

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



Council of Administration Meeting

November 21, 2004

Gettysburg, PA



The **National Council of Administration** meeting was held at the **Eisenhower Inn and Conference Center** in Gettysburg, PA on November 21, 2004. Voting Council Members present were: C-in-C Stephen A. Michaels, SVC-in-C Donald E. Darby, JVC-in-C James B. Pahl, National Secretary Michael S. Bennett, National Treasurer Max L. Newman, National Quartermaster Danny L. Wheeler, Council Of Administration Members PDC Robert B. Petrovic, PDC Charles E. Kuhn, Jr., PDC Leo F. Kennedy, PDC D. Brad Schall. Past Commanders-in-Chief present were PC-in-C George L. Powell, PC-in-C Elmer F. Atkinson, PC-in-C Andrew Johnson, PC-in-C Chuck Corfman, PC-in-C Robert Grim, and PC-in-C Edward J. Krieser. Also present were Chief of Staff Donald D. Palmer, Jr., Executive Director Lee F. Walters, and Brothers Ron Gill and John Hart.

Following reminders regarding the importance of wearing the badge of our **Order to Council** meetings and of checking the *Electronic Boardroom* regularly to ensure that votes are not missed, and to inform the *Council* if members will be away for extended periods of time, C-in-C Michaels opened the meeting with a moment of silence for PC-in-C Richard Schlenker who passed away in August. An inspirational opening prayer was then given by Brother Charlie Kuhn, and the *Pledge of Allegiance* was led by C-in-C Michaels. Secretary Bennett then called the roll of **Council Members**, and noted the Past Commanders-in-Chief and guests who were present.

The large collection of *Officer and Committee Reports* assembled by Chief of Staff Palmer was then noted and Brother Palmer was asked to summarize or comment on any of the reports he felt required special attention. Brother Palmer identified the reports of the *Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief*, the *Department Organizer*, the *Graves Registration Officer*, the *Liaison to the Cathedral of the Pines*, the *National Webmaster*, the *Committee on Americanization and Education*, the *Constitution and Regulations Committee*, the *Committee on Legislation*, the *Program and Policy Committee*, and the *Memorial Grant Fund Committee* as possibly containing issues which need to be addressed at this time. A schedule was also provided noting the dates of *Department*

Encampments, noting those which the Commander-in-Chief plans to attend.

When asked for communications and/or bills, National Quartermaster Danny L. Wheeler, PC-in-C presented a bill for a new *Commander-in-Chief's* badge to be kept in the event that the primary badge is ever lost or needs to be replaced. This expense had been approved previously.

Treasurer Newman then reviewed the *Financial Report* which he prepared and distributed to those present. He specifically pointed out and explained the balance sheet. Difficulties with the auditors' understanding of our dues structure were also discussed.

Treasurer Newman then announced that, with much regret, he will be resigning from the office of *Treasurer* at the conclusion of this fiscal year due to health-related reasons. The *Council* briefly discussed ways to proceed with regard to both the auditors and recruiting a new *National Treasurer*. This subject will be discussed further under *New Business*.

C-in-C Michaels noted that last year the **SUVCW** waived dues for members serving in the military. Discussion took place as to whether the original motion included an expiration, and if this policy might be extended through this year or in perpetuity. C-in-C Michaels expressed his belief that, while the **Council** will most certainly approve future motions to waive dues for our members serving in combat zones, it is a good practice to have such matters come before the **Council** for regular review and affirmation. Therefore, he suggested that the **Council** approve this waiver for the year 2005. A motion was made by Brother Kuhn and seconded by Brother Petrovic. The motion passed unanimously.

C-in-C Michaels then informed the **Council** that a request has been made to reissue the scholarship for Whitney Ashley, who was involved in an automobile accident which delayed her entry into college. Ms. Ashley is now in college, however the scholarship funds were returned to the **SUVCW** when she, initially, was unable to enroll. Brother Kuhn moved that the funds be forwarded back to Ms. Ashley's present school. This was seconded by Brother Kennedy. C-in-C Michaels suggested that we also request a letter from the school she is attending as affirmation that she is now enrolled. The motion passed unanimously.

