



## **Navy League of the United States**

### **Annual Meeting of Members**

#### **MINUTES**

SAN DIEGO, CA- JUNE 8, 2024

9:00 AM - 11:15 AM

Room: Coronado ABC

- I. National President Chris Townsend called the meeting to order at 9:12 AM PDT**
- II. NL Chaplain Ron Brooks led Pledge of Allegiance and delivered Invocation**
- III. The presentation of colors was delivered by a local Sea Cadet unit.**
- IV. Report of Proxy Committee**
  - a. The Proxy Committee was reported by National Corporate Secretary, Tom Pruter. According to Bylaw 4.1, the national president can designate the time, place, and procedures for the annual meeting.
  - b. Proxy committee findings for 2024:
    - Proxies were due by May 30, 2024
    - 493 members submitted proxies electronically or physically
    - 65 members signed in and present at the meeting
    - Total member count: 558
- V. The National Corporate Secretary has established Quorum was met**
- VI. The minutes of the 10 June 2023 Annual Meeting of Members were approved**
- VII. National President Chris Townsend Delivered Report**
  - a. Noted a significantly productive year
  - b. The organization is in a better position compared to June 2023
  - c. **Leadership Engagement:**
    - NP Townsend engaged with the Pentagon, Capitol Hill and the White House
    - High-level cooperation established with Navy and other senior military leadership
    - Notable international engagement includes a recent trip to Romania, with results briefed to the Chief of Naval Operations
  - d. **Council and Regional Updates:**

- Attended every regional meeting except one (due to daughter's graduation)
  - Reinforced message of national support and actively listened to regional challenges
  - Stronger relationships and trust are established between local councils and national leadership.
- e. **Organizational Development:**
- Key leadership vacancies from the previous year have been filled
  - Regional Presidents are actively supporting their councils and resolving issues
  - Council crises have improved with structured support and project-based intervention
- f. **Council Expansion:**
- New councils being established in:
    - Juneau, AK
    - Korea
    - Perth, Australia
    - Birmingham
    - Nashville
    - Crestview
    - Biloxi
    - Miami
  - Memberships stable but not growing at anticipated levels
  - Stronger councils expected to drive future membership growth
- g. **International Relations:**
- Leveraged travel opportunities to meet with international councils
  - Held productive discussions in South Korea and Romania
  - Participated in Romania's Navy Day (August 2023) and follow-up engagement
- h. **Advocacy Efforts:**
- First in person congressional engagement since 2019 was held last month
  - Event was successful in promoting Navy League service priorities on Capitol Hill
  - Well received by members across the country
- i. **Headquarters and Operations:**
- Headquarters staff continue to perform at a high and disciplined level

- Sea Air Space Conference shattered previous engagement metrics and was fully managed by a lean team of 30 staff members

j. **Database Migration:**

- Phase 1 of the database migration is complete
- Some initial challenges reported, but system improvements are ongoing

k. **Closing Remarks:**

- The President expressed confidence and enthusiasm for the organization's future
- Declared the Navy League to be as strong as ever in its 121-year history

**VIII. National Corporate Secretary Tom Pruter Delivers Report**

a. **Membership Statistics**

- As of May 1, 2024, the total membership of the Navy League of the United States was 30,024 members
- Comparison with Previous year: May 1, 2023: 30,749 members. Loss: 725 members

b. **Membership Breakdown (As of May 1, 2024)**

- Total members: 30,024
  - 18,651 Regular members
  - 4,414 Five-year members
  - 5,311 Community members
  - 62 Corporate Gold members
  - 75 Regular Corporate members
  - 59 Nonprofit and Government Agency members
  - 14 Small Business Corporate members
- Among the Regular members, 606 are Active members.
- Among the Corporate Gold members: 31 identified

c. **Council Count**

- Total number of active councils as of May 1, 2024, is 186
- The Corporate Secretary concluded the report and formally submitted it for inclusion in the meeting record

**IX. CEO Mike Stevens Gives Report**

a. **Introduction:**

- CEO Mike Stevens opened his remarks by acknowledging the length of his report and asked for attendees' patience. He expressed appreciation to members for their time, commitment, and financial support, which directly supports the Navy League's mission.

