

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



National Council of Administration Meeting Minutes

23 November 2008

Gettysburg, PA



The Council of Administration meeting was opened by Commander-in-Chief David V. Medert at 8:01 am. The opening prayer was offered by National Chaplain Jerome Kowalski, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll of Council of Administration was called, with the following recorded as present:

Voting Members Present

Commander-in-Chief David V. Medert

Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo F. Kennedy

Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief James R. Hanby

National Secretary Donald D. Palmer, Jr.

National Treasurer Max L. Newman

National Quartermaster Danny L. Wheeler

Council Member Perley Mellor

Council Member Eric Schmincke

Council Member Robert Petrovic

Council Member D. Brad Schall

Council Member Henry Shaw

PCinC Charles E. Kuhn, Jr.

Non-Voting Members Present

Washington, D.C. Rep. Andrew Johnson,

PCinC PCinC Elmer F. Atkinson

Executive Director David Demmy

PCinC Donald E. Darby

National Counselor Robert Grim,

PCinC PCinC James B. Pahl

PCinC Charles W. Corfman

PCinC Richard D. Orr

PCinC Stephen A. Michaels

PCinC George L. Powell

Guests of the Council of Administration

National Chaplain Jerome Kowalski

DC Bill Vieira – Dept. of Rhode Island

National Signals Officer Ken Freshley

PDC Michael Beard – Dept. of Maryland

Commander-in-Chief Dave Medert opened the meeting by discussing the situation with his wife's illness and the uncertainty that it will bring in the coming months. He alerted the Council of Administration to the fact that his plans and schedule may change at a moments notice.

Commander-in-Chief Medert introduced David Demmy, who succeeded Lee Walters as the Executive Director of the SUVCW. Brother Demmy commented that he was honored to hold this position and noted that he had "big shoes" to fill.

Old Business

Commander-in-Chief Medert opened a discussion about the current process for depositing funds and lingering issues relative to checks apparently not being deposited in a timely manner by the National Treasurer. National Treasurer Max Newman responded that he has been tracking the checks he received. On average, he has been holding checks for 35 days, which, in his opinion, was not significantly long. Brother Newman also relayed information passed on to him by an auditor that changing the process for depositing checks (i.e., granting deposit authority to other officers) will increase the complexity of the audits. Based on the information presented by Brother Newman, the Commander-in-Chief recommended that we keep the current check deposit process for the time being. There were no objections.

Commander-in-Chief Medert introduced National Signals Officer and Webmaster Ken Freshley to discuss anti-virus software for the computers recently purchased by the National organization. Brother Freshley noted that we should have both anti-virus and anti-spyware software. He recommended either Norton 360 or Zone Admin Internet Security Sweep. PCinC Charles Kuhn commented that he has Norton 360 and is not happy with it. PCinC Richard Orr recommended Trend Micro. The Commander-in-Chief tasked the Communications & Technology Committee to make an official recommendation by 27 November. Motion by PCinC Kuhn, second by National Quartermaster Danny Wheeler, to allocate up to \$800 to purchase anti-virus/anti-spyware software. **Motion passed.**

National Secretary Don Palmer presented information on protection of SUVCW logos and emblems. Brother Palmer noted that the Federal charter has language that protects our logos and emblems. In discussions with a patent attorney, additional protection would require the use of trademark language in the charter, or the filing of trademark paperwork for each logo/emblem/badge requiring additional protection. He noted that the Boy Scouts are also a Title 36 corporation and their charter has similar language. However, given the market for Boy Scout merchandise, they have filed for a large number of trademarks to provide the necessary protection. Brother Palmer also mentioned the cost for initial trademark filing is \$375. Trademarks must be renewed every 10 years at a cost of \$400 for each renewal. Given the cost and the potentially high number of trademarks that might be filed, the Commander-in-Chief concluded that filing for trademarks may not be value-added to our organization, and that the language in our federal charter will likely suffice. There were no objections.

Senior Vice Commander Leo Kennedy mentioned that the Program & Policy Committee has reviewed the criteria for the War Medal application. The proposed criteria will soon be ready for a boardroom vote.

Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy presented recommendations made by the Program & Policy Committee relative to the BANNER Policy. The recommendation was to keep the BANNER Policy as is with two minor changes on Pages 1 and 2 (typos). PCinC Richard Orr mentioned that opinions of the National Counselor must be published in the BANNER per the Constitution & Regulations. Commander-in-Chief Medert requested that the BANNER Policy be put back on the web site. Motion by Brother Kennedy, second by Council Member Robert Petrovic, to accept recommendations made by the Program & Policy Committee. During discussion, PCinC Don Darby asked if the 2004 version of the BANNER Policy should be changed to ensure that the National Quartermaster and the Charitable Foundation receive adequate advertising space as previously passed by vote of the Council of Administration. Motion by PCinC Kuhn to table the original motion until 29 December. **Motion passed.**

The Commander-in-Chief called for a break at 8:58 am – reconvened at 9:10 am.

Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy passed around draft certificate for Associates produced by National Quartermaster Danny Wheeler and recommended by the Program & Policy Committee. PCinC Richard Orr noted the word "membership" must be removed from the certificate as Associates are not considered "members" as defined by our Constitution. Motion by Council Member Robert Petrovic, second by Council Member Eric Schmincke, to approve the recommendations of the Program & Policy Committee. **Motion passed.**

Commander-in-Chief Medert initiated a discussion about handwritten forms submitted to National and the occasional difficulty in transcribing the information. The Commander-in-Chief noted that a General Order will soon be published requiring all forms (except membership applications) to be either typewritten or electronically filled in on the computer. No more handwritten form submittals will be accepted.

PCinC Charles Kuhn provided an update of long range planning focused on establishing a new National headquarters for the SUVCW. He noted that the committee has agreed on requirements for a new facility, including 20 acres of land at a location significant to the Civil War. PCinC Kuhn also mentioned that the committee listing on the web site should be modified to add Lee Walters. The web site incorrectly referenced Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy as a member of this committee.

Commander-in-Chief Medert requested a status report on the merchandise license for production of large banners. McCormick Camp #215 from the Department of Missouri had the license prior to the 127 th National Encampment; however, failed to submit a request for renewal to the National Secretary. At the post-Encampment Council of Administration meeting, the Department of Pennsylvania requested a license to produce these banners. However, PCinC Charles Kuhn, noting that the McCormick Camp was relatively new and may not have fully understood the process, and in a gesture of fraternity, offered to withdraw the Department of Pennsylvania request if the McCormick Camp was still interested in producing the banners. National Secretary Don Palmer commented that he inadvertently left the McCormick Camp off of the reminder notice he distributed prior to the National Encampment, so they may have overlooked the need to submit a request for renewal. After the National Encampment, Brother Palmer contacted the McCormick Camp Commander about this situation and a request to maintain the license was received from the McCormick Camp shortly thereafter. Motion by Council Member Petrovic, second by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy, to allow the McCormick Camp to continue their license until the 2010 National Encampment, at which point it must be renewed. **Motion passed by a vote of 8-3 (Wheeler, Schmincke, Kuhn dissenting).** Motion by PCinC Charles Kuhn, second by Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief James Hanby, to establish a policy that when a license is granted or renewed, a letter be sent by the National Secretary to the license recipient that: (1) states that they have permission to produce the item requested, (2) states the license expiration date, and (3) clearly states their responsibility in renewing their license when it expires, along with the procedure for renewal. **Motion passed.** PCinC Richard Orr offered his opinion that this issue should be put to a vote at the 2009 National Encampment since the McCormick Camp failed to follow the process. He also noted that the pre-Encampment reminder notice that the National Secretary distributed is only a courtesy and not a requisite. Commander-in-Chief Medert granted PCinC Orr's request to hold this issue in abeyance. This action, combined with the vote of the Council, allows the McCormick Camp to produce the banners until the 2009 National Encampment, at which point this issue will be brought to the floor of the Encampment. The National Secretary was tasked with sending a letter to the McCormick Camp explaining the Council of Administration action regarding the banner license.

National Secretary Don Palmer brought up another merchandise issue that needed action by the

Council of Administration. Brother Palmer noted that the license held by the V.P. Twombly Camp #2 from the Department of Iowa to produce and sell embroidered hats was approved at the post-Encampment Council of Administration meeting. The Twombly Camp is requesting that this license be transferred to the Department of Iowa. In order to grant this request, the Commander-in-Chief stated the need for the Department of Iowa to send a letter to the National Secretary expressing their interest in accepting the license currently held by the Twombly Camp. Once received, the Council of Administration will take action.

Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief James Hanby discussed the high level of interest in forming new Camps in Oregon, Washington, New Mexico and Louisiana. National Secretary Don Palmer added that he had an e-mail exchange with an individual interested in forming a Camp in Alaska. Commander-in-Chief Medert noted that the appointed office of Department/Camp-at-Large Organizer is now vacant and that he is planning on appointing Brother Gary Brewer from the Department of Colorado & Wyoming, who expressed interest in holding this office, as the new Department/Camp-at-Large Organizer.

Commander-in-Chief Medert presented PCinC Charles Kuhn with a certificate of appreciation for his service as Commander-in-Chief during the 2007-2008 administrative year.

New Business

Commander-in-Chief Medert discussed a request from National Graves Registration Officer James Davenport to grant all members of the Graves Registration Committee access to the Civil War Database. The cost will be \$25 per year and all members can access the database using the same password. Motion by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy, second by Council Member Brad Schall, to approve the request. **Motion passed.**

Commander-in-Chief Medert presented information from PCinC Al Loomis, Lincoln Tomb Observance Committee Chairman, regarding cancellation of the Lincoln Bicentennial Ball scheduled in conjunction with the Lincoln Death Day events in Springfield, IL due to lack of interest. It was noted that the cost to get out of the contract with the hotel will be \$925. The Commander-in-Chief tasked members of the Council and the Lincoln Tomb Observance Committee to figure out how the hotel facilities could be used in another capacity as opposed to surrendering the cancellation fee.

During a discussion about the Remembrance Day program, it was noted that Gettysburg National Military Park Superintendent John Latschar was not in attendance due to the death of his father. National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski was tasked with sending a sympathy card on behalf of the National organization, SUVCW.

National Signals Officer and Webmaster Ken Freshley presented recommendations for changes to the SUVCW National Policy on Electronic Communications. Specific changes associated with the Internet/World Wide Web, E-mail, Databases and Website Assistance and Authorizations were reviewed. Motion by National Quartermaster Danny Wheeler, second by Council Member Eric Schmincke, to accept the proposed changes. **Motion passed.**

Commander-in-Chief Medert presented information about the Lincoln Birthday Ceremony scheduled for 12 February 2009 in Washington, D.C. He also noted that the start time has changed to 8:00 am due to other activities in Washington, D.C. that day. The original start time was 11:00 am.

Commander-in-Chief Medert requested updated information regarding the GAR Post in Factoryville, PA. It was noted that the borough of Factoryville was in the process of taking ownership of the building that served as a GAR Post from 1907-1947. Council Member Henry Shaw is currently awaiting a response from the borough solicitor relative to information needed for the purposes of preparing a Quit Claim Deed to the subject tract.

Commander-in-Chief Medert asked PDC Michael Beard, Chairman of the Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee, to update the Council on recent committee activities. Brother Beard noted that the committee was investigating medals and/or medal enhancements that could be worn to commemorate the sesquicentennial.

Commander-in-Chief Medert initiated a discussion about delays in getting the BANNER to new members. Executive Director David Demmy noted that Camps and Departments are not submitting Form 30's in a timely manner. PCinC Steve Michaels noted that timeliness of delivery also depends on where the new members live and the post office delivery schedules.

PCinC Richard Orr discussed recent activities relative to the GAR Sesquicentennial Committee. PCinC Orr expressed the need to introduce a Bill in Congress to authorize the U.S. Mint to strike commemorative coins by the year 2016. The Committee is also drafting a letter for the membership to send to citizens advisory committees to urge the U.S. Postal Service to issue a stamp (09 April 2016 as the first day of issue).

The Commander-in-Chief called for a break at 10:28 am – reconvened at 10:40 am

Commander-in-Chief Medert informed the Council of Administration about a recent communication from Canada regarding a monument to Canadian soldiers who fought for the Union during the Civil War. The Canadians apparently want the SUVCW to fund the entire project, which was estimated at \$1.2 million. The Council immediately dismissed this option as a possibility.

