

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

DISTRICT THREE MEETING MINUTES

Date	Sunday, 13 September 2026
Time	1200 Hrs
Location	Post 79, Marshall, Michigan; also via Microsoft Teams
Presiding Officer	Commander Steve "Radar" Caudill

Meeting Summary

The District approved the May minutes and removed Standing Rule 9 concerning membership dues waivers. The Commander announced the DEC's decision to move District meetings to the third Saturday, beginning November 21 in Hillsdale. Reports covered membership, the Oratorical Contest, the Post 280 to Post 485 transition, Auxiliary eligibility, and the new D3 Dispatch newsletter. Draft for approval; unclear source details remain flagged for review.

Call to Order

Commander Steve "Radar" Caudill presided. The opening observances included prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Officer and post roll calls were conducted, and the Commander declared a quorum. The exact call-to-order time was not stated in the transcript.

Roll Call

Officer and post roll calls were conducted, and a quorum was declared. Eaton County Commander Larry Fennell was subsequently recognized as present. Post 207 joined via Teams later in the meeting. The attendance below reflects the draft record; a complete roster requires confirmation.

Position	Name	Present	Excused	Absent
Commander	Steve "Radar" Caudill	☒	☐	☐
First Vice Commander	Ed Jinks	☒	☐	☐
Second Vice Commander	Mike Sinclair	☒	☐	☐
Adjutant	Jackie Vermette	☐	☒	☐
Finance Officer	Missy Alkema	☐	☒	☐
District Service Officer	Josh Clark	☐	☒	☐
Judge Advocate	Brian Mohlman	☒	☐	☐
Chaplain	Wayne Briggs	☒	☐	☐
Historian	Tom Charon	☒	☐	☐
Sergeant-at-Arms	Time Fields	☒	☐	☐
District County Commander-Branch	Ralph Gottschalk	☐	☒	☐
District County Commander-Calhoun	Don Kujawa	☒	☐	☐
District County Commander-Eaton	Larry Fennell	☒	☐	☐
District County Commander-Hillsdale	Corey Murray	☒	☐	☐
District County Commander-Kalamazoo	Doug Colby	☐	☒	☐
Trustee	Miles Newell	☐	☒	☐
Trustee	Tia Bradshaw	☐	☒	☐
Legion Riders Liaison	Angela Synder	☐	☒	☐

Position	Name	Present	Excused	Absent
Immediate Past Commander	Sheila Overholts	☐	☒	☐

Member Post Rollcall:

Post	Present	Post	Present	Post	Present
36	☒	157	☐	360	☐
42	☐	195	☐	420	☐
48	☒	196	☒	465	☐
52	☐	207	☒	475	☐
53	☒	222	☐	485	☐
54	☒	257	☒		
55	☒	269	☐		
79	☒	298	☐		

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion was made by Judge Advocaat Mohlman and seconded by First Vice Commander Jinks to approve the May meeting minutes as written, subject to audit. The motion carried.

Introduction of Guests

The assembly recognized Kathy, who assisted with preparation of the host post's meal.

Committee Reports

• Finance

No financial report was presented because account access was unavailable during the reported bank transition. Annual District dues invoices had been mailed to all posts. Payments from Posts 36, 53, and 257 were reported received; Post 48 reported its payment was in the mail. Posts missing an invoice were asked to contact the Commander for a copy.

• Oratorical

Second Voce Commander Sinclair briefed that the District contest is scheduled for January 23, 2027, at the Kalamazoo Area Mathematics and Science Center, on the fourth floor of the Kalamazoo Public Schools Community Education Center. Rooms are reserved from 1–4 p.m. Two of three judges and an emcee were secured; timers and additional volunteers are needed. An advance flyer is planned for late October, with registration contact information to be distributed through the District by the end of November. Applications are available.

• Membership

First Vice Commander Jinks briefed members present that the District membership was reported at 53.8% of goal and sixth in the Department. Nine posts had met or exceeded the October 14 target of 55%: Posts 420, 54, 207, 36, 257, 196, 157, 79, and 55. Post 420 had exceeded monthly target goal. Posts were encouraged to strengthen retention plans, contact new members within 30 days, and provide a mentor and opportunities for involvement within 90 days. The First Vice Commander offered assistance with membership strategies.

- **Sons of the American Legion**

Commander Caudill as the Post to encourage their Squadrons support SAL District leadership by encouraging members to serve as officers.

- **District Service Officer:**

No report given

- **American Legion Rider**

No report given

Sick Call Relief and Employment

No matters were raised during this agenda item. Memorial announcements were made later under Good of the Legion.

Old Business

- **Post 485 and closure of Post 280**

The Commander reported that Ron Petty Memorial Post 485 had received its temporary charter and that the transition from Post 280 was continuing. Members were being transferred to the new post, with additional transfers to occur as renewals were received. Post 485 was reported at approximately 40% of its membership goal. After completion of the transition is confirmed, closure of Post 280 is to be considered by an email vote or at the next meeting, with the hope of placing the matter on the Fall Conference agenda. No closure vote was taken at this meeting.

New Business

- **District meeting schedule**

The Commander announced that the District Executive Committee had voted to move District meetings to the third Saturday, with breakfast or brunch at 10 a.m. and the meeting at 11 a.m. The change is intended to improve attendance and reduce Sunday scheduling conflicts. The next meeting will be November 21, 2026, in Hillsdale.

