

**National Civil War Association, Incorporated
Combined Administrative Board and Unit Board
Minutes**

Date: July 13, 2019

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Location: Round Table Pizza, Benicia, CA

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m.

Roll Call: Present were: Lynne Ashby, Glenn Johnson, Jon Nickerson-Tremayne, Dennis Main, Robert Allen, David Rogers, Stephen Senishen, Jeff Polder, Kevin Groom, Samantha Watkins, Scott Spence, and Melani Van Petten.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of April 6, 2019 were approved unanimously.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda for July 13, 2019 was approved with additions.

Vice President's Report: Dennis Main said he had taken the job of Vice President to support Jon Nickerson-Tremayne as President, but he felt he was no longer able to support Jon and so was resigning from his position as a result of their differences. It was pointed out that since Marcelo Pontin was not present, the Admin Board would not be able to vote without a quorum. Lynne Ashby moved to accept Dennis's resignation with regret. Scott Spence volunteered to act as Vice President for this meeting only in order to facilitate a vote. Jeff Polder moved to accept Scott's offer, and the motion was passed. Dennis left the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Jon spoke for Marcelo Pontin, saying that the club is now \$2700.00 in the black, \$1000.00 more than at this time last year. He said that our yearly hard costs had been \$9500.00, but the fees for the storage unit had increased to \$133.00 per month, or \$1596.00 per year.

Secretary's Report: Melani Van Petten reported that we have a total of 472 members listed, but only 127 of them are current. It was suggested that those who have not renewed since 2016 or earlier should be put into a separate list, to be notified about events in their area. Jon suggested that the membership form should be reduced in size, and Scott Spence made a motion to create a committee to do so, headed by Melani. The motion passed, and Lynne Ashby and Samantha Watkins volunteered to serve on the committee.

President's Report: Jon Nickerson-Tremayne thanked everyone for coming out on a Saturday. He said that a letter of complaint regarding a racial insult had been filed against him. (See attachment.) He said that he had witnesses that he had never said anything, and that one person was holding the club hostage. He said he had made six or seven phone

calls to try to secure an RV parking space for the people in question, and that they had made up the accusation because they were angry at not getting a space. At this point, Scott Spence leaped to his feet and shouted, "Just stop it!" He said that Jon was refusing to take responsibility for his actions and engaging in character assassination, and that he was withdrawing his offer to be acting Vice President for the meeting. He then left the meeting, saying he was going to join the ACWA. This left the Admin Board without a quorum and unable to vote.

Jon said that membership cards would be required at Duncan's Mills, and if the member did not have one, to say it was in storage. Lynne Ashby handed Melani an envelope full of membership renewals that had been incorrectly sent to the club's P.O. Box, and arrangements were made to provide a list of paid-up members to the gate at Duncan's Mills.

Jon said that he had made arrangements for Marysville to be run by a coalition of fraternal lodges, who would then get a percentage of the gate. He said they would run the whole event and pay for the privies, and that this would be a more efficient way to do things. He said we would need a "doorman" who was a member of the club to answer questions and give directions, as the people running the gate were not reenactors and would not have information about the club. He invited members to make suggestions for changes for next year.

Committee Reports

Planning Committee: Jon said that the person in charge of the site of Uncle Tom's Cabin had died, but his son wanted to continue the event. Jeff Polder observed that camping was rather cramped. Jon said that Uncle Tom's Cabin must pay its own way, and we would decide this year if we wish to continue the event, which is in conflict with Fort Point.

Jon said that Tres Piños would be September 6, 7, and 8. Melani is making a flyer for Becky Thompson to advertise the school day.

Jon said that Marysville wanted to have a bluegrass concert on Saturday night, and that reenactors were invited to sing as well. It was suggested that the amphitheater be used for this, and that the concert be held from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. He said we already have \$1000.00 in donations for the event, and that the rental fee has been waived. He said again that local non-profits will be collecting the money at the gate, and that once the locals are interested in the event, we could move to a different site if we want.

Jon said that the terms for Half Moon Bay have been agreed upon, but that the contracts are not yet signed. He said they will pay us \$2500.00 to show up, and we will collect the \$3.00 per head fee for the school day. The event will be November 8, 9, 10, and 11. On Monday there will be a veterans' memorial service, and one battle.

Webmaster: Andrew Crockett has sent a letter resigning from the development of the new website, and assigning those duties to Scott Spence. (See attachment) There was no further report, as Scott had left the meeting. Melani said she can work with the ncwa1863.org site.

Marketing: No report.

Safety: No report.

First Aid: No report.

Rules: No report.

Rank Ratio: No report.

PACWR: Lynne Ashby said the answer key for the safety test is incorrect and needs to be fixed.

Old Business

After Action Reports:

Galt: Jon said he doesn't want to go back in 2020 because the people there are too hard to deal with. He said the contract specified the use of four bathrooms, but the management said they weren't ready to use yet and were ready to breach the contract. He said they had told him the first three weeks in April 2020 were already taken, and he said that maybe we could return in 2021. He said that we had 500 kids for the school day and had made a small profit, and that Midrise Arnold had worked very hard on this. He also thanked Jeff Polder for his work on the event.

