

American Legion. The events could be used as actual marketing events or used to raise money for a particular cause/program.

8. Having regular speaking engagements at colleges and law enforcement agencies to promote “Invisible Wounds” program as a community outreach program. Cultivate relationships with communities to spread the word of The American Legion.
9. Regularly asking the digital billboard companies to display messages on holidays and special days (at no cost).
10. Purchasing a Public Relations trailer with highly visible scheme that promotes The American Legion. This trailer could be used to setup at Air shows, gun shows, etc., with a table to give information to veterans and promote membership into The American Legion and to offer our veteran service officer services.
11. Working with the Public Relations Committee Chairman and members of the committee to aid the Public Relations Director in establishing and promoting Department’s programs.

INTERNAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations at the Department level are the most important program in getting the word out to the public who we are and what we do. Public Relations are the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various public on whom its success or failure depends.

THE IDEAL PUBLIC RELATIONS FUNCTION:

1. Is a planned and sustained program conducted by an organizations’ management.
2. Deals with the relationships between an organization and its various constituent publics.
3. Monitors awareness, opinions, attitudes and behavior inside and outside the organization.
4. Analyzes the impact or organizational policies, procedures, and actions on various publics.
5. Adjusts those policies, procedures and actions found to be in conflict within the public interest and organization’s survival.
6. Counsel’s management on the establishment of new policies and procedures, and actions that is mutually beneficial to the organization and its publics.

7. Establishes and maintains two-way communications between the organization and its various publics.
8. Produces specific changes in awareness, opinions, attitudes and behavior, inside and outside, the organization.
9. Results in new, and/or, maintained relationship between an organization and its public.

INTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

GOALS FOR THE MICHIGAN LEGIONNAIRE NEWSPAPER ARE AS FOLLOW:

1. To produce the newspaper at one-half (1/2) the cost as presently being done. (\$1.00 per membership verses the current \$2.00 per membership).
2. Include a section within the newspaper to include the "Sons of the American Legion for additional revenues. Note: Action taken by S.A.L. at their June, 2014 Convention. Action completed.
3. Continue to purge all files on a monthly basis to assure that the Michigan Legionnaire is sent to one household only.
4. Sell advertising to outside business and include a "want ad" section in the paper and a business card section for fund-raising purposes to reduce the cost of publication. This may include hiring an outside advertising agency to fulfill the obligation filling up a section of newspaper with larger ads.
5. Encourage all posts to send pictures with captions on their post activities to be considered for printing in the Michigan Legionnaire, especially those that include post children and youth programs.
6. Encourage all posts to produce a post newsletter for their membership.
7. Assist in promoting MALPA membership.

Note: Previous research for advertising show Legionnaires are most interested in the following types of advertisements:

1. Cooking
2. Outdoor Recreation
3. Hunting and Fishing

It is recommended that all savings on the Legionnaire be used to fund scholarships through the Education and Scholarship Committee with scholarship monies earmarked for Michigan Community Colleges only.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION DIVISION
STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN**

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the VA&R Division of The American Legion, Department of Michigan, is to assist all veterans and their dependents that have chosen the American Legion to act on their behalf as advocates in seeking benefits that they are entitled to from the Department of Veteran Affairs; to assure assistance in gaining Temporary Financial Assistance to veterans and their families that are in need of our services; to instill interaction with our State legislatures helping them to understand the continued changes in Veterans' benefits that will affect State funding; to assure that each and every staff member assist and treat all of our clients and Legion family with the utmost respect at all times.

VISION STATEMENT:

It is the vision of the VA&R Division of The American Legion, Department of Michigan to have all our funding reinstated for the purposes of serving Veterans throughout the State and provide the necessary field service officers to serve all Veterans and leave n Veteran in need behind.

OBJECTIVES:

The following objectives have been developed for the future:

1. Continue working toward establishing a Department of Veteran Affairs within the State. Note: Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency established in 2013.
2. Continue to work toward having the State Legislators restore our state grants to fund our programs as it was prior to SB250.
3. Continue to build our staff back to 5 Field Service Officers and 5 Detroit Service Officers.
4. Continue to work with getting our Post and County Service Officers "Certified" to improve our aid to Veterans at the local Post and County levels.
5. Continue to work toward getting our Post and District Service Officers on line to assist our VA&R Division.
6. Continue to keep our membership and Legion family informed on VA&R issues and concerns through the Michigan Legionnaire.

7. Continue to work diligently and cooperatively with the Veterans coalition to mutually achieve the goals of serving all Michigan Veterans.
8. Continue to update our computer system to provide immediate information to all coalition members regarding Veterans applying or receiving benefits through the VA. Note: Vetraspec is the system currently being used.
9. Continue working with the Department VA&R Committee by providing the Chairman with the necessary statistical data needed to effectively run his committee and programs. This does not involve revealing operational data regarding coalition involvement or individual Veterans applying for benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the VA&R Director work closely with the Legislative Committee Chairperson in achieving the mutual goals of the Department and its membership through needed changes in legislation. It is further recommended that the VA&R Director be aware of the limitations of the VA&R Committee and make the VA&R Committee a part of its program.

