



Sonora SIR Branch No. 136

**Branch Executive Committee Meeting October 10, 2023 Minutes  
In person meeting at Elks Club**

**In Attendance:**

**BEC Officers:** Big SIR Eddie Toews, Little SIR Rick Bronner, Secretary Gene Zanoni, Treasurer John Salmon and Assistant Treasurer Eddie Toews.

**Not Present:** Assistant Secretary Bill Burnes.

**Directors:** Stan Enos, Steven Holt and Melvin Kutsch.

**Not Present:** George Cocores, Marty Martin and Rex Page.

**Committee Chairmen:** Bowling Don Banchemo, Bulletin Jim Botto, Car Club Rick Bronner and RV Travel Eddie Toews.

**Not Present:** Chaplain Steve Gregory, Fishing Chuck Simons, Internet & Zoom Jerry Bellefeuille, Kayaking Sol Robin, Lunch Tickets Jerry Bellefeuille, Membership George Cocores, Photographer Steve Belochi and Propane Marty Martin.

**Past Big SIRs:** Jim Botto, Paul Squeri, Phil VanSwoll and Gene Zanoni.

**Call to Order** – Big SIR Eddie Toews called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

**Roll Call** – Secretary Gene Zanoni took attendance and informed the board that a quorum was present.

**Approval of Agenda** – Big SIR Eddie Toews asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. Recognizing this meeting date to be October 10<sup>th</sup> instead of October 14<sup>th</sup>, the agenda was approved.

**Secretary's Report** – Big SIR Eddie Toews asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes from the September 12, 2023 meeting. There were none and the minutes were approved as presented.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Treasurer John Salmon presented the September 2023 monthly Treasurer's Report. He reported that we had a beginning checking account balance of \$14,666.30 and a month ending balance of \$14,314.08 and \$150.00 cash on hand. General Fund Receipts: Luncheon profit \$89.00, Raffle revenue \$127.00, Guest expense \$17.00, New Amount Petty Cash \$150.00. Custodial Fund Receipts: Luncheon \$1,171.00. General Fund Disbursements: Printing, Supplies and Taxes \$39.66, Postage \$22.05, Guest expense \$17.00, Rent, Setup, Cleanup \$300.00, Domain name \$20.17, Raffle payout \$64.00, Birthday lunch \$20.00, Petty Cash \$150.00. Custodial Fund Disbursements: Luncheon \$1,171.00, Replace Check Lost In Mail \$52.34. There were no additions or corrections to the presentation, thus, the report was approved as presented.

### **Big SIR Report – Eddie Toews**

1. Received an e-mail from SIR Branch 128 about a ZOOM call meeting on "How to Choose a Safari" for anyone interested in attending. I have the ZOOM information if you would like it. See me and I will send you the link to the ZOOM call.
2. Marty Martin's Letter of Resignation was read aloud by Big Sir Eddie Toews. It is as follows:

Marty Martin #237  
Letter of resignation

Request this letter be read out loud during the BEC meeting held on Oct. 10, 2023. I will not be present.

Effective immediately I am resigning my position as Director Propane Chairman which I have held for the last eight years. I can no longer stand to be intimidated by Big Sir Eddie Toews, telling me on more than one occasion that I don't contribute enough. In the past I have always volunteered for the Home and Garden Show, My wife and I have hosted and co-hosted RV Club trips. My wife and I for the third year in a row have hosted the RV Club Christmas Dinner and my wife and I always contribute raffle prizes for all the SIR functions. My wife is the Sunshine Lady (the one who sends get well cards, birthdays, etc) also is the RV club historian. A big problem came to light at our last RV club outing. It appears that our Big SIR does not know how to interpret some of our bylaws. Page 4 in the membership roster, item #3 states the organization would espouse no political party, (meaning to adopt or support) a political party. Page 8 Restrictions: Again the organization does not endorse any political party. While at this outing one of the RV Club wives and her husband asked me a question about one of our California congressman. Our Big SIR overheard us and I was told that I cannot discuss anything that has to do with politics while at any SIR function and that is in the bylaws. I disagreed

and was told that if I continued to speak he would kick me out of the RV club and I assume SIR. I than said let there be a vote from our members, he said he didn't need a vote he can kick me out when ever he wants to. In the past at our luncheons we have had the Mayor of Sonora and District 5 Supervisor discussing our local politics. So why can't I have the same freedom of speech. Also I don't know what the future is for the Propane Co-op. Dana Mayo General Manager JS West Sonora is retiring by the end of March 2024. I had expressed my concern about any changes to our propane discounts and he has assured me that I would have a meeting with who ever replaces him. I hope our local SIR branches don't lose this perk as it is no longer in my hands. Good luck in the future. I plan to continue to be a member of SIR if I am not expelled but that decision may not be up to me. In closing I regret leaving my director position but I feel this is best for me at this time. Thank You, Marty Martin #237

After a short discussion the matter was given to Little Sir Rick Bronner to lead a committee, including volunteer Paul Squeri and possibly one other member, with the objective of bringing about a palatable conclusion to this particular situation.

#### **Little SIR Report – Rick Bronner**

##### 1. Update on guest speakers.

Our guest speakers for today's luncheon will be Senior Behavioral Health worker Betsey Coe and Deputy Director Brock Kolby with the Tuolumne County Behavioral Health Department. Their presentation will accentuate the importance of the CARE ("Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment") Act. It is important to recognize that Tuolumne County is the recent recipient of a \$6.2 million dollar grant applicable for the rehabilitation of the homeless and the prisoners.

