

DISTRICT 35-L PRE-CABINET MEETING

Date: January 24, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Location: Falling Waters Lions Club
New Life Fellowship Church, Chipley

These minutes have been prepared by Brittny Young, District 35L Secretary.

Members Present:

DG Suzi Rodgers, 1VDG George Niles, 2VDG Susan Oliva, Sue Hooten, Brittny Young, , IPDG Greg Seltzer, PDG Bobby Wright, Denise Williams, PDG Tony Stefanowicz, PDG Lou Jones, Mike Poweleit, PCC Stanley Rodgers

1) Call to Order - DG Suzi Rodgers

2) Invocation - IPDG Greg Seltzer

3) Approval of Previous Minutes

The Chair noted that the prior minutes should be separated into two sections (an in-person meeting and a Zoom meeting).

- **Motion:** IPDG Greg Seltzer
- **Second:** Denise Williams
- **Result:** Motion carried.

4) Disaster Trailers: Status, Equipment Needs, Storage Plan, and Next Steps

The group discussed two district disaster trailers (one originally kept at Lion Brittny's home; another acquired from Palatka New Vision Club).

Key updates and decisions:

- **Trailer registration/title status:**
 - The new trailer is registered, has a tag, and the title is in the name of the District.
 - The smaller trailer does not require a title (due to size), but its tag/registration is in the District's name.
- **Road readiness / tires:**
 - Tires appear in good condition and not dry-rotted, but are original (trailer noted as 2017).
 - Plan to have a tire shop inspect to confirm they are roadworthy.
 - Strong recommendation from members: consider replacing tires due to age/date codes.
- **Needed outfitting items (examples discussed):**
 - Spare tire, jack, and stabilizer stands/leveling supports
 - Tie-down solutions: straps (~\$50 range discussed), and potential need to add rings/anchor points
 - Wheel lock (preferred "boot"-style lock) and continued use of hitch lock
 - Inventory review of what is currently inside (tents and other items noted; a list may be posted on the trailer wall)
- **Storage plan:**
 - Discussion supported housing the newer trailer at High Springs (on Denise Williams private property), to reduce theft risk and keep it accessible.

- **Operational plan:**
 - Keep both trailers for disaster response but outfit them intentionally so they can be deployed regionally without unnecessary hauling.

Action Plan / Timeline:

- Lion Brittany Young and Lion Denise Williams will coordinate and return in April with a proposed list and estimated costs.
- Build-out and purchasing target: April–June, ahead of hurricane season.

5) Communications Equipment: Generators, Charging Stations, and Connectivity (Starlink / Satellite Options)

Generators

- A member shared a generator example used for research comparison:
 - Approx. 8,000 watts
 - Dual-fuel capable (propane + gasoline)
 - Electric start + pull start
 - Estimated cost around \$1,000
- The group emphasized sizing generators based on what needs to be powered.

Phone charging station

- Charging stations discussed ranging \$30–\$50, supporting multiple USB ports.
- Concept: trailer-based public/relief charging capability (users bring their own cables).

Starlink / Connectivity

- Discussion focused on using Starlink as a Wi-Fi hotspot capability for disaster relief communications.
- Cost discussed as approximately \$165/month, with the understanding service may be activated/deactivated as needed (subject to plan rules).
- Two Starlink sizes discussed:
 - Smaller unit: supports ~20 connections
 - Larger unit: supports ~40 connections
- The group discussed the benefit of providing connectivity for civilians to contact family during disasters, noting many response agencies do not offer public Wi-Fi access.

Action Item

- Lion Brittany Young will research satellite phone vs. hotspot/Starlink options, including the best fit for disaster operations.+

6) Insurance Discussion: Trailer vs. Cargo/Contents Coverage

The meeting discussed insurance complexity for district-owned trailers and contents.

Key points:

- Insurance needs may require two separate coverages:
 1. Physical damage (the trailer itself)
 2. Cargo/contents (equipment inside)

Action Item

- Identify an appropriate commercial insurance agent experienced with trailer + contents coverage and clarify allowable use.

7) Disaster Relief Funds: Balances and Permitted Uses

Financial figures were shared:

- Disaster relief fund balance: a little over \$55,000
- Disaster relief spending this year: \$5,580

- Disaster relief income this year: \$100

8) Hearing Aid Bank Update and Revitalization Plans - 1VDG Susan Oliva

Correction to prior minutes

- 2VDG Susan Oliva noted a correction needed: it is not “Northeast Florida Hearing Foundation”; the correct name is NORTHEAST FLORIDA LIONS HEARING AID BANK, Inc.

Program status and governance

- A meeting occurred in early January; a nominating committee was created to select:
 - President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer
- Financials and minutes were referenced; some materials were pending distribution.