MICHIGAN AMERICAN LEGION WILWIN LODGE

BUSINESS PLAN (Board updated 6/1/13)

The Michigan American Legion Wilwin Lodge is a wholly owned subsidiary of The American Legion, Department of Michigan. The facility is operated by an eight man board consisting of five (5) Legionnaires, one (1) Auxiliary member, one (1) Sons of the American Legion, and one (1) Legion Rider. All donations, receipts and invoices paid are accounted for through the Department's Finance section.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Michigan American Legion Wilwin Lodge, Inc. to provide a premiere facility that can care for our disabled and handicapped Veterans in a relaxed atmosphere and to provide the necessary therapeutic care needed, administered by licensed professionals; to utilize the property as a reconnect center for returning war veterans and their families after long deployments; to provide a visitation place for all veterans to utilize on special occasions, events, or retreats; to provide a place for our youth to go to enjoy the outdoors, including scouting groups, community groups and/or other youth organizations.

VISION STATEMENT

It is the vision of Michigan American Legion Wilwin Lodge, Inc. to be recognized as a premiere facility throughout the Midwest for our disabled and handicapped veterans as a place to go for rest, relaxation, recuperation and recreation as part of their rehabilitation; to become a training center and retreat for other non-profit organizations; and to become a center for serving America's youth by giving them an enjoyable outdoor experience.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Wilwin are as follows:

1. To encourage the American Legion Family and all other Veteran organizations to stay involved with Wilwin by continued monetary support and to continue supplying volunteer labor and professional expertise to upgrade the facilities.
2. To continue utilizing the property as a retreat for disabled and handicapped veterans and their families as a place for rest, relaxation, recreation, recuperation and rehabilitation by using the current buildings.
3. To offer continued support for severe PTSD and TBI patients, working with clinical psychologists and the VA Medical Centers by providing a place for therapeutic care.

4. To work with all organizations who provide recognized therapeutic rehabilitation services for veterans.
5. To work with Veteran organizations' "Reconnect Committees and National Guard units to have families reunite after deployment to a war zone, and to keep available on premise the "Elmobility" equipment to accommodate the children of these families.
6. To establish a rustic campground that accommodates a limited number of veterans, their families, and guests who wish to camp out on the property and enjoy all activities that the facility has to offer.
7. To establish a bivouac and camping area for scouting groups and other youth organizations, offering them an opportunity to enjoy all the benefits that nature has to offer.
8. To team up with National veteran sporting organizations to offer outdoor sporting opportunities for our disabled and handicapped veterans.

WILWIN'S ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY:

Michigan American Legion Wilwin Lodge, Inc., a 501c3 Michigan Corporation, serves severely diagnosed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) war veterans who have gone through psychological evaluation and treatment programs through the Captain James Lovell V.A. Medical Care Facility in North Chicago, working with Michigan Licensed Psychologist, Dr. Mark Kane of Grand Rapids. Dr. Kane serves as an in-house medical consultant when his patients are present. He uses the facility as a "Retreat Providing Healing with Nature in Mind," an experimental program that has proved so beneficial to these veterans that Dr. Kane wants to expand the program. Those individuals who have gone through the Captain James Lovell V.A. Medical Care Facility's psychological evaluation and treatment program that are not under the care of a psychologist are welcome to use the Wilwin facilities. These individuals are Okayed by North Chicago assuring Wilwin that they will not create any problems.

Beginning in 2015, Wilwin serves veterans with severe disabilities through the National "Project Healing Waters" to give severely handicapped veterans a chance to fly fish. Each of these individuals has a facilitator when present at Wilwin.

Wilwin is also used as a place for families to reconnect after several deployments in war zones.

Scout troops and youth organizations are also welcomed at Wilwin for bivouacs, hikes etc. All services offered are at no cost to qualifying individuals.

The Wilwin property was donated to the Michigan American Legion in December 2009 by Robert Consadine, Petoskey, Michigan. Incorporated in 2010 as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Michigan American Legion, Wilwin consists of approximately 600 acres of pristine wilderness near Trout Lake, Michigan. With over 10 miles of hiking and ATV trails, Wilwin buildings consist of a 6000 sq. ft. Lodge, a 3000 sq. ft. handicapped accessible Veteran's home and a 4000 sq. ft. handicapped accessible conference center with a full commercial kitchen. Since the American Legion's acquisition of the property a 20'x30' caretakers home and a 30' x 50' pavilion has been added. A new metal roof was added to the lodge in 2014 and a new kitchen and entryway floor was removed and replaced.

An 8-member board of directors determines how the facility will be best utilized with funds available.

WILWIN'S IMMEDIATE PROJECTED REQUIREMENTS:

Wilwin offers a rare and unique place where severely handicapped war veterans can go for complete rest, relaxation, and recreation, to aid in their rehabilitation. A large portion of Wilwin's current donations are used for "fixed costs" and veterans programs with very little money left at the end of each year for much needed capital improvements. Current donations come from the Michigan American Legion, family, other veteran organizations, and private donations. There is a need for up to 12 additional handicapped-accessible cabins for our anticipated increased veterans' needs (3 or 4 built per year). Most construction is done by volunteer labor and volunteer licensed contractors. In addition, there is a need for a 9-13 passenger handicapped-accessible van or a 14-20 seat handicapped-accessible bus to get our disabled veterans to and from Wilwin, fishing and hunting outings, field trips, site-seeing trips, and emergency trips to and from a hospital or VA community based outreach clinic.

Future plans include a rustic RV area, a new boiler or outdoor furnace for the lodge and a storage building to store the RV home, trucks, tractors and other large equipment.