b. **Organizational Growth and Achievements:**

- Outperforming all previous achievements in advocacy, education, and support of the U.S sea services
  - Strengthened ties with government, industry leaders, and the public to further maritime security advocacy
- c. **Mission and Strategic Planning:**
- Focused on advocacy for maritime policy, educational programming and events, and support for active-duty personnel, veterans, and their families
  - Developed annually to align operations with mission and vision, including performance metrics
  - Optimized internal communication, reduced redundant meetings, and improved efficiency (2023)
- d. **Financial Overview:**
- Annual Revenue: \$20 million
  - Annual Expenses: \$18 million
  - Managed Portfolio: 36 million
- e. **Financial Department:**
- Implemented new financial management systems
  - Improved transparency, compliance, and operational efficiency
  - Successfully identified and managed \$1.5 million in new investments
- f. **Technology & Media Department:**
- Major Achievements:
    - Migrated over 120,000 records
    - Revamped websites for improved user experience
    - Created a mobile app to streamline reporting
    - Doubled scholarship applications
- g. **Media & Communications:**
- Enhanced social media and newsletter presence
  - Increased visibility of council events
  - Doubled scholarship applications
- h. **Headquarters Operations & Staffing**
- Staff operate under an integrated strategy with specialized departments (IT, legislative affairs, marketing, legal, etc.)
- i. **Human Resources (HR):**
- Retention Rate: 75% (above the national average of 48%)
  - Programs include monthly employee shout outs, staff lunches, and celebrations

- Ongoing effort to be recognized as one of the top 10 workplaces in Arlington, VA
- j. **Advocacy & Legislative Affairs:**
- 2023-2024 Legislative Campaign
    - Advocacy for funding LPD-33 and Coast Guard operations
    - Hosted Congressional events, roundtables, and the Congressional Maritime Seminar
    - CMS included third day field trips to shipyards, and generated strong congressional engagement
    - Achieved major policy wins including defeating adverse amendments via rapid-response emails adjustments
- k. **Member Engagement**
- Successfully chartered the New Hampshire Council
  - Membership Rebate Distribution: \$31,191
  - Maintained 77%-member retention rate
- l. **Navy League Building LLC**
- The Navy League's building in Arlington was impacted by post-pandemic occupancy challenges
  - Cash infusion and new tenants helped stabilize revenue
  - Facing refinancing challenges, potential engagement with a special servicing process is anticipated for a loan due in December 2025
- m. **Active-Duty Membership Strategy:**
- Ongoing discussions about reducing online subscription costs to \$20
  - Renewed efforts to build a strategy encouraging active-duty personnel to join
  - Emphasis on removing misconceptions among Navy leadership that prevent participation
  - Plans for complementary memberships are being explored. Pending alignment with national programs and council capabilities
- n. **Council Support Tools and Communication:**
- Marketing Director, Evan Clarke, is developing tools and training to support councils in membership outreach and social media efforts
  - Suggestion made for monthly update emails from leadership (CEO or National President) to region presidents to improve communication down to local councils
  - The "Connections" newsletter is already available but may be landing in spam folders
- o. **Organizational Transparency and Structure:**

- Proposal to create a digital staff navigator (directory) listing national team members, bios, and responsibilities to help local councils engage effectively

**X. Bill Stevenson, III Presents Nominating Committee Report**

**a. Delegate Election Process:**

- National Parliamentarian Bruce Bishop facilitated the presentation and election of the national delegates
- Delegates listed by region, reviewed for accuracy, and corrections made when appropriate

**b. Motion to accept the slate of corrected candidates was passed unanimously**

**c. Governance Concern:**

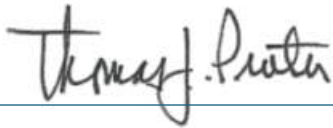
- Concern raised about a delegate being nominated and elected without region level input
- Recommendation made to review bylaws and nomination procedures to ensure regional involvement

**d. Recognition: Presidential Award- Bill Stevenson, III, Chair**

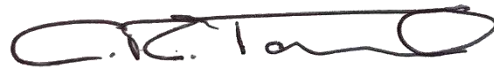
- Bill Stevenson received the Navy League Presidential Award for:
- Outstanding service as trusted advisor and nominating committee chair
- Voluntary support of the national president and Navy League business
- Continued leadership and commitment post-presidency, especially during and after the pandemic

**XI. National President Chris Townsend adjourned the meeting at 10:37 AM PT.**

Respectfully written and submitted:



**Thomas J. Pruter**  
National Corporate Secretary



**Christopher Townsend**  
National President