Secretary Bennett was then asked to report on the letter received from the **Department of Illinois** requesting authorization to create and distribute their own **ROTC/JROTC** medal. Discussion between **Council officers** on this matter has already taken place via e-mail. Before reading the response he drafted, C-in-C Michaels asked Brother Bennett to read the original letter making this request, which was done. JVC-in-C Pahl moved that the request be denied, which was seconded by Brother Kuhn. Discussion took place which included SVC-in-C Darby's report that not all branches of the military will permit the Illinois medal to be presented to its members if the same award is not available to all of its members nationwide, which clearly the Illinois medal would not be. The **Air Force**, for example, will not permit a *regional* award. Additional discussion noted the problems that would occur, and did occur with our forefathers in the **GAR**, if **Departments** and **Camps** were permitted to create their own versions of **National** medals, certificates, and badges. The vote to deny this request was unanimous, and Secretary Bennett was directed to forward a letter to the **Department of Illinois** noting the *Council of Administration's* concerns, and the reasons why the request is being denied.

National Quartermaster Wheeler, PC-in-C then passed around a sample of the *Civil War Widows Badge* which our **Order** still has a small supply of. Brother Wheeler also noted that there is a supply of the original program from the *Meeting of the Widows* event which can be paired with each remaining medal. Approximately 25 medals remain. PC-in-C Atkinson noted that when this subject last came before the **Council**, it was decided to hold onto these medals as their value has

continued to increase. Following discussion, a motion was made by Brother Wheeler for our **Order** to keep the *Widows Badges* at this time. Brother Kuhn seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion confirmed that, according to the *123rd National Encampment*, **SUVCW Form 7**, the *ROTC/JROTC Award Application*, is to be revised to reflect the change in wording from "graduating senior" to "any **ROTC** or **JROTC** student."

With the *Lincoln Birthday Bicentennial* approaching in 2009, C-in-C Michaels noted that some organizations already have plans well underway. PC-in-C Al Loomis, as the representative from the **SUVCW**, has been working to ensure that the **SUVCW** will be a part of programs and activities which take place during this celebration. Brother Gill added that PC-in-C Loomis is also a member of the *Indiana Taskforce* on this project. It was noted that Brother Loomis is C-in-C Michaels' appointed representative and each C-in-C from this year forward will need to appoint his own representative.

As a point of information, C-in-C Michaels informed the *Council* that he has made personal contact with the heads of the other **Allied Orders** regarding contributions towards the *2005 Encampment*, and that written communication would soon follow reminding them that a response to the **SUVCW's** request for additional financial support from the other **Allied Orders** was to have come this year.

Brother Petrovic then gave a report on the *Charitable Foundation's* fund-raising/sales efforts during the *Remembrance Day Weekend*, both at the *Blue & Gray Ball* and the *SVR Breakfast*, and additional merchandise they plan to have produced and offer for sale by the *2005 Encampment*. Discussion then ensued regarding expanding the line of *National Quartermaster* items as well, to include other areas not currently licensed to the *Foundation*, **Departments** or **Camps**. Of particular interest were **SVR**-related items including buttons and officer's belt-buckles. Brother Schall expressed concern that the *Foundation* and *Quartermaster* should not duplicate their efforts leading to an inefficient system. It was clarified that one of the main differences is in the purpose of each. The *Quartermaster's* office exists to provide items necessary to the operation of **Camps** and **Departments**, and of use to individual Brothers in their capacity as members of the **Order**, at as low a price as practical so that these items will be available to as many members as possible. The *Charitable Foundation's* purpose is to raise funds for use by the **Order**, by developing and offering for sale items of a luxury/souvenir nature, as well as to provide the matching funds often necessary in order to obtain additional grants from outside entities. National Quartermaster Wheeler made the *Council* aware of notice from some vendors regarding impending price increases, and some corrections which need to be made to our policies regarding shipping and insurance.

Brother John Hart, *Banner Publisher*, was then given an opportunity to address the *Council* and answer any questions. He spoke on the special *National Officer/Committee* insert included in the most recent issue, which was well-received, and addressed the absence of the *Special Committees*. Brother Hart also noted that we will be changing printers due to hurricane damage suffered by our previous printer, and have also changed mailing houses due to waste factors and other costs associated with the former vendor. The subjects of submission deadlines, circulation schedules, and delivery methods were then discussed. The *Council* gave Brother Hart a round of applause for a great job, and for a great looking product.