PART II

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN FOR

DEPARTMENT STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The following Committees operate as a function of the Department through its Constitution and By-Laws, therefore, any changes to these Committees will need to come directly from the Department of Michigan with changes made by the Department's Internal Affairs Committee. The following Committees are affected:

1. Finance and Personnel
2. Internal Affairs Committee including the Constitution and By-Laws Subcommittee.
3. Permanent Time and Place and Resolutions Committee.

In addition, the Membership Committee is a direct function and operates under the sole discretion of the Department Commander and his or her Membership Chairmen.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that consideration be given to change the Permanent Time and Place and Resolutions Committee to Permanent Time and Place Committee. The Resolutions part of this committee becomes a part of the Internal Affairs Committee.

It is recommended that the Finance and Personnel Committee become two (2) separate committees with the Chairman of the Finance Committee an ex-officio member of the Personnel Committee.

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the American Legion Baseball Committee is:

- 1. To inculcate in our American youth a better understanding of the American way of life by promoting a 100% Americanism.**
- 2. To instill in our Nation's youth a sincere desire to develop within themselves a feeling of citizenship, sportsmanship, loyalty, and team spirit.**
- 3. To aid in the improvement and development of physical fitness of our Country's youth.**
- 4. To build for the Nation's future through our youth.**

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the American Legion is to continue to grow the program; to continue to get more youth involved in the program, and to make the program self-sufficient.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The American Legion Baseball Program was in a stagnant mode until the recent introduction of the two tier system. 2010 was the first year of the second tier tournament, successfully ran, and also showed a significant growth in the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Expand to a 3-tier system from the present 2-tier with 3 State sanctioned tournaments effective for the 2015 year and beyond. Department has incorporated a non-profit children and youth program and American Legion Baseball is part of this program.**
- 2. To add consistency and continuity in the program by reassigning committee people every two years or as agreed to by the Committee Chairman and the Commander. Upon incorporation, this should be included in the Corporate Constitution and By-Laws.**

- 3. According to generally accepted accounting procedures, it is required that the chairman have a full accounting for all expenses with verified receipts. All income must be turned into the Department's accounting office and all expenses paid through Department without exception. Credit should be set up with Department ahead of time by the committee chairman.**
- 4. Make American Legion Baseball self-sustaining within the next 5 years by using as many of the following ideas as possibilities:**
 - a. Sponsorship through grants and outside donations.**
 - b. Admission charges to tournament games.**
 - c. 50-50 raffle ticket sales at tournament games.**
 - d. Charging a fee (\$10-20) per player yearly to participate with all expenses offsetting Department expenses.**
 - e. Sell Advertising in State Tournament programs.**
 - f. Seek grant funding from foundations funding children and youth programs.**
 - g. Seek funding through Major League Baseball.**
 - h. Sell American Legion promotional clothing and memorabilia.**
 - i. Other funding as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.**
- 5. Promote American Legion Baseball aggressively and extensively throughout the State, using all available media coverage including the Department Public Relations Department.**
- 6. Expand the program over the next 5 years to have a minimum of 100 teams playing Michigan American Legion Baseball covering all three tiers.**

AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

THE AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE PHILOSOPHY:

- 1. To continue to conduct a quality program that reflects the high standards of the Michigan American Legion and the American Legion Boys State.**
- 2. To be current in all levels of program structure and educate on all aspects which the American Legion Boys State teaches.**
- 3. At all times, each member of the American Legion Boys State staff will conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner.**
- 4. To treat each young man attending with respect and as a young adult.**
- 5. To make American Legion Boys State positive Learning experiences which will help each young man grow as a person and be better educated as a citizen of Michigan.**
- 6. To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation.**
- 7. To transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy.**
- 8. To arouse in our young citizens a determination to maintain our form of government.**
- 9. To develop civic leadership and pride in their American citizenship.**
- 10. To arouse a keen interest in the detailed study of government.**
- 11. To continue to strive in all ways possible to maintain American Legion Boys State as the leading program within the Department of Michigan program.**

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of The American Legion Boys State is to provide an educational and leadership program that exposes young men to the rights and privileges, the duties and responsibilities, and the love for God and Country necessary to being self-governing citizens

VISION STATEMENT:

Through a practical, objective, nonpartisan approach, participants in The American Legion Boys State program are exposed to fundamental democratic principles in local, county and state elections and governmental functions which prepare them for lifetime leadership roles as patriotic American citizens.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The current situation of the Boys State program is that it is a program that must continue to grow, reversing past downhill trends. Failure to turn this program around dramatically will create a situation of whether future Department Commanders will want to continue this program.

OBJECTIVE:

1. To increase Boys State to a sustainable level so the program becomes self-funding as it has many years past.
2. Consider taking the program back to Michigan State University to arouse more interest for youth to attend Boys State. Run the program at State in conjunction with the American Legion Auxiliary's Girls State and at the same times to bring the numbers in line for greater discounts.
3. Get all Service Organizations and Veteran's Organization throughout the State of Michigan to aid us in making this program more successful
4. Obtain a slate of speakers each year, from political dignitaries, judges, prosecuting attorneys, attorneys, and pass successful alumni of the Boys State program.
5. Obtain University credit for each student attending Boys State through the University's Political Science Department.
6. Bring the program up to a minimum 400+ students by 2016.
7. Work to get more Posts involved in sending a student to Boys State.
8. Make more and better use of media in promoting our Boys State Program.

