

# Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



## National Council of Administration Meeting Minutes

18 November 2007

Gettysburg, PA



The Council of Administration meeting was opened by Commander-in-Chief Charles Kuhn at 8:03 am. The opening prayer was offered by National Chaplain Jerome Kowalski, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll of officers was called, with the following recorded as present:

Commander-in-Chief Charles E. Kuhn, Jr.  
Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy  
National Secretary Donald D. Palmer, Jr.

National Treasurer Max L. Newman  
National Quartermaster Danny L. Wheeler

Council Member Daniel Murray  
Council Member James Hanby  
Council Member Eric Schmincke

Council Member D. Brad Schall  
Council Member Robert Petrovic

Immediate Past Commander-in-Chief James Pahl  
National Counselor Richard D. Orr

Washington, D.C. Representative Andrew Johnson

Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief David V. Medert was excused due to an emergency at home. Additional Past Commanders-in-Chief present included Charles W. Corfman, Edward J. Krieser, Stephen A. Michaels, Elmer F. Atkinson.

Guests of the Council of Administration included Executive Director Lee Walters, National Chaplain Jerome Kowalski, National Graves Registration Officer Bob Lowe, National Chief of Staff Gene Mortorff and Massachusetts Department Commander Perley Mellor.

## Old Business

National Treasurer Max Newman provided a status on delinquent IRS Form 990's. He reported that none of the audits have been completed as of yet.

Council Member James Hanby reported on delinquent National Encampment proceedings. Based on the National Treasurer's report, those proceedings previously reported as missing were either turned in to the committee as ordered or were otherwise accounted for. Motion made by James Hanby, second by National Quartermaster Danny Wheeler, to form a committee to determine which SUVCW members are still eligible to receive paper copies of past National Encampment proceedings. **Motion passed.** A concern was subsequently raised that there were still a couple missing that were not on the National Treasurer's list. Council Member Hanby responded that the committee would verify that all proceedings were accounted for.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn introduced National Graves Registration Officer Bob Lowe, who reported that there is a need for enhancements to current database software and expressed concern about the apparent lack of progress in this area. He also reported that the job has grown tremendously with the inclusion of photos of grave stones. Inputting graves registration data takes approximately four (4) minutes per entry. In addition, Brother Lowe mentioned that the entire Vermont graves database is incorrect, primarily due to incorrect unit information. There are approximately 15,000 Vermont records that need to be corrected. Brother Lowe also reported that there are three (3) Departments that still do not have a Department Graves Registration Officer identified. Due to the increased workload faced by the Graves Registration Committee, it was reported that Bruce Frail from Rhode Island was recently added as an Aide to the Committee.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn asked for a status on the records retention policy required by the IRS. PCinC Richard Orr responded that he has the action to take it to the Constitution and Regulations Committee.

As a result of the changes to the Constitution and Regulations approved by the Special National Encampment held on 17 November in Gettysburg, Commander-in-Chief Kuhn tasked the National Secretary with distributing changes to the Constitution to Department Secretaries, along with a ratification cover sheet, so that action can be taken at the various Department Encampments in 2008. By action of the Special National Encampment, the changes to the Regulations become effective on 01 July 2008, assuming the changes to the Constitution are ratified.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn opened a discussion on protection of SUVCW insignias/emblems. The Order has a 100 year-old patent on the badge itself and a copyright on the emblem. The Commander-in-Chief assigned PCinC's Richard Orr and Jim Pahl to search for a patent attorney and get an opinion about how much protection the Order really has over the badge and emblem.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn initiated a discussion on processes for chartering new Camps. On the question previously posed regarding calligraphy for charters, Council Member Bob Petrovic offered the services of a calligrapher in the St. Louis area that would charge \$20 maximum for calligraphy on SUVCW charters. Due to calligraphy, shipping charges, etc., it was mentioned that the cost may exceed the \$25 charter fee imposed by the National organization. Motion made by PCinC Jim Pahl, second by Council Member Eric Schmincke, to provide calligraphy on new charters and have the National organization absorb any cost above the \$25 charter fee. **Motion passed.** Also on the subject of chartering new Camps, a discussion ensued on empowering Departments to give Camps permission to form (Form 51). The current process requires the National organization to grant permission to new Camps wishing to form. PCinC Richard Orr

volunteered to take this item to the Constitution and Regulations Committee for further action.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn initiated a discussion on revisions to the Membership Application (Form 1). A request to add space to include the name of the cemetery where the qualifying ancestor is buried (if known) was submitted previously to the Program and Policy Committee for review. Other ideas, including creating a supplemental form for adding additional family members, were brought forward. Motion made by Council Member Eric Schmincke, second by Council Member Brad Schall, to assign the Program and Policy Committee to amend the Job Description of the Graves Registration Officer to include recording graves registration information from Membership Applications. **Motion passed.**

