



Post 552

American Legion Meeting Minutes

18 June 2026

Meeting Called to Order: 6:00 pm

Officers Present: (Note absences)

Commander	Doug Benzel
1 st Vice	Bill Marsh
2 nd Vice	Mike Hill (excused)
Adjutant	Dave Schmidt
Finance Officer	Kent Van Horn
Chaplain	Bill Bartle
Service Officer	Dave Schmidt
Sergeant-At-Arms	Jim Vander Ploeg
Public Affairs Off.	Carlos Bazua
Asst. Adjutant	Bill Heard

Guests: Vic Martin, Commander, American Legion District 22

Installation of Officers:

District Commander Vic Martin presided over the installation of Post 552 officers: Commander Doug Benzel, 1st Vice Bill Marsh, and Sergeant of Arms Jim Vander Ploeg. He read the charge that outlined their American Legion duties as Post officers, then swore them into office. He called on members of the Post to support the officers in their duties.

Minutes from the May meeting:

Approved on a motion by Bill Heard, seconded by Bill Marsh.

Committee Reports:

Finance Officer Kent Van Horn reported that the Post's brokerage account is up somewhat, an increase of \$365.81 over the previous period. Bingo revenues in May were \$105.00, for a total of \$1,361.00 thus far this year. Net income from May raffles were \$95.00, for a total so far this year of \$512.00.

Membership:

Adjutant Dave Schmidt said the Post's membership percentage stands at 90 percent, compared to the District's 93.61 percent.

Boys and Girls State:

Kent Van Horn reported that this Saturday a chartered bus transported delegates, including two of Post 552's delegates to Sacramento for Boys and Girls State. One delegate flew on her own. It is hoped that at least 2 delegates will be at our July meeting to give their presentation.

Boy Scout Troop 271:

Troop 271 Liaison Officer Bill Heard reported that the Scout Troop continued an active schedule of hikes and community projects. Troop Committee Chair Sarah Knoke has ordered a 3 X 5 flag for display in the Post, and it has been shipped. The Post's share of the cost will be \$181. She plans to have Scouts present the flag at an upcoming meeting.

American Legion Baseball:

Commander Benzel reported that he recently contacted the coach of the Mission Bay Cobras, the team our Post sponsors. We have budgeted \$600.00 which will be sent to the District. District Commander Martin said the cost of sponsorship per player had risen to between \$125 and \$150 and the cost per team had risen to \$900. Because of the increase in expenses, he said the District will switch its teams to the Connie Mack Baseball League, which will cost only \$350 per team. The Cobras will compete in the Connie Mack program. Kent Van Horn said he will send \$600 to District 22.

Sons of the American Legion Update:

Commander Benzel said Post 552 and the SAL will sponsor a fish fry in August. Date and time to be announced. Dave Schmidt will be the point of contact.

Unfinished Business:

1st Vice Bill Marsh said the next Bingo session is set for 21 June at 6:30 p.m. Future Bingo will start at 4:00 P.M.

Public Affairs:

PAO Carlos Basua sent Bingo fliers to senior independent living and retirement homes in the area. He has been sending out blanket texts and emails to all groups with ties to the VFW Hall. Jim provided homemade candles for the next few months of Bingo.

Commander Benzel asked for a volunteer to attend the American Legion California convention in his place since he will not be able to attend. The convention is 25-28 June in Visalia. Bill Marsh is scheduled to attend.

New Business:

Sergeant-at-Arms Vander Ploeg will be away from San Diego for the next four months. Todd Hagwood from the SAL will fill in for him.

The August Post 552 meeting is rescheduled to August 27 due to a prior VFW Hall commitment.

Memorium for Deceased Member:

The Post observed a moment of silence for U.S. Navy veteran Mike Cook who died 9 June from complications of a stroke. He was 46 years old. His organs were donated so other lives could be saved. He was engaged to Jessica Marsh, daughter of Bill Marsh. A celebration of life is scheduled for 7 August.

Good of the American Legion:

District Commander Martin announced that a specially customized motorcycle will be presented at the American Legion convention to disabled veteran Josh Hooker of Poway.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

/s/Signed July 6, 2026
Adjutant Dave Schmidt