TO PROMOTE BOYS STATE PROGRAM IN SCHOOLS WITH THE FOLLOWING OR SIMILAR STATEMENT:

The Michigan American Legion presents the American Legion Boys State program at Michigan State University to the young men of the current High School Junior Class in Michigan:

“As a junior at one of the 1000+ high schools in the State of Michigan, within a year you will be headed for college, the military, or the pursuit of a vocation.

This summer will be a pivotal one for you in many ways. You have much to do NOW to prepare yourself for your future.

One event this summer can assist you in preparing for your future by providing experience of living in a college environment; learning of leadership and management skills to serve you in any career path you choose; the formation of friendships which may last a lifetime, combined with learning about a vital part of every citizen’s life, how our Michigan government operates and functions on the city, county, and State levels; all through a nonpartisan education approach.

That event is a week long experience at Michigan American Legion Boys State.”

AMERICANISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONGRANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Americanism and Community Service Committee is to protect our history, our pride, our honor and our flag. In addition, the American Legion recognizes that the Community is an integral part of our American way of life in accomplishing the objectives of the Committee.

VISION STATEMENT:

It is the Americanism Committee's responsibility to promote the mission statement's vision to our youth in our schools and the community.

OBJECTIVES:

The Americanism and community Service Committee must become more proactive in its programs. The following goals should be considered for adoption by this committee:

- 1. Flag Education:** The American Legion must promote flag etiquette, offer instruction and demonstrations for proper care of the American flag and the distribution of flags to 1st graders (Contact Mike Buss: 317-630-1207 or mbuss@legion.org .)
- 2. School Medal Awards:** The American Legion must encourage Posts to take an active part in presenting medals to students for their achievements in Citizenship and Americanism. Students should be recognized for their commitment to honor, courage, scholarship, leadership, citizenship, Americanism and service.
- 3. Educational Assistance:** The American Legion's yearly publication "Need a Lift?" provides a road map for college bound students. Legion Posts should be encouraged to distribute copies to local libraries and youth service organizations.
- 4. Junior Shooting Sports:** The American Legion recognizes that guns are a part of sports and recreation in our society and strives to teach youngsters the proper use of firearms before accidents occur. The Americanism Committee should encourage Posts to sponsor Junior Shooting Clubs which provide training in gun safety and marksmanship for student's age 14 through 20. The Committee should be active in promoting a State-wide competition for winners to go on to National Competition.
- 5. Boy Scouts of America:** The Americanism Committee should encourage all Posts to host a Boy Scout unit. The American Legion recognizes the opportunity to build

patriotic attitudes and strong moral character among youth through the Scouting program.

6. **Student Trooper:** The American Legion recognizes developing favorable attitudes in our youth toward Law Enforcement and will articulate those attitudes throughout their communities and among their peers. It is also important to expose our youth to the fundamentals of law enforcement and prepare them in the decision making process of whether a law-enforcement career becomes a chosen vocation.
7. **Community Service:** The American Legion recognizes that one of the 3 most important functions of all Posts is to promote programs beneficial to the betterment of the local community. It is important that the American Legion Post be an integral part of the Community to the point that if the Post should happen to fold, it will be missed.
8. **Veterans in the Classroom:** This program involves veterans going into schools to talk about their experiences during wartime military service. It can be an educational and enjoyable experience for our youth and can be presented at any time during the school year.
9. **Youth Programs:** Use high visibility programs designed to benefit America's young people to preserve our heritage through development of future citizens. Youth programs include American Legion Boys State/Boys Nation, American Legion Baseball, High School Oratorical Contest, and the Junior Shooting Sports Program.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS:

Community Service Programs include:

1. **Family Support Network**
2. **Media Center**
3. **National Emergency Fund**
4. **Temporary Financial Assistance**
5. **Community Volunteering**
6. **Sons of the American Legion**
7. **American Legion Auxiliary**

8. Legion Riders
9. Get out and vote

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. It is recommended that each member on this committee be assigned one or two programs by its chairman. The chairman appointed is to take full responsibility in promoting each of the assigned Americanism traditions. This must be a working committee.
2. Americanism must be promoted. Each chairman has the responsibility to promote these programs in the general media in the name of the American Legion with short articles or power points put into the Michigan Legionnaire on a regular basis.
3. Junior Shooting Sports, Boy Scouts of America and Student Trooper to be transferred to the Children and Youth Committee as Sub-committees.
4. It is recommended that Legion Riders become a sub-committee of the Americanism and Community Service Committee.
5. Due to importance of its programs, break down this committee between Americanism and Community Service by assigning 5 members of the Committee to Americanism and 3 to Community Service, bringing the total committee members to 8.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA SUB-COMMITTEE

of the Americanism and Community Service Committee

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law,

SCOUT OATH:

On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

SCOUT LAW:

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

VISION STATEMENT:

The Boy Scouts of America will prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the Boy Scouts of America Sub-Committee is to encourage all American Legion Posts within the State of Michigan to be first in sponsoring a Boy Scout troop in their community and to assure that no community in need of a scout troop goes without one.

Continue to work with the awarding of scouting trophies and recognition.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Consideration should be given in recognizing an entire Boy Scout Troop for outstanding service to community, state, and nation. This recognition can be done by State or Zones.