- **American Legion Auxiliary eligibility**

A National Convention report described passage of a constitutional amendment removing gender-specific language from Auxiliary relationship categories and expanding eligibility within the Legion Family. Copies of the amendment and an eligibility chart were distributed. Discussion addressed qualifying family relationships and potential dual or triple membership. A question regarding stepchildren required clarification. Judge advocate Mohlman stated he would get back to the membership on the issue of stepchildren.

- **Standing Rules of Order Item 9**

First Vice Commander Jinks motioned and seconded by Judge Advocate Molhman to remove Standing Rule 9, which provided District dues waivers of 100%, 50%, and 25% for the first three posts to reach their membership goals. The stated reason was the Department's reported incentive of \$100 for each post reaching 100% by the end of December. The motion carried. The Commander will remove the rule and distribute the revised Standing Rules. t.

Good of the Legion

- **District newsletter**

Historian Tom Sharon announced the D3 Dispatch, planned as a bimonthly District newsletter, with the first issue in November. Submissions are due October 20, 2026. Officers and posts were invited to submit reports, accomplishments, photographs, and material useful throughout the District. Distribution will include email and the District website, with mail available when needed. Articles may be sent to the Historian or through the Commander. The Commander agreed to provide the Historian's email address and circulate the draft layout with the minutes. Send all submissions to Tom Charon at charront@msn.com

- **Buddy checks and District participation**

The First Vice Commander plans to provide County Commanders with talking points, beginning with buddy checks before November. Members emphasized using these contacts to identify needs and connect veterans with assistance. County Commanders were also asked to encourage post attendance at District meetings.

- **VA volunteer support**

Members reported that the coordinator of Legion-sponsored bingo at the VA hospital was stepping down. Interest was requested in supporting the program and filling the District's vacant VAVS representative position. No appointment was recorded.

Community recognition: Post 257 was thanked for supporting the Huey 369 event. Members reported strong attendance at the helicopter event and The Wall That Heals in Battle Creek, including an escort of approximately 390 motorcycles.

Upcoming activities: Announcements included Post 55's lasagna dinner on September 17, from 4–7 p.m.; the September 26 Honor Flight, with participation by former Post 36 Finance Officer Dave Carvell and a request for flag-line support; an October 2 pickleball tournament; and Post 298's November 8 veterans dinner and meal deliveries, for which volunteers are needed. The sponsoring post for the pickleball tournament was unclear in the transcript.

Artificial intelligence and branding: Members discussed checking the accuracy of AI-generated material and using official National emblems and approved branding in post communications. The Commander encouraged replacing generated emblems with the official artwork.

Membership verification: Members discussed concerns about use of a veteran designation on a driver's license as evidence of eligibility. Participants emphasized post responsibility for reviewing acceptable documentation and seeking additional proof when needed. The Commander asked that conflicting training guidance be reported for follow-up. No motion or change to District policy was adopted.

Memorial announcements: Members reported the deaths of Dwight Isley, a former Fort Custer honor guard squad leader and member of Post 54, and Chuck Savage, a longtime Post 55 service officer. Memorial and committal arrangements for Dwight Isley were discussed, but the transcript contains conflicting dates and times that require confirmation.

Post 79 thanked attendees, and the Commander thanked Post 79 and its volunteers for their hospitality.

Adjournment

With no further business, the Chaplain offered the closing prayer, including remembrance of departed comrades and POWs/MIAs. Following closing honors, Commander Caudill declared the meeting adjourned at 1256 hrs..

Next meeting: Saturday, November 21, 2026 • Hillsdale • Breakfast or brunch at 10 a.m. • District meeting at 11 a.m.

Submitted by

///Signed///

Stephen Caudill, Commander
American Legion Department of Michigan District Three

Attachment: D3 Dispatch Sample

D3 Dispatch

Monthly updates, District 3 happenings, and ways to get involved.



Hello Legionnaires,

Welcome to this month's District 3 newsletter. We're excited to share recent highlights, upcoming events, and opportunities for everyone to connect, contribute, and celebrate what makes our District special.

District 3 Highlights

- Thank you to everyone who participated in recent Posts and District activities and helped support Legion programs.
- Posts continue to organize Veteran programs, Membership drives, workshops, and family-friendly gatherings.
- Post members are encouraged to share announcements, photos, and success stories for future editions.

Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Details
[Insert date]	Community Meet-Up	Join neighbors for conversation, updates, and refreshments.
[Insert date]	Volunteer Day	Help with a local cleanup, donation drive, or service project.
[Insert date]	Family Activity Night	Bring the whole family for games, activities, and community fun.

Volunteer Opportunity

We're looking for volunteers to help with event setup, Veteran and Community outreach projects, and newsletter contributions. If you have a skill, idea, or a little extra time to share, we'd love to hear from you.

District Spotlight

This month, we recognize the neighbors, volunteers, and local partners who go the extra mile to make our community welcoming, active, and connected. Submit a name or story for next month's spotlight.

Reminders

- Send announcements by [submission deadline] to be included in the next issue.
- Check local bulletin boards, social pages, or community calendars for schedule changes.
- Invite a Veteran to the next Post meeting or event.

Stay Connected

Have news, photos, events, or volunteer opportunities to share? Reply to this email or contact [District contact information]. Thank you for helping keep our District informed and connected.