Jackson: Jon said we lost money on Jackson, and that if we go back, there needs to be better site prep and the grass must be mowed. We also need to set up a better battlefield, as the steep hill did not work. He said there were people on the battlefield with no membership cards, and that has to stop. Jeff Polder said the Union commanders would check their units' cards. Glenn Johnson suggested a parade in town after the school day or on Saturday morning. He said the hotel was very hospitable, and said they had rooms we could rent for meetings, and perhaps could get a discount for members who wanted to stay there, but they would need to know well in advance.

Lynne Ashby said that we need to get the Planning Committee back so more than one person can inspect prospective sites, and that there had not been a site walk in two years. Jon said we need an email chain for people to participate. It was pointed out that the Planning Committee is chaired by the Vice President, who had just quit.

Angel Island: Jon said it was a good event. Glenn said the food was great, and thanked Jon and Dennis and Cynthia Main for cooking. Lynne said Jon should charge more for the food.

New Business

2020 Budget: Jon said again that the recurring costs for the year were \$9500.00, with \$1800.00 of that being the storage locker. He said Marcelo suggested an inventory and finding a cheaper place. Jon suggested a trailer which could be moved around. The pros and cons were discussed, including insurance, registration of the trailer, a vehicle capable of towing it, and possible theft. Lynne suggested checking with Midirise about it, as she had experience with a trailer. The issue was tabled until the next meeting.

Scott Spence's request to be called "President Emeritus", discussion of the PA system, and his statement about the possibility of a drill event at Ardenwood were tabled, as Scott had left the meeting.

2020 Schedule: Jon said there would be no event at Galt. He said there was a large free site available at Elk Grove. The event would be run by the Elk Grove Historical Society, and we would get a cut of the gate and the school fees. He said they want the event for Memorial Day.

Jackson: May 1, 2, and 3.

Elk Grove: May 22, 23, 24 and 25.

Possible event in Petaluma: April 4 and 5.

Angel Island: Father's Day weekend?

Duncan's Mills: July 18-19. Jon wants to take it over and eliminate the event fee. Will be discussing that August 11, 2019.

Uncle Tom's Cabin: August 15 and 16. Maybe, must pay for itself this year.

Tres Piños: September 11, 12 and 13.

Marysville: Perhaps move it to the spring, as that is when the 8th grade studies the Civil War.

Petaluma: maybe October 3 and 4?

Half Moon Bay: Veteran's Day, November 6, 7 and 8.

Ball: January 11, after Combined Board meeting. There is a free building available in Jackson. Glenn suggested that CO's should survey their units about the location and a \$20.00 ticket price. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

Flo: Robert Meyer wants to form a new Union artillery unit, using Flo. The unit will be the 3rd US, Company C. The unit will purchase Flo from the club for \$11000.00, with a \$5000.00 down payment on April 4, 2020, and \$1000.000 every April 1 until paid off. Robert says he has four members ready to join. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

Announcements: None

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be Saturday, October 12, 2019, at 11:00 a.m. at Round Table Pizza in Benicia.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Attachment

On Saturday, May 4, 2019, at the NCWA-sponsored event at Jackson, a very unpleasant incident occurred. Club members Sharon Bursey and Ms. Bursey's two children were entering the event when club President Jon Nickerson-Tremayne made a remark that Ms. Bursey found racially insulting. He asked Ms. Bursey and her older child Amad if they didn't find it hot out there in the fields picking cotton, and commented that black skin didn't do well in the sun. When I asked Jon what he meant by that, Jon refused to speak to me. When questioned later about the incident by the club secretary, Jon emphatically denied that he had said anything, and said that he had witnesses that nothing happened. Ms. Bursey is quite sure about the remark, as were the ten prospective new members that were also coming to the event. The ten friends who came with us were shocked, and the mothers and children, including Ms. Bursey, left within the hour. The three men who had come along had expressed the intention of joining the club with their families, but never returned.

If Jon said something which was meant as living history rather than an insult, it would have been appropriate to offer some form of apology when he saw that his remark had been taken badly. Instead he completely denied that anything was said at all. There is no reason to believe that Ms. Bursey, who is in her second year of membership, is making this up. It seems that this incident has cost the club ten new members, as well as four existing members.

Jon Nickerson-Tremayne has done a lot of good work for the club in his two years as president, but this action on his part is actively hurting the club. We come to these events to have a good time while learning and teaching history, and it is very painful to be treated this way by someone who is supposed to be a club officer facilitating the event. It was even worse for the children who were involved, and embarrassing in front of friends who were also there to have a good time and wanted to join up. A simple apology on Jon's part would go a long way to rectify this mistake, but his response has been to simply deny that he ever even spoke to Ms. Bursey and Amad. This is simply not an acceptable way for the president to represent the NCWA, and the Administrative Board needs to address this issue.

Fred Ray III
Norfolk Light Artillery Blues