STUDENT TROOPER SUB-COMMITTEE

Of the Americanism and Community Service Committee

MISSION STATEMENT:

To develop favorable attitudes in our youth toward Law Enforcement and articulate those attitudes throughout their communities and among their peers

VISION STATEMENT:

To expose our youth to the fundamentals of law enforcement and prepare them in the decision making process of whether a law-enforcement career becomes a chosen vocation.

This program has become a very successful program of the Department of Michigan; is supported by its many Post sponsors and has instilled a sense of individual self-worth into many of our youth. This program should continue to grow in the next 5 years under competent leadership, but at a slow rate.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that this Americanism and Community Service Committee Sub-committee become a subcommittee of the Children and Youth Committee.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG-RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

It shall be the mission of the Children and Youth Committee to assure that programs are enacted to strengthen the family unit and insure that any child of a veteran in need of care and protection shall receive proper and timely service and aid; to maintain well-rounded youth programs that meet the need of the young people in their respective community; and to support other organizations which serve children and youth and extend support to sound organizational facilities that provide services for children and youth.

VISION STATEMENT:

The ultimate vision of the Children and Youth Committee is to educate our youth through high visibility programs designed to benefit America's young people and preserve our heritage through development of future citizens.

OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the Children and Youth Committee should be to get programs into our schools in Michigan, stressing the safety and health of all its children. The Children and Youth Committee should be better educated on Children and Youth programs to include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- 1. Child Health: Our new alliance with the Children's Miracle Network underscores The American Legion's mission and reputation as a care-taker of America's future—its children. Children's Miracle Network affiliated hospitals provide quality health care to all children, regardless of condition or ability to pay.**
- 2. Teenage Suicide Prevention: Teen suicides have shocked communities throughout the country. The American Legion actively supports programs of prevention and awareness and has published the brochure "Warning Signs: Suicide Prevention" for distribution.**
- 3. Drug Abuse: Drug and alcohol abuse are robbing this nation of our youth. Legion Posts have expressed their concern over this devastating problem through sponsorship or speakers and support of other anti-drug organizations.**
- 4. Temporary Financial Assistance: This program provides cash assistance for needy children of eligible veterans.**

5. **Child Welfare Foundation:** Established by the National Organization, this program funds efforts that deal with problems affecting children. The program awards monies to not-for-profit programs that benefit children.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Each committee member is assigned an objective by the Committee Chairperson or Department Commander and takes an active part in promoting its children and youth programs as listed in these objectives above.
2. That more leadership is displayed by all members of this committee in getting our Children and Youth programs into the schools or into the news media promoting the "good of the Legion".
3. That the committee works closely with the Americanism Committee in promoting Americanism programs for our youth.
4. That this committee takes more responsibility in writing articles to the news media stating The American Legion's commitment to the Youth of our state with additional articles of "Blue Cap" interest submitted for publication in the Michigan Legionnaire.

JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS (A PROPOSED SUBCOMMITTEE)

(CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE)

MISSION STATEMENT:

Shooting sports are an important recreational activity in America. Shooting competition is part of the Olympic Games. Marksmanship is a proud part of our State and National Heritage. Skilled American riflemen have played a deciding role in all our Nation's wars and conflicts.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the Department of Michigan is to involve more youth in the program by enticing more American Legion Posts to adopt the program and to bring attention to the citizens of Michigan, and our role in taking on the responsibility of training our youth in the correct way to handle firearms.

REASONS FOR ADOPTING THE PROGRAM:

- 1. Competitive marksmanship does not require great physical size or strength. Even though physical fitness and stamina are important, mental qualities determine whether a shooter will ever become a champion. Being able to concentrate completely at a task and being able to relax under pressure are two keys to success.**
- 2. Shooting is a skill sport.**
- 3. Shooting is a participation sport.**
- 4. Shooting is an Olympic sport.**
- 5. Shooting is a safe sport.**
- 6. Shooting is a lifetime sport.**
- 7. Shooting is a sport for both girls and boys.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that this program be adopted by the Department of Michigan as a sub-committee of the Children and Youth Committee.

Although Junior Shooting Sports is not a recognized program by the Department of Michigan, it is a National program, and it does exist in certain Posts throughout the State. This program should be adopted by the Department and expanded to include more youth.

The committee member assigned to this program should be familiar with the rules and regulations in starting this program at new Posts and follow through with State-wide competition. Winners should be recognized annually at convention, and the best shooters should compete in the National competition.

ECONOMICS COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

To deal with the economic issues that affect all veterans within the state of Michigan

VISION STATEMENT:

To provide jobs to all veterans in need, and encourage all employers throughout the State of Michigan to hire more veterans

The Economics Committee must continue to work hard and diligently in the following areas:

- 1. Jobs: The committee must monitor economic legislation and regulations that affect veterans' preference in Federal and State employment and ensure that veterans have the opportunity to provide for their economic necessities and those of their dependents.**
- 2. Awards: That the committee continues to recognize employers who excel in the hiring of disabled workers, the elderly, and veterans. The committee should continue to recognize representatives of local veterans employment agencies, disabled veterans outreach programs, and service to unemployed or underemployed veterans. This committee should encourage Legion Posts throughout the State to carry out similar activities in their communities and counties.**
- 3. America's Job Bank: That this committee provide access to jobs for qualified veterans by informing them of two important resources: America's Job Bank and USA Jobs, each of which is updated daily. These lists contain jobs listed by Federal contractors who are required to give preference in hiring qualified veterans.**
- 4. Job Fairs: The committee should work closely with State organizations to encourage job fairs in the area of need.**

The chairman of the Economics Committee or his or her designee shall write articles in the local media and the Michigan Legionnaire regarding economic issues. The Department of Michigan will assist the chairman in writing an article.

EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

Education is the cornerstone upon which the future of this nation is built. Where there are good schools, providing good education, we find good citizens. It should be the committee's goal to encourage our youth to participate in all American Legion educational programs.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of this committee is to encourage more participation in The American Legion's Oratorical Program, giving to deserving students more and larger scholarship.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Oratorical Con test: To explore the reasons why the Department does not have more participation in the State Oratorical Contest.**
- 2. Educational Scholarship: To explore the ways the Department can give out more scholarships to needy children.**

Note: All scholarship applications received by the district should be acknowledged by the District commander in the following manner.

- a. Those not selected for forwarding to the State should have a letter sent to them as early as possible to thank them for their application but they were not selected.**
- b. All applications forwarded to Department for final review and action should be acknowledged by the Department whether they receive a scholarship or not.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. The committee needs to explore ways to obtain more funding for the Scholarship program. The Public Relations Department could have enough extra funds left over if they would begin selling advertising for the Legionnaire.**

- 2. Department funding could be in order if the recommended changes are made to the American Legion Boys State Program and the American Legion Baseball Program so that each of these programs would become self-funding without Department monies.**
- 3. Other recommended changes would be that any scholarship monies go toward enrollment in State Community Colleges only.**
- 4. The committee encourages all local Posts to give scholarships at their local high school in their local communities.**
- 5. The possibility of more restrictions on current scholarship applications should be explored to cut down on the number of applicants.**
- 6. This committee should consider a Children and Youth Program for incorporation into a 501c3 non-profit organization along with Boys State, American Legion Baseball and Children and Youth Committees.**

LEGION RIDERS (PROPOSED) COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Missions of the Legion Riders are to participate in parades and other ceremonies that are in keeping with the aims and purposes of The American Legion, to promote motor cycle safety, to provide a social atmosphere for the American Legion Family members who share the same interests; to use our association to promote and support the programs of The American Legion through community and other motor cycle organizations.

VISION STATEMENT:

It is the vision of the Legion Riders to continue to support the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion and its programs.

LEGION RIDERS ELIGIBILITY:

Membership requirements for becoming a Legion Rider member are as follows:

- 1. You must be a current member of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of the American Legion.**
- 2. You must be a registered owner of a motorcycle of at least 500cc and hold current motorcycle endorsement. The motorcycle must be operational upon renewal or as determined by the executive board.**
- 3. All new applicants should be sponsored by a fellow American Legion Rider or seek membership through the Legion Rider's executive board.**
- 4. The member must be a card carrying member of the A.L., ALA, or SAL. Upon approval of membership; annual dues must be paid to the Legion Rider's organization as directed by the organization.**
- 5. Any motorcycle enthusiast who meets the above requirements and would love to share their enthusiasm and interest should contact the nearest Legion Riders Group president.**

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Legislative program in the Department of Michigan is to maintain communication between the American Legion and our elected officials on the State and National levels; to furnish information to each of them and to our members on important issues concerning, but not limited to Veteran's benefits, health care, family issues, child welfare, rehabilitation for the disabled and to obtain the proper funding for the Department VA&R program, State Veteran's Homes and the Veteran's Trust Fund.

VISION STATEMENT:

It is the vision of this Committee to obtain the proper funding for the Department's VA&R Program efficiently and effectively throughout the State of Michigan and successfully establish a Department of Veterans' Affairs in the State Capitol.

OBJECTIVES:

1. That the committee appear before committees of the House and Senate of Michigan's general assembly to testify on bills and resolutions affecting the Department of Michigan and its veterans.
2. Support all Legislation that benefits veterans.
3. Encourage and support the development of legislation to extend the current legislative and executive term limits in the Michigan Constitution.
4. Continue adequate funding to support the operations of the Michigan Veterans Homes in Grand Rapids and Marquette.
5. Support legislation that has a positive effect upon active duty military, reserves, National Guard, retirees and their families.
6. Encourage adequate State funding to support Veteran Service Officer (State Grants).

- 7. Encourage and support the establishment of an office of Veterans Affairs in State Government, managed and administered by a competent member of one of the eleven chartered veteran's organizations that make up the Commander's Group.**
- 8. Keep Legionnaires informed by writing articles in the Michigan Legionnaire on legislative issues concerning veterans.**

MICHIGAN LEADERSHIP COLLEGE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Michigan Leadership College to educate all Legionnaires, Legion auxiliary members and Sons of the American Legion throughout the State of Michigan the critical intricacies of running and maintaining a great post and organization; how keep records to file timely reports; to encourage membership to take an interest in their Districts.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the Michigan Leadership College is to educate all Post Commanders and Adjutants, Auxiliary Presidents and Secretaries, and Sons of the American Legion Detachment Commanders and Detachment Adjutants throughout the State of Michigan trained in leading their Post's in a positive direction to accomplish the mission and vision of The American Legion.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Continue to use National Leadership School Graduates as leaders to present instruction in Post administration and procedures.**
- 2. Continue to bring instructions to the Districts throughout the State, using different districts, posts and locations each year.**
- 3. Educate and train as many new leaders throughout the State of Michigan as possible.**
- 4. Use Department Public Relations for tapes, slides, and other needed power point presentations where feasible.**
- 5. Use Department Public Relations department and the Legionnaire magazine to promote all dates of schools of instructions.**
- 6. Write brief power point articles for the Legionnaire magazine at least 4 times per year.**
- 7. Foster an environment of support within each zone.**

