



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

In the Spirit of Service Not Self for Our Veterans, God and Country

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GIRLS STATE MEETING MINUTES

October 12, 2014

Wasilla, Alaska

The meeting of the American Legion Auxiliary, Alaska Girls State Board was called to order by Department President Penny Mazonna at 9:06am on Sunday morning, October 12, 2014 at Susitna Valley Post 35 located in Wasilla, Alaska. Susitna Valley Unit 35 Chaplain Terry Archibald gave the opening prayer. Department 1st Vice President Sharon Cherrette led the Pledge of Allegiance and Past Department President Lisa Williamson led the Preamble.

Roll Call was taken by Department Secretary Linda Schmitt as follows:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS	NAME	P	A	E	TOTALS
GIRLS STATE DIRECTOR	VONN LAMM	X			
GIRLS STATE CO-DIRECTOR	BETH ANDERSON			X	
PRESIDENT	PENNY MAZONNA	X			
1ST VICE PRESIDENT	SHARON CHERRETTE	X			
2ND VICE PRESIDENT	SUSAN WALDHAUS	X			
SEC./TREAS	LINDA SCHMITT	X			
FINANCE CHAIRMAN	NORA ANDERSON			X	
AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN	EVA AULSTON	X			
1 - YEAR BOARD MEMBER	DEBBIE GILCHRIST		X		
2 - YEAR BOARD MEMBER	DEE THOMAS		X		
3 - YEAR BOARD MEMBER	BEVERLY EADS			X	
TOTAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS					6
PAST GIRLS STATE DIRECTORS					
JUDY PUSTI				X	
SUSAN CASWELL		X			
DEBBIE HENDERSON				X	
DIANA ESTRADA		X			
LORI FITZSIMONS		X			
TOTAL PAST DIRECTORS					3

Department Secretary Linda Schmitt announced that there was a quorum.

Department President Penny Mazonna turned the chair over to American Legion Auxiliary, Alaska Girls State Director Yvonne Lamm.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

American Legion Auxiliary, Girls State Conference Report

See attached report.

American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program and Operations Guide

There are new guidelines for the entire national program of the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program. The official trademarked name of the program is the American Legion Auxiliary, Alaska Girls State, Inc. We need to protect the trademarked name of the program and use it in its entirety as it is a branding issue.

The new location is St. Theresa's Wilderness Camp in Wasilla. The Bunk houses are on a hill but Vonn is bringing her side by side for transporting staff and girls if need be. Secretary Linda elaborated on the cost difference to justify the camp move amounted to a savings of one half. Cabins will hold up to fourteen girls, bunk houses are carpeted and the bunks are built in, girls will still have to bring sleeping bags. The camp is located off of Engstrom on Bogard Rd. behind the fire station. The camp is still in the same general area as Kings Lake camp and likewise is still on a lake, dining room and kitchen and general meeting room are in the same building. The Camp caretaker is a certified lifeguard and has offered to act as lifeguard for two hours each day.

Web Site

Linda Schmitt addressed the separate web site set up by Deb Henderson. Nothing has been updated other than the director since 2009.

Linda Schmitt made a motion to write a letter to Deb Henderson to take down the exterior website and incorporate the Girls State website on our Department website. Lisa Williamson has agreed to do the work to achieve this end. The motion was seconded. Discussion ensued. Lisa clarified that since Girls State is a program of the American Legion Auxiliary, it only makes sense that it should be incorporated into our Department website. Motion approved.

Lisa Williamson made a motion to do the same thing with any other social media concerning the Girls State program as well. Debra Henderson has to provide all passwords that is attached to the Girls State name in any way shape or form. The motion was seconded. Motion approved.

American Legion Auxiliary, Alaska Girls State 2015

Changes to application, Registration, Interview Information

- *Girls State Application*

Vonn asked everyone to find the application that goes to the girls who want to attend the program. The changes are:

Sex – Male or Female? Why would a boy want to go to Girls State? It is a transgender problem that arose in another state. If male is indicated on the application, the question must be asked if they will be

female by the beginning of the girl's state session. If the answer is no then the individual must be directed and recommended to the boy's state program. Maggie Van Dyke expressed that this is a problem in all departments and no one wants to ask this question. Unfortunately, it must be asked.

Interviewers must also ask if the girls are pregnant. If they are pregnant they must be allowed to attend the program.

Marital Status – Interviewers must ask if the girl is married. Unmarried girls go to girl's state – not married women. Married women are emancipated, unmarried girls cannot come and go as they please. Unmarried girls are still under the guardianship of their parents.

Citizenship – The girls do not have to be a US citizen to attend the girl's state program. In order to run for President of Girls Nation they must be a US citizen.