C-in-C Michaels then called upon Brother Kennedy to address the subject of the *National Graves Registration Database*. Brother Kennedy announced that the database is still not functioning on our *National Website*, and communication with Brother Nathan Orr, whose company was hired by

our **Order** to create and maintain this online database, has been minimal due to Brother Orr's many other family and business obligations. SVC-in-C Darby moved that a deadline of December 31st be given to Brother Orr and the company with which the **SUVCW** has contracted, to get the database completely active online. Should this not be done, all property belonging to the **Order**, including any source-code developed, should be returned, the existing contract will be terminated, and National Graves Registration Officer Bob Lowe will be authorized to locate and retain another contractor to take over this project. This motion was seconded by National Quartermaster Wheeler, and passed unanimously. Secretary Bennett was directed to communicate the **Council's** decision to Brother Orr. It was also ordered that the minutes from Mid-Winter **COA** meeting in Harrisburg in 2001 be checked to see how much has been paid to Brother Orr and his company prior to any more recent payment(s) by Treasurer Newman. It is hoped that the 3000 grave entries being used to test the workings of the system would not be lost.

Following PC-in-C Atkinson's report that the hotel could not extend check-out time for the members of the **Council** as a large group was coming in that afternoon, C-in-C Michaels called for a 15 minute recess during which such matters could be attended to.

Under the heading of *New Business*, C-in-C Michaels asked PC-in-C Ed Krieser to address the **Council** regarding the printed *Proceedings* of our *National Encampments*. Brother Krieser showed a sample of the *Proceedings* as they have been published in recent years, bound or stapled at the spine and approximately 6" x 9". He also showed another version that would be 8 ½ " by 11" and spiral bound. The spiral binding would permit the **Order** to more easily self-publish, as well as print only as many copies as we require, and then easily print more if needed. Of course *Proceedings* could also be made available on CD-Rom as well. Furthermore, for those who frequently refer to these books, the spiral binding permits the book to be opened and laid flat for easier use. Following discussion, SVC-in-C Darby moved that future *Proceedings* be produced which are 8 ½" x 11" and use a plastic spiral binding. This was seconded by Brother Petrovic. Brother Kuhn offered a friendly amendment, which was accepted, to provide the *Proceedings* digitally on CD-Rom, for a nominal fee, as well. There were nine votes in favor. JVC-in-C Pahl objected out of habit.

The subject was then raised by PC-in-C Wheeler of past years' *Proceedings* which still have not been completed and published. SVC-in-C Darby repeated his offer to provide a court reporter who would transcribe the recordings from *Encampments* at a rate of \$3 per page. Brother Kuhn cautioned that if we were to take advantage of such a service, we should make sure to create copies of all materials as a safeguard before they leave our possession. C-in-C Michaels asked the Past Commanders-in-Chief present to express their feelings. After some discussion, a motion was made by National Quartermaster Wheeler to accept SVC-in-C Darby's offer to hire a transcriptionist to be working on the old *Proceedings* waiting to be done. This was seconded simultaneously by Brothers Kennedy and Schall. Brother Kuhn offered a friendly amendment that only copies be given to the transcriptionist and that original recordings and documents be maintained at our **National Headquarters**. That amendment was accepted and the motion was approved unanimously.

C-in-C Michaels then brought up a difference of opinion within the **Department of New Jersey** regarding the cataloguing of Civil War Memorials in New Jersey. It is the opinion of some that this information should be made available, via their *Department Website*, to anyone who can benefit from it. Others feel that the **Department** and/or our **National Order** has a proprietary interest in this information and that it should only be made available through the **National Organization**, and possibly for a fee. Discussion included clarification that while information gathered and recorded on **SUVCW** forms may be disseminated to the public, the forms themselves may not be

copied for that purpose. Also, JVC-in-C Pahl stated that, in his opinion, the material could and should be made available and spread as widely as possible so long as fees are not charged, citing the purpose of our organization: to keep green the memory of the sacrifices made by the *Boys in Blue* and their **Grand Army of the Republic**. SVC-in-C Darby noted that there could be expenses incurred in producing copies of this information and JVC-in-C Pahl agreed that the costs of publishing or duplication could be recovered. Following some discussion, Brother Pahl moved that any **Department** in our **Order** should be permitted to freely publish grave registration and/or memorial information gathered on behalf of the **SUVCW** so long as they make it available free of charge, or that it be sold for no greater than their out-of-pocket expenses. The motion was seconded by SVC-in-C Darby. Brother Kuhn added the friendly amendment that while data contained on **SUVCW** forms may be included, the forms themselves could not be. Brother Kennedy further clarified that information made public should not include names or contact information for individual Brothers who may have collected this data without the specific permission of those Brothers. This addition was included in the amendment, which was accepted. The motion passed unanimously.

