

Minutes
Cornwall and District Branch (ON 54)
Branch Annual Member's Meeting (BAM)
Held on 7 May 2025
At the Cornwall Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion

The call to order was issued at 10:35 am.

1. The President, Veronica Britton, declared we had a quorum as the number of members present exceeded the numbers necessary based on our Branch By-Laws. Forty-one members were present for the meeting which included our seven Board members.

2. The President offered a Land Acknowledgement.

A member suggested that everyone in attendance should stand and introduce themselves. This will be taken into consideration by the Board for future events, however the President cautioned that doing so would impact the overall schedule requiring either an earlier start time or delaying lunch.

The Vice-President, Claude Bourget, explained that blank cards were placed on all tables for attendees' comments and questions.

3. The President requested a moment of silence for our deceased members.

4. The President welcomed all members and thanked them for attending. The President then introduced the Branch Board of Directors and listed their portfolios: Vice-President/Branch Advocacy Liaison Claude Bourget, Secretary/Membership/Web Master Anne-Marie Griffin, Veterans Liaison Peter McBride, Health & Long-Term Care Rainer Pethke, Director Mike Griffin and Director Denise Duquette. She also introduced our volunteers for the day, Lise Poirier, Lorraine Cartier and Monica McCool.

5. The members were asked to approve the agenda. Motioned by the Secretary and seconded by Richard Beaupre. Motion was approved.

6. The President requested that the minutes of the Branch Annual Meeting of 9 May 2024 be approved. Moved by Leo Lehtiniemi and seconded by Claude Poitras. Motion was approved.

7. Vice-President's Report. The Vice-President advised that his report, available in bilingual format, was distributed as a handout as members arrived. He then proceeded to focus on the critical importance of Advocacy and the need to meet with our local political representatives within our Branch boundaries. He explained that the Cornwall Branch sits within three Federal and Provincial Districts. He then outlined the current four strategic advocacy-related priorities that guides the advocacy program within the Association – protection of our pensions, a national program for pharmaceutical, better supports for our Veterans and national strategy for Health Care. He advised that during the last provincial and federal elections, our Branch had written to all election candidates, provided an opinion letter (which was also published in a local newspaper) and then sent congratulations to the elected candidates. He also reminded members

that the best recruiting tool we have is word of mouth and encouraged everyone to talk to eligible family and friend and promote our Association.

The Vice-President advised that our Branch had a new Preferred Partner, CAA North & East Ontario and that flyers were available at the back of the room.

8. Secretary's Report. The Secretary advised that her report was given out as a handout and our Branch membership stood at 2,356 active members. The Secretary explained that in her report she had listed Lost Contact and Reported Death. She explained, in greater details, what constitute a "Lost Contact" and a "Reported Death". She explained the importance of all members to advise family and/or friends that they belong to our Association so we can be notified when a member passes away or requires a change of address because of a residential move. This way, the Branch can make the appropriate changes to their status and contact information.

9. The President introduced our Veterans Liaison Director and advised his report was available as a handout. She advised that he had worked diligently on our sponsorship of 2024 Remembrance Day Wreath with the Legions in our catchment area.

10. President's Report. The President advised that she also still carries the duties of the Treasurer which is why we desperately need to fill the vacant position.

She thanked everyone who had attended our information and recruiting event in Kemptville in October 2024. She advised the event was a success as we had increased our membership base by a few new members and the MEDOC presentation had been very well received.

She explained that she and the Vice-President had attended several District and National meetings. She explained briefly that the current President of the National Association, Roy Goodall's position was up for re-election this year. She advised that former President Jean-Guy Souliere had also put his name forward for nomination. She asked everyone for feedback on their preference, as her vote at the Annual Member's Meeting (AMM) represents the wishes of our Branch membership. She also advised that an organizational structure review of the Association, including the structure of the branches, was underway and that more information would be passed along to everyone directly by the National Association once available.

The President discussed briefly an interesting report from the National Office on the Power of Pensions.

11. Financial Report. The acting Treasurer reminded those present that the Branch subscribes to the Branch Banking Initiative (BBI) wherein the National Office Finance department holds responsibility for posting all our transaction (acting as bookkeeper) and for paying expenses we submit from our branch funds held by them (acting as our banker). The review did not go as smoothly this year as in 2023.

During our year end review process, a number of issues/anomalies were discovered which necessitated more detailed investigation to ensure proper accounting treatment and to verify the balances provided. She assured the membership that we have no concerns as most appear to be clerical issues in the posting of transactions – we are in good financial position and our funds are

secure. She has communicated with both our National Office Board of Director's district representatives and the Chief Financial Officer of the Association in the interest of transparency. We will continue conducting our due diligence with the support and cooperation of the National office staff to ensure the accuracy of the financial transaction for 2024 activities and will present them to you in due course. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we work towards final reconciliation of our 2024 Financial Statement and Reserves.

The 2025 budget showing an estimated operating cost of \$14,000.00 was tabled. It was moved by Peter McBride and seconded by Lise Poirier to receive the budget. The motion was approved.

11. Election of Officers

The President opened the elections. She invited nominations for the position of Treasurer and none were received. The President will need to continue to fill the role until a volunteer comes forward.

The President invited nominations for a second Vice-President to serve as a possible successor for the President. One nomination was received from the floor. No other nominations were received and Denise Duquette was acclaimed to the position.

The President invited nominations from the floor for a secretary in waiting and none were received.

Lillian Bedard volunteered to join the Board as a Director and was welcomed.

12. The President stated that 2026 will be the 30th anniversary of our Branch. She suggested we would be looking for volunteers to organize a celebration event.

13. The President motioned to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Leo Lehtiniemi. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am.

14. Our guest speaker was Josée Desrochers-Leduc, Education Coordinator at the Alzheimer's Society Cornwall & District. Her presentation was entitled "Understanding Dementia. More than a State of Mind". The presentation was very well received by all in attendance.

15. Lunch was provided by the Legion staff and enjoyed by all.

Veronica Britton – President

Anne-Marie Griffin - Secretary

Date

Date