- 8. Aid post leaders in reaching out to new members and recruit all war era veterans regardless of gender.**

- 9. Design classes of instruction to include the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion. Note: All leadership classes given since 2013 now include the Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion.**

NATIONAL AND HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

The deep-rooted interest of the American Legion in the security of the nation was born in the hearts and minds of its founders after World War I. The bitter experience of seeing comrades wounded and killed through lack of proper training instilled in these veterans the determination to fight for adequate defense establishment, capable of protecting the sovereignty of the United States.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the National and Homeland Security Committee is to keep all Legionnaires within Michigan informed to changes and proposed changes on the National and State levels, affecting constitutional liberties, and recognize legislative goals affecting our National Security, both home and abroad.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of this committee is to keep alert on all governmental programs detrimental to the security of the United States and the State of Michigan, and to take an active role in curtailing objectionable legislation.

OBJECTIVES:

It is the objective of this committee to become more actively involved in the following programs:

- 1. Illegal immigration in Michigan:** Illegal immigration continues to escalate into a serious threat against our national and homeland security. This committee should continually keep in touch with the National American Legion website on this issue, and how it affects the State of Michigan.
- 2. Flag Protection Amendment:** The American Legion, through its membership-p in the Citizens Flag Alliance, a broad based coalition of groups of individuals committed to protecting the flag from intentional desecration, will be lobbying the U. S. Senate for the passage of the amendment.

3. **English as the Official Language:** Recognizing challenges inherent in a bilingual society, The American Legion urges Congress to adopt English as the official language of the U.S. government. The Legion also opposes the use of foreign languages in the U.S., such as in Naturalization Ceremonies and the printing of election ballots in foreign languages. The American Legion does advocate funding of alternative bilingual education programs as an intermediate step to English language proficiency.
4. **Patriotic Holidays;** The American Legion calls for the return of Memorial Day to May 30, Washington's Birthday to February 22, and Columbus Day to October 12 of each year and an annual Presidential proclamation calling for all bells to toll for one minute on the traditional Memorial Day in honor of our deceased service men and women.
5. **Proper conduct during hoisting, lowering, or passing of the flag and during playing of the National Anthem** as currently written into the U.S. Flag code, but this should be changed to coincide with the National Organization's opinion.
6. **Supporting school prayer in our classrooms.**
7. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Taking the words "In God" out of the pledge is adamantly opposed by the National Organization.
8. **POW/MIA:** That The American Legion continue to put pressure on our government to account for all our POW/MIAs.
9. **Blood Donations:** the largest identifiable organization, the American Legion, encourages Posts to sponsor blood drives during holidays when accident rates are high and hospital blood supplies are low. Posts need to be encouraged to report blood donations on the Consolidated Post Reports.
10. **ROTC:** The Reserve Officer Training Corps has long been the largest source of junior officers for all branches of the military. It is important that the American Legion remains in the forefront of supporting ROTC by supporting legislative efforts to retain and expand the program. Posts are encouraged to recognize outstanding cadets with the presentation of medals.
11. **National Cemeteries:** Encourage State and Federal Government officials to establish and maintain national cemeteries for our deceased veterans.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That each committee member be responsible one or two parts in an objective listed above, as assigned by the committee chairman or Department Commander.**
- 2. That more resolutions come out of this committee regarding National and Homeland security, and be forwarded to the National organization.**
- 3. That the Committee take more responsibility in writing articles to the News Media stating the American Legion's official position on issues affecting individual's constitutional rights, flag desecration, prayer in schools, POW/MIA, Pledge of Allegiance, English as the official language, etc. Many of these articles can be written from resolutions passed by the National Organization. A minimum of three articles per year should be submitted on National Security, with additional articles of interest to the 'blue cap' Legionnaire being submitted for publication in the Michigan Legionnaire.**
- 4. That this committee becomes more active in supporting and promoting the stated objectives of this program.**

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Public Relations Committee is to encourage all Posts to develop communications with in their Post and Community; keeping the local public informed of Post activities that are benefitting the public, the public's youth, and Post activities that pertain to the four (4) pillars of The American Legion.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the Public Relations Committee is to educate all Posts within the State of Michigan to produce a media outlet to keep their members informed of Post activities and to that each Post knows how to use the media to promote The American Legion.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To get the name of The American Legion into the local news media as much as possible "patting themselves on the back" and promoting Post programs to the local public.
2. To encourage local Posts to write letters to the editor promoting The American Legion and its programs.
3. To encourage local Posts to write letters to the editor opining on local, state, or National laws affecting Veterans that are both beneficial and controversial.
4. Encourage more Posts to create a web-site and have an e-mail address to more effectively communicate with their membership.
5. Encourage more Posts to be actively involved in submitting pictures with captions to the Michigan Legionnaire for printing or for displaying on the State web-site.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Public Relations Committee work closely with the State Public Relations Director to have articles printed in the Michigan Legionnaire addressing the objectives listed above.