The subject of retaining a professional photographer to record images from our *National Encampments* was then raised by C-in-C Michaels. Brother Kuhn suggested that all photographs taken should become the property of the **SUVCW**, and it was agreed that both 35mm film negatives and digital files should be produced. Brother Petrovic suggested that the host **Department** of each *Encampment* could be given the responsibility of retaining a suitable photographer, and further suggested that a local community college could be approached as a photography student might be available to use this event as a class project. Brother Kuhn noted that the **Department of Pennsylvania** once had a photograph taken of the entire membership at an *Encampment*, which might be an item desired by Brothers attending a *National Encampment*. Brother Wheeler reported that he has assembled a large collection of photographs taken by PC-in-C Joe Rippey going back many years and intends to show them at the *2005 Encampment* and seek the assistance of those in attendance in identifying some of the people in the photos. C-in-C Michaels asked Brother Petrovic to look into the retaining a photographer for the *2005 Encampment* with the *Host Committee* from the **New Hampshire Department** and report back to the *Council* at the spring meeting.

JVC-in-C Pahl then discussed the procedures he is now following with regard to the acceptance of membership applications by mail, which includes providing contact information directly to Executive Director Walters so that new members will get on the **Banner** circulation list as soon as possible, even before they are reported to **National** by the **Camp** and **Department** they are recruited into. Brother Pahl also noted that he has helped to process 75 applications that have come to him since the *2004 National Encampment* with still other applications currently being worked on.

C-in-C Michaels then directed everyone's attention to a chart he created listing each **Department** and when, in the last several years, its *Department Encampment* was visited by the C-in-C or another *National Officer*. He also presented a listing of most **Departments' Encampment** dates for 2005. It was pointed out which *Department Encampments* he is already planning to attend, and which others might really benefit from a visit from a *National Officer*, also noting the \$300 travel reimbursement which can be made available to a *National Officer* traveling to represent the *Commander-in-Chief*. Officers willing and interested in representing the *Commander-in-Chief* at any of the *Encampments* he is unable to attend were asked to make C-in-C Michaels aware of this.

An issue regarding the routing and approval of the *Memorial Grant Fund Request Form 62* was

brought to the attention of the **Council** through a communication from National Civil War Memorials Officer Todd Shillington, PDC. As grant applications are forwarded to **National**, he feels there is insufficient communication between the *Grant Fund Committee* and the *National Memorials Officer* to ensure that a *Memorial Assessment Form 61* is already on file, or that a completed form is submitted with the grant application. Further, if a *Form 61* accompanies the grant application then copies of it need to be forwarded to the *Memorials Officer* as well. C-in-C Michaels will refer this matter to the *Program & Policy Committee*. Brother Shillington also suggested that the "*Last Soldier*" project needs to be revisited as many questions have arisen. SVC-in-C Darby will speak with Brother Shillington about these issues. Brother Shillington also expressed concerns regarding the format for the new *National Memorials Database*. C-in-C Michaels expressed his belief that this will fall into place and can be better addressed after issues with the *National Graves Registration Database* are handled.

Treasurer Newman then circulated an official letter announcing his resignation from the office of *Treasurer*, to take effect at the end of this fiscal year. With much regret, Brother Newman's health concerns and the instructions of his physician make this decision necessary. SVC-in-C Darby summarized the feeling of many present by saying that we would rather have Brother Newman as a live Brother than a deceased Treasurer, and suggested that the **Order** might begin to search for a successor sooner than the next *Encampment*. C-in-C Michaels suggested that we might utilize the **Banner** to spread the word that a *Treasurer* or *Assistant Treasurer* is needed to begin taking over some of Brother Newman's responsibilities as soon as possible.