Someone needs to go to the Anchorage School District for permission to go to schools. It was suggested that we return to the way we used to do it in Anchorage. All of the Units in Anchorage get together and work together to hold interviews on the same day. This will require someone in the Anchorage area to spearhead this effort and to act as coordinator to further this process. Requires someone to fill out a form and submit it to the school district. It needs to be stated on the form that it is not a school sponsored event. The form needs to go to each school.

In the Unit packets are strips of paper containing all of the schools in the area of the Unit.

It was suggested that the State of Alaska has a newsletter for all of their homeschool programs and we may want to contact the state and see if they would put the Girls State contact information and application in their newsletter.

“No men at Girls State” in the bylaws, this rule is directly opposite of National and other states. Vonn told us that we are not very American Legion family oriented because we discriminate against men at Girls State. Secretary Linda Schmitt read the Standing Rule: “To assure that there be no hint of impropriety at an Alaska Girls State session, only women shall be housed in the sleeping quarters.”

Form Letter for the Units – Designates who sponsors the girl to Alaska Girls State and where the girl needs to go for her interview.

The registration form is a shorter registration form this year. It is more to the point.

Media Release and Information Disclosure form are added. All girls must sign these for photos to be taken.

- *Background Checks and DMV check for staff*

Background and DMV Checks – Will be done on every staff member attending Girls State.

All Staff or Unit members chauffeuring girls to the program will have to have a DMV check done.

- *New T-Shirts, Logo Design, Colors etc.*

There are two possibilities for the Alaska Girls State Logo. Due to branding and trademark requirements by the National organization, these are the only choices that we can use for our program. Lavonne Collier made a motion to choose the black and white logo design. The motion was seconded. Motion approved. The majority voted to go with the Auxiliary logo and the wording, “American Legion Auxiliary Alaska Girls State” in the black and white logo.

Colleen Newman Robert G. Blair Unit 17 made a motion that the staff shirts be red and the girls shirts be forest green. Motion seconded. Discussion ensued. Colleen Newman rescinded her original motion and amended the motion to go with different two shades of blue. Motion approved.

Lavonne Collier Jack Henry Unit 1 made a motion that staff shirts be women's polo shirts and the girls will shirts will be t-shirts. Motion seconded. Motion approved.

New shirts for staff will be dark blue polo shirts and the girls t-shirts will be light blue. Motion seconded. Motion approved.

- Storage Facility

Marge Blankenship Peters Creek Unit 33 made a motion to secure temporary dry storage capped at \$100.00 to store Girls State belongings. Motion seconded. Motion approved.

For Information - There will no longer be a Girls State handbook. It is not cost effective to produce it. The girls will be given the Uniform Rules instead.

Computers for House and Senate

We need two inexpensive (\$200 – \$250 each) laptop computers for the girls to type up their bills. Linda Schmitt made a motion to spend up to \$500.00 to purchase a laptop for the house and a laptop for the senate for Girls State. Motion seconded. Motion approved.

American Legion Auxiliary, Alaska Girls State Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules

The Girls State Constitution was last updated in 2004, the Bylaws were updated in 2002 and the Standing Rules were last updated in 2004. There are many discrepancies, inconsistencies and contradictions between the three documents. We need to work on and amend these documents so that they can be ready for Department Convention.

Linda Gunvalson Spenard Unit 28 made a motion for the Girls State board and three other members work on the Girls State Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules to be ready for adoption at Department Convention being held in Seward in April of 2015. The motion was seconded. Discussion ensued. Lavonne Collier recommended the Department Constitution and Bylaws committee to work on these documents. Linda Gunvalson amended her original motion to include the Constitution and Bylaws committee instead of three other members. The amendment to the original motion was seconded. Motion approved.

A point of clarification was requested by Lisa Williamson as to who sits on the Constitution and Bylaws committee:

Lavonne Collier – Chairman

Jane Larson

Betty Randall

Sue Diaz

Sharon Dillon

Lisa Williamson - Advisor

Leona Schank – (was not one of the original appointees) – Lavonne requested that Leona be added to the committee. Sue Caswell made a motion to ratify Leona Schank as being on the Constitution and Bylaws committee. The motion was seconded. Motion approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Michelle Giddings Dorman H. Baker Unit 11 announced that Unit 11 is donating \$2,000 to American Legion Auxiliary Alaska Girls State program to aid in the purchase of computers or other needs as required by the program. Vonn requested donations of money or air miles to aid in transporting girls from bush communities to the program.

Linda Gunvalson Spenard Unit 28 made a motion to adjourn this meeting of the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State board. The motion was seconded. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda A. Schmitt
American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Alaska
Secretary/Treasurer