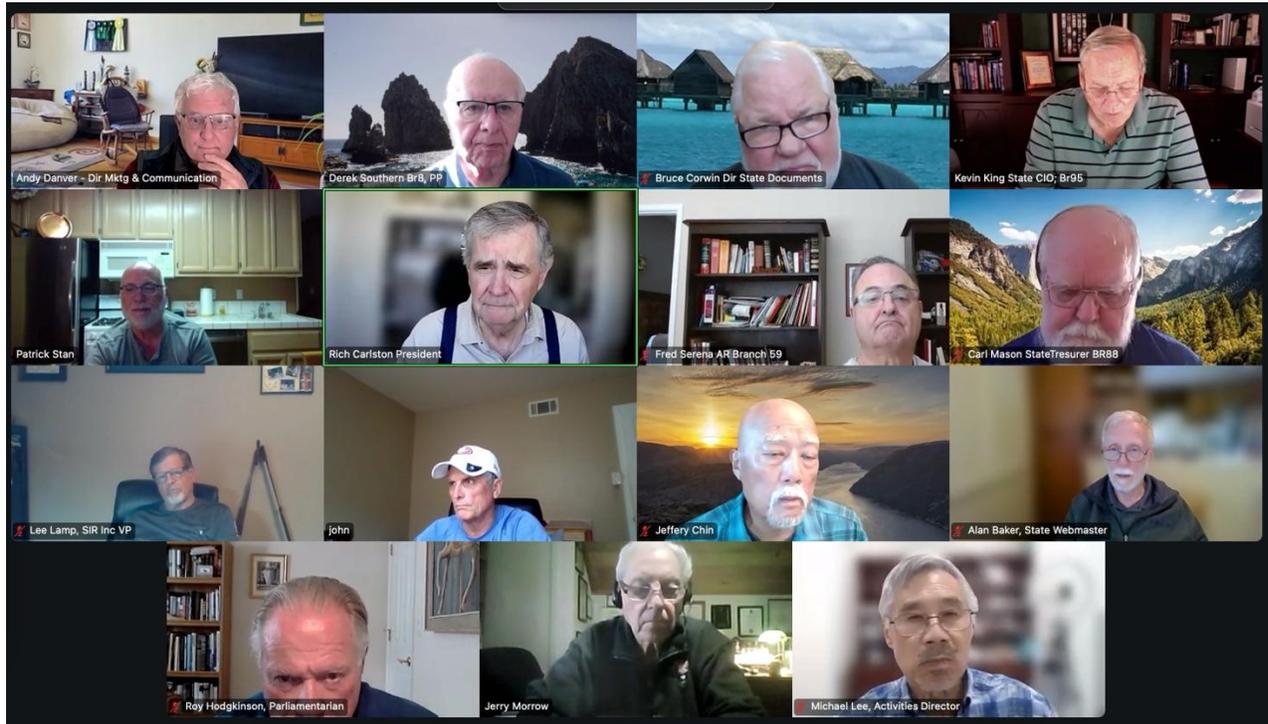


## DRAFT Minutes of the SIR Inc Board Meeting January 2025 by Zoom

### Attendees



### Meeting Commences

Rich called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. Several new members introduced themselves. John mentioned his background in manufacturing and distribution, his involvement with USA, and his volunteer work in San Mateo County, expressing interest in building communities and suggesting using pickleball to bring more people in. Patrick Stan, from the San Francisco chapter, mentioned his four years of involvement, focusing on golf and social aspects.

### Oath of Office and Meeting Schedule

All board members took an oath of office [13]. The 2025 board meeting schedule was reviewed and approved [13].

### Quorum and Consent Calendar

Jeff confirmed a quorum was present. Attendees: Rich Carlston, Lee Lamp, Jeff Chin, Carl Mason, Roy Hodgkinson, Bruce Corwin, Fred Serena, Andy Danver, Derek Southern, Kevin King, Alan Baker and Michael Lee. A motion by Bruce to approve the minutes from the previous board meeting, it was seconded by Carl and passed unanimously.

Carl presented the financial information and proposed budget. He noted that **there was \$19,100 unspent last year**. The revenue was \$95,000, and fixed costs included insurance, taxes, and hardware/software. Variable costs were budgeted at \$35,000, but only \$16,000 was spent. This year, variable costs are projected to be \$41,000

due to assessment increases. **\$75,000 is budgeted for a potential legal advisor if a new charter is pursued.** \$14,700 is allocated for projects and \$400 for in-person meetings. \$5,000 was donated by Dale. Assessments are up by \$6,000. Marketing and communication are budgeted at \$7,700, and the director of branch support at \$7,000. The board retreat budget is \$4,000. Carl mentioned that projections from 2003 predicted being out of business by 2028 if assessments were not raised, but that the organization is now projected to be in good financial shape until 2035. **There was effectively no membership loss this year.** A question was raised about branch losses. The response was that three branches were lost, but these were mergers, and 25 branches grew [1].

A motion was made by Lee, to accept the financial report and approve the budget, it was seconded by Carl, and passed.