History document

- A historical summary (beginning around 1971) was shared, showing longstanding activity and prior balances. This will be placed in the newsletter

Modernization approach

- The group discussed that refurbishing used hearing aids is outdated due to technology changes.
- Plan discussed: partner with Starkey (and also awareness of other providers such as Miracle-Ear, especially for children).
- Approximate program cost referenced as \$300 (application/fee discussed).
- Discussion emphasized that final decisions will be made once the new board is seated, aligned with bylaws.

9) New Club Development / Extension (Ocala Area)

An update was given regarding new club development efforts in Belleview.

- Canvassing and outreach planning targeted for February.
- A club branch. Was discussed for the Crestview Club in Baker

10) Ponte Vedra Funds Disposition (Restricted Membership Funds)

The group discussed \$495 in funds collected for a club effort in Ponte Vedra. Individuals who requested refunds had been addressed; remaining contributors had been contacted with no response.

- Motion: IPDG Greg Seltzer - Use the \$495 to support the GET (Global Extension Team) for this year's extension work; transfer funds accordingly from restricted/designated category into operating/general funds and apply for GET purposes.
- Second: 1VDG George Niles
- Vote: All in favor; motion carried.

11) District “Entities” (Charitable Partners) and Reporting

DG Suzi Rodgers reported no feedback was received on proposed district entities, and indicated the district would align with Lions International designations for the remainder of the term.

Discussion points:

- Concern that removing “parade of checks” recognition may reduce giving; counterpoint raised that public comparisons discouraged smaller clubs.
- Emphasis that clubs should report donations through the service portal so totals can be tracked consistently.
- Suggestion made to revisit entity vetting and applications in a focused/special meeting, especially ahead of the next term.

12) Grants Recap (LCI Grant Funds) – In Progress

The Chair reported the grants recap paperwork was about ¾ complete and awaiting a few signatures.

Total: \$12,250, allocated as discussed:

- \$1,500 each to Ronald McDonald House locations: Pensacola, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Gainesville
- \$1,250 for reading glasses (Bosch referenced in transcript; exact recipient name unclear)
- \$2,500 to “Paynut Companions” (name unclear in transcript; needs verification)

- \$2,500 to Leader Dogs

Action Item

- DG Suzi Rodgers to finalize signatures and submit/complete the recap documentation.

13) District Policy & Procedure Manual

PCC Stanley Rodgers reported progress on a district Policy & Procedure Manual, based on an initial draft by John Hart.

- The drafting stage is complete; now in the “what’s missing / edits / review” stage.
- Plan: finalize after incorporating feedback and bring forward for approval in time for the next term.

14) Electronic Voting Update (Statewide Practice)

The group reiterated prior adoption of electronic voting and noted statewide direction:

- All four districts will vote electronically over the same three-day window.
- Results remain confidential until the official announcement date.
- Delegate eligibility requires a unique email address in the portal; communications to clubs will emphasize this.
- Reminder: districts must use either electronic voting or paper ballots—no mixing in the same election cycle.

15) Club Status Concern: Defuniak Springs (Delinquent Dues / Membership Cleanup)

The group discussed Defuniak Springs’ low membership and delinquent balances caused in part by old members not being removed from the portal.

- A payment plan had been proposed including current term dues; payments were not made as agreed.
- The group discussed whether to pursue closure/charter surrender versus continued efforts, noting the president’s personal circumstances and contributions elsewhere.
- Action Item: PDG Lou Jones will speak directly with the club leader regarding next steps (payment compliance and/or charter status).

16) Adjournment 10:07 AM

District 35-L Cabinet Advisory Meeting – Minutes

Date: Saturday, January 24, 2026

Location: New Life Fellowship Church Chipley, FL

These minutes have been prepared by Brittny Young, District 35L Secretary.

In Attendance: Alachua (1), Chattahoochee (2), Chipley Falling Waters (5), Crestview (7), Fleming Island (1), Gulf Breeze (1), High Springs (1), Jacksonville RAW (1), Live Oak (1), Ocala (1), Ocala 200 (1), Orange Park (1), Palatka New Vision (2), Pensacola (1), Quincy (1), Tallahassee (2), Turkey Creek (1)

1) Call to Order

- Invocation by IPDG Greg Seltzer
- Pledge by Lion Lisa Mitchell, Crestview Lions Club
- Welcome, Falling Waters Lions Club President, Lion Brittny Young
- Introduction of our head table, 2VDG Susan Oliva
- Roll Call, Cabinet Secretary, Lion Brittny Young

2) Approval of Prior Minutes

Members were advised that minutes from the 11/15 cabinet meeting (High Springs) were available on the website and also the December Newsletter

3) Treasurer's Report (Lion John Hopkins)

Reporting period: Year-to-date through December (first half of the Lions year).

