



**NARFE Southwest Federation
Wednesday, January 28, 2026
Zoom Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by President Mark Mickelsen at 10:05 AM followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present were the 3 Southwest Federation (SW) elected officers- Mark Mickelsen, Etta Bryant, and Sharon Willoughby, Region VII VP Sharon Reese, 8 appointed officers – Roger Corner, Judy Rosco, Vic Peterson, Deborah Corner, Della Apodaca, William Britton, Carol Main, and Jeff Smith. Present were 2 guests – Steven Craig Singleton and Nancy Godfrey. See Attachment 1 (Pages 5 & 6).

Board Minutes from Oct. 2025: The October 14, 2025 minutes were distributed, then revised and distributed. Being no further corrections were received the minutes were accepted as distributed.

Officer Reports: President Mark Mickelsen submitted his Report of Federation President and Treasurer Sharon Willoughby submitted her report on the Southwest Federation bank account in advance. See Attachments 2 & 3 (Pages 7 & 8).

Other (if other SW Officers desire to report): Treasurer Sharon Willoughby submitted the Draft Budget for 2026 as well as 2 attachments for the Advocates. See Attachments 4, 5 & 6 (Pages 9, 10, & 11).

Unfinished Business:

Review of Executive Board Voting members as determined at our Oct. 2025 meeting: A list of officer positions and names were discussed and the list was agreed to. See Attachment 7 (Page 12).

1. **Confirming votes for previous actions:** Secretary Etta Bryant read changes to the SW Federation Reimbursement Policy that were made by email during May 20-23, 2025; corrected mileage rate to \$0.70/mile, to reimburse members participating in recruiting activities for all mileage incurred in the performance of their duties whether out of town or not, and to include the Membership Chair as a voting member but this person would not have two votes if they were also one of the current voting members. A motion was made and seconded, discussed, and **ADOPTED**. See Attachment 8 (Pages 13 & 14).
2. **Do we need a template to distribute to Chapters for them to update their Bylaws to mention SW Federation instead of AZ Federation or NM Federation? Changes to SW Federation Bylaws?** President Mark Mickelsen will send/email chapters reminding them of necessity to change their chapter bylaws and to let him know when this is done. As there appear to be a couple of changes that need to be made to the SW Federation Bylaws, a committee was appointed – Carol Main and Etta Bryant.

3. **Status of Chapter efforts to identify Lifetime Members:** It was noted that Nora McDonald, Senior Director of Member Engagement, sent out an email requesting chapters to report to her by January 31, 2026, on the status of both Life Members and Honorary Members. President Mark Mickelsen is to include this reminder with his email regarding Chapter Bylaws and ask for a report.
4. **Yuma Chapter visit of SW Pres. And SW VP now scheduled for Monday, March 2.**
5. **Status of research into whether to accept other forms of payment from members besides personal checks:** Treasurer Sharon Willoughby noted that taking members' bank account numbers was dangerous and she was not in favor of this. In-coming Treasurer Steven (Craig) Singleton asked if this was payments to members or from members and that he does not see the need. As VP Marlene Seaton was the one that brought this up at the last meeting and since she was not attending, we agreed to table this to the next meeting.
6. **Renaming our SW Federation Award recognizing an outstanding member in both AZ and NM (currently called "Tony Genta Award") to something more applicable to SW Federation:** Discussed and decided that we have time to decide this. Suggestions: Southwest (SW) Federation Outstanding or SW Federation Service Award or make a contest about names and then vote on top 5+/- . President Mark Mickelsen will work with Webmaster Jeff Smith on this.

New Business:

1. **Review of Executive Board Voting members as determined at our Oct. 2025 meeting:** Taken up under Unfinished Business.
2. **Feb. 13 Resignation of Sharon Willoughby as Federation Treasurer and Succession by Craig Singleton:** The in-coming Treasurer noted that his legal name is Steven Craig Singleton and that is how NARFE knows him. President Mark Mickelsen thanked Sharon Willoughby for all the work she has done for the SW Federation and NM Federation. A motion was made to accept Sharon Willoughby's resignation as of February 13, 2026, and to appoint Steven Craig Singleton, effective on February 13, 2026, as the new SW Federation Treasurer for the remainder of Sharon's Willoughby's unexpired term ending January 1, 2027. Seconded, there was no discussion, and following a Roll Call vote it was **ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY**. See Attachment 9 (Page 15).
3. **Welcome Letter from Federation Pres. For new Chapter members?** After a discussion, President Mark Mickelsen indicated this is not a problem for him to do this and he will send an email to chapters giving them an option as to whether the chapter wants him to do this or not but the chapter would need to provide him with the new member's name (he can look up the mailing address in the online NARFE records). It was noted that this would give new members the knowledge that they are not just a chapter member but also a SW Federation member. See Attachment 10 (Page 16).
4. **Draft Budget for CY 2026:** Etta Bryant stated that with the income projected plus funds on hand less expenses of \$52,000 that after next year the Federation will not have much money on hand for anything. President Mark Mickelsen indicated that the travel amount may be high and that he only planned expensive Chapter visit will be the Yuma Chapter this year. He will likely visit some New Mexico Chapters but at much lower cost. He is thinking that in coming years VP Marlene Seaton will do most of the chapter visits in Arizona and he will do the New Mexico chapters. But he agreed that we need to be more conservative. In-coming Treasurer Steven Singleton indicated that the budget is a plan and we do not have to spend it all. He indicated that there is be new formats to the treasurer's reports and he will investigate where to put some of the Federation monies besides our current checking account. Also, he noted that the balance on hand

