

Western Caucus Nation Convention Louisville Meeting Summary

August 31, 2026

Overview

The Western States Caucus reviewed prior business, finances, leadership endorsements, bylaws, selection procedures, department representation, and upcoming meetings.

Business Review

- Secretary confirmed a quorum and reported that the previous meeting minutes from May 5, 2026, were accepted as posted.
- The financial report showed a balance of \$4,146.47, with no expenses since the prior meeting.
- The caucus endorsed Jay Bowen of Colorado for National Commander for 2026–2027.

Leadership Decisions

- Marty Bigbie of Utah was recommended as the Western candidate for National Vice Commander, subject to final endorsement at the 2026 National Convention.
- The caucus elected Charlie Schmidt as chairman and Duane Cunningham as secretary for 2027–2028.
- The 2026–2027 Selection Committee nominees were Randy Edwards as chair, Tom Flores as NEC representative, Vanessa Stewart as department adjutant, and Steve Spurl as blue-cap Legionnaire. A past national commander position remained unresolved.

Governance And Schedule

- The caucus discussed adding a bylaw requirement that five copies of a candidate packet be submitted before the election year.
- The 2026 Selection Committee is scheduled to meet during the fall National Executive Committee meeting in Indianapolis, October 5–8, with the caucus meeting planned for October 6 at 4:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Meridian East Lower Level.
- The next caucus meeting will address candidate vetting and selection procedures; the committee composition must exclude members of the department group under consideration.

Action Items

- Discuss with the chair offline how to add the requirement for five candidate-information copies to the Western Caucus Constitution and Bylaws. (Duane Cunningham)

Outline

Opening And Quorum

- Opening prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, and recitation of the American Legion preamble.
- Roll call of Western departments and confirmation of a quorum.

Previous Minutes

- Review and acceptance of the May 5, 2026, meeting minutes as posted on the Western Caucus website.

Financial Report

- Duane Cunningham reported an ending balance of \$4,146.47 and no intervening expenses.
- Department dues were discussed.

National Leadership

- Introduction of representatives for Jay Bowen and Matthew Schumann.
- Motion approving Western Caucus endorsement of Jay Bowen for National Commander 2026–2027.
- Recognition of outgoing National Vice Commander Benjamin Headen and discussion of Western membership performance.
- Recommendation of Marty Bigbie for National Vice Commander, including her membership and leadership background.

Bylaws And Selection Committee

- Discussion of the proposed five-copy candidate packet requirement.
- Review of the 2026 fall selection process and eligibility restrictions for committee members.
- Committee nominations included Randy Edwards, Tom Flores, Vanessa Stewart, and Steve Spurl; the past national commander position was not filled.

Department Reports

- Department representatives introduced NECs, alternates, commanders, adjutants, and other delegation members from Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming.

Elections And Closing

- Charlie Schmidt was elected Western Caucus chairman for 2027–2028.
- Duane Cunningham was elected secretary for 2027–2028.
- The next meeting was announced for October 6, 2026, in Indianapolis, followed by a closing prayer and adjournment.