



**Sons In Retirement Inc.**  
**MINUTES - State Board Special Meeting**  
**Veterans Memorial Building,**  
**420 Admiral Callaghan Lane, Vallejo, CA**  
**Friday, March 7, 2014**



**State Board Members**

President-Maynard Rodland  
 Vice President-Bobbie Hairston  
 Secretary-Richard DeVoe  
 Assistant Secretary-Ron Flagel  
 Treasurer-Mike Berry  
 Assistant Treasurer-Karl Ryden  
 Director, Region 1-Bob Roberts  
 Director, Region 2-Russ Salazar  
 \* Absent

Director, Region 3-Jimmie Johnson  
 Director, Region 4-Bob Staib  
 Director, Region 5-Bob Fox  
 Director, Region 6-Dean Steichen  
 Director, Region 7-Roland Rempel\*  
 Director, Region 8-Jerry Strain  
 Director, Region 9-Don Dill  
 Director, Region 10-James Filippo

**Other Attending Invited Participants**

G&M Chair\*-Jerry Milano  
 G&M Training Chair/SAT\*-Derek Southern  
 G&M SAT\*\*- Ed Benson  
 G&M SAT\*\*- Roger Pelz  
 G&M SAT\*\*- Walter Schick  
 \*Moderator \*\*Facilitator

Past Presidents-  
 Rich Dettmer  
 Art Pufford  
 Jim Stedman

**Meeting Purpose per Special Meeting Notice Jan. 22, 2014**

- to identify the problems affecting Branch health and survival- specifically involving membership loss (attrition) and recruiting.
- to develop solutions and an action plan designed to significantly counter these problems.

**Call to Order, Welcome, Installation**

President Maynard Rodland called the Special Meeting to order at 9:30am and welcomed the Board Members, Past Presidents, and other invited participants.  
 Secretary Dick DeVoe verified there was a quorum.  
 Region 1 Director Bob Roberts led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the Invocation.  
 Bob Fox was installed as Region 5 Director.

**President's Remarks**

President Rodland presented the reality that more men retiring now don't feel as great a need to join SIR as in the past. Perhaps the social aspects of the SIR product are being found elsewhere with the ever-expanding electronic connectivity and other lifestyle changes retirees have to pick from. SIR needs to reevaluate its current purpose and its goals, placing greater focus/emphasis on things that attract and retain members- particularly increasing SIR coed and other activities. He complimented recent correspondence on the membership loss problem distributed to Board members from Past President Jim Stedman and Regional Director Don Dill, calling upon them to make some remarks.

Past President Jim stated that membership losses have been a part of SIR since the 1980's. Branch ageing is a critical problem for SIR that will never go away. We must respect the work of all those State Boards that have diligently worked on overcoming membership loss all those years, and recognize that the 2014 Board is a integral part of that continuum.

Regional Director Don described the action plan he and his Area Governors are instituting, with the stated objective "To stop the continuing loss of membership". The Region's plan focuses on every branch establishing a Branch Recruiting Team (BRT) comprised of assigned leaders responsible for specific aspects of the plan. The plan emphasizes

that each branch itself must take full responsibility for improvement in membership; the RD, AG's and State Committees can assist, but the branch itself must make it happen.

### **Vice President's Remarks**

Vice President Bobbie Hairston:

- reported that Travel Chair Larry Garvin is now home, recovering from 5-way bypass surgery;
- distributed to the Regional Directors information on how a branch can obtain a CA raffle license and run a raffle;
- submitted a bylaw change proposal to the Rules Committee, to provide greater flexibility in the annual meeting date;
- provided an update on a 2014 annual meeting location vs. Vallejo- Reno is not feasible, but Sacramento is being considered.

### **Breakout Groups**

Moderators Jerry Milano and Derek Southern provided a status report on branches and membership.

- From 2005 to the present, the no. of branches declined from 165 to 134. The average no. of members per branch declined from 134 to 125. The median is now 109 members.
- Over the three years 2011-2013:
  - the average SIR branch recruited 36% of membership but lost 50% to attrition, netting -14%.
  - 83 of 134 branches recruited at least 30%, averaging 10+% annually. Only 39 of those 83 reported a net gain in membership. Only 28 of the 83 met the 70% objective.
  - 11 of 134 branches grew each of the three years.
- Over the past ten years, the average branch lost members in six of those years.
- In 2013 the average attendance was 65% vs. the 70% objective.

The Moderators then directed the next few hours of the structured agenda. The participants were divided into three groups, with one of three facilitators at each table- Ed Benson, Roger Pelz, and Walter Schick. Each groups independently developed their ideas and then presented them at the end of each topic session (see Attachment).

Topic One: Identify why branches continue to lose membership.

Topic Two: Develop a range of practical solutions to increase membership.

Topic Three: Prepare and adopt an action plan from the solutions in Topic Two (the Board didn't have the time to fully adopt an action plan)

Notes from the sessions will be distributed to participants.

President Rodland charged each Regional Director to report in writing, prior to the April 8 Board meeting, a synopsis of actions being taken within his Region resulting from this Special Meeting. At the June 3 Board meeting, each Regional Director will report a brief summary of the feedback from the branches regarding their response to those actions.

### **Adjournment**

The next State Board meeting will be Tuesday, April 8, 2014 at the same location. The meeting was adjourned at 1:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dick DeVoe- Secretary

## **ATTACHMENT- RESPONSES TO TOPICS 1-3**

### **TOPIC 1 Summary:**

#### **What Are Key Problems Causing Membership Decline?**

Lack of recruiting focus	Poor meeting facilities
Product doesn't match market	Branch doesn't understand problem
Lack of interesting activities and lack of co-ed activities	Lack of member motivation
Don't know how to recruit	Not using existing tools
Image needs updating	Lack of promotion
	Don't understand why guests don't join

#### **TOPIC 2 Summary : What Are Solutions To The Problems?**

Examine image	More logo clothing
Facility improvement	Retention focus
Survey members	Use social media
Recognize success	Foster area activities
Create speakers bureau	Appoint PR person
Train Branch leaders	Focus on guests
Integrate new members	Branch recruiting team
Good will ambassador	Incentives
Measure results	Co-Ed activities
Communicate message	New member orientation

#### **TOPIC 3 Summary : What Is The Board's Role?**

(By Various Categories for Ease of Review)

The Board would require or request as appropriate the applicable State or Branch organization leaders to implement whatever the Board approves.

#### **Coed**

Promote activities which include our ladies.

#### **Training**

Hold Area roundtables 3-4 per year on membership growth techniques.

Train AG's how to help branches meet membership "+1" net annual goal

Promote the value of a branch Activities Chairman/Coordinator

Focus on retention, including surveying members on areas for improvement

Develop a recruitment training plan Train branch leaders

Focus on guests

Integrate new members

Improve Area Governor (AG) skills

#### **Communication**

Improve Branch sharing of activities/ideas/proposals within Area

Communicate a simpler goal: "+1" growth for each branch

Foster Area activities and Speaker Bureau

Improve use of social media

Show what success looks like

Share successful initiatives

### **Publicity - Internal and External**

Appoint a PR person at each branch

Recognize top recruiter- every Area

Recognize every branch which meets the +1 goal

Promote wearing SIR clothing with logo

### **Other**

Establish policy to address key issues

Obtain brand input

Use HLMs to help unhealthy branches

Examine SIR image

Encourage facility improvements