Key points reported:

- Income collected: \$18,814.00 against a budget of \$44,820 (~40% collected; noted target would be closer to 50% mid-year).
- Only 40% of district dues have been collected this Lion Year.

Motion: Approve the Treasurer's financial report.

- Motion made PDG Lou Jones
- Seconded 1VDG George Niles

4) Pre-cabinet meeting and online voting Updates - 1st VDG George Niles

Key updates from the pre-cabinet discussion:

- Disaster Relief Trailers: District now has two trailers.
 - One to be located in Chipley.
 - One to be located in High Springs (still being finished/stocked).
- NORTHEAST FLORIDA LIONS HEARING AID BANK, Inc. to be addressed by Susan.
- New Club Development: Continued efforts to establish new clubs and recruit younger members.
 - Mission 1.5 emphasis continues through June 2027.
 - Encouraged visibility and service ("yellow vests") to retain and attract members.
- Grant allocations: Mention of grant funding allocated to Leader Dogs and other supported organizations (total grant dollars referenced but unclear in notes).
- District 35-L Policies & Procedures Manual: Reported as coming out shortly.
- Electronic Voting: Announced that voting will be electronic this year; encouraged clubs to ensure proper delegate assignment and readiness.

5) Global Service Team (GST) - 1VDG George Niles

A major focus was placed on logging service activities in the Lions portal, noting that many clubs performed holiday projects but did not report them.

Action encouraged:

- Club officers (secretary/president) to enter service hours and projects (Thanksgiving/Christmas, hunger projects, etc.) into the portal so LCI can reflect district impact and inform resource allocation.

6) Training & Orientation (February)

- Orientation training to be scheduled in February (date TBD).

7) Membership Items - DG Suzi Rodgers

- Membership contest details shared with copies provided; members directed to online posting if missing.
- New District Governor's Achievement Award for New Lions
 - Newly approved and effective now (date on form referenced as January 7, 2026).
 - Must be completed within a new Lion's first year.
 - Noted as a multiple district form, usable beyond District 35-L.

8) Communication & Resources - Lion Brittny Young

Items provided and discussed:

- MD35 membership materials order form (QR code and web path) for presidents/secretaries to order brochures/posters/materials.
 - Confirmed: no shipping charges; materials typically arrive within about a week; multiple languages available.
- RLLI (Regional Lions Leadership Institute):
 - Shared as a strong leadership development opportunity; approx. \$200 fee referenced.
 - Encouraged carpooling and club sponsorship when possible.
- District communications: Members instructed on how to resolve missing district/MD emails (unsubscribed, spam, etc.); offered help to reset.
- Social Media & Websites: Encouraged following:
 - Florida Lions District 35-L Facebook page
 - Lions of Multiple District 35 Facebook page
 - Florida Lions history page (private approval)
 - Websites: lionsmd35.com and district35l.com for calendars, newsletters, resources, directories, archives.
- Discussed the need to expand beyond Facebook (Instagram/TikTok) to reach younger audiences; noted that posts can be scheduled in advance.

9) Electronic Voting Presentation (Stan Rodgers)

- Electronic voting approved in constitution/bylaws; all four districts will vote electronically.
- Voting access tied to email and LCI portal.
- Delegate process remains the same: delegate forms completed by club officers; verified by credentials committee.
- Ballot distributed and available during a three-day voting window (selected by governors).
- Explained ranked/preferential voting process for races with multiple candidates (no runoffs).
- Reminded clubs to verify and update member email addresses.

10) Club "Bragging Rights" / Reports

Several clubs shared service and fundraising updates, including (high-level, as captured in notes):

- High Springs, Orange Park, Ocala, Gulf Breeze, Pensacola A1C Avengers, Crestview, Palatka New Vision, Chattahoochee, Turkey Creek, Lynn Haven 2,

11) Diabetes Screening / Diabetes Awareness Foundation Updates - Judi Seltzer

Key changes and reminders:

- Screening form revised:
 - Blood pressure moved to the top; all screening clubs must take BP.
- Equipment: BP monitors can be purchased locally (~\$25-\$35 referenced).
- Critical compliance:
 - Patient signature and screener signature required; forms may be rejected if incomplete.
 - Supplies must be ordered two weeks in advance (Dr. Callahan noted as supply contact)
- Screening schedules: Screening dates must be sent to Lion Greg Evans (and flyers encouraged for calendars).
- Certification / Recertification:
 - Recertification required (annual)
 - Training may be offered at MD-35 Conference in May
 - Fundraiser: Diabetes Foundation Super Bowl squares fundraiser referenced; Super Bowl date noted as Feb 8; squares \$100.