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT:

The American Legion has maintained an ongoing concern and commitment to veterans and their families. The Legion is a continual watchdog and an advocate for veteran's rights. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation is a cornerstone of The American Legion. It focuses on a primary reason for the founding of the organization. The VA&R services include assistance with medical care claims, appeals, insurance programs, burial benefits and veterans' employment.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the VA&R Committee is to work with the Department VA&R to keep our veterans informed of their benefits; support the VA&R and Veteran Service Officers (VSO); and to assure that no veterans is left behind.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Continue to support our VAVS program, encouraging more volunteers to serve in a VAVS capacity at all VA facilities throughout the State.**
- 2. Continue working with the Department VA&R and the Legislative Committee to restore our State grants to fund our program as it was prior to SB250.**
- 3. Continue to work toward getting our Post and District Service Officers on line to assist our VA&R Division.**
- 4. Continue to strive to have 100% of the Posts submit Service Officer's Reports to the Department.**

VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTEER SERVICES (VAVS) SUB-COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN

Representatives of the American Legion are active at all VA medical facilities in Michigan. They donate time to supervise social and recreational activities for patients. Money is appropriated by Department to finance these activities. Monies may also be solicited from Posts to help support the program. A complete accounting of the VAVS programs and its funding should be reported on an annual basis at the State Convention.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of this sub-committee is to bring special talents and understanding to veteran patients. These skills provide veterans a bridge between the medical facility and their community, enhancing rehabilitation, and speeding the return to productive, independent living.

The second mission of the Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services Committee is to assure that the Department of Michigan has at least one volunteer representative in each of our VA facilities and Veterans Homes. In addition, the mission includes getting more and younger volunteers into our VA facilities and our Veterans Homes.

VISION STATEMENT:

The vision of the Veteran Affairs Volunteer Services Committee is to bring cheer and comfort to veteran patients and provide a service which helps to keep down the cost of their hospital care.

OBJECTIVE:

To appoint individuals on this committee who:

- 1. Agree to serve without compensation.**
- 2. Attain the most effective use of community volunteer resources.**
- 3. Coordinate and integrate volunteer assistance into the medical facility patient care program.**
- 4. Supplement the work of the VA Staff in assisting with health care services to veterans and their families.**
- 5. Make a formal commitment to serve by signing the RS Volunteer Information Card.**

6. Complete the orientation prescribed by the medical facility.
7. Complete ten hours of probationary service within sixty days following the orientation.

VAVS REPRESENTATIVES:

1. Are the official representatives to the VA facility to which they are appointed in all aspects of The American Legion's participation in the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Program?
2. Will meet with the respective VSO immediately after appointment to receive an orientation on the local VAVS program.
3. Will keep the VSO informed of all aspects of the legion's participation in the VAVS program.
4. Will distribute information concerning the VAVBS program to each post within the facility's area.
5. Will attend the quarterly meeting of the facility's VAVS Committee and distribute copies of the committee minutes to each post in the facility's area and the chairman of the VAVS Committee.
6. Will meet annually with the VSO to complete an Annual Joint Review.
7. Will keep the area Legion membership informed on the needs of the veterans in the form of volunteer support and resources.
8. Will know who the Legion volunteers in the facility are and where they work. VSO will be contacted to ascertain how individual volunteers are performing. Volunteers not performing satisfactorily should be removed from the VAVS program by the VSO.
9. Will make quarterly written report to the Department Committee Chairman and the Hospital VSO. This report will include the number of Legion volunteers in the facilities, the total number of volunteer hours worked during the quarter, and problems noted concerning volunteers, recommendations for improving the volunteer service, and any other information deemed appropriate.

- 10. Will contact each post providing volunteers concerning the annual submission of the American Legion VA Volunteer Award nomination. (Due May 1. The nomination form can be found in the Department's Post Administration Manual.)**
- 11. Will forward to Department the necessary certification for American legion VAVS awards for volunteers as they become eligible.**
- 12. Will be familiar with the Legion's Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Handbook.**
- 13. May accompany the Department Commander on the annual VA facility tour and be prepared to discuss the local VAVS program.**

TYPES OF VOLUNTEER JOBS:

The following is a list of the types of jobs that volunteers are needed for at many of the VA facilities in Michigan:

- 1. Shuttle drivers from outpatient clinics to the hospital**
- 2. Parking lot golf cart driver**
- 3. Escorts to take patients from one place to another for tests and appointments**
- 4. File clerks in the records area**
- 5. Delivery books to patients rooms**
- 6. Visit the patients**
- 7. Help in the pharmacy or lab**
- 8. Assist patients with crafts**
- 9. Write letters for patients or read letters or a book**
- 10. Help with office work, mailing out letters to veterans and volunteers**
- 11. Work at the information Desk**
- 12. Answer phones**

13. Take patients on outings

14. Supply recreation activities such as bingo, movies, board games, cards or music

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. It is recommended that all funds given to VAVS representatives be accounted for to the Commander on a semi-annual and annual basis. A reporting form should be designed for reporting purposes.**
- 2. All VAVS volunteers must obtain a copy and become familiar with The American Legion's Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Handbook. (Department has copies in inventory.)**
- 3. That a "VAVS Volunteer of the Year" plaque be given an American Legion Representative in recognition for the work these volunteers do in our VA Hospitals.**