

The American Legion

Department of Illinois

Gaming and Wellness Committee

Minutes for the meeting held on Oct 3, 2026 in Bloomington IL

Committee Chairman Miller prepared a Zoom meeting for the members of the Gaming and Wellness Committee. The Zoom call began at 1:00pm. One committee member joined, David Lopez, 1st Div. Also joining the Zoom call were Greg Lawrence, SAL representative and Ashley Rolf, Auxiliary representative.

Chairman Miller welcomed everyone and commented that the Gaming and Wellness Committee was approved at the Department Convention as a committee under the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission.

Department Commander Latham and Adjutant Theilen visited and addressed the zoom participants.

The goals of the committee are to encourage gaming, whether they are electronic games, board games, or card games as a method to engage veterans to become part of an activity. Many newly discharged veterans were brought up with console video games and continued them during their service, and it is thought to be a way to encourage them to become members of The American Legion.

Offering "game nights" is also a way to engage the families of younger members to come out to the post and participate in activities. Include the community, so that they might see benefit of membership in The American Legion Family.

Rantoul recently held a game night at their post and it had limited success. Members were encouraged if they do hold a game night at the post to not be discouraged with a limited turnout, but continue with a regular program. As a continual process, people will become aware of the program and begin to show. The key is, don't let one less than successful experience, prevent you from doing a similar program in the future.

The gaming process needs to start at the post, unit, squadron level and grow from there. Committee members are encouraged to reach out to their districts and ask them to create a gaming committee in their district and maintain communication with the Division contact to enhance communications and cooperation within the division and districts, with a goal of perhaps starting an eSports league. District leaders should also look to their posts in their districts to develop local gaming committee or points of contact.

There is a district in northern Illinois that already conducts intra-district eSports events. This began as a grassroots effort and has grown throughout the district. They have portable gaming consoles so that a post doesn't have to devote a room to full time eSports activities.

Larry Miller
Chairman, Gaming and Wellness Committee