For our November luncheon, which is when we customarily pay honor to our members that have served honorably in the armed forces, a couple of directors from the Tuolumne County Veterans Administration are scheduled to be our guest speakers.

2. I would like to send each of our sponsors a "letter of appreciation" for their support during the current year in the form of advertising that appears in our monthly bulletin. In addition, it is my intention to enclose a pre-paid postage return envelope as an inducement for their continued support in 2024. Rick then made a motion for the branch to pay the postage while he supplies the envelopes in this exercise. The motion was then seconded by Melvin Kutsch and passed by the BEC.

#### **Attendance/Membership Reports:**

Big SIR Eddie Toews presented the combined review of the Membership/Attendance Report and Form 27 – Monthly Branch Membership Report for September. He stated that we started the month with 134 members and during the month there was a late reporting that we lost one member (Bob Burkett) who previously moved away. Thus, we ended September with 133 members. The reporting was approved as presented.

## **PROGRAM DIRECTOR REPORT**

**Bulletin Report** – To give recognition to those deserving members that volunteer their services for various responsibilities, Editor Jim Botto has requested that Big SIR Eddie Toews present to him timely listings for inclusion in the monthly bulletin.

## **ACTIVITY REPORTS**

**Bowling** – Don Banchemo says that our branch bowling activity remains on hold.

**Car Club** – Rick Bronner spoke of the car show’s success held last month in Jamestown, benefiting a children’s toy drive. In November another children’s toy drive is planned to be held at the CHP Office in Jamestown. He announced while driving his Corvette he won first-in-class and first-overall in a recent driving exhibition competition held at Thunder Hill in Willows, CA . Congratulations go out to Rick.

**Golf** – Rick Bronner mentioned there is activity scheduled this month at the Teleli Golf Course in Sonora and again quite possibly in November marking the final year’s play.

**RV Travel** – Eddie Toews reported the group’s outing last month to Casper Beach RV Park, Mendocino, CA. They encountered a couple days of balmy coastal weather and employed bond fires to effectively deal with the precipitation and cooler temperatures that were also present. Later this month an outing is scheduled for Jackson Rancheria.

## **Old Business**

1. Discuss placing article about SIRs Branch 136 in the Union Democrat Newspaper. Show new Article.

Upon review of The Union Democrat’s “Fall Advertising Specials,” which included four promotional options ranging in price from \$275 each (Package #1), \$475 (Package#2), \$675 (Package #3) and \$1,150 (Package #4), along with the specifics associated with each package, as well as the proposed ad for publication, generated the following responses from our BEC during this meeting:

- A. The proposed ad appears bland, not eye catching.
- B. Timing of the ad runs is during the wrong time of year.
- C. Cost factors to be considered. Besides any advertising expenses incurred, there currently remains uncertainty regarding potential increases in the monthly meal costs, special events meal costs and the monthly Elk Lodge rental fees for 2024. Plus, keep in mind that recent BEC action resulted in mandating an increase in the individual member dues beginning in 2024.

C1. “. . . I [Dale Decker, State SIR Inc. President-Elect] am challenging all branches for a +4% increase above their September 30, 2023 level which will be the base level thru 2024.”

“Since our Branch was 133 on Sept 30 the increase will be 5 new members. But remember, this is an increase above the base level so

if we lose 15 members we will have to bring in 20 to meet the challenge.”

C2. Also, “Starting January 1, 2024, per-capita dues for the Branches will be raised \$0.50 per quarter from \$2 per member to \$2.50 based on branch membership as of September 30, 2023. This membership level will be

used each quarter throughout 2024 so a Branches assessment amount will be the same each quarter. Please plan accordingly.”

Due of the collective factors presented in the forgoing remarks, the BEC took a polarized position to pursue alternative cost-conscience endeavors in its efforts to increase membership. Thus, Rick Bronner voiced a motion to reject the proposal for the placement of an ad in the Union Democrat. The motion was seconded by Mel Kutsch and was approved by the BEC.

Thereafter, preliminary ideas receiving consideration for practical application included the following:

A. Question: Where do we get our most membership from?

Answer: Word-of-mouth.

Examples include the following:

1. Annual Home and Garden Show
2. Individual member contacts

B. Establishing a liaison with the intent of creating constant exposure.

C. Develop in-house “business-like” identification cards for solicitation.

D. Distribution of posters and pamphlets to various local businesses.

All branch members are strongly encouraged to vigorously participate in our efforts to promote a successful campaign regarding membership expansion.

## **New Business**

1. The new officers for the 2024 Year will be:

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Big SIR             | Rick Bronner |
| Little SIR          | Mike Krom    |
| Secretary           | Steve Holt   |
| Assistant Secretary | Gene Zanoni  |
| Treasurer           | John Salmon  |
| Assistant Treasurer | Eddie Toews  |

Directors:

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>1<sup>st</sup> Year</u> | <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Year</u> |
| Jim Botto                  | George Cocores             |
| Bill Burnes                | Stan Enos                  |

Raul Santana

Mel Kutsch

Paul Squeri

Marty Martin

New BEC will be sworn-in at the November regular meeting.

2. Christmas Luncheon tickets go on sale today.

Get them early and remember to bring a raffle prize.

Birthday recognition for November.

To be announced from the result of a random drawing during today's luncheon.

**Next BEC meeting – November 14, 2023 starting at 10:00 am at the Elks Lodge.**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:14 am.**

Gene V. Zanoni, Secretary

October 23, 2023