National Signals Officer Ken Freshley presented information regarding the request made by David Merchant to have the SUVCW take over his Memorial Day website (www.usmemorialday.org). Brother Freshley recommended that the SUVCW take over this website and to establish a committee to assist with maintaining this website. Commander-in-Chief Medert recommended that this assistance be provided by the Communications & Technology Committee. Motion by PCinC Charles Kuhn, second by Council Member Henry Shaw, to have the SUVCW take over the Memorial Day website. **Motion passed.**

In a page out of the absurd, Commander-in-Chief Medert read a letter from an individual in Washington state requesting permission to help recruit new members into the SUVCW and use these members to raise funds to help this individual start a construction business. Needless to say, the Council of Administration was quick to state their disapproval.

Coming back to reality, Commander-in-Chief Medert read a letter from Eleanor Larson looking for information on a flag from the 1900 GAR National Encampment held in Chicago, IL. Council Member Eric Schmincke volunteered to contact National Historian Robert Wolz to see if any information was available.

At the conclusion of a discussion on timely submittal of new member information, a motion was made by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy, second by Council Member Henry Shaw, to establish a web link to record new members in the Order such that immediate information would be provided to the National organization. The web-based information would be

followed immediately by submittal of Form 30's per National regulations. **Motion passed.**

National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski provided an update on the Chaplain's Handbook he is currently developing and discussed the intended contents. He requested help in dealing with information provided to him in multiple formats. Brother Kowalski also requested funds to produce the handbook. Motion by Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Leo Kennedy, second by Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief James Hanby, to authorize up to \$300 to produce the Chaplain's Handbook. **Motion passed.**

Council Member Perley Mellor presented information passed on to him from Department of Massachusetts Graves Registration Officer Steve Twining about an individual in Lowell, MA that refurbished cannons in a local cemetery and was trying to keep the cemetery in a presentable state. Brother Mellor requested that a certificate of appreciation be presented to this individual for his exemplary efforts.

Council Member Brad Schall presented information from the Memorial Grants Committee, noting that two grant requests were received since the National Encampment. One of these requests was rejected.

Executive Director David Demmy highlighted recommendations in his report to (1) purchase a shredder to dispose of documents that contain sensitive information and (2) change the address of the National office from the current P.O box to that currently used by the National Civil War Museum. The Council of Administration voiced no opposition to the recommendations.

National Quartermaster Danny Wheeler commented that the ROTC program is highly successful, with over 500 medals sent out during the past administrative year. Given the high level of activity, PCinC Wheeler requested that Council Member Perley Mellor be allowed to serve as his assistant. No objections were raised by the Council of Administration.

Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief James Hanby provided an update on new member applications received and provided a summary of occupations of these new members, noting that the Order could benefit from occupational skills.

Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief Hanby also provided an update on the Abraham Lincoln Endowment Fund, noting that \$27,000 has been pledged to date by the Lincoln Fellows.

National Signals Officer Ken Freshley mentioned that he has set up the new e-mail addresses for Council of Administration members. In addition, he discussed the recent problems some Council members were having accessing the Electronic Boardroom and mentioned that a process to fix the problem was sent to members of the Council of Administration.

National Treasurer Max Newman provided information on interest earned on SUVCW accounts. Since the National Encampment, the accounts have earned \$13,500 in interest. The estimate for the entire year was \$21,000, so interest income is running well ahead of the year end projection.

Rhode Island Department Commander Bill Vieira presented information to the Council about a project the Department of Rhode Island is working to replace a bronze medallion on a GAR monument to Rhode Island veterans. In addition, the burial plot has been discovered to have two burials per plot (on top of each other) and have little or no names listed. Rhode Island is starting to work on this project, led by the Department Commander.

Commander-in-Chief Medert noted that the next Council of Administration meeting will be held on 18 April 2009 in Springfield, IL commencing at 6:00 pm.

With no further business to come before the Council, Commander-in-Chief Medert asked National Chaplain Jerome Kowalski to provide a closing prayer and subsequently adjourned the meeting at 11:40 am.

Respectfully Submitted in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Donald D. Palmer, Jr., PDC

National Secretary, SUVCW



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KLF