Brother Kuhn made a motion that members of the *Council* attending a *Council* meeting without wearing their membership badge be fined \$1. This was seconded by SVC-in-C Darby. Following discussion of the importance of **National Officers** wearing their badges as an example for our membership, the motion passed unanimously.

Brother Kuhn then asked if a sample of each *National Encampment* badge has been kept so that a display could be created at our **National Headquarters**. It was noted that badges were not always produced, but ribbons or other devices were made. Several Brothers present offered to provide some of these items that they had in their own collections. C-in-C Michaels asked who would be given the responsibility for creating and maintaining such a display. Brother Kuhn agreed to take charge of collecting and cataloging. PC-in-C Johnson offered the caution that the **SUVCW** should not undertake the start of museum or library work. It was agreed that this project will only be for a display at our headquarters.

SVC-in-C Darby asked National Quartermaster Wheeler to provide an updated list of which past years' *National Encampment Proceedings* he still has a surplus of so that they may be offered for sale to our membership through the **Banner**. It was decided that they would be offered for \$5 plus postage.

Brother Petrovic then brought up the subject of having signs created to identify the rooms of our **Allied Orders** heads at *National Encampments*. Following discussion, and with concerns for loss, damage or theft, it was decided to take no action at this time.

SVC-in-C Darby requested the *Commander-in-Chief* to consult with his *Counselor* and issue a ruling regarding a **Camp** requiring a fee in order to transfer out of that **Camp**. It was Counselor Pahl's belief that this is prohibited by our *Constitution and Regulations*.

Secretary Bennett asked about the status of old membership records and applications in the possession of our **Order** at our *National Headquarters*. As inquiries often come in as to an ancestor's membership, or the need for other information which may be included on an

application, it would be helpful to know what information we have, and may be able to provide. Executive Director Walters acknowledged that there are some 7000 records on file at our Headquarters, which is by no means a complete record of our organization, and that they are currently in the process of being alphabetized. While there is no guarantee that a specific record may exist, it is possible that it does, and further possible that it can be located.

Treasurer Newman noted that the old *aoi* e-mail addresses will continue to function until December 31st, after which the *suvcw.org* addresses will remain as the official contact e-mail addresses for members of the **Council of Administration**.

JVC-in-C then directed everyone's attention to a hand-out he provided showing images used by our **Sons of Veterans Departments** as their adopted *Department Symbols*. He also reported that preliminary conversations with **IRS** officials regarding a change from 501(c)(4) status to 501(c)(3) status have revealed potential difficulties that may prevent this action from being taken without an act of **Congress**. Rulings from the **IRS** have been requested before any further action is taken.

PC-in-C Johnson reported that the Schlenker family will let the **Order** know, through Brother Johnson, if any personal property of PC-in-C Schlenker is not going to be kept by the family, or if any items are to be sold or auctioned. He also noted that the package of materials forwarded to Brother Douglass Knight with the results of the *Hearing Council's* investigation were returned with delivery refused, and have been turned over to the *National Secretary*.

Chief of Staff Palmer noted that he would forward copies of the *Officer and Committee Reports* to PC-in-C Kent Armstrong and Council Member David Stephen.

PC-in-C Powell asked if there were a limited number of *suvcw.org* e-mail addresses available or if, for a fee, members could obtain one. C-in-C Michaels noted that there are only a very small number provided to us, but that he would ask National Webmaster Kent Peterson to look into it and report back.

Brother Kennedy expressed his understanding and appreciation to Brother Newman for his dedication and performance as our *Treasurer*. This sentiment was repeated by Brothers Kuhn and Schall, and a round of applause was given by all in attendance. Brother Newman stated that he only tried to do the best he could at the job he was given. C-in-C Michaels noted that due to Brother Newman's efficiency and level of professionalism, the organization has been able to focus on the work of our **Order** without having our attention drawn away by concerns for our financial stability or day-to-day operations.

With no further business to come before the **Council**, the *C-in-C* directed Brother Kuhn to offer a closing prayer and, noting that the next **Council of Administration** meeting would take place on April 16 in Springfield, IL, closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted in
Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,
Michael S. Bennett, PDC
National Secretary



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KAP