### **Membership and Branch Growth**

Andy shared an analysis showing that 25 branches gained members, 5 branches were flat, and the remaining branches decreased, with over 10% being down significantly [2]. There was a discussion about finding out what the successful branches are doing, noting a membership workshop held on October 8th [3]. There is a need for continuing meetings and to maintain momentum to absorb membership loss [4]. Fred shared his assessment that Branch 128 is successful due to its recognition system, dedicated staffing, networking, and strong financials. He noted the challenges smaller branches have in competing with these larger branches [5]. Jared asked what Branch 128 did to bring in new members. Fred said that most of it was face-to-face, networking, and dedicated marketing and advertising [6]. Andy added that 50% of 128's new members came from newspaper ads and 50% from face-to-face invitations [7]. Roy suggested looking at geographic targeting and population centers [8]. A postcard project was suggested for struggling branches [9]. Jerry Morrow introduced himself and mentioned visiting six branches to discuss retention. He has been getting new members at the county fairs and passing out business cards at branches. He is worried about the Jackson branch, which is declining [10]. Michael Lee, the new activities director, introduced himself, mentioning that his Branch 128 is growing rapidly due to activities [11].

### **Moment of Silence for Dale Decker**

A moment of silence was observed for Sir Dale Decker, recognizing his dedication to the organization [12]. Dale's obituary will be in the Union Democrat (Sonora newspaper) next week, and a celebration of life is planned for the second week of February [12].

### **Scam and Security Awareness**

A discussion about the increasing number of scams and a program to assist branches was held [14]. Derek mentioned two kinds of scams: those with "red flags" and those requiring proactive measures [15]. Allan and Derek are planning a Zoom meeting on scams and security at the end of February and will be training ambassadors to travel to branch meetings [16]. Branches should reduce the emails of branch leaders on

websites [17]. There is a need to warn branches about how to prevent public information from being gathered [18]. There was discussion about the fact that public information is readily available to bad actors [19].

### **Branch Advisory Council (BAC)**

Rich provided an update on the BAC, noting that the main purpose is to re-establish trust between branches and the state [20]. The BAC is having healthy discussions and getting different perspectives [20]. The summaries of the meetings will be sent to members of the committee and the board [20]. The BAC confirmed the desire to leave things as they are [21]. The two main issues that came up were the names of the president and vice president position and the need for a policy for converting to a mixed branch [21]. The five-year plan will be discussed at the next BAC [22]. Kevin suggested adding Fernando Gonzalez to the distribution list [23]. There was a question on why the meeting summaries aren't posted on the state website [23]. Andy stated that some BAC members are unsure of the council's purpose [24]. It was confirmed that the BAC is a means to share information and gain transparency [22].

### **NCG Advertising Postcard Program**

Jim Gragg has resigned from the board, causing a delay in the NCG advertising postcard program [25]. Someone is needed to take responsibility for the program [25]. The program is going to generate leads that will be sent to the branches [25]. The state will begin to do the marketing and provide leads [25]. A postcard program is also in the works and is not expected to be as difficult as the NCG program [26]. It was determined that a targeted postcard program is beneficial because the responses go directly to the membership chair [27].

### **Grouper Program**

A program with Grouper is being developed, where members can receive compensation for being active [28]. The program will be available in March [28]. Lee believes the database access provides a great opportunity to broaden visibility [29].

### **Newsletter**

Feedback was requested on the January newsletter [28]. Suggestions for topics are welcome [30]. Rich is considering summarizing the marketing meeting on the back page of the February newsletter [30].

### **Director Reports**

Michael reported on the activities meeting from December 11th. Priorities include increasing support for state activities and events, encouraging more areawide events, and a handbook on how to start new branch activities is being developed. Quarterly meetings of the activities committee will be held. Annual approval of activities is required. A \$1,500 budget for 2025 to help branches start new activities was requested. There is already \$1000 allocated for this [31, 32].

Andy provided a marketing update. Countywide adventures are being pushed, there will be a three-month minimum run for ads in local papers, and ads will be bigger than

a single column. Placement of ads in every other edition is being worked on. Regional magazine ads are being used, and Next Door is being used to promote lunches and activities. San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus are part of the pilot program. The state will cover half the cost of the advertising in these areas. The Turlock Times has a creative team who is helping. There is a need for an approval process for ads. There are questions about where to send people who respond to the ads. Allan Baker set up a landing page for San Mateo. Branch one in Santa Clara will take phone calls. The ads will start running soon. Branches have been inconsistent in messaging. A member has a publicity chair who says he cannot describe sir in an ad without saying sons in retirement. There are elevator speeches and brochures available. There is a need to centralize the marketing effort. Carl is concerned about spending and suggests matching up to a certain amount. **The overall cost is \$10,500, split 50/50 with branches.** The marketing program is a pilot and will be evaluated before any broad rollout is considered [33-36].

Bruce reported that revisions to the SIR manual are being made [37].

Kevin reported that three former CIOs have joined his leadership team and are reviewing the membership system, the form 20 process, and the mailbox structure [38, 39].

### **Meeting Adjournment**

Rich thanked everyone for their contributions and declared the meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM. [40].