On the subject of per capita dues for Dual Members, an issue was raised regarding Brothers who have dual membership paying per capita dues for both Camps. The consensus reached by the Council of Administration was that Brothers who are dual members should pay per capita dues for both Camps. PCinC Richard Orr mentioned that at one time, Forms 27 and 35 had blanks identifying dual members, and were dropped during the latest revisions of these forms (going from quarterly reporting to annual reporting). PCinC Orr recommended, for the purpose of membership count accuracy, that this issue of identifying dual members be brought to the Program and Policy Committee for action and possible revision of the referenced forms.

## New Business

PCinC Ed Krieser updated the Council of Administration on plans for Lincoln Death Day, scheduled for Saturday, 12 April 2008 in Springfield, IL. He mentioned that contract with the hotel, the State House Inn, should be in place.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn followed the discussion on Lincoln Death Day with an announcement on the Spring Council of Administration meeting. The meeting will be held in conjunction with Lincoln Death Day in Springfield, IL on Saturday, 12 April 2008 at 6:00 pm. The Commander-in-Chief wishes the Council meeting to be a “working dinner” format, with food provided.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn initiated a discussion on the Lincoln Bicentennial. PCinC Ed Krieser mentioned that the coin being developed by PCinC Al Loomis to commemorate the Lincoln Bicentennial was turned over to the SUVCW Charitable Foundation. Council Member James Hanby offered information on events associated with the official observance of the Lincoln Bicentennial and suggested that the Commander-in-Chief or his representative be present in Kentucky next February as the President of the U.S. will be there for the kickoff of the two year observance. Council Member Hanby also suggested that the Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee be tasked will following the Lincoln Bicentennial events. Commander-in-Chief Kuhn responded that he would task this committee to do so.

Council Member Brad Schall provided the Council of Administration with background information on a request for funds for a GAR monument for a cemetery in Tulsa, OK. Apparently, there is no monument to the GAR in the state of Oklahoma. The Indian Nations Camp has asked for funds from the Memorials/Monuments Grant Committee. The Camp has raised \$4500 out of the \$9000 needed, including \$1,000 from the SUVCW Charitable Foundation. Motion made by Council Member Bob Petrovic, second by Council Member James Hanby to donate \$1000 out of the GAR Fund to support this activity. **Motion passed** (6 votes for – Schall, Wheeler, Hanby, Palmer, Petrovic, Pahl; 3 votes against – Schmincke, Kennedy, Murray; 1 abstention – Newman)

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn opened a discussion on Council of Administration approval of Camp items. PCinC Richard Orr noted that there is nothing in the National charter that restricts Camps from using the name of the organization, only the emblem. The discussion turned to Garfield Camp #142 items address at the post-Encampment Council meeting in St. Louis. Motion made by PCinC Jim Pahl, second by Council Member Eric Schmincke, to (1) rescind the action from the previous meeting; (2) accept the offer from the Ohio Department Commander; and (3) table further discussion on CoA approval of Camp items until the Spring Council meeting. **Motion passed.** The Commander-in-Chief tasked the National Secretary with sending a letter to the Department of Ohio noting the action by the Council of Administration.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn initiated a discussion on expediting the election process at National Encampments, noting the time-consuming affair at the 126 th National Encampment in St. Louis. Much of the discussion focused on empowering Department Commanders and/or chairmen of Department delegations to take more control of delegate counts during roll calls. The Commander-in-Chief announced that he will be issuing a General Order on this subject and tasked Council Member Eric Schmincke with coordinating with Credentials Committee Chairman George Powell prior to issuance.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn brought up the subject of Honorary Membership in light of the recent vote on the nomination of Ken Burns. The viewpoint of the Commander-in-Chief is that the current criteria are too stringent; however, based on an informal survey, most of the Council of Administration believes the criteria are acceptable as currently stated. On a related subject, the Commander-in-Chief tasked the Department of Maryland with approaching historian Ed Bearss with Honorary Membership in the SUVCW.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn, given the recent actions requiring a Special National Encampment, noted that the organization should investigate ways to shorten the process for changing the Constitution. Both PCinC's Richard Orr and Jim Pahl offered that the solution is to submit proposed changes to the Regulations well in advance so that an adequate review can take place. This would help avoid a situation similar to the Junior Associate action taken at the 126 th National Encampment.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn declared a break for an Executive Session at 11:00 am. The session concluded at 11:15 am.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn nominated a brother for a Meritorious Service Award with Gold Star. Motion made by National Quartermaster Danny Wheeler, second by Council Member James Hanby, to approve the nomination. **Motion passed.**

