Post 552

American Legion Meeting Minutes

15 October 2026

Meeting Called to Order: 6:03 pm

Officers Present: (Note absences)

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

Guest: None

Other members: Corey Blount, Gabe Rowin

Finance Report:

Finance Officer Kent Van Horn delivered the finance report for August and September. He noted that the VFW had made their American Legion Baseball contribution. Kent also plans to write a check to the VFW for half of the property taxes.

Membership:

Adjutant Dave Schmidt reported that he has sent out 10 membership cards since our last meeting. He said the Post currently has 84 members toward a goal of 130, which is 64.62 percent of the goal. Commander Benzel suggested that a “Buddy Check” of Legion

members before the end of 2026 might be appropriate to encourage active participation in Post 552. He asked the Adjutant to review last year's letter to Post 1000 members for possible issuance in the near future.

Boy Scout Troop 271:

Troop leadership is planning an online or in-person Holiday Gift Basket sale in November and December. The goal is to raise $3,000. Troop leadership also is considering a "Vendors Give-Back" program that would enlist local businesses to donate 10% to 15 % of certain sales to Troop 271. The goal is to raise $5,000.

The revenue is intended to support Scout attendance at the annual Philmont Scout Jamboree next summer. Troop leadership hopes to raise $16,000 by next July. The total cost of sending 12 Scouts and six adults to Philmont is $36,000, including registration, transportation, food, etc. The Troop has collected $14,490 in deposits from the Scouts' families. There's currently a $5,500 gap, which Troop leadership expects to fill in time for the Jamboree.

Sons of the American Legion Update:

In the absence of 2nd Vice Mike Hill, there was no report. Gabe Rowin reported that SAL purchased some blue chairs for the patio deck.

Sick Call:

Mike Hill was absent due to a medical procedure.

Unfinished Business:

The signs have been received for placement on Mission Bay Drive at the north entrance to Pacific Beach. Brush must be cleared at the site. The frame is expected to be erected November 7-8 or November 14-15. The sign will include the logos of the American Legion Post 552 and VFW Post 5985.

Commander Benzel reported that the Fish Fry was a great success, bringing in $1,200 to be split evenly with SAL. Special thanks to Donavon Morris for securing the fish the morning of the Fish Fry. Carlos Bazua suggested that next time the Post issue tickets to attendees to avoid long lines waiting for food.

New Business:

Bill Heard moved and Dave Schmidt seconded a motion to provide $500 to Troop 271 to help with fundraising for sending Scouts to Philmont Ranch jamboree next summer, and $500 to the American Legion Auxiliary for its Cookies with Santa event. Motion carried.

Commander Benzel presented Finance Officer Kent Van Horn with a special American Legion pin in recognition of his outreach work on the Post's Boys and Girls State program.

Good of the American Legion:

Bill Heard noted that May 5, 2028, will be the 90th anniversary of Post 552. He recommended that Post leadership think ahead about how to celebrate the anniversary.

Commander Benzel recognized SAL member Todd Hagwood for filling in as Sergeant-At-Arms for the past few months.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

/s/Signed November 1, 2026

Adjutant Dave Schmidt