12) Lions Saving Sight - PDG Bobby Wright

- Announced rebrand from Florida Foundation for the Blind to **Lions Saving Sight**
- Emphasized website accuracy, readable fonts, proper application completion, and tracking of cases/billing to reduce liability risk.
- Reported **surgery costs increasing**; significant spending this year

13) Guest Speaker: Lion Lou Barnes, a member of the Ocala Lions Club and a major volunteer for VOSH Southeast Vision Mission Work

- Speaker began from the Lions perspective on eyeglass collection and noted many clubs already know basic drop-box setup.
- Shared that they track monthly totals and maintain approximately 20 drop boxes in Ocala (including optometry offices, the public library, the blood bank, and multiple tax offices) to credit participating locations.
- Introduced VOSH (Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity) and described their local partnership/support from Lions (including a connection with Orange Park Lions Club).
- Explained the processing steps for donated glasses:
 - Initial inspection for obvious damage (scratches, broken frames, missing lenses) and separation into a scrap pile vs. usable pile.
 - Use of a lensometer to read prescriptions and classify readers (speaker noted keeping 13 classifications of reading glasses).
 - Cleaning method: placing glasses in mesh bags and running through a dishwasher.
 - High magnification items (above ~3.50) and negative prescriptions are handled separately for mission purposes.
 - Sunglasses are collected and kept only if non-prescription.

Collection / Distribution Highlights (as reported by speaker):

- 2025 collection totals shared included:
 - 8,600 pairs from speaker's club, 6,000 from Eastport Lions Club, and 5,700 from Orange Park Lions Club.
- Eastport Lions Club support described: 18 members meet twice per month to inspect, lensometer-read, clean, and bag glasses; they also remove packaging and bag new glasses to assist.
- International distribution figures shared:
 - Pre-owned: 16,846 glasses and 5,774 sunglasses.
 - New readers/frames: 19,250.
 - Total shipped internationally (as stated): 41,870.
- Speaker also donates locally in Ocala (example given: providing approximately 500 pairs every three months to Interfaith/homeless support) and to select thrift shops that support community causes (hospice, Veterans Helping Veterans, Operation Shoebox, etc.).

Scrap / Recycling Discussion:

- Speaker stated prescription glasses are typically not reused due to low likelihood of matching prescriptions; readers are the most reusable category.
- Scrap glasses are sent to a recycling partner (California referenced); proceeds help cover operational expenses (example shared: shipping ~20,000 at a time yields about \$1,300 back; scrap proceeds cover facility rent).
- Discussion included clarification that some areas/clubs pre-sort readers before forwarding (example cited: Alabama Lions clubs sending primarily usable readers after pre-sorting).

Mission Trip Report (Guatemala and Other Trips):

- Speaker shared mission trip experience in Guatemala:
 - Clinic days described as long, with early start and 12-hour work days.
 - Target for one week was 750 eye exams; reported completing 1,200+ in five days.
 - Surgery goal was 150; reported completing 200+ surgeries.
 - Speaker served as a helper and assisted with preliminary vision screening using an "E" directional method; translators were used as needed.
 - Noted that mission teams transport equipment and bring a large supply of glasses (example: ~3,000 pairs taken).

- Clarified that for some trips prescriptions may be made locally (example: Guyana), and for others prescriptions are brought back to the U.S. for fulfillment and then delivered.
- Speaker recognized volunteer ophthalmologists/optometrists and described notable patient cases from the trip (vision restoration examples shared).

Q&A / Club Discussion:

- Multiple questions focused on:
 - What happens to prescription glasses vs. readers.
 - Whether clubs should sort glasses before delivery and whether sending through the speaker's process differs from other district/state recycling routes (conclusion: end result is similar; proceeds support operations).
 - Approximate lensometer cost shared as \$1,000–\$6,000 depending on model/condition.
- Speaker indicated contact information would be provided through Suzi/district distribution.

14) Closing Remarks - DG Suzi Rodgers

DG Suzi Rodgers shared that her first six months as District Governor have been challenging and that she has felt discouraged at times due to limited communication and feedback from clubs. She spoke candidly about “failure,” emphasizing that Lions should not try something once and quit, but instead evaluate what didn't work and try again with improvements. Using personal examples, she stressed perseverance, noting that persistence builds trust and results over time (including her home club's effort to get a newspaper story published after three years).

DG Rodgers encouraged members to keep showing up and serving—reminding everyone that repeated effort is how Lions create impact. She urged clubs to keep trying new approaches, stay committed, and lead with “Lion heart,” because service matters to real people: children needing glasses, students needing support, seniors needing care, and communities needing help during disasters. She closed by asking clubs to reflect, reorganize if needed, and continue moving forward as part of Lions International's mission.

Adjournment

Adjournment time not stated in notes. Meeting continued into speaker presentations and follow-up discussion.