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn asked for a status on developing a CD that contains the Constitution, Regulations, Digest, Policies, etc. PCinC Jim Pahl responded that he will develop this CD once the proposed changes to the Constitution and Regulations are made official.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn asked National Chief of Staff Gene Mortorff to provide a status on the schedule of Department Encampments for 2008. There were 11 Department Encampments that had no National elected officer assigned to attend. Those assignments were made. The Chief of Staff noted that there were still several Departments that have yet to respond with dates for their Encampments.

National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski presented a proposal for a 20-minute church service at the Council of Administration meetings in Gettysburg and Springfield, and the National Encampment. The services will be held on Sundays at 7 am. Motion made by Council Member James Hanby,

second by Council Member Brad Schall, to accept this proposal. **Motion passed.**

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn brought up the issue associated with presidential candidate Barack Obama and his failure to place his hand over his heart during the National Anthem. The Commander-in-Chief was considering sending a letter taking exception to his behavior. The general consensus of the Council of Administration was that this was a political issue that the organization should not get involved with.

National Secretary Don Palmer brought up an issue with the current job description for the National Secretary. Item #5 states that the Secretary provide monthly reports of the numerical and financial strength of the Order to the Council of Administration. He noted that, based on feedback from his predecessors, that it has been many years since this information has been presented. He offered to provide this information, but would need to enlist the help of the Executive Director and the National Treasurer to assemble the data. Based on consensus from the Council of Administration, this issue will be turned over to the Program and Policy Committee to amend the National Secretary job description by removing item #5.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn brought up a request from the Department of Wisconsin to use the SUVCW emblem/log on a ribbon and pin-back button to support their 125 th Department Encampment in 2008. Motion made by Council Member James Hanby, second by Council Member Eric Schmincke, to approve this request. **Motion passed.** The National Secretary was tasked with sending a letter notifying the Department of Wisconsin of this action.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn brought up a request from the Department of New Hampshire to use the SUVCW emblem/logo for a Department challenge coin. Motion made by Eric Schmincke, second by Council Member James Hanby, to approve this request. **Motion passed.** The National Secretary was tasked with sending a letter notifying the Department of New Hampshire of this action.

Commander-in-Chief Kuhn mentioned a letter received by PCinC Jim Pahl regarding partial distribution of the William E. Little Trust. The information was passed on to PCinC Steve Michaelsto place information in the BANNER.

PCinC Richard Orr brought up several items. First, he recommended some wording changes to the Rituals of the Order as they may be inappropriate for Juniors. Second, ribbons and voting cards from the Special National Encampment will be sold as a set for \$7.00, including shipping and handling. Finally, he mentioned that the G.A.R. Sesquicentennial Committee is recommending that the SUVCW seek authorization from Congress to have the U.S. Mint commemorate coins in gold, silver and platinum. Since the mint cannot make a profit, proceeds above and beyond the cost of production are directed to non-profit organizations. Motion made by PCinC Jim Pahl, second by Council Member Eric Schmincke, to direct money received from sales of these coins to the G.A.R. Fund. **Motion passed.**

Council Member Bob Petrovic recommended that, in addition to the three (3) laptop computers being purchased for the Executive Director, BANNER Editor and National Secretary, the National organization purchase a fourth computer for the National Treasurer. Council Member Petrovic put this in the form of a motion, with a second from Council Member Eric Schmincke. **Motion passed.**

Council Member Eric Schmincke mentioned that Camp Letterman (just north of Gettysburg) is under attack by developers. Camp Letterman served as a hospital for those wounded in the battle of Gettysburg. Homes are being built on the grounds, requiring movement of the monument.

With no further business to come before the Council, Commander-in-Chief Kuhn adjourned the meeting at 12:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

**Donald D. Palmer, Jr., PDC**

**National Secretary, SUVCW**



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