should not be on the budget and should be removed. A motion was made to accept the SW Federation 2026 Budget as corrected. This was seconded and following a Roll Call vote, it was **Adopted**. See Attachment 11 (Page 17).

5. **Communication with members (FedHub, Newsletters, new email system, other means)**
 - a. **Status of new website and Microsites courtesy of Web Administrator Jeff Smith and Area Officer Carol Main:** Jeff Smith had to leave the meeting as he had another NARFE meeting. Carol Main indicated they are working on the websites and hope to have it up and running soon. She is working on the Federation website and he is working on the Las Cruces Chapter website. When pressed, she said hopefully 6 weeks or so.
 - b. **Federation Newsletter:** President Mark Mickelsen announced that he had talked with Marian Thornton and she has agreed to do the Federation newsletter. He will appoint her to this position. There was a discussion on how to distribute and how often. It was decided to do it quarterly and to only mail it once a year. The first issue would be mailed as well as emailed, posted on the SW Federation website, and on FedHub. After that, it would be only emailed and posted on the website and FedHub due to the expense of mailing. There was discussion on when to start and President Mark Mickelsen indicated that this would be determined after he talks with Marian Thornton.
 - c. **Zoom meeting on a topic of interest to SW Federation members:** This was discussed as a way to involve more members (especially National Only members), perhaps two or three times per year. President Mark Mickelsen indicated that he would volunteer to be the guinea pig for this first Zoom and has a presentation ready on “Knowledge is Power: How Your Benefits are Funded and Why Most Proposed Cuts Don’t Actually Save Money.” He will come back with a proposal of when to do it and time and will work with VP Marlene Seaton on this.
6. **Recruiting Options—with or without Street Level Studio, NARFE’s marketing contractor**
 - a. **Social Media presence**
 - b. **Buying ads or other options:** President Mark Mickelsen talked about the phone call he and Marlene Seaton had with Lexie at Street Level Studio. There was information regarding 50% matching funds from the NARFE National Office and other options. He also reported on the results that other states have had. For more information, see Mark’s report on this phone call and the short recap on other Federations’ open season results. It was decided that we need to get more information from Street Level Studio and the National Office. See Attachments 12 & 13 (Page 18 & 19).
 - c. **Health Fairs:** There was no further discussion at this time.
 - d. **Federal Employee Association Fairs (BIG, FEW, Law Enforcement, FMA, etc.):** It was noted that the Federal Woman’s group is no longer holding meetings and their website has been taken down.
 - e. **Community events Feds and Fed retirees may attend:** No discussion
 - f. **Other ideas:** It was noted that we should get the Membership Committee to make some recommendations
7. **Creating better succession planning for both Federation and Chapter Officers:** The discussion included shadowing current officers, that the fear of the position is out of proportion, and maybe create a best practices list.
8. **Time and place for the next SW Federation Conference in 2027:** It was noted that it does not have to be as elaborate as the first one last year. President Mark Mickelsen noted that since the last one was in New Mexico that it would be good to have the next one in Arizona. Etta Bryant noted that Tucson 55 does not want to do anything and if she had not agreed to another term that the chapter would be closed. There was discussion of Tucson and Phoenix combining to do one

or maybe Albuquerque with Santa Fe helping as a fallback if it can't be in Arizona, or possibly by Zoom.

Is there any other new business: None

Announcements: Deborah Corner asked if someone would put together a list of all the elected and appointed officers.

The next Board Meeting: To be held by Zoom; Date and time? It was agreed to hold the next Southwest Federation board meeting via Zoom on April 22, 2026 at 11:00 am NM time and 10:00 am AZ time.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 12:22 pm.

Etta Bryant

Etta Bryant
Southwest Federation Secretary

Attachment

1. Roll Call
2. President Mark Mickelsen's Report
3. Report on Southwest Federation bank account
4. Proposed Budget for 2026
5. Proposed Budget for AZ Advocates
6. Proposed Budget for NM Advocates
7. List of SW Federation Voting Members by Position
8. Reimbursement Policy dated 01/28/2026
9. Letter of Resignation
10. Welcome Letter
11. Adopted Budget for 2026
12. Mark Mickelsen's Recruiting Options Remarks
13. Recap of Federation Open Season Results