

BEC Committee / Board Meeting Minutes

July 13th, 2026

Members Attending

X	Dan Smith, Big Sir	X	Terry Baldwin, Assistant Treasurer
	Thom Watkins, Little Sir	X	John Vallor, Attendance Secretary
X	Carl Ludwig, Secretary	X	Arte Chan, Asst. Membership Secretary
X	Peter Shapiro, Treasurer	X	Mike Frey, Director & ACC Member
X	Rich Knowles, Membership Secretary	X	Leo Dominguez, Assistant Secretary
X	Manuel Dominguez, Assistant Attendance Secretary		Open, Public Relations/Marketing Director
X	Terry Mason, Director		Peter Jordan, Assistant Secretary
X	Thomas Draeger, Director	X	Tom DiGrande, ex-officio

Visitors Attending

Derek Southern	Dan Crowley	
Chick Lowry	Stan Johnson	
George Vogt	Ken Main	
Ron Cassano	Jim Sowell	
Ray de Wit		

Dan Smith opened the meeting at 9:03

Big SIR Announcements – Dan Smith

- We will hold Elections for 2027's Branch Officers and ensure that our secretary submits the names required by State SIR. There are several things to be aware of. The names required by State SIR are a mix of BEC officers and activity chairmen. And our BEC officers differ in title and function from State SIR, plus we have assistants to ensure continuity. Also, State SIR is preparing to roll out a new system replacing Form 20, and we were asked to appoint Branch Data Coordinator plus a backup.
- The Photo Release issue remains tabled, pending further information from State Sir.
- Peter's Treasurer's Report for June shows that 211 members have paid their 2026 dues with three members still outstanding. Rich Knowles expects these members to pay as they are relatively new to SIR 8.
- Garland Bell prepared his "Chronological Details of Database Software Investigation" which has been shared with you. It can be stated that we have a committee here, comprised of Rich Knowles, Dan Weller, and Garland. We await their input as to whether we continue with Access or use another system to support our needs. There has been no decision yet. I feel that whatever we do with database support of our administration needs to be simple and not specialized.
- In the past, we often did not fully advise Boundary Oaks of what we require for tables at the luncheons. Room diagrams for both sit-down and buffet luncheons were given to

BO. Dan thanked John and Manuel for really being on top of the attendance. They are doing a great job.

- Thom is having his knee replacement reworked and will not be with us today. We have scheduled his Little SIR running BEC and the luncheon to be in October.

Little SIR Announcements – Thom Watkins

- Not attending

Nominations – Tom DiGrande

- The nominations for the 2027BEC are complete. Three open positions are yet to be filled:
 1. Thom Watkins - Big SIR
 2. Ken Main - Little SIR
 3. Leo Dominguez - Secretary
 4. Peter Jordon - Asst Secretary
 5. John Vallor - Attendance Secretary
 6. Manuel Dominguez - Asst Attendance Secretary
 7. Terry Baldwin - Treasurer
 8. ***Open** - Asst Treasurer
 9. Rich Knowles - Membership Secretary
 10. Arthur Chan - Asst Membership Secretary
 11. Dennis Mierzwa - ACC Chairman
 12. ***Open** - Public Relations / Marketing Director
 13. Mike Frey - Director
 14. Thomas Draeger - Director
 15. ***Open** – Director
- It was moved, seconded, and approved that these individuals become our 2027 SIR 8 officers.
- The Nominations Committee plans to meet after the luncheon to discuss the open positions.

Guests:

1. Dave Blank - Sponsored by Steve Schramm
2. Russell Creighton - Sponsored by Dave Sutton
3. Mark Fridell - Sponsored by Terry Baldwin
4. Kirk Harding - Sponsored by Rich Knowles

New Applicants for Induction & Orientation

1. Charlie Lincoln - Sponsored by David Bushnell
2. George Szlemp – Sponsored by Rich Petersen

Speaker: - Derek Southern, Branch 8 Member and State Sir participant

Derek will present, “How to use AI at Home.”

Announcements -

1. Positions to fill: UPDATE

IT / Data System - Assist Dan Weller

Website Assistance - Derek Southern

Hotline Editor – Chris Wehling: Tom Draeger volunteered to take on the role and Chris has been in contact. Thank you, Tom.

Public Relations Director This is with the nominating committee.

Greeters – Tom DiGrande is looking for a permanent replacement for Bill Barber. The search for two greeters is best initiated after receiving the first luncheon attendance list. This is when we first know who is attending.

2. Membership – Rich Knowles

Rich asked the BEC for approval to refund membership dues to certain new members. There are four or five new members, all 18-hole golfers, who decided not to continue their active membership. As they had already paid a separate 18-hole golf activity fee, the activity chairman refunded those activity fees not expended by Branch 8 (he had paid NCGA membership fees for these individuals but other activity fees still remained with the Branch). The activity chairman suggested to Rich that he (Rich) refund membership dues to these individuals. Rich felt that by offering to refund general membership dues, Branch 8 could gain favorable public relations feelings from these individuals.

Rich's request for guidance in this matter generated substantial discussion:

- Should we refund all, part or none of the 2026 dues....?
- Why refund any amount if they haven't asked for it?
- Why should we bear any financial consequence of their unfortunate decision making?
- By making any refund, are we setting a poor precedent for other future malcontents?

It was decided that the BEC should not take any action on this issue at today's meeting.

3. Director "Follow Up" program - new members

Rich is using a tracking spreadsheet to ensure that new members are followed up with by their sponsor.

4. Website

- We are leaving the photos on the website as is pending State Sir's updated directives regarding photo releases.
- Any input from Derek Southern, Mike Frey, and John Vallor:

5. Audio / Visual Committee – Garland Bell and Eric Moss

This seems to be working well. We do have to fine tune the microphones for each meeting.

UPDATES-

Happy Fall Y'all – Ray de Wit

- “Happy Fall Y’all” will be held at the Cowell Community Park, 3501 Cowell Road, Concord, on Sep. 16, 12:00 noon ’til 4:00 PM. Approximately 30 individuals have signed up thus far.
- Sign-up and volunteer sheets will be available at the luncheon.

Holiday Gala – Buck Cheshire / Ray de Wit/ Paula Murphy

- Thom stated last month that preparations for the Holiday Gala have been initiated.
- Buck had submitted a “save the date” reminder for the Hotline and website.
- Dan contacted Angelique to confirm that we have the date and time reserved.
- Mike Frey will reach out to Buck to ask him to give a presentation to the BEC regarding event updates.

New / Old Activities:

Treasurer Report - Peter Shapiro

- Peter summarized the SIR Branch 8 Treasurer’s Report
- He has yet to collect dues from 2-4 individuals, but he does not anticipate any problems in collecting them.
- It was moved, seconded, and approved that we accept Peter’s report.

Public Relations / Marketing - Open

- **We are registered with the Clayton Oktoberfest, which occurs on Oct. 3rd and 4th. Dan suggested that we set up a committee within the BEC to take charge of this year’s event if this position is not filled soon.**
- **The following is being kept in the minutes pending filling this position.**
 - Clayton Art & Wine Festival spaces were filled. As with many other events, early show of interest is important in securing any venue. Hold this thought for next year. The effort for participating would be identical to the Oktoberfest and occurred this year on April 25th and 26th.
 - (It was noted that George Vogt, Peter Shapiro, and Dan Crowley were the members with the most experience with this effort.)
 - Introductions have been attained with the founder of Sensational Seniors who help run the Senior Fair in Walnut creek. Greg was looking into partnering with her on monthly events that focus on senior issues. **There has been no follow-up.** This connection may prove useful beyond any marketing event with opportunities for her to be a speaker or otherwise provide awareness of various senior-centric programs.
 - Dan added a suggestion in April. The senior centers in WC, PH, and Concord all send monthly newsletters to their many members. Would it be possible to have a continuously running spot in these newsletters letting their members know that SIR is here to serve the guys and their spouses with many activities and events of our own?

- Peter Shapior noted that SIR Branch 146 has a presence on Meet-Up.com and we should also consider this avenue of promotion to our branch.
- Derek Southern suggested that we designate a team of members who will staff the Marketing and Promotion effort. In so doing, the new chairman of this important function would see that he is not alone in shouldering all functions related to the position.

Secretary Report - Carl Ludwig

Carl noted that the June BEC minutes have been posted to the Branch 8 website. It was moved, seconded, and approved that the posted minutes be accepted.

Membership Report - Rich Knowles

Rich noted that membership stands at 217 members after today's meeting. It was moved, seconded, and approved that the Membership Report be accepted.

Attendance Report - John Vallor

John reviewed his previously released report, noting that the four no-shows equaled the number of walk-ins so that the number of meals ordered from BO was not affected. It was moved, seconded, and approved that the Attendance Report be accepted.

Activities Report - Mike Frey

Mike noted that his report from the recently held ACC meeting was generated using AI and the experience was very successful.

Member Relations Report - Rich Knowles

No report.

Member Feed Back - Jim Sowell

Jim summarized his analysis of leave-behind cards from the last lunch. Ken Main noted that we are seeking feedback on potential new speakers/topics via luncheon table cards.

System Support - Dan Weller

None.

"Hotline" - Chris Wehling

No report. Dan noted that older emails in our Hotline email (hotline@sirinc3.org) should be deleted automatically if no longer relevant. Dan has been doing this manually including any spam.

Open Discussion: Additional matters - none

Close & Adjourn at 10:14

